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SELF-AWARENESS AND AFFECTION

Manfred Frank has in recent publications criticized a number of prevailing views concerning the nature of self-awareness,¹ and it is the so-called reflection theory of self-awareness which has been particularly under fire. That is, the theory which claims that self-awareness only comes about when consciousness directs its 'gaze' at itself, thereby taking itself as its own object. But in his elaboration of a position originally developed by Dieter Henrich (and, to a lesser extent, by Cramer and Pothast) Frank has also more generally criticized every attempt to conceive original self-awareness as a *relation*, be it a relation between two acts or a relation between the act and itself.² Every relation entails a distinction between two (or more) relata and, according to Frank, it would be impossible to account for the immediacy and infallibility of self-awareness (particularly its so-called *immunity to the error of misidentification*), if it were in any way a mediated process. Thus, self-awareness cannot come about as the result of a self-identification, a reflection, an inner vision or introspection, nor should it be conceived as a type of intentionality or as a conceptually mediated propositional attitude, all of which entails the distinction between two or more relata. The pre-reflective self-awareness of an experience is not mediated by foreign elements such as concepts and classificatory criteria, nor by any internal difference or distance. It is an immediate and direct *self-acquaintance* which is characterized by being completely and absolutely *irrelational* (and consequently best described as a purely immanent self-presence).³

Frank's approach is unusually broad, since he draws on the resources of several different philosophical traditions, including German Idealism, analytical philosophy of mind, and phenomenology. When it comes to the latter, it is particularly in Sartre that Frank has found important insights, whereas he has criticized Husserl's position persistently in most of his writings on self-awareness. According to Frank, Husserl's entire investigation of consciousness is based on the tacit assumption that consciousness is conscious of something different from itself. Due to this fixation on *intentionality* Husserl never managed to escape the reflection theory of self-awareness. He persistently operated with a model of self-awareness based upon the subject-object dichotomy, with its entailed *difference* between the intending and the intended, and therefore never discovered the existence of a pre-reflective self-awareness.⁴

Somewhat surprisingly, Frank occasionally modifies this severe criticism, and concedes (usually with reference to Held's account in *Lebendige Gegenwart*) that it is in fact possible to find passages in Husserl which point in a quite different direction, namely towards a concept of a passive, anonymous, pre-reflective self-awareness. But Frank either simply takes these passages *ad notam* without feeling obliged to reconsider his own interpretation, or belittles them as being 'mystical', and 'aporetical'.⁵ Thus, at no point is he prepared to ascribe any yet to be discovered explanatory force to Husserl's theory, and at one point he even likens it to a 'buried corpse'.⁶

In the following article I wish to question Frank's provocative Husserl-interpretation. I will attempt to show that an unbiased reading of Husserl's manuscripts presents us with far more sophisticated reflections on the nature of self-awareness. Reflections which incidentally question a fundamental tenet in Frank's own theory.

Husserl's analysis of self-awareness is complex and points in a number of different directions. The particular issue which I wish to focus upon concerns the relation between *self-awareness* and *affection* and my aim is to provide a preliminary answer to the three following questions:

1. To what extent does reflective self-awareness presuppose pre-reflective self-awareness?
2. To what extent can pre-reflective self-awareness be understood as self-affection?
3. To what extent does self-affection depend upon hetero-affection?

1.

According to Husserl, a reflection - say my thematic consciousness of my perception of a black billiard ball - is *founded* in a twofold sense. Reflection does not present us with a self-enclosed subjectivity, but with a self-transcending subjectivity directed at objects, and it consequently presupposes the preceding act of object-intentionality.⁷ Moreover, as an explicit self-awareness it also relies upon a prior pre-reflective self-awareness. To utilize a distinction between perceiving (*Wahrnehmen*) and experiencing (*Erleben*) dating back to the *Logical Investigations*: prior to reflection one perceives the intentional object, but one experiences the intentional act. Although I do not perceive the act (this only happens in the subsequent reflection, where the act is thematized), it is not unconscious but conscious,⁸ that is, pre-reflectively self-aware. In Husserl's words:

Das Wort Erlebnis drückt dabei eben dieses Erlebtsein, nämlich Bewussthaben im inneren Bewusstsein aus, wodurch es für das Ich jederzeit vorgegeben ist.⁹

Jeder Akt ist Bewußtsein von etwas, aber jeder Akt ist auch bewußt. Jedes Erlebnis ist 'empfunden', ist immanent 'wahrgenommen' (inneres Bewußtsein), wenn auch natürlich nicht gesetzt, gemeint (wahrnehmen heißt hier nicht meinend-zugewendet-sein und erfassen). [...] Freilich scheint das auf einen unendlichen Regreß zurückzuführen. Denn ist nun nicht wieder das innere Bewußtsein, das Wahrnehmen vom Akt (vom Urteilen, vom äußeren Wahrnehmen, vom Sich-freuen usw.) ein Akt und daher selbst wieder innerlich wahrgenommen usw.? Dagegen ist zu sagen: Jedes 'Erlebnis' im prägnanten Sinn ist innerlich wahrgenommen. Aber das innere Wahrnehmen ist nicht im selben Sinne ein 'Erlebnis'. Es ist nicht selbst wieder innerlich wahrgenommen.¹⁰

In a moment, I will return to Husserl's use of the term 'perception' when it comes to pre-reflective self-awareness, but it is quite obvious that he has seen the aporetic implications of the reflection theory: The claim that self-awareness only comes about when the experience is apprehended by a further act leads to an infinite regress.¹¹

Although Husserl has often been accused of defending a reflection theory of self-awareness - of taking object-intentionality as the paradigm of every kind of awareness - this interpretation must be rejected. It is true that Husserl occasionally writes that I do not *perceive* my own subjectivity prior to reflection, but lives 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,¹² it

becomes clear that he, in this context, is using the term 'perception' to denote a thematic examination. Husserl does not deny the existence of a pre-reflective self-awareness. But he does deny that this self-awareness can provide us with more than awareness. It cannot give us knowledge of subjectivity.

