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### *Inner Time-Consciousness and Pre-reflective Self-awareness*

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IF ONE LOOKS at the current discussion of self-awareness there seems to be a general agreement that whatever valuable philosophical contributions Husserl might have made, his account of self-awareness is not among them. This prevalent appraisal is often based on the claim that Husserl was too occupied with the problem of *intentionality* to ever pay real attention to the issue of self-awareness. Due to his interest in intentionality Husserl took object-consciousness as the paradigm of every kind of awareness and therefore settled with a model of self-awareness based upon the subject-object dichotomy, with its entailed difference between the intending and the intended. As a consequence, Husserl never discovered the existence of pre-reflective self-awareness, but remained stuck in the traditional, but highly problematic, reflection model of self-awareness.

To a certain extent this is an old criticism that can be traced back to Heidegger. In Heidegger's lecture course *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* from 1925, Heidegger writes that Husserl operated with a too narrow concept of Being. Because of his exclusive interest in intentionality, Husserl identified the Being of consciousness with the Being of objects and consequently failed to uncover the unique mode of Being characterizing intentional subjectivity itself. Heidegger consequently states that a more radical phenomenology is called for—a phenomenology that has to return to the original givenness of subjectivity, and not merely consider it, as Husserl did, insofar as it is a (potential) *object* of reflection.<sup>1</sup>

More recently, Tugendhat has formulated a related criticism. Tugendhat claims that Husserl understood self-awareness as a kind of internal perception, that is, as a subject-object relation between two different experiences (a perceiving and a perceived), and as he then adds, Husserl never succeeded in explaining why such a relation should result in self-awareness.<sup>2</sup> Similar views can be found in Henrich, Frank, and Gloy, who all argue that Husserl's analysis of self-awareness never managed to escape the reflection-theoretical paradigm.<sup>3</sup> As Manfred Frank puts it: "In any case, Husserl does not know any other concept of self-awareness than the reflective one."<sup>4</sup> Frank even claims that Husserl not

only failed to provide a convincing analysis of self-awareness, but that he basically did not even understand the very problem.<sup>5</sup>

A common feature of these critical interpretations is their narrow textual basis. By and large they restrict themselves to Husserl's position in two of his published works, namely, *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900–1901) and *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie I* (1913). Occasionally, they also draw on material from *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (1893–1917), but they very rarely consider any further material, neither from any of the posthumously published volumes of *Husserliana* nor for that matter from any of the still unpublished research manuscripts found in the Husserl-Archives.

If there is anything that contemporary Husserl scholarship has demonstrated, however, it is that it is virtually impossible to acquire an adequate insight into Husserl's philosophy if one restricts oneself to the writings that were published during his lifetime. This is not only the case when it comes to topics such as the problem of intersubjectivity, the role of the body, or the structure of temporality, but also when it concerns the question of self-awareness.

Drawing on posthumously published material, I will in the following show that the standard interpretation must be rejected. The notion of pre-reflective self-awareness is not only to be found in Husserl, he also subjects it to a highly illuminating analysis. It is true that one rarely finds analyses dedicated exclusively to the problem of self-awareness. But this is by no means because the topic is absent, but rather because Husserl's reflections on this problem are usually integrated into his analysis of a number of related issues, such as the nature of intentionality, spatiality, embodiment, temporality, attention, intersubjectivity, etc. This fact makes any attempt at a systematic account both challenging and rewarding. Rewarding because Husserl's phenomenological analysis of self-awareness is far more detailed, concrete, and substantial than the more formal considerations to be found in the writings of, for instance, Frank or Henrich. Challenging because although there is a profound and complex theory of self-awareness to be found in Husserl's writings, it is a theory that will first have to be pieced together; simply to isolate the relevant elements and avoid getting lost in the adjacent discussions will demand effort. Since space will not allow me to outline the full scope of Husserl's theory, I will in the following content myself with arguing for the claim that Husserl does in fact operate with the notion of a pre-reflective self-awareness.

Before I start, however, a few words about the reflection theory might be appropriate. Why is it at all necessary to find an alternative to the view that self-awareness is the result of consciousness directing its "gaze" at itself, taking itself as an object, and thus becoming aware of itself?<sup>6</sup> If one takes a look at the writings of Henrich, Cramer, Pothast, Frank, Gloy, et al., one will find an entire arsenal of arguments (including different versions of what is basically the same argument) showing the deficiencies of the reflection model. The criticism is particularly directed against the claim that there is no self-awareness prior to

reflection, and that self-awareness comes about only in the moment consciousness objectifies itself. Let me present their central argument.

The reflection model of self-awareness operates with a duality of moments. Whether it comes about by one experience taking another experience as its object, or one experience taking itself as an object, we are dealing with a kind of self-division and have to *distinguish* the reflecting from the reflected. Of course, the aim of reflection is then to overcome or negate this difference and to posit both moments as identical. Otherwise, we would not have a case of *self-awareness*. This strategy is, however, confronted with fundamental problems. The reflection theory claims that in order for a perception to become self-aware it must await its objectivation by a subsequent act of reflection. In order to speak of *self-awareness*, however, it is not sufficient that the experience in question be reflexively thematized and made into an object. It must be grasped as being *identical* with the thematizing experience. In order to be a case of *self-awareness*, it is not sufficient that A is conscious of B: A must be conscious of B as being identical with A. In other words, to count as a case of self-awareness the perception must be grasped as being identical with the act of reflection (and since a *numerical identity* is excluded in advance, the identity in question must be that of belonging to the same subject or being part of the same stream of consciousness). But how can the act of reflection (which lacks self-awareness) be in a position to realize that the perception belongs to the same subjectivity as itself? If the reflecting experience is to encounter something as itself, if it is to recognize or identify something different as itself, it needs a prior acquaintance with itself. Consequently, the act of reflection must either await a further act of reflection in order to become self-aware, in which case we are confronted with a vicious infinite regress, *or* it must be admitted that it is itself already in a state of self-awareness *prior to reflection*. The latter, of course, would involve us in a circular explanation, presupposing that which was meant to be explained, and implicitly rejecting the thesis of the reflection model of self-awareness, that is, that all self-awareness is brought about by reflection.<sup>7</sup>

The general lesson to learn from this argument is that one should avoid theories that describe self-awareness as a kind of relation—be it a relation between different experiences, or between the experience and itself—since every relation, especially the subject-object relation, presupposes a *distinction* between two (or more) relata, and this is exactly what generates the problem.

## I

What does Husserl have to say about self-awareness? Let me start by showing that he, in a manner not unlike Sartre, took self-awareness to be an essential feature of subjectivity and that he considered reflection to be a founded and non-basic form of self-awareness.

According to Husserl, to be a subject is to exist for-itself, that is, to be

self-aware. Thus, rather than being something that only occurs during exceptional circumstances, namely, whenever we pay attention to our conscious life, self-awareness is a feature characterizing subjectivity as such, no matter what worldly entities it might otherwise be conscious of and occupied with.<sup>8</sup>

To be a subject is to be in the mode of being aware of oneself.<sup>9</sup>

*An absolute existent* is existent in the form of an intentional life—which, no matter what else it may be intrinsically conscious of, is, at the same time, consciousness of itself. Precisely for that reason (as we can see when we consider more profoundly) it has at all times an essential ability to *reflect* on itself, on all its structures that stand out for it—an essential ability to make itself thematic and produce judgments, and evidences, relating to itself.<sup>10</sup>

For this is not merely a continuously streaming lived-experiencing [*Erleben*], rather when it streams there is always simultaneously consciousness of this streaming. This consciousness is self-perceiving. Only exceptionally is it a thematic noticing performed by the I. To that exception belongs the reflection, possible at any time. This perception, which makes all experiencing conscious, is the so-called internal consciousness or internal perception.<sup>11</sup>

It is important not to misunderstand Husserl. When he claims that subjectivity is as such self-aware, he is not advocating a strong Cartesian thesis concerning total and infallible self-transparency; rather he is simply calling attention to the intimate link between experiential phenomena and first-person givenness, in much the same way as Nagel and Searle have later done.<sup>12</sup> Thus, when Husserl speaks of a pervasive self-awareness he is concerned with the question of how consciousness experiences itself, how it is given to itself, how it manifests itself. In Husserl's view, the subjective or first-person givenness of an experience is not simply a quality added to the experience, a mere varnish as it were. On the contrary, it constitutes the very mode of being of the experience. In contrast to physical objects, which can exist regardless of whether or not they *de facto* appear for a subject, experiences are essentially characterized by their subjective givenness, by the fact that there is a subjective "feel" to them.<sup>13</sup> To undergo an experience necessarily means that there is something "it is like" for the subject to have that experience.<sup>14</sup> But insofar as there is something "it is like" for the subject to have the experience, there must be some awareness of the experience itself along with its inherent "quality" of *mineness*; in short, there must be some minimal form of self-awareness. As Flanagan puts it: "all subjective experience is self-conscious in the weak sense that there is something it is like for the subject to have that experience. This involves a sense that the experience is the subject's experience, that it happens to her, occurs in her stream."<sup>15</sup> Self-awareness is consequently not something that only comes about the moment one scrutinizes one's experience attentively (not to speak of it being something that only comes about the moment one recognizes one's own mirror image, or refers to oneself using the first-person pronoun, or is in possession of identifying knowledge of one's own life story). Rather, it is legitimate

to speak of self-awareness the moment I am no longer simply conscious of a foreign object, but of my experience of the object as well, for in this case my subjectivity reveals itself to me. If the experience is given in a first-person mode of presentation to me, it is (at least tacitly) given as *my* experience, and it can therefore count as a case of self-consciousness. On this account, the only type of experience which would lack self-awareness would be an experience I was not conscious of, that is, an “unconscious experience.”

Granted that I am aware of my experience even when intentionally directed at objects in the world, the central question, of course, is *how* this self-awareness comes about. Is it the result of a reflection? Husserl’s answer is no. For Husserl, the act of reflection, say, an explicit consciousness of an occurrent perception of a Swiss Army knife, is *founded* in a twofold sense. It does not present us with a self-enclosed subjectivity, but with a self-transcending subjectivity directed at an object, and it consequently presupposes the preceding act of object-intentionality.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, as an explicit self-awareness, it also relies upon a prior tacit self-awareness. To utilize a terminological distinction between perceiving (*Wahrnehmen*) and experiencing (*Erleben*) dating back to the *Logical Investigations*: prior to reflection one perceives the intentional object, but one experiences (*erlebt*) the intentional act. Although I am not intentionally directed at the act (this only happens in the subsequent reflection, where the act is thematized), it is not unconscious but conscious,<sup>17</sup> that is self-given. In Husserl’s words:

The term lived-experience [*Erlebnis*] expresses just this [quality of] being experiential [*Erlebtsein*], that is having conscious awareness in internal consciousness, which at any time makes it pre-given to the I.<sup>18</sup>

[E]very experience is “consciousness,” and consciousness is consciousness *of*. . . . But every experience is *itself experienced* [*erlebt*], and *to that extent* also “conscious” [*bewußt*].<sup>19</sup>

Every act is consciousness of something, but there is also consciousness of every act. Every act is “sensed,” is immanently “perceived” (internal consciousness), although naturally not posited, meant (to perceive here does not mean to grasp something and to be turned towards it in an act of meaning). . . . To be sure, this seems to lead back to an infinite regress. For is not the internal consciousness, the perceiving of the act (of judging, of perceiving something external, of rejoicing, and so forth), again an act and therefore itself something internally perceived, and so on? On the contrary, we must say: Every “experience” in the strict sense is internally perceived. But the internal perceiving is not an “experience” in the same sense. It is not itself again internally perceived.<sup>20</sup>

In a regular intentional act, I am directed at and preoccupied with my intentional object. Whenever I am intentionally directed at objects I am also self-aware. But when I am directed at and occupied with objects I am not thematically conscious of myself. And when I do thematize myself in a reflection, the very act of thematization remains unthematic.<sup>21</sup> When subjectivity functions it

is self-aware, but it is not thematically conscious of itself, and it therefore lives in *anonymity*.<sup>22</sup>

Thus we always have the separation between the I and *cogito* as functioning but not grasped (functioning subjectivity), and the possibly thematized, direct or self-grasped I and its *cogito*, or more simply, it is necessary to distinguish between the functioning subjectivity and the objective subjectivity (the objectified, thematically experienced, presented, thought, predicated subjectivity), and whenever I take myself or something else as an object, I am always necessarily unthematically cogiven as a functioning I, accessible to myself through reflection, which, on its part, is a new unthematic activity of the functioning I.<sup>23</sup>

In a moment I will return to Husserl's use of the term "perception" when it comes to the basic form of self-awareness, but it should be quite obvious that he has seen the aporetic implications of the reflection theory: The claim that self-awareness only comes about when the act is apprehended by a further act ultimately leads to an infinite regress.<sup>24</sup>

As far as the interpretation of Henrich, Gloy, Tugendhat, and Frank is concerned, it must be acknowledged that Husserl occasionally writes that we do not *perceive* our own subjectivity prior to reflection, but live in a state of self-oblivion and self-forfeiture (*Selbstverlorenheit*). But when he then adds that we only *know* of our acts reflectively, that is, that we only gain *knowledge* of our conscious life through reflection,<sup>25</sup> it becomes clear that he is using the term "perception" to denote a thematic examination. Husserl does not deny the existence of a tacit self-awareness. But he does deny that this self-awareness can provide us with more than awareness. It cannot give us *conceptual knowledge* of subjectivity. As Husserl says:

The actual life and lived-experiencing is of course always conscious, but it is not therefore always thematically experienced and known. For that a new pulse of actual life is necessary, a so-called reflective or immanently directed experience.<sup>26</sup>

It is, however, also possible to unearth passages where Husserl does in fact describe the tacit self-awareness as a type of *internal perception*,<sup>27</sup> but a closer examination of these texts does not substantiate the claim that Husserl is trying to reduce self-awareness to a type of object-intentionality. Husserl's terminology is taken from his classical investigation of the hierarchy of foundation existing between different types of acts. In contrast to various kinds of presentifying (*vergegenwärtigende*) acts, such as recollection, fantasy, or empathy, perception is characterized as bringing its object to an originary kind of presentation. That which appears in perception is given *leibhaftig*, and it is exactly this feature which Husserl focuses upon in his discussion of basic self-awareness. This is brought to light in a passage from *Erste Philosophie II*, where Husserl writes that the life of the subject is a life in the form of original self-awareness. He then equates this self-awareness with an *innermost* perception, but adds that it is a perception, not in the sense of being an active self-apprehension, but in

the sense of being an *originary* self-appearance.<sup>28</sup> In two of the passages quoted above, passages from, respectively, *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis* and *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, Husserl speaks alternately of the tacit self-awareness as an internal perception and as an internal consciousness (*inneres Bewußtsein*—one feels the influence from Brentano).<sup>29</sup> As will gradually become clear, Husserl ultimately opts for the latter expression, and much misunderstanding might have been avoided if he had always distinguished as clearly between the two as he does in *Ideen II*, where he equates “internal perception” with reflection, and “internal consciousness” with a non-thematic kind of self-awareness that precedes reflection.<sup>30</sup>

According to Husserl, our acts are tacitly self-aware, but they are also accessible for reflection. They can be reflected upon and thereby brought to our attention.<sup>31</sup> An examination of the particular intentional structure of this process can substantiate the thesis concerning the founded status of reflection. Reflective self-awareness is often taken to be a thematic, articulated, and intensified self-awareness, and it is normally initiated in order to bring the primary intentional act into focus. However, in order to explain the occurrence of reflection it is necessary that that which is to be disclosed and thematized is (unthematically) present. Otherwise there would be nothing to motivate and call forth the act of reflection. As Husserl points out, it is in the nature of reflection to grasp something, which was already given prior to the grasping. Reflection is characterized by disclosing, and not by producing its theme:

When I say “I,” I grasp myself in a simple reflection. But this self-experience [*Selbsterfahrung*] is like every experience [*Erfahrung*], and in particular every perception, a mere directing myself towards something that was already there for me, that was already conscious, but not thematically experienced, not noticed.<sup>32</sup>