As already mentioned it is also possible to unearth passages where Husserl describes the pervasive pre-reflective self-awareness as a type of *inner perception*,¹³ 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: 1) On the one hand, Husserl's terminology is a relic from his classical investigation of the hierarchy of foundation existing between different types of acts. In contrast to various kinds of presentiating (*vergegenwärtigende*) acts, such as recollection, fantasy or empathy, perception is characterized by 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 is focusing upon when he discusses pre-reflective 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 and thematic self-apprehension, but in the sense of being an *originary* self-appearance.¹⁴

2) On the other hand, Husserl's (at times rather misleading) terminology can also be taken as illustration of an often noticed tension in his writings. The tension, namely, between his actual and innovative analysis and the more traditional systematical or methodical reflection accompanying it. It was the latter (representing Husserl's self-interpretation) that determined the terminology used, but Husserl's analyses were often more radical than he himself knew of and than his nomenclature ever suggested.¹⁵ In the passage from *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins* quoted above, Husserl speaks alternately of pre-reflective self-awareness as an inner perception and as an inner awareness (*inneres Bewußtsein* - one feels the influence from Brentano). As will gradually become clear, Husserl ultimately opts for the latter expression, and much misunderstanding might have been avoided if he had done that from the very start. It is called *inner* awareness, not because it is a type of introspection, but because it belongs *intrinsically* to the very structure of the act itself.

But let me return to self-reflection proper. Reflective self-awareness is often taken to be a thematic, articulated and intensified self-awareness,¹⁶ 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) conscious. Otherwise there would be nothing to motivate and call forth the act of reflection. This argumentation affirms the founded status of reflection: It presupposes pre-reflective self-awareness. But it also calls for a proper analysis of the very process of motivation.

In Husserl's analysis of the different layers of intentionality, one encounters an important distinction between activity and passivity. According to Husserl, we can find acts in which the subject is actively taking position; acts in which the subject is comparing, differentiating, judging, valuing, wishing or willing something. But, as Husserl points out: Whenever the subject is active, it is also passive, since to be active is to react to something.¹⁷ Every kind of active position-taking presupposes a preceding affection:

Jedes Ich-tue ist Bezogensein des Ich auf ein Etwas, das ihm bewusst ist. Und bewusst muss schon dem Ich etwas sein, damit es sich ihm überhaupt zuwenden kann, und ohne Zuwendung ist keine Betätigung in Beziehung auf dieses Etwas. Die Zuwendung setzt voraus Affektion, aber affizieren kann wieder nur etwas, das bewusst ist, nur das kann auf das Ich einen grösseren oder geringeren 'Reiz' üben.¹⁸

If we follow Husserl a step further in his analysis, he distinguishes between *receptivity* and *affectivity*. Receptivity is taken to be the first, lowest and most primitive level of intentional activity, and consists in responding to, or paying attention to that which is affecting us passively. Thus receptivity understood as a mere 'I notice' presupposes a prior affection, presupposes that that which is now brought into focus and consequently ontified, was already affecting and stimulating the ego unnoticed.¹⁹ In order to provoke this change of attention, in order to force the ego to pay heed, the affection must however be sufficiently strong, and it is in this context that Husserl analyses the relation between affection and differentiation. That which affects us must be more conspicuous than its surroundings. It must stand out in some way through contrast, heterogeneity and difference, if it is to impose itself on the ego.²⁰ Thus our attention will quickly be aroused if we are affected by something unusual and abnormal, for instance - to use an example of Husserl's - by the smell of gasoline in the ladies room.²¹ If it succeeds in doing this, that which affects us is *given*, whereas it is only *pre-given* as long as it remains unheeded.²²

The relevance of this analysis for our present problem is obvious. Reflection is not an act *sui generis*, it does not appear out of nowhere, but presupposes, like all acts initiated by the subject, like all intentional activity, a motivation. To be motivated is to be affected by something, and then to respond to it.²³ That which motivates reflection is exactly 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.²⁴

Wenn immer ich reflektiere, finde ich mich 'in bezug auf' ein Etwas, als affiziertes bzw. aktives. Das, worauf ich bezogen bin, ist erlebnismäßig bewußt - es ist für mich etwas schon als 'Erlebnis', damit ich mich darauf beziehen kann.²⁵

[N]ur weil es beständig passiv 'vorgegeben' gewissermassen sich selbst Erscheinendes ist (obschon nicht in abschattender Darstellung Dargestelltes), kann es aktiv erfasst, im eigentlichen Sinn gegeben, bedacht, erkannt und praktisch zum Thema eines reflektiven sich selbst so und so Wollens, sich ethisch Erneuerns usw. werden.²⁶

And needless to say, this basic self-affection is not the result of intentional activity, is not something initiated, controlled or chosen by me, but a given state of pure passivity.