Whenever I reflect, I find myself “in relation” to something, as affected or active. That which I am related to is experientially conscious—it is already there for me as a “lived-experience” in order for me to be able to relate myself to it.<sup>33</sup>

In short, reflection is not an act *sui generis*, it does not appear out of nowhere, but presupposes, like all intentional activity, a *motivation*. According to Husserl, to be motivated is to be *affected* by something, and then to respond to it.<sup>34</sup> That which motivates reflection is exactly, with a term I will later return to, a prior *self-affection*. I can thematize myself, because I am already passively self-aware; I can grasp myself, because I am already affected by myself.<sup>35</sup>

When I start reflecting, that which motivates the reflection and which is then grasped has already been going on for a while. The reflected experience did not commence the moment I started paying attention to it, and it is not only given as still existing, but also and mainly as having already been. It is the *same* act, which is now given reflectively, and it is given to me as enduring in time, that is, as a temporal act.<sup>36</sup> When reflection sets in, it initially grasps something that has just elapsed, namely, the motivating phase of the act reflected upon. The reason why this phase can still be thematized by the subsequent

reflection is that it does not disappear, but is retained in the *retention*, wherefore Husserl can claim that retention is a condition of possibility for reflection. It is due to the retention that consciousness can be made into an object.<sup>37</sup> Or to rephrase, reflection can only take place if a *temporal horizon* has been established.

## II

So far I have argued that Husserl takes self-awareness to be a pervasive feature of consciousness, and that he considers reflection in the sense of an explicit and thematic type of self-awareness to be a founded and non-basic form of self-awareness. Is this sufficient to demonstrate the existence of a pre-reflective type of self-awareness for Husserl? The answer is yes as long as pre-reflective self-awareness is merely understood as a type of self-awareness that precedes and is more basic than reflective self-awareness. However, the answer is no if pre-reflective self-awareness is understood as a type of self-awareness that emphatically lacks any kind of dyadic structure. To put it differently, in order to escape the problems facing the reflection-theoretical model, it is not sufficient simply to acknowledge the existence of a tacit and unthematic type of self-awareness. One also has to avoid interpreting this tacit and pervasive self-awareness in a manner analogous to the way in which reflection is understood; that is, it will not do to argue that tacit self-awareness comes about as the result of some mediated, dyadic, and relational process of self-objectification. But so far, it has not been shown that Husserl avoids this trap. And until that is done, it cannot be concluded that he in fact did surpass the reflection-theoretical model and discovered the existence of a truly pre-reflective type of self-awareness.

I have just mentioned that Husserl took reflection to depend upon *temporality*. In fact, it is exactly in his theory of *inner time-consciousness* that one finds his most elaborate account of the structure of pre-reflective self-awareness. So let me turn to that theory, and thereby to a nest of problems, which have often and rightly been characterized as being among the most important and difficult ones in the whole of phenomenology.<sup>38</sup>

In *Ideen I* Husserl confined himself to an analysis of the relation between the constituted objects and the constituting consciousness.<sup>39</sup> He accounted for the way in which the givenness of objects are conditioned by subjectivity, but apart from stressing that experiences are not given in the same (perspectival) way as objects, he did not pursue the question concerning the givenness of subjectivity itself any further. However, such a silence was *phenomenologically* unacceptable. Any analysis of the conditioned appearance of objects would necessarily lack a foundation as long as the givenness of the subjective condition were itself left in the dark.<sup>40</sup> Husserl was well aware of this, and he explicitly admits that he, in *Ideen I*, left out the most important problems, namely, those pertaining to inner time-consciousness. Only an analysis of time-consciousness will disclose the truly absolute, he adds.<sup>41</sup> The reason why Husserl speaks of the



absolute, and more generally attributes such immense importance to his analysis of temporality, considering it to constitute the bedrock of phenomenology, is exactly because it is not a mere investigation of the temporal givenness of objects. It is not just a clarification of how it is possible to be conscious of objects with temporal extensions—that is, objects such as melodies, which cannot appear all at once, but only unfold themselves over time—rather, it is also an account of the *temporal self-givenness* of consciousness itself.

If we briefly consider Husserl's account of how we are able to intend temporally extended objects, we come across his crucial distinction between the *primal impression*, the *retention* and the *protention*. Husserl's well-known thesis is that a perception of a temporal object (as well as the perception of succession and change) would be impossible if consciousness merely provided us with the givenness of the pure now-phase of the object, and if the stream of consciousness were a series of unconnected points of experiencing, like a string of pearls. In fact, Husserl does have a name for our consciousness of the narrow now-phase of the object. He calls this consciousness the *primal impression*. But as he then argues, this alone cannot provide us with consciousness of anything with a temporal duration, and it is in fact only the abstract core-component of the full structure of experiencing. The primal impression is embedded in a two-fold temporal horizon. On the one hand, it is accompanied by a *retention* which provides us with consciousness of the phase of the object which has just been, that is, which allows us to be aware of the phase as it sinks into the past, and, on the other hand, by a *protention* which in a more or less indeterminate fashion anticipates the phase of the object yet to come:<sup>42</sup>

In this way, it becomes evident that concrete perception as original consciousness (original givenness) of a temporally extended object is structured internally as itself a streaming system of momentary perceptions (so-called primal impressions). But each such momentary perception is the nuclear phase of a continuity, a continuity of momentary gradated retentions on the one side, and a horizon of what is coming on the other side: a horizon of "protention," which is disclosed to be characterized as a constantly gradated coming.<sup>43</sup>

However, as already mentioned, it is not sufficient to analyze the way in which we are able to be conscious of temporal objects; we also need to understand how we are able to be aware of the very acts that intend these temporal objects. Our perceptual objects are temporal, but what about our very perceptions of these objects? Are they also subjugated to the strict laws of temporal constitution? Are they also temporal unities, which arise, endure, and perish? Husserl often speaks of the acts themselves as being constituted in the structure: primal impression–retention–protention. They are only given, only self-aware, within this framework.<sup>44</sup> But how is this self-awareness to be understood? And how do we avoid an infinite regress? If the duration and unity of a tonal sequence is constituted by consciousness, and if our consciousness of the tonal sequence is itself given with duration and unity, are we then not forced to posit yet an-

other consciousness to account for the givenness of this duration and unity, and so forth *ad infinitum*?<sup>45</sup>

Unfortunately, I do not think that Husserl ever managed to achieve complete clarity on this issue. Both his published and unpublished analyses remain characterized by ambiguities, and it is ultimately possible to find textual evidence in support of several different interpretations. Needless to say, this is not a very satisfying situation, but in the following I have opted for the interpretation that provides us with the most adequate account of self-awareness.<sup>46</sup>

On one dominant interpretation, Husserl is said to argue in the following way: just as we must distinguish between the constituted dimension in which transcendent objects exist and the constituting dimension that permits them to appear, we must distinguish between the constituted dimension in which the acts exist and the constituting dimension that permits them to appear. The acts are themselves temporal objects existing in *subjective time*, but they are constituted by a deeper dimension of subjectivity: by the *absolute flow* of inner time-consciousness.<sup>47</sup> Although it is possible to unearth some passages in support of this interpretation, I think it must ultimately be rejected, not only for systematic reasons—it presents us with an unattractive and very problematic account of self-awareness—but also because there are many other passages that speak against it. To say that the acts are originally given as *objects* for an internal consciousness, to interpret their primal givenness as an object-manifestation, leads us right back into a version of the reflection theory. This account does not explain self-awareness, it merely defers the problem. Obviously one is forced to ask whether inner time-consciousness is itself in possession of self-awareness or not. If it is denied that this consciousness is itself self-aware, the regress is indeed halted, but as already mentioned, this account cannot explain why the relation between inner time-consciousness and the act should result in *self*-awareness. If the answer is yes, one must ask how the self-awareness of inner time-consciousness is established. Two possibilities seem open. One, it comes about in the same way in which the act is brought to givenness. In this case we are confronted with an infinite regress. Or, the second possibility, inner time-consciousness is in possession of an implicit or intrinsic self-manifestation. But if it is acknowledged that such a type of self-awareness exists, one might reasonably ask why it should be reserved for the deepest level of subjectivity, and not already be a feature of the act itself. Furthermore, to claim that the absolute flow of inner time-consciousness is itself self-aware, and to claim that this is something apart from and beyond the givenness of the acts, is to operate with an unnecessary multiplication of self-awareness. Nevertheless, this is exactly the position that Husserl has been assumed to hold. According to one dominant interpretation, Husserl considers the acts to be *full-blown internal objects* that are immediately given as such, even prior to reflection. Apart from this, however, the flow is also given to itself. Thus, if we examine a reflection on a perception of a Swiss Army knife, the following should be the case: (1) the Swiss Army knife is given as a transcendent object, (2) the act of reflection is pre-

reflectively given as an internal object, (3) the act of perception is reflectively given as an internal object, and finally (4) the flow for which all of these objects are given also reveals itself in a fundamental *shining*. Reflection should consequently present us with a threefold self-awareness with one transcendent object and two internal objects.<sup>48</sup> That seems excessive. Not only is the distinction between (2) and (4) hard to fathom, but the characterization of (2) also seems misleading. Even if one takes pre-reflective self-awareness to be a “marginal form of consciousness” and consequently distinguishes the pre-reflectively given internal object from the reflectively given internal object by emphasizing that the first is merely a marginal object,<sup>49</sup> this will not solve the problem. In fact, Husserl himself explicitly rejects this suggestion:

*One should not mistake the consciousness of the objective background [gegenständliche Hintergrund] and consciousness understood in the sense of experiential being [Erlebens]. Lived-experiences as such do have their own being, but they are not objects of apperception (in this case we would end in an infinite regress). The background however is given to us objectively, it is constituted through a complex of apperceptive lived-experiences. We do not pay attention to these objects . . . , but they are still given to us in a quite different manner than the mere lived-experiences themselves, say the objectifying apperceptions and acts. (We could also say that experiential being is not mere-unnoticed-being, or unconscious-being in the sense of the unnoticed-being of the objective background.) The attentional consciousness of the background and consciousness in the sense of mere experiential givenness must be completely distinguished.<sup>50</sup>*

It is definitely necessary to distinguish between thematic and marginal modes of consciousness. One must dismiss any narrow conception of consciousness that equates it with attention and claims that we are only conscious of that which we pay attention to. But although consciousness is not given thematically prior to reflection, this does not justify the claim that pre-reflective self-awareness is a marginal form of consciousness, that is, that our pre-reflective experiences remain in the background as potential themes in the same way as, say, the hum of the refrigerator. Pre-reflective self-awareness is not a kind of marginal, inattentive, object-consciousness, and prior to reflection, consciousness is not given to itself as a marginal object. The entire analogy is misleading, since it remains stuck in the subject-object model.<sup>51</sup>

I would like to propose a different interpretation, an interpretation that ultimately permits one to link Husserl’s analysis of inner time-consciousness to his differentiations between functioning and thematized subjectivity, and pre-reflective and reflective self-awareness, respectively.

One of the problems confronting Husserl’s analysis was how to avoid an infinite regress. However, one should not conceive of the relation between inner time-consciousness and the intentional act as if it were a relation between two radically different dimensions in subjectivity. When Husserl claims that the intentional act is constituted in inner time-consciousness, he is not saying that

the act is brought to givenness by some other part of subjectivity. Inner time-consciousness *is* the pre-reflective self-awareness of the act, and to say that the act is constituted in inner time-consciousness simply means that it is brought to awareness thanks to itself. It is called *inner* time-consciousness because it belongs *intrinsically* to the *innermost* structure of the act itself. To phrase it differently, Husserl's description of the structure of inner time-consciousness (primal impression–retention–protention) is exactly an analysis of the structure of the pre-reflective self-manifestation of our acts and experiences. Thus, Husserl's position is relatively unequivocal. The intentional act is conscious of something different from itself, namely, the intentional object. The act is intentional exactly because it permits hetero-manifestation. But the act also manifests itself. The object is given through the act, and if there were no awareness of the act, the object would not appear. Thus, apart from being intentional, the act is also characterized by its “internal consciousness,” or “*Urbewußtsein*,” or “impressional consciousness,” to mention three different terms for one and the same.<sup>52</sup> This internal consciousness is not a particular intentional act, but a pervasive dimension of self-manifestation, and it is exactly this which precedes and founds reflective self-awareness.<sup>53</sup> In short, Husserl would claim that to have an experience, for example, a perception of a flowering apple tree, is to be aware of the experience. But this self-awareness is not itself a separate experience in need of yet another awareness. The self-awareness of the experience is an internal, non-reflective, irrelational feature of the experience itself, and thus the regress is stopped.<sup>54</sup>

Husserl is typically taken to distinguish three different layers or levels of temporality: The objective time of the appearing objects, the subjective, immanent, or pre-empirical time of the acts and experiences, and finally the absolute pre-phenomenal flow of inner time-constituting consciousness.<sup>55</sup> Where does the interpretation I am offering stand in regard to this tripartition? It accepts the tripartition but argues that the second level is the least fundamental. At first, we only have level one and level three, that is, the level of constituting subjectivity and the level of constituted objects. At first there is no level two, there is no layer of subjective time where the experiences are given sequentially as temporal objects. This level is only constituted the moment we engage in reflection and recollection. Prior to reflection there is no awareness of internal objects, and there is no distinction between the lived self-manifestation of the experiences and the flow of inner time-consciousness. Inner time-consciousness simply is the name of the pre-reflective self-awareness of our experiences.

As mentioned above, I do not only think that there are systematic reasons for favoring this interpretation. There is also a large amount of textual evidence in support of it. In §37 of *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, for instance, Husserl writes that our perceptual act is not in immanent time, is not a constituted temporal unity, but a moment of or a wave in the self-temporalizing, flowing experiencing itself.<sup>56</sup> Later in the same volume he writes:

Therefore *sensation*—if by “sensation” we understand *consciousness* (not the immanent enduring red, tone, and so forth, hence not that which is sensed)—and likewise *retention*, *recollection*, *perception*, etc. are *non-temporal*; that is to say, *nothing in immanent time*.<sup>57</sup>

But whereas Husserl claims that our acts (be they perceptions, recollections, anticipations, imaginations, judgments, etc.), *qua* absolute constituting consciousness, reveal themselves, but not as immanently given temporal objects, he also quite explicitly writes that the very same acts appear in subjective time with duration and temporal location *qua* objects of reflection.<sup>58</sup> As it is formulated in, respectively, the C 12 and the C 16 manuscripts:

But my thematic experience of I and consciousness is by itself the founding of a continuous validity—the founding of a lasting being, the being of the immanent.<sup>59</sup>

Do we not have to say: of course, the stream is objectified by the “apperceiving” I. But the sheer streaming is indeed objectified only as it is [reflectively] observed, etc., and through the possibility of the “again and again.”<sup>60</sup>

Originally, the intentional acts are moments of the self-temporalizing streaming and, therefore, *not* temporally constituted distinct and enduring objects. It is only the moment we start to thematize these acts, be it in a reflection or recollection, that they are constituted in subjective, sequential time.<sup>61</sup> Prior to reflection, there is no awareness of internal objects, just as there is no distinction between the givenness of the act and the self-manifestation of the flow. As for the acts objectified by reflection, these cannot be separated from the flow either, since they are nothing but the flow’s own *reflective* self-manifestation. That is, the absolute flow of experiencing and the constituted stream of reflectively thematized acts are not two separate flows, but simply two different manifestations of one and the same. As Husserl writes: “We say, I am who I am in my living. And this living is a lived-experiencing [*Erleben*], and its reflectively accentuated single moments can be called ‘lived-experiences’ [*Erlebnisse*], insofar as something or other is experienced in these moments.”<sup>62</sup> Through inner time-consciousness one is aware not only of the stream of consciousness (pre-reflective self-awareness), but also of the acts as demarcated temporal objects in subjective time (reflective self-awareness), and of the transcendent objects in objective time (intentional consciousness).