However, it is one thing to claim that reflective self-awareness must in some general way presuppose a preceding self-affection. It is something different to insist, that reflective self-awareness is to be accounted for in strict analogy with other types of attentive consciousness. In the latter case, it is obviously necessary that that which motivates the reflection must be particularly conspicuous, must stand out in some way if it is to rouse my interest.²⁷ But is such a conspicuousness really to be found in the perceptions that are subsequently reflected upon, when compared to all the acts that remain unthematized? Husserl is rather silent when it comes to this problem, but in one text he points out that the present act, exactly by being present, stands out in comparison with all past acts.²⁸ Although this might explain why reflection is first and foremost a reflection upon an experience still existing, it does not, however, explain why we reflect upon certain acts and not upon others. But perhaps it is a mistake to seek a further explanation? Husserl has occasionally, in an almost fichtean vein, described (philosophical) reflection as an expression of our basic freedom,²⁹ and in this perspective the attempt to seek the sufficient reason for the act of reflection appears misguided.

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 just been. That is, the

experience reflected upon is given to me as enduring in time.³⁰ Viewed temporally, the reflection is a grasping of something that has just passed; it presupposes a distance between the reflecting and the reflected, which is then bridged, but never abolished.

When reflection sets in, it initially grasps something that has just passed away, namely the motivating pre-reflective phase of the act. I am perpetually affected by this backward sinking phase of the flow, and I therefore have the possibility to react on it, and to thematize it in a reflection or recollection.³¹ 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.³² Or to rephrase it: Reflection can only take place if a temporal horizon has been established.

Although reflection attempts to fixate the functioning source, it only attains it retentionally, when it has just passed away. Thus, when I reflect, there will always be something which will evade my grasp: the very reflective gaze. I cannot grasp my own functioning subjectivity, because I am it: that which I am cannot be my *Gegenstand*, cannot stand opposed to me.³³ If asked whether that which is grasped in reflection is really the primal functioning subjectivity, the reply must be no, since the latter is always to be found on the reflecting rather than on the reflected side.³⁴

2.

Ultimately, Husserl's thesis concerning pre-reflective self-awareness is connected to a general claim concerning the being of subjectivity. To be a subject is to exist for-itself, that is to be self-aware. Thus, no matter what worldly entities subjectivity might be conscious of and occupied with otherwise, it is also self-aware.³⁵ Husserl likens pre-reflective self-awareness to a perpetual self-manifestation, which is by no means to be understood as a particular intentional act, but rather as a pervasive dimension of self-affection.³⁶

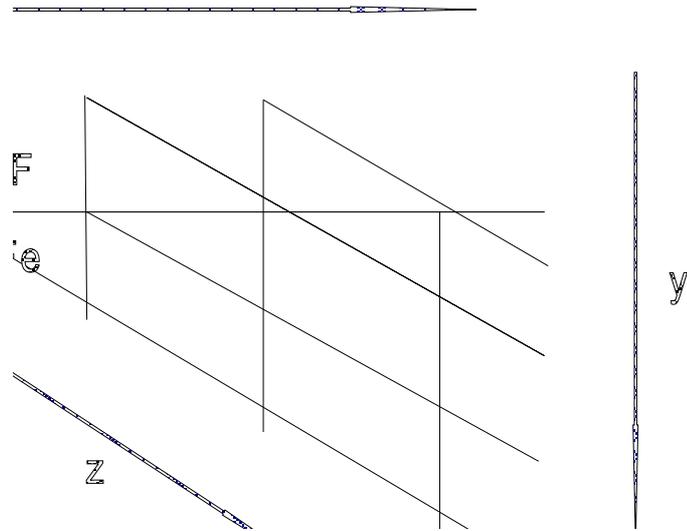
The attempt to elucidate this self-affection, which Husserl in the manuscript C 10 (1931) designates as an essential, enduring and necessary feature of the functioning ego,³⁷ leads in two different but nevertheless intrinsically intertwined directions: to temporality and to embodiment.³⁸

Husserl's discussion of the relation between temporality and self-affection is primarily to be found in his analysis of the double intentionality of the retention, its so-called *Quer-* and *Längsintentionalität* (transverse and longitudinal intentionality).

Let us imagine that we are hearing a triad consisting of the tones C, D and E. When C is first heard, it is presented in the primal impression. When it is succeeded by D, D is given in the primal impression, whereas C is then retained in the retention, and when finally E sounds, it replaces D in the primal impression, whereas D is retained in the retention.³⁹ However, the retention is not merely a retention of the tone which has just passed. Every time a new tone is intended in a primal impression, the entire retentional sequence is modified. That is, when the tone C is succeeded by the tone D, our impressional consciousness of D is accompanied by a retention of C (Dc). When D is succeeded by the tone E, our impressional consciousness of E is accompanied both by a retention of D (Ed), but also by a retention of the tone retained in D (Ec).⁴⁰ When we are aware of tone E of the triad, we are also aware of profile E (tone D), and profile E (tone C). This is shown in figure 1, where the horizontal line denotes the sequence of tones (C, D, E, F); where the vertical line (for instance 'F, E, Ed, Ec) designates a momentary slice of consciousness composed of protention, primal impression and retentions; and where the diagonal line (for instance C, Dc,

Ec, Fc) illustrates how a single tone remains the same when it sinks into the past, although its mode of givenness changes.