So far I have been arguing that there are *not* two different types of pre-reflective self-awareness at play: the constituted marginal object-givenness of our acts, and the self-manifestation of the absolute flow. The absolute flow of experiencing simply is the pre-reflective self-manifestation of our experiences. However, to make this point is not to deny that there are good reasons for insisting upon the *difference* between our singular and transitory acts and the abiding dimension of experiencing, between *die Erlebnisse* and *das Erleben*.<sup>63</sup>

In fact, there seems to be an excellent reason for not simply identifying the experience and the experiencing, the intentional act and the pre-reflective self-givenness of the act. Let us compare three different intentional acts: a visual perception of a bird, a hearing of a melody, and the smelling of a rose. These three different acts obviously have different intentional structures. The self-givenness of the three acts, however, does not have a different structure in each case. It is one and the same basic structure. But if that is the case, we need to distinguish the act and its self-givenness. Whereas we live through a number of different experiences, our self-awareness remains as an unchanging dimension. It stands—to use a striking image by James—permanent, like the rainbow on the waterfall, with its own quality unchanged by the events that stream through it.<sup>64</sup> In other words, it is highly appropriate to distinguish the strict singularity of the *lebendige Gegenwart* from the plurality of changing experiences.<sup>65</sup> But, of course, this should not be misunderstood. Distinguishability is not the same as separability. We are not dealing with a pure or empty field of self-manifestation upon which the concrete experiences subsequently make their entry. The absolute flow has no self-manifestation of its own, but *is* the very self-manifestation of the experiences.

Hopefully, these remarks should make it clear that the interpretation I am offering does not deny the distinction between the flow and the act; it simply rejects a misleading account of their relationship.

### III

I have repeatedly mentioned that Husserl's most profound investigation of self-awareness can be found in his analysis of inner time-consciousness. Although Husserl denies that our experiences are pre-reflectively given as temporal objects, he does claim that self-awareness has a temporal infrastructure, and that pre-reflective self-awareness is a type of manifestation that is intrinsically caught up in the ecstatic-centered structure of primal impression–retention–protention. One consequently finds an elaboration of his theory of self-awareness in his renowned analysis of the double intentionality of the retention, its so-called *Quer-* and *Längsintentionalität* (transverse and longitudinal intentionality). If  $P(t)$  is the primal impression of a tone, then  $P(t)$  is retained in a retention  $R_p(t)$  when a new primal impression appears. As the notation makes clear, however, it is not only the conscious tone which is retained, but also the primal impression. Each retention is not only retaining the preceding tone, but also the preceding primal impression. That is, the actual phase of the flow is retaining not only the tone, which has just been, but also the elapsing phase of the flow.<sup>66</sup> In short, the retentional modification does not only permit us to experience an enduring temporal object, it does not merely enable the constitution of the identity of the object in a manifold of temporal phases, it also provides us with temporal self-awareness.<sup>67</sup> Whereas the flow's constitution of the duration of its object is called its *Querintentionalität*, the

flow's awareness of its own streaming unity is called its *Längsintentionalität*,<sup>68</sup> and, although the latter carries the name intentionality, it would be a decisive misunderstanding of Husserl's theory if one were to identify it with a type of object-intentionality.<sup>69</sup> Husserl's account of the *Längsintentionalität* does not succumb to the lure of the reflection theory, but is in fact an analysis of the pre-reflective self-manifestation of consciousness. It is because consciousness is characterized by this self-manifestation that it is possible to escape the infinite regress of the reflection theory:

The flow of the consciousness that constitutes immanent time not only *exists* but is so remarkably and yet intelligibly fashioned that a self-appearance of the flow necessarily exists in it, and therefore the flow itself must necessarily be apprehensible in the flowing. The self-appearance of the flow does not require a second flow; on the contrary, it constitutes itself as a phenomenon in itself.<sup>70</sup>

This central passage from *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, however, has not been overlooked by Husserl's critics. It has generally been met with two distinct arguments.

Cramer has argued that Husserl's notion of self-appearance is vulnerable to the same criticism that has been directed against the reflection theory. If one claims that the stream of consciousness is characterized by self-appearance, one must ask what it is that appears when the stream appears to itself. According to Cramer, the only answer possible is that the stream appears to itself as a self-appearing stream. But he takes this account to be both redundant and circular.<sup>71</sup>

The pertinence of this criticism is, however, questionable. First of all, Cramer erroneously identifies Husserl's notion of self-appearance with a kind of "quasi perception," thereby overlooking its non-objectifying and non-relational character. Secondly, and more importantly, Cramer seems to expect something of a theory of self-awareness which it, *qua* explication of a phenomenon *sui generis*, will forever be prevented from providing, namely, a decomposition of the phenomenon into more simple elements without self-awareness. To put it differently, the impossibility of providing a non-circular definition of self-awareness is hardly a problem for an account that explicitly acknowledges the irreducible and fundamental status of self-awareness. It is only a problem for an account that seeks to explain self-awareness by reducing it to something more basic. In this sense, it might be more correct to say that it is Cramer's criticism rather than Husserl's theory that is indebted to the reflection theory.

The second argument can be found in Frank (and with different emphasis in both Henry and Derrida). If the self-appearance of the stream of consciousness is to be accounted for by means of the notion of *Längsintentionalität* and if this is a kind of retentive modification, then there will only be self-awareness of the just-past phase of the stream, since the initial phase of consciousness will only become conscious when it is retained. There consequently

seems to be a blind spot in the core of subjectivity: Initially, consciousness is unconscious, and it only comes to presence *nachträglich* through the retentional modification. But how does this agree with our conviction that we are in fact aware of our experiences the moment they occur? And how can we at all be aware of something *as* past, unless we are also aware of something present against which we can contrast it? If self-presence is only constituted in the difference between retention and primal impression, there will be nothing left to explain this difference, or more correctly, there will be nothing left to explain our experience of this difference. It will be a merely postulated difference, with no experiential basis. Thus, self-awareness will ultimately become a product of an unconscious difference.<sup>72</sup> But to make this claim is basically to face all the problems of the reflection theory once again.

Husserl himself was well aware of these difficulties. He anticipated the line of thought, and although he occasionally seriously considered it,<sup>73</sup> he ultimately and quite explicitly rejected it:

What about the beginning-phase of an experience that is in the process of becoming constituted? Does it also come to be given only on the basis of retention, and would it be “unconscious” if no retention were to follow it? We must say in response to this question: The beginning-phase can become an object only *after* it has elapsed in the indicated way, by means of retention and reflection (or reproduction). But if it were intended *only* by retention, then what confers on it the label “now” would remain incomprehensible. At most, it could be distinguished negatively from its modifications as that one phase that does not make us retentionally conscious of any preceding phase; but the beginning-phase is by all means characterized in consciousness in quite positive fashion. It is just nonsense to talk about an “unconscious” content that would only subsequently become conscious. Consciousness is necessarily *consciousness* in each of its phases. Just as the retentional phase is conscious of the preceding phase without making it into an object, so too the primal datum is already intended—specifically, in the original form of the “now”—without its being something objective.<sup>74</sup>

Thus, Husserl’s analysis is not meant to imply that consciousness only becomes aware of itself through the retention. On the contrary, Husserl explicitly insists that the *retentional* modification presupposes an *impressional* (primary, original, and immediate) self-manifestation, not only because consciousness is as such self-given, but also because a retention of an unconscious content is impossible.<sup>75</sup> The retention retains that which has just appeared, and if nothing appears, there is nothing to retain.<sup>76</sup> Thus, retention presupposes self-awareness. It is this self-awareness which is retentionally modified when P(t) is transformed into Rp(t): The tone is not only given as having-just-been, but as having-just-been *experienced*.<sup>77</sup>

Is it possible to specify the nature of this impressional self-manifestation, this absolute experiencing, any further? The terminology used, and the fact that we are confronted with an unthematic, implicit, immediate, and passive occurrence, which is by no means initiated, regulated, or controlled by the ego, sug-



gest that we are dealing with a given state of pure passivity, with a form of *self-affection*. This interpretation is confirmed by Husserl, for instance, in the manuscript C 10 (1931), where he speaks of self-affection as an essential, pervasive, and necessary feature of the functioning ego, and in the manuscript C 16 (1931–33), where he adds that I am ceaselessly (*unaufhörlich*) affected by myself.<sup>78</sup> We are here confronted with a type of non-relational self-manifestation that lacks the ordinary dyadic structure of appearance.<sup>79</sup> There is no distinction between subject and object, or between the dative and genitive of appearing. On the contrary, it is a kind of self-manifestation, a fundamental *shining*, without which it would be meaningless to speak of the dative of appearance. Nothing can be present *to me* unless I am *self-aware*.<sup>80</sup>