If $P(t)$ is the primal im-pression of a tone, then $P(t)$ is retained in a retention $Rp_{(t)}$ 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 just-passed primal impression. That is, the actual phase of the flow is not only retaining the tones which have just been but also the just elapsed phase of the flow.⁴¹ Whereas the flow's consciousness of the duration of its object is called its



Querintentionalität, the flow's awareness (of) its own streaming unity is called its *Längsintentionalität*⁴² and, although the latter carries the name intentionality, it would be tantamount to a decisive misunderstanding of Husserl's theory if one were to identify it with a type of object-intentionality. 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 the flow:

Der Fluß des immanenten zeitkonstituierenden Bewußtseins ist nicht nur, sondern so merkwürdig und doch verständlich geartet ist er, daß in ihm notwendig eine Selbsterscheinung des Flusses bestehen und daher der Fluß selbst notwendig im Fließen erfaßbar sein muß. Die Selbsterscheinung des Flusses fordert nicht einen zweiten Fluß, sondern als Phänomen konstituiert er sich in sich selbst.⁴³

However, Husserl's reflections are not meant to imply that consciousness only becomes aware of itself through the retentional modification. Quite the contrary, he explicitly states that it is impossible to retain an unconscious content⁴⁴ - the retention retains that which has just appeared and, if nothing appears there is nothing to retain - wherefore retention must presuppose self-awareness. Thus Husserl insists that the retention presupposes the *impressional* (primal, original) self-awareness of the primal impression.⁴⁵ It is exactly 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*.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, Husserl is not very informative when it comes to this impressional self-awareness. But 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 clearly suggests that we are dealing with a type of *self-affection*, and this is definitely the case when it comes to the retentional modification.⁴⁷

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Let me proceed with Husserl's analysis of embodied subjectivity. As is well known, Husserl claims that the perception of space and spatial objects presupposes a functioning lived body. This is not only due to the body's function as the indispensable centre of orientation, but also to the constitutive contribution of its mobility. Our perception of the world is not a question of passive reception, but of active exploration. At first, Husserl merely calls attention to the importance of bodily movements (the movement of the eye, the touch of the hand, the step of the body etc.) for the experience of space and spatial objects,⁴⁸ but ultimately he claims that perception is correlated to and accompanied by the self-sensation or self-affection of the moving body. Every visual or tactile appearance are given in correlation to a *kinæsthetic experience*.⁴⁹ When I touch the surface of an apple, the apple is given in conjunction with a sensation of finger-movement. When I watch the flight of a bird, the moving bird is given in conjunction with the sensation of eye-movement.

Although the kinæsthetic sensations are never interpreted as belonging to the perceived object, and although they do not themselves bring objects to presence, they constitute bodily self-awareness, and thereby a framework which is indispensable if the perceptual (hyletic) sensations are to acquire an object-reference, that is, are to become appearances of something.⁵⁰

Let me turn towards a perceptual object in order to illustrate Husserl's argument. Whereas the actual appearing front of the armchair is correlated with a certain position of the body, the horizon of the co-intended but momentarily absent aspects of the armchair (the backside and bottom etc.) is correlated to my kinæsthetic horizon, that is, to my potential of possible movements.⁵¹ The absent aspects are linked to an intentional if-then connection. If I move in this or that way, then this or that aspect will become visually or tactually accessible:

Alle möglichen Abschattungen eines Objektes als Raumobjektes bilden ein System, das Zuordnung hat zu einem kinästhetischen System und zu dem kinästhetischen Gesamtsystem, derart, daß 'wenn' eine beliebige Kinästhesie zum Ablauf kommt, 'notwendig' gewisse Abschattungen als zugehörige mitablaufen müssen.⁵²

Thus perception can be said to be a unified performance of two different, but correlated functions: On the one hand there is the sequence of kinæsthetic sensations manifesting positions in a system of movements, and on the other hand the motivated sequence of perceptual (hyletic) sensations (*Merkmalsempfindungen* or *Aspekt Daten*) correlated to these positions,⁵³ and thereby connected in a way that permits them to constitute objects.

At this point, the crucial problem is obviously to clarify the relation between subjectivity and body and between lived body (*Leib*) and perceived body (*Leibkörper*). Husserl himself emphasizes the importance of distinguishing the pre-reflective, unthematized lived body-awareness that accompanies and makes possible every spatial experience, from the thematized consciousness of the body. My original body-awareness is not a type of object-consciousness, is not a perception of the body as an object. Quite the contrary, the latter is a subsequent move which, like every other perceptual experience, is dependent upon and made possible by the pre-reflectively functioning body-awareness:

Es ist hier zu beachten, daß bei aller dinglichen Erfahrung der Leib miterfahren ist als fungierender Leib (also nicht als bloßes Ding), und daß er, wo er selbst als Ding erfahren ist, eben doppelt und in eins als erfahrenes Ding und als fungierender Leib erfahren ist.⁵⁴

Although one could have wished for a more precise formulation - the use of the term 'erfahren' to denote both types of body-awareness is unfortunate, since it obscures their decisive difference - Husserl's point remains clear. The similarity between the description of the relation between the thematized and the functioning body on the one hand and the standard characterization of the relation between reflective and pre-reflective self-awareness on the other, suggests the following conclusion: Originally, I do not have any consciousness *of* my body. I am not perceiving it, I am it. Originally, my body is experienced as a unified field of activity and affectivity, as a volitional structure, as a potentiality of mobility, as an 'I do' and 'I can'.⁵⁵ My awareness of my functioning body is an immediate, pre-reflective self-awareness, and not a type of object-intentionality. There is no distance or separation between the functioning body and the awareness (of) it, since it is given in and through itself. Our primary bodily self-awareness can consequently be described as a self-sensation, self-affection or impressional self-manifestation.

3.

The preceding analyses have to a large extent prepared the ground for the answer to the last question. I have already mentioned that Husserl took all intentional activity to presuppose a prior affection. Contrary to what might be the immediate assumption, the primal affection is however not exerted by objects. To be an object is exactly to be given (and not merely pre-given), but it is also to be in possession of an act-transcendent identity. To be an object is to be something that one can return to in different acts and identify as the same. Objects are constituted in syntheses of identification but, according to Husserl, these syntheses are manifestations of intentional *activity* and not something occurring in the realm of passivity.⁵⁶ Thus the affection is not exerted by objects, but by something pre-ontical, namely the hyletic data that are presented in the primal impression.⁵⁷ As Husserl writes:

[I]chliche Aktivität setzt Passivität voraus - ichliche Passivität - und beides setzt voraus Assoziation und Vorbewußtsein in Form des letztlich hyletischen Untergrundes.⁵⁸

Das Wort Impression paßt aber nur auf ursprüngliche Sensationen; Impression drückt gut aus, was von selbst, und zwar ursprünglich 'da' ist, nämlich dem Ich vorgegeben ist, sich ihm anbietend in der Weise eines als ichfremd Affizierenden.⁵⁹

Ultimately Husserl claims that every constitution entails a hyletic affection,⁶⁰ and this thesis is of obvious relevance for an elucidation of the relationship between self-awareness and hetero-affection. Especially so since Husserl often characterizes the hyle as a type of alterity:

Innerhalb der Innerlichkeit das erste 'Ichfremde', dem puren Ich vorgegeben, das Ich Affizierende (Reize Ausübende): das Hyletische.⁶¹

Dann hätten wir zu sagen, das konkrete Ich hat in seinem Leben als Bewusstseinsleben beständig einen Kern von Hyle, von Nicht-Ich, aber wesentlich ichzugehörig. Ohne ein Reich der Vorgegebenheiten, ein Reich konstituierter Einheiten, konstituiert als Nicht-Ich, ist kein Ich möglich.⁶²

Thus Husserl is unequivocally stating that subjectivity is dependent upon and penetrated by alterity, and he makes it quite clear that the concrete ego cannot be thought independently of its relation to that which is foreign to it.⁶³ But, of course, this was already spelled out in his theory of intentionality:

Nun gehört es eigentlich zum Wesen der intentionalen Beziehung (das ist eben die Beziehung zwischen Bewußtsein und Bewußtseinsobjekt), dass das Bewußtsein, d.i. die jeweilige *cogitatio*, Bewusstsein von etwas ist, was es nicht selbst ist.⁶⁴

Das Ich ist nicht denkbar ohne ein Nicht-Ich, auf das es sich intentional bezieht.⁶⁵

Needless to say, this should not be interpreted in a realistic vein. That which I am affected by is different from me, but it is not ontologically independent of me. Quite the contrary: To be affected by the hyle is to be affected by something which is not yet distinguished from subjectivity and therefore not yet constituted as an object. When Husserl says that the hyle as the core of interpretations, sense-formations, feelings and drives is inseparable from the ego, he is also saying that the hyle has no place outside of subjectivity. Nevertheless the hyle remains foreign. It is a domain in me which escapes my control. It is a facticity which is passively pre-given without any active participation or contribution by the ego.⁶⁶ Husserl speaks of an interior non-egological dimension, which surrounds and affects the ego.⁶⁷ It is an immanent type of alterity which manifests itself directly in subjectivity, which belongs intrinsically to subjectivity, and which subjectivity cannot do without.⁶⁸ Both are, as Husserl says, inseparable, both are irreducible structural moments in the process of constitution, in the process of bringing to appearance.⁶⁹

All of these passages testify to the intrinsic relation between subjectivity and alterity, but they do not *per se* say anything about the relation between self-awareness and hetero-affection. Another look at Husserl's analysis of time and body should, however, make the connection apparent.

In *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis* Husserl explicitly states that inner time-consciousness taken on its own is a pure, but *abstract* form.⁷⁰ *In concreto* there can be no primal impression without hyletic data, and no self-temporalisation in separation from the hyletic affection. Time-consciousness never appears in pure form, but always as a pervasive sensibility, as the very sensing of the sensations: "Das Empfinden sehen wir an als das ursprüngliche Zeitbewußtsein."⁷¹ Basically, this is the reason why Husserl insists upon the inseparability between *Quer-* and *Längsintentionalität*.

Demnach sind in dem einen, einzigen Bewußtseinsfluß zwei untrennbar einheitliche, wie zwei Seiten einer und derselben Sache einander fordernde Intentionalitäten miteinander verflochten.⁷²

There can be no inner time-consciousness, no pre-reflective self-awareness, without a temporal content.⁷³ The two are given conjointly, and can only appear in this interdependent fashion. I am only aware of my own flowing when I am aware of the temporality of that which I am conscious of.⁷⁴

We find a similar interdependence between self-affection and hetero-affection when we turn to the body. Husserl speaks of the reciprocal co-dependency existing between the constitution of spatial objects on one hand, and the constitution of the body on the other. The very exploration and constitution of objects implies a simultaneous self-exploration and self-constitution, since I cannot perceive physical objects without having an accompanying bodily self-awareness, be it thematic or unthematic:⁷⁵ The hand cannot touch without being touched and brought to givenness itself.

If my hand touches a table top, I have a series of appearances that is experienced as belonging to the touched table. When my hand slides over the top, I perceive the hardness, smoothness and extension of the table. However, it is at all times possible to undertake a change of attention so that, instead of being preoccupied with the properties of the table, I thematize the touching hand; I then experience sensations of pressure and movement, which are not perceived to be objective properties of the hand, but which are nevertheless *localized* in it (Husserl then speaks of an '*Empfindnis*'), and which manifests its function as an *experiencing organ*.⁷⁶

However, we are dealing with an interdependence, insofar as the touching and the touched are constituted in the same process: "Das System der Kinästhesen ist aber nicht im voraus konstituiert, sondern seine Konstitution erfolgt in eins mit der Konstitution hyletischer Objekte, auf die es jeweils hinauswill [...]." ⁷⁷ The body only appear to itself when it relates to something else.⁷⁸ This is not to say that original bodily self-awareness should be taken as an object-intentionality, but merely that it is an intentional consciousness which is self-aware. The body is not first given for us and subsequently used to investigate the world. The world is given to us as bodily investigated, and the body is revealed to us in its exploration of the world. It is when we perceive that we are aware of ourselves, when we are affected, that we appear to ourselves. Self-awareness presupposes hetero-affection, since the subject only appears to itself across its affections, as an affected, exposed and self-transgressing subject.⁷⁹ The affection reveals both that which affects as well as that which is affected.