This clarification allows for a final remark about the relationship between the *impressional* self-manifestation (internal consciousness) and the *Längsintentionalität*. We are not dealing with two independent and separate types of pre-reflective self-awareness, but with two different descriptions of the same basic phenomenon. As already mentioned, Husserl uses the term *Längsintentionalität* to designate the flowing self-manifestation of consciousness, but this self-givenness does not merely concern the elapsing phases, but takes its point of departure in an immediate impressional self-manifestation. Conversely, this impressional self-manifestation stretches to include the retentionally given. As Husserl writes: “In this respect we take the impressional consciousness to stretch as far as the still living retention.”<sup>81</sup>

To summarize: Taken in isolation the primal impression is not unconscious, and to suggest that is to succumb to a variant of the reflection theory. But when this is said, it should be immediately added that the primal impression taken in isolation is a theoretical limit-case. It is in fact never given alone, but is always already furnished with a temporal density, always already accompanied by a horizon of protentional and retentional absencing. Thus Husserl would claim that the full structure of pre-reflective self-awareness is primal impression–retention–protention.<sup>82</sup> Pre-reflective self-awareness has an internal differentiation and articulation—and Husserl insists that only this fact can explain the possibility of reflection and recollection—but it is not a gradual, delayed, or mediated process of self-unfolding; rather, consciousness is “immediately” given as an ecstatic unity. One has to avoid the idea of an instantaneous non-temporal self-awareness, but one must also stay clear of the notion of a completely fractured time-consciousness, which makes both consciousness of the present, and of the unity of the stream unintelligible.<sup>83</sup>

#### IV

This brief account of Husserl’s theory of self-awareness leaves a number of aspects untouched: What is the connection between time-consciousness and kinaesthesia, and between intentionality and self-awareness? What is the connection between our pre-reflective self-awareness and our lived body, and

between selfhood and alterity? What is the more precise difference between the temporality of, respectively, reflective and pre-reflective self-manifestation? How should one exactly understand the notion of self-affection? Are there forms of self-awareness which are intersubjectively mediated? And what is the relation between transcendental reflection *qua* thematization of subjectivity and natural reflection *qua* mundanization of subjectivity?<sup>84</sup> All of these topics are treated by Husserl, however, and, in contrast to a widespread assumption, it is simply not true that he was so taken up by his “discovery” of object-intentionality that he never escaped the reflection model, but always operated with a model of self-manifestation based upon the subject-object dichotomy, and never managed to raise the more fundamental problems concerning the Being of consciousness. In fact, as the above interpretation should have demonstrated, the topic of self-awareness was by no means of mere incidental interest to Husserl. On the contrary, he considered its elucidation to be even more fundamental to phenomenology than the analysis of intentionality. Not only did his own reflective methodology make such extensive use of reflection that an examination of reflective self-awareness was called for, but Husserl also very well knew that his analysis of intentionality would lack a proper foundation as long as the problem concerning the self-manifestation of consciousness remained unaccounted for. That is, without an elucidation of the unique givenness of subjectivity, it would be impossible to account convincingly for the appearance of objects, and ultimately phenomenology would be incapable of realizing its own proper task, to provide a clarification of the condition of possibility for manifestation.

## Notes

This study was supported by the Danish National Research Foundation.

1. Martin Heidegger, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, GA 20 (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979), 143, 152.

2. Ernst Tugendhat, *Selbstbewusstsein und Selbstbestimmung* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1979), 15, 17, 53.

3. Dieter Henrich, “Fichtes ursprüngliche Einsicht,” in *Subjektivität und Metaphysik. Festschrift für Wolfgang Cramer*, ed. Dieter Henrich and Hans Wagner (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1966), 231; Karen Gloy, *Bewusstseinstheorien. Zur Problematik und Problemgeschichte des Bewusstseins und Selbstbewusstseins* (Freiburg: Alber, 1998), 203.

4. Manfred Frank, *Was ist Neozstrukturalismus?* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), 300; *Zeitbewusstsein* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1990), 53–57.

5. Manfred Frank, *Die Unhintergebarkeit von Individualität* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 45. In contrast, one might point out that already Sartre acknowledged that

Husserl had described the pre-reflective being of consciousness (cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, “Conscience de soi et connaissance de soi,” *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie* XLII [1948], 88).

6. It is not difficult to find contemporary defenders of some version of this theory. For a presentation and criticism cf. Dan Zahavi and Josef Parnas, “Phenomenal Consciousness and Self-awareness: A Phenomenological Critique of Representational Theory,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 5 (1998): 687–705.

7. Let me mention one additional and more classical argument: According to the reflection theory, self-awareness comes about the moment an act of reflection reflects upon an experience, say, a perception of a die, and takes this experience as its object. However, given this view, it is obvious that there is something crucial the act of reflection will forever miss, namely, itself *qua* subject of experience. Even though a second-order reflection might be able to capture the first-order reflection, this will not change the fact, since there will still be something that eludes its grasp, namely, itself *qua* subjective pole, and so forth *ad infinitum*. One implication of this view is that self-awareness in the strict sense (understood as an awareness of oneself as subject) is impossible.

8. One can find numerous statements to this effect. See, for instance, *Cartesianische Meditationen*, 81; *Cartesian Meditations*, 43; *Ideen II*, 318; *Ideas II*, 330–31; *Erste Philosophie II*, 189, 412, 450; *Intersubjektivität I*, 252, 462; *Intersubjektivität II*, 151, 292, 353, 380; Ms. C 16 81b.

9. *Intersubjektivität II*, 151; cf. *Intersubjektivität I*, 462; *Erste Philosophie II*, 412.

10. *Logik (Hua)*, 279–80; modified *Logic*, 273.

11. *Passive Synthesis*, 320.

12. Cf. John R. Searle, *The Rediscovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 172; David Woodruff Smith, *The Circle of Acquaintance* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 95; David J. Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4; Galen Strawson, *Mental Reality* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), 71.

13. Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 15–16; Frank Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia,” *Philosophical Quarterly* 32 (1982): 127–36; William James, *The Principles of Psychology I–II* (London: Macmillan, 1890/1918), I: 478.

14. Thomas Nagel, “What Is It Like to Be a Bat?” *Philosophical Review* 83 (1974): 436; Searle, *The Rediscovery of the Mind*, 131–32.

15. Owen Flanagan, *Consciousness Reconsidered* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), 194.

16. *Intersubjektivität III*, 78; *Erste Philosophie II*, 157.

17. *Ideen I (Hua)*, 162, 168, 251, 349; *Ideas I*, 174, 180, 261, 360; *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, 29; *Phenomenological Psychology*, 19–20; *Zeitbewusstsein*, 291; *Time-Consciousness*, 301.

18. *Intersubjektivität II*, 45.

19. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 291; modified *Time-Consciousness*, 301.

20. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 126–27; modified *Time-Consciousness*, 130.

21. However, one should not forget that the act of reflection is itself a pre-reflectively self-given act. The reflected act must already be self-aware, since it is the fact of its being already mine, already being given in the first-person mode of presentation that allows me to reflect upon it. And the act of reflection must also already be pre-reflectively self-aware, since it is this that permits it to recognize the reflected act as belonging to the same subjectivity as itself.

22. Thus it is worth emphasizing that anonymity and self-givenness are by no means incompatible notions. Cf. Dan Zahavi, “Anonymity and First-Personal Givenness: An At-

tempt at Reconciliation,” in *Subjektivität-Verantwortung-Wahrheit. Neue Aspekte der Husserlschen Phänomenologie*, ed. David Carr and Christian Lotz (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 61–72.

23. *Intersubjektivität II*, 431; cf. *Intersubjektivität II*, 29; *Krisis (Ergänzung)*, 183–84; Ms. C 2 3a.

24. *Ideen I (Hua)*, 550; *Zeitbewusstsein*, 119; *Time-Consciousness*, 123.

25. *Erste Philosophie II*, 88; *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, 306–7.

26. *Aufsätze II*, 89.

27. *Erste Philosophie II*, 471; *Zeitbewusstsein*, 126; *Time-Consciousness*, 129.

28. *Erste Philosophie II*, 188; cf. *Ideen I (Hua)*, 549.

29. Cf. Franz Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt I* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1874/1973), chaps. II–III.

30. *Ideen II*, 118; *Ideas II*, 125.

31. *Ideen II*, 248; *Ideas II*, 259–60.

32. *Intersubjektivität III*, 492–93.

33. Ms. C 10 13a. I am grateful to the Director of the Husserl-Archives in Leuven, Prof. Rudolf Bernet, for permitting me to consult and quote from Husserl’s unpublished manuscripts.

34. *Ideen II*, 217; *Ideas II*, 228–29.

35. *Krisis*, 111; *Krisis*, 109; *Intersubjektivität III*, 78, 120.

36. *Ideen I (Hua)*, 95, 162–64; *Ideas I*, 98–99, 174–77.

37. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 119; *Time-Consciousness*, 123.

38. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 276, 334; *Time-Consciousness*, 286, 346.

39. Normally the term “constitution” has been used to designate the process of bringing to appearance. More specifically, something (an object) is said to be *constituted* if it is brought to appearance by something else, that is, if it owes its manifestation to something different from itself, whereas something (transcendental subjectivity) is said to be *constituting* if it is itself the condition for manifestation. To speak in this way obviously raises a question concerning whether or not that which constitutes does itself appear or not. Traditionally one has then had the choice between two formulations, both of which were ambiguous. Either one could say that transcendental subjectivity is itself unconstituted, or one could say that it is self-constituting. The first formulation might suggest that transcendental subjectivity does not at all manifest itself, the second that it manifests itself in the same way as objects do.

40. Of course, it could be argued along Kantian lines that the transcendental condition is not itself given, is not itself a phenomenon. But since such a conclusion would exclude the possibility of a phenomenological investigation of transcendental subjectivity, it would not be an option for a phenomenologist.

41. *Ideen I (Hua)*, 182; *Ideas I*, 193–94.

42. Ms. L I 15 37b.

43. *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, 202; modified *Phenomenological Psychology*, 154.

44. *Passive Synthesis*, 233, 293; *Ideen II*, 102; *Ideas II*, 108; *Erfahrung und Urteil*, 205; *Experience and Judgement*, 175–76.

45. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 80; *Time-Consciousness*, 84.

46. For a more extensive account, cf. Dan Zahavi, *Self-awareness and Alterity: A Phenomenological Investigation* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1999).

47. Cf. J. B. Brough, “The Emergence of an Absolute Consciousness in Husserl’s Early Writings on Time-Consciousness,” *Man and World* 5 (1972), 308–9; R. Sokolowski, *Husserlian Meditations* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 156–57.

48. Sokolowski, *Husserlian Meditations*, 154, 156–57; Brough, “Absolute Consciousness,”

318. Let me stress that I am obviously not accusing either Sokolowski or Brough of having

overlooked the existence of the notion of pre-reflective self-awareness in Husserl, that is, of having made the same mistake as Frank, Tugendhat, and Henrich. To a certain extent, but only to a certain extent, the difference between my interpretation and Brough's and Sokolowski's interpretation might simply be a question of different accentuation and terminology.

49. Brough, "Absolute Consciousness," 304, 316.
50. *Einleitung in die Logik*, 252.
51. It is interesting to notice that Gurwitsch in his noematically oriented analysis apparently commits this error and consequently claims that the self-awareness which accompanies every act of consciousness is a marginal datum (Aron Gurwitsch, *Marginal Consciousness* [Athens: Ohio University Press, 1985], 4). Cf. Aron Gurwitsch, *Das Bewusstseinsfeld* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 339–40.
52. *Ideen II*, 118–19; *Ideen II*, 125–26; *Zeitbewusstsein*, 83, 89–90, 119, 126–27; *Time-Consciousness*, 88, 93–95, 129–31; *Phantasie*, 321; cf. Ms. L I 15 35a–36b.
53. *Logik*, 279–80; *Logic*, 317–18; *Ideen II*, 118; *Ideen II*, 125.
54. When criticizing the standard interpretation, I am not denying that consciousness can appear to itself as an internal temporal object, I am only denying that it does so already pre-reflectively. For a more detailed discussion of how our acts are *reflectively* constituted as enduring objects in subjective time cf. Zahavi, *Self-awareness and Alterity*.
55. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 73, 76, 358.
56. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 75–76; cf. *Krisis (Ergänzung)*, 194.
57. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 333–34; cf. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 371–72.
58. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 112, 285, 293; *Intersubjektivität II*, 29.
59. "Aber meine thematische Erfahrung vom Ich und Bewußtsein ist in ihrer Art selbst Stiftung einer Fortgeltung—eines bleibenden Seins, des Seins des Immanenten" (Ms. C 12 3b).
60. "Müssen wir nicht sagen, natürlich ist es das 'apperzipierende' Ich, durch das der Strom gegenständlich wird. Aber das bloße Strömen wird eben erst durch das Betrachten etc. gegenständlich und durch die Vermöglichkeiten des 'immer wieder'" (Ms. C 16 59a).
61. For passages that might corroborate this interpretation, see *Ideen II*, 104; *Zeitbewusstsein*, 36, 51, 112; Ms. A V 5 4b–5a; Ms. C 10 17a; Ms. C 16 59a; Ms. C 12 3b; Ms. L I 19 3aMb; and Ms. L I 19 10a.
62. "Wir sagen, ich bin, der ich bin in meinem Leben. Und dieses Leben ist Erleben, seine reflektiv als einzelne abzuhebenden Bestandstücke heißen rechtmäßig 'Erlebnisse,' sofern in ihnen irgendetwas erlebt ist" (Ms. C 3 26a).
63. *Phantasie*, 326; cf. *Intersubjektivität II*, 46; Ms. L I 1 3a.
64. James, *Principles of Psychology*, I: 630.
65. Erich Klawonn, "Kritisk Undersøgelse af Kritikken," in *Kritisk Belysning af Jæg'ets Ontologi*, ed. David Favrholt (Odense: Odense Universitetsforlag, 1994), 143; Brough, "Absolute Consciousness," 316.
66. Brough, "Absolute Consciousness," 319.
67. Husserl alternately speaks of absolute time-constituting consciousness as an unchangeable form of presence (as a *nunc stans*), and as an absolute flux (*Ding und Raum*, 65; cf. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 74, 113; *Time-Consciousness*, 78, 118). Regardless of which description one chooses—and ultimately both are attempts to capture the unique givenness of this dimension—it should be obvious why one must not only avoid speaking of the absolute flow as if it were a temporal object, but also avoid interpreting the flow as a sequence of temporally distinct acts, phases, or elements. "This streaming living Presence is not what we elsewhere have designated transcendental-phenomenologically as stream of consciousness or a stream of lived-experience. It cannot be depicted as a 'stream' in the sense of a spe-