A further particularly striking manifestation of the relation between self-affection and hetero-affection can be found in the so-called double-sensation: When one hand touches the other, the touching hand (the perceiving organ) has a series of sensations which are objectified and interpreted as being properties of the touched hand (the perceived organ). However, the decisive difference between touching one's own body and everything else, be it inanimate objects or the bodies of Others, is exactly that the relation between the touching and the touched are reversible, since the touching is touched, and the touched is touching.⁸⁰ (If the touched hand did not itself experience the touch, it would lack bodily self-awareness, and would no longer be experienced as *my* hand. Anybody who has fallen asleep with her arm as a pillow knows how distressing and strange it is to wake up with a numb arm. When one touches the arm it does not respond, and could just as well be somebody else's.) It is the very same (part of the) body which is feeling and which is felt.⁸¹ To touch oneself is a type of bodily self-awareness but, in contrast to what has been discussed earlier, we are now dealing with something that can be described as *bodily reflection*.⁸² It is a thematic self-awareness mediated by difference and exteriority; the single parts of the body remain separated, and they gain contact through a surface which is exposed to the world.⁸³

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Is it possible to draw some general conclusion about the nature of self-awareness against the background of the preceding discussion?

1) First of all, the intrinsic relation between self-awareness, temporality, affection and incarnation has been indicated. It is impossible to separate pre-reflective self-awareness from inner time-consciousness, which is articulated in the tripartite ecstatic-centred structure primal impression-retention-protention. But there can be no primal impression without a hyletic content, and consequently no self-awareness without a hyletic affection. This affection does not appear out of nowhere, however. It refers us to our kinæsthetic experiences and our bodily sensibility. Thus, to revive a central thesis of Landgrebe: Since there can be no primal impression without a hyletic content, and no hyletic content without kinæsthesis, it must be concluded that pre-reflective self-awareness is both temporal and embodied.⁸⁴

2) Secondly it might be asked whether self-affection does not always reveal more than itself? Both in the sense that it is a given state, a state that we have not ourselves instigated or initiated, and which therefore refers beyond ourselves - we are born and not self-generated, but also in the sense that the subject appears to itself as affected - by something different than itself. If the self-givenness of the touch is inseparable from the manifestation of the touched, and if more generally self-affection is always penetrated by hetero-affection, if inner time-consciousness presupposes a hyletic content, an affection by something not generated by consciousness,⁸⁵ it is meaningless to introduce a founding-founded relation between self-affection and hetero-affection, since they are inseparable and interdependent. Against this background it seems impossible to characterize self-awareness as a pure self-coinciding and self-sufficient irrelationality. This holds good for both reflective and pre-reflective self-awareness. In Husserl's words: Reflective self-awareness presupposes a non-ego, which the ego is directed at and from which it can then turn back on itself.⁸⁶ And as for pre-reflective self-awareness, we have already seen that the self-aware experience possesses both an egoic and a non-egoic dimension. These two sides can be distinguished but not separated:

Das Ich ist nicht etwas für sich und das Ichfremde ein vom Ich Getrenntes und zwischen beiden ist kein Raum für ein Hinwenden. Sondern untrennbar ist Ich und sein Ichfremdes [...].⁸⁷

Since pre-reflective self-awareness is characterized by this inner fracture, it is no wonder that a number of commentators have chosen to speak of the existence of a pre-temporal distance, absence, or even of a *proto-reflection* in the core of the pre-reflective self-awareness. Brand, for instance, describes the perpetual self-affection in pre-reflective self-awareness as a 'Reflexion-im-Ansatz',⁸⁸ and Derrida has argued that a subjectivity defined by self-affection cannot possibly be undifferentiated and self-enclosed, since self-affection necessarily entails a minimal self-differentiation and -division.⁸⁹

Ultimately this should come as no surprise. Despite the fundamental difference between reflective and pre-reflective self-awareness, they must share a certain affinity, a certain structural similarity. It is no coincidence that the most original dimension of self-manifestation is called 'pre-reflective'. The choice of word does indicate that there remains a connection. Otherwise it would be impossible to explain how the pre-reflective cogito could ever give rise to reflection.⁹⁰ And, needless to say, a theory of self-awareness which can *only* account for pre-reflective self-awareness is as deficient as its counterpart, the reflection theory. The reason why reflection remains a permanent possibility is exactly that the reflexive scissiparity exists already *in nuce* in the structure of the pre-reflective cogito. It is a significant determination of the originary self-awareness, that it permits self-reflection. And in fact reflection merely articulates the unity of unification and differentiation inherent in the living presence: Its ecstatic-centred structure of presencing, retaining, protending.⁹¹

In dieser Nachträglichkeit (Reflexion als 'Nachgewahren') erweist sich dreierlei als immer schon vorausgesetzt: 1. die Unterschiedenheit des Vollziehers von sich selbst, durch die er sich selbst überhaupt thematisieren - oder wie Husserl sagt: 'ontifizieren' - kann, 2. die Einheit seiner mit sich selbst, durch die er sich bei der Selbstthematisierung mit sich identifizieren kann, und 3. die Bewegtheit der Einheit-mit-sich-selbst im Sich-von-sich-selbst-Unterscheiden.⁹²

We consequently end up with the insight that pre-reflective self-awareness must be conceived not as a static self-identity but as a dynamic self-differentiation.