cial temporal (or even spatio-temporal) whole that has a continuous-successive individual being consisting in the unity of a temporal extension (individuated by this temporal form in its distinguishable stretches and phases). The streaming living Presence is ‘continuous’ streaming-being, and yet it is not a separated-being, not a spatio-temporal (world-spatial) being, not an ‘immanent’-temporal extended being; not a separation [*Außereinander*] that implies a succession [*Nacheinander*], a succession in the sense of a punctual-separation taking place in time properly so called.” (Diese strömend lebendige Gegenwart ist nicht das, was wir sonst auch schon transzendental-phänomenologisch als Bewußtseinsstrom oder Erlebnisstrom bezeichneten. Es ist überhaupt kein “Strom” gemäß dem Bild, als ein eigentlich zeitliches (oder gar zeiträumliches) Ganzes, das in der Einheit einer zeitlichen Extension ein kontinuierlich-sukzessives individuelles Dasein hat (in seinen unterscheidbaren Strecken und Phasen durch diese Zeitformen individuiert). Die strömend lebendige Gegenwart ist “kontinuierliches” Strömendsein und doch nicht in einem Auseinander-Sein, nicht in raumzeitlicher (welträumlicher), nicht in “immanent”-zeitlicher Extension Sein; also in keinem Außereinander, das Nacheinander heißt—Nacheinander in dem Sinne eines Stellen-Außereinander in einer eigentlich so zu nennenden Zeit) (Ms. C 3 4a). For further distinctions between “das Strömen” and “der Strom,” cf. Ms. B III 9 8a, Ms. C 15 3b, Ms. C 17 63b). Inner time-consciousness cannot be temporal in the empirical sense of the word; it cannot be reduced to a succession of mental states. Not only would such a succession not enable us to become conscious of this succession, it would also call for yet another consciousness, which would be conscious of this succession, etc., and we would be unable to avoid an infinite regress. As Husserl writes, it makes no sense to say of the time-constituting phenomena that they are present and that they have endured, that they succeed each other, or are co-present, etc. They are, in short, neither “present,” “past,” nor “future” in the way empirical objects are (*Zeitbewusstsein*, 75, 333, 375–76; *Time-Consciousness*, 79, 345, 386–87). Inner time-consciousness is a field of experiencing, a dimension of manifestation, which contains all three temporal dimensions. The structure of this field of experiencing—primal impression–retention–protention—is not temporally extended. The retentions and protentions are not past or future in regard to the primal impression, nor are they simultaneous, as long as “simultaneity” is used in its ordinary sense. They are “together” or “co-actual” with it. Ultimately, the structure of constituting time-consciousness cannot be adequately grasped using temporal concepts derived from that which it constitutes. Thus, in a certain way inner time-consciousness is atemporal (*Zeitbewusstsein*, 112), but only in the sense that it is not intra-temporal. Time-constituting consciousness is not *in* time, but it is not merely a consciousness *of* time, it is itself a form of temporality (cf. Iso Kern, *Idee und Methode der Philosophie* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975], 40–41; Rudolf Bernet, *La vie du sujet* [Paris: PUF, 1994], 197; Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* [Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1945], 483; Martin Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* [Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1991], 192). Temporality constitutes the infrastructure of consciousness. Consciousness is inherently temporal, and it is as temporal that it is pre-reflectively aware of itself. Thus, although the field of experiencing has neither a temporal location nor extension, and although it does not last and never becomes past, it is not a static supra-temporal principle, but a living pulse (*Lebenspuls*) with a certain temporal density and articulation, and, variable width: it might stretch (*Zeitbewusstsein*, 78, 112, 371, 376; *Time-Consciousness*, 82, 116–17, 382, 387; *Passive Synthesis*, 392; *Intersubjektivität III*, 28; Ms. C 2 11a; Ms. C 7 14a; cf. Mary Jeanne Larrabee, “Inside Time-Consciousness: Diagramming the Flux,” *Husserl Studies* 10 [1994], 196; Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart* [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966], 116–17). In fact, the metaphor of *stretching* might be appropriate not only as a characterization of the temporal ecstasis, but also as a description of the *Längsintentionalität*, since it avoids the potentially misleading and objectifying talk of the flow as a

sequence or succession of changing impressions, slices, or phases. For an interesting related observation, cf. §72 in Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*.

68. *Zeitbewusstsein* 80–81, 379; *Time-Consciousness*, 84–86, 390. At one point Husserl speaks of the *Längs-* and *Querintentionalität* as the noetic and noematic-ontical temporalization (Ms. B III 9 23a). He also calls them, respectively, the inner and outer retention (*Zeitbewusstsein*, 118; *Time-Consciousness*, 122).

69. An error Gloy seems to commit (*Bewusstseinstheorien*, 319); cf. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 333; *Time-Consciousness*, 345.

70. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 83; after *Time-Consciousness*, 88.

71. Konrad Cramer, “‘Erlebnis.’ Thesen zu Hegels Theorie des Selbstbewußtseins mit Rücksicht auf die Aporien eines Grundbegriffs nachhegelscher Philosophie,” in *Stuttgarter Hegel-Tage 1970*, ed. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel Studien*, Beiheft 11 (1974), 587.

72. Frank, *Was ist Neostrukturalismus?*, 307, 314, 321–22, 335.

73. Cf. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 83; *Time-Consciousness*, 89. As Bernet has often pointed out, Husserl's description of the relation between primal impression and retention is by no means unequivocal. It contains both a confirmation and an overcoming of the metaphysics of presence (Rudolf Bernet, “Die ungegenwärtige Gegenwart. Anwesenheit und Abwesenheit in Husserls Analyse des Zeitbewußtseins,” *Phänomenologische Forschung* 14 [1983]: 18). On the one hand, the retention is interpreted as a derived modification of the primal impression. But on the other hand, Husserl also states that no consciousness is possible which does not entail retentional and protentional horizons, that no now is possible without retentions (*Passive Synthesis*, 337–38), and that the primal impression is only what it is when it is retained (Ms. L I 15 4a; cf. Ms. L I 16 12a; Ms. L I 15 22a; *Passive Synthesis*, 315). Husserl was clearly wrestling with these issues, and it is undeniable (and perhaps also unavoidable) that he occasionally opted for some highly problematic accounts. Let me mention a few further examples. In *Ideen II* Husserl characterized the retention as an objectifying immanent perception (*Ideen II*, 14; *Ideas II*, 16), and in the manuscript L I 15 22a he claimed that the *Längsintentionalität* is characterized by its *indirect* nature.

74. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 119; after *Time-Consciousness*, 123.

75. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 119; *Time-Consciousness*, 123.

76. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 110–11, 119; *Time-Consciousness*, 114–15; 123; *Passive Synthesis*, 337.

77. *Zeitbewusstsein*, 117; *Time-Consciousness*, 121–22.

78. Ms. C 10 3b; Ms. C 10 5a; Ms. C 10 7a; Ms. C 10 9b–10a; Ms. C 16 82a; cf. Ms. C 16 78a; Ms. A V 5 8a; Ms. C 5 6a; *Intersubjektivität III*, 78.

79. It could be objected that the very term “self-affection” is singularly unsuited as a designation for a non-relational type of manifestation. Does it not, after all, entail a structural difference between something that affects, and something that is affected? (Cf. Jacques Derrida, *La voix et le phénomène* [Paris: PUF, 1967], 92; *De la grammatologie* [Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit 1967], 235.) In reply, it could be argued that Husserl is not the only phenomenologist to conceive of self-awareness in terms of self-affection. One finds related reflections in Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, 469, 487; Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, 189–90; and Michel Henry, *L'essence de la manifestation* (Paris: PUF, 1963), 288–92, 301. Particularly Henry has been anxious to stress the non-dyadic nature of self-affection (cf. Dan Zahavi, “Michel Henry and the Phenomenology of the Invisible,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 32, no. 3 [1999]). As he points out, self-affection should not be understood in the same way as we would normally understand (outer) affection, namely, as a process involving a difference between an organ or faculty of sensing and a sensed object. On the contrary, it is to be taken as an immanent occurrence that involves no difference, distance, or mediation. To put it differently, when speaking of self-affection one should simply

bear in mind that we are dealing with a non-relational type of manifestation, and that the choice of the term is mainly motivated by its ability to capture a whole range of the defining features of pre-reflective self-awareness, including its immediate, implicit, non-objectifying, and passive nature.

80. Sokolowski, *Husserlian Meditations*, 166; James G. Hart, "Intentionality, Phenomenality, and Light," in *Self-awareness, Temporality, and Alterity*, ed. Dan Zahavi (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998).

81. *Passive Synthesis*, 138.

82. *Passive Synthesis*, 317, 378; Ms. C 3 8b; Ms. C 3 76a.

83. Frank, *Zeitbewußtsein*, 62–63.

84. For further analyses of Husserl's theory of self-awareness, cf. Zahavi, "Husserl's Phenomenology of the Body," *Études Phénoménologiques* 19 (1994); "Self-awareness and Affection," in *Alterity and Facticity: New Perspectives on Husserl*, ed. Natalie Depraz and Dan Zahavi (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998); "The Fracture in Self-awareness," in *Self-awareness, Temporality, and Alterity*, ed. Dan Zahavi (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998); Zahavi, "The Three Concepts of Consciousness in *Logische Untersuchungen*," *Husserl Studies* 18 (2002). For a full-scale presentation and discussion of the theories of self-awareness found in some recent analytical philosophy of mind, in the Heidelberg School, and in phenomenology, cf. Zahavi, *Self-awareness and Alterity*.