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As I pointed out in the beginning, Husserl's analysis of self-awareness is complex, and there remain numerous untouched and unsolved problems. However, that Husserl's theory of self-awareness is of a somewhat different nature than that suggested by Frank hardly needs further mentioning.

At the same time, Husserl's analysis seems to question the validity of Frank's own theory, especially when it comes to Frank's description of the complete and strict irrelational character of pre-reflective self-awareness.

Interestingly enough, Frank himself has later expressed certain reservations about the adequacy of his own central claim. Following Dieter Henrich, Frank has started speaking of *three* moments, which together make up the unity of self-awareness: the anonymous dimension of subjectivity, the epistemic self-acquaintance, and the egological organization. All of these features have to co-exist in a structural unity, and this seems to contradict the claim that pre-reflective self-awareness *per se* lacks internal differentiation and structural complexity. Thus, when all is said and done, self-awareness is primitive in the sense of being irreducible, but it is neither simple nor unstructured. We are ultimately dealing with a unitary phenomenon composed of connected elements that can neither be subsumed under nor deduced from a higher principle. Frank speaks of a unity of identity and difference, in the sense that each element is irreducible, but unable to exist in separation from the others.⁹³ At this point, however, the analysis terminates, since Frank admits that he cannot explain why the elements are inseparable, nor how they manage to form the unity of self-awareness.⁹⁴

Whether phenomenology can contribute to a clarification of this particular problem must for now remain an open question, but it is important not to mistake the nature of Frank's modification. Although Frank ends up acknowledging that pre-reflective self-awareness has a differentiated structure, he never analyzes it in depth, nor does he take into sufficient consideration the interdependency existing between self-manifestation and hetero-manifestation. Thus, Frank's formalistic and overly regressive theory of self-awareness remains problematic. It is not internally incoherent (as for instance the reflection theory), but it does not appear to deliver a particularly adequate description of the *phenomenon* of self-awareness, nor does it manage to explain how this completely irrelationally self-present subjectivity can simultaneously be in possession of an inner temporal articulation; how it can simultaneously be directed intentionally towards something different from itself; how it can be capable of recognizing other subjects (being acquainted with subjectivity as it is through a completely unique self-presence); how it can have a bodily self-awareness; and, finally, how it can give rise to the self-division found in reflection. Thus, Frank's approach basically fails because it conceives of self-awareness *in abstracto*, rather than accounting for the self-awareness of the *self-transcending* temporal, intentional, reflexive, corporeal and intersubjective experiences.⁹⁵

Notes:

This paper is based on research done at the Husserl-Archives in Louvain, Belgium. I thank the director of the archives, Professor S. IJsseling, for permission to quote from Husserl's unpublished manuscripts. Thanks are due also to Natalie Depraz for some useful suggestions.

1. Cf. Frank 1984, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1991a and 1991b.
2. Cf. Henrich 1966, 1970, Cramer 1974, Pothast 1971.
3. Frank 1986, pp.34, 61, 1991a, pp.71, 405, 1991b, p.597. Actually Frank explicitly denies that self-awareness is a 'présence à soi', since he takes this expression to designate a kind of self-presentification which is completely indebted to the reflection model (Frank 1989, p.488, 1991a, p.24). However, it seems difficult to find a more perfect candidate for a pure unmediated self-presence than the completely irrelational self-acquaintance described by Frank, which is so close to itself that every kind of mediation is excluded.
4. Frank 1984, pp.294, 300, 320, 1990, pp.53-55.
5. Frank 1990, pp.52-53, 1991b, pp.530, 535-536.
6. Frank 1991a, p.26.
7. Hua 15/78, 8/157.
8. Hua 3/251, 10/291, 9/29, 3/162, 3/168, 3/349.
9. Hua 14/45.
10. Hua 10/126-127.
11. Hua 3/550, 10/119.
12. Hua 8/88, 9/306-307.
13. Hua 8/471, 10/126.
14. Hua 8/188. In fact it might have been better to avoid the term 'self-appearance' as well, since the truly originary and pervasive self-awareness is exactly characterized by lacking the ordinary structure of appearance. Not only is there on this level no distinction between that which appears and that to whom it appears, but there is also no difference between that which appears and the appearance itself. The originary self-manifestation is total and in this sense non-horizontal, whereas the reflective self-thematization to a certain extent remains horizontal - not in the sense of presenting us with a transcendent adumbrational object, but in the sense of presenting us with only one aspect of the full subjective life.
15. Cf. Bernet 1983, p.42.
16. For a number of reasons it is better to avoid characterizing reflection as a higher-order perception: 1) There is a radical difference between the way in which the objects of respectively perception and reflection appear, that is between the appearance of our perceptual objects and our intentional acts. Whereas our perceptual objects are essentially characterized by their adumbrational (or perspectival) givenness - the object is never given in its totality, but always in a certain restricted profile - this is not the case for our perceptual acts. 2) Due to its adumbrational givenness, due to the difference between that which appears and the single appearance, the perceptual object is act-transcendent. It is not a part or moment of the stream of consciousness. On the contrary, there is no such transcendence between the act and the object of reflection. Both belong to the same stream of consciousness. 3) Intentionality is characterized by its existence-independence: The intentional directedness does not presuppose the existence of that which is

intended. Reflection however necessarily entails the existence of its object. There can be no reflection if the reflected act does not exist.

17. Hua 4/213, 4/337, Ms. E III 2 12b.

18. Hua 14/44.

19. Hua 11/84, 11/64, EU 81-83, Holenstein 1971, p.117.

20. Hua 11/151, EU 80, Ms. B III 9 18a.

21. Ms. C 16 42a.

22. Hua 11/162.

23. Hua 4/217.

24. Hua 6/111, 15/120, 15/78.

25. Ms. C 10 13a.

26. Hua 14/275.

27. 17/279, Ms. C 16 49a-b.

28. Ms. C 10 7a.

29. Cf. 8/19, 3/62, 4/213.

30. Hua 3/95, 3/162-164.

31. Ms. C 10 3b, Ms. C 10 5a, Ms. C 10 7a, Ms. C 10 9b-10a, Ms. C 16 82a, Ms. C 16 78a, Ms. A V 5 8a, Ms. C 5 6a.

32. Hua 10/119.

33. Hua 8/412.

34. In fact, this conclusion raises an embarrassing problem, which should be mentioned although I cannot pursue it further in this article: If knowledge of subjectivity is only obtained through reflection, how are we then to gain knowledge of the structure of pre-reflective subjectivity? When it concerns our investigation of the most fundamental dimension of subjectivity, of the very source of intentional life, it seems impossible to carry it out in accordance with Husserl's *principle of principles* (cf. 3/51). We cannot base our considerations exclusively on that which is given intuitively in a phenomenological reflection, since reflection never manages to capture the living presence of the functioning life, which remains essentially evasive and anonymous, that is unthematic.

35. Hua 1/81, 8/450, 14/151, 14/292, 14/353, 14/380, Ms. C 16 81b.

36. Hua 17/279-280, 6/111, 15/78, 13/462, 8/189, 8/412, 4/118, Ms. B I 17 4.

37. Ms. C 10 3b, 5a, 9b-10a. Cf. C 16 82a.

38. Cf. Bernet 1994, pp. 318-325.

39. It is important to realize that 'primal impression' is Husserl's term for the consciousness of the now-

phase of the object, and not the term for this now-phase itself, and it is essential to distinguish the phases of the object from the intending consciousness itself, with its structure primal impression-retention-protention (Hua 10/372, Ms. C 2 11a). The retention and protention are not past or future in regard to the primal impression; they are 'co-actual' with it. Thus each momentary slice of consciousness will be at once primal impression, retention, and protention (Ms. C 3 8a). The correlates of this tripartite *ecstatic-centred* structure of inner time-consciousness will be the phases of the *object* experienced in the modes *now, past* and *to come*. The now-phase of the object has a horizon, but it is not made up of the retention and the protention, but exactly of the past and future phases of the object (Cf. Brough 1972, pp. 302, 314-15).

40. Hua 10/81, 10/100.

41. Brough 1972, p.319.

42. Hua 10/80-81, 10/379. At one point Husserl speaks of the *Längs-* and *Querintentionalität* as the noetic and noematic-optical temporalization (Ms. B III 9 23a).

43. Hua 10/83.

44. Hua 10/119.

45. Hua 10/89-90, 10/110-111, 10/119, 11/337.

46. Hua 10/117.

47. Hua 11/235, 11/323, 11/72, 1/125, Ms. C 17 63a-b. Cf. Held 1966, pp.162, 164.

48. Hua 11/299.

49. Hua 11/14, 6/108-109.

50. Hua 16/189, 11/14-15, 4/66, 16/159, 6/109.

51. Hua 11/15.

52. Hua 9/390. Cf. Hua 6/164, 13/386.

53. Hua 4/58, Ms. D 13 I 4a.

54. Hua 14/57. Cf. 15/326, 9/392.

55. Hua 11/14, 1/128, 14/540, 9/391.

56. EU 64, 75.

57. Hua 4/214, 11/168, Ms. E III 3 3a, E III 2 22b.

58. Ms. C 3 41b-42a.

59. Hua 4/336.

60. Hua 15/385.

61. Ms. E III 2 22a. Cf. Ms. C 6 4b.

62. Hua 14/379.

63. Hua 14/14.

64. Hua 13/170. Cf. 14/51, 13/92.

65. Hua 14/245.

66. Hua 13/427, 11/386.

67. Ms. E III 2 22b.

68. Hua 15/375, 13/406, 13/459, 14/51-52, 14/337, 15/128, 4/356, Ms. E III 2 5a, Ms. E III 2 23a. Of course, it remains necessary to distinguish the alterity of the hyletic material from the alterity of the Other, and it is important to counter the suggestion that we are simply dealing with two different types or manifestations of one and the same alterity. But in the present context, this separate problem can be put aside.

69. This overcoming of a type of absolute idealism conceiving a worldless ego to be the sole and supreme ground of constitution should, however, not be interpreted as a reinstatement of a vanquished dualism. The dualism between subject and object, between ego and world is the result of a subsequent and founded distinction, which merely articulates their origin and common base: The (fractured and differentiated) unity of functioning intentionality (Cf. Brand 1955, p.28, Hart 1992, p.12). Since subjectivity entails both self and alterity it becomes understandable why transcendental phenomenology has been characterized as being beyond the opposition between idealism and realism (cf. Seebohm 1962, p.153, Zahavi 1996, pp.96-97).

70. Hua 11/118, 11/128, 1/28, EU 76, Ms. L I 15 3a.

71. Hua 10/107. Cf. EU 191.

72. Hua 10/83.

73. Hua 11/137, Ms. A V 5 7a, Ms. L I 17 9b.

74. Hua 10/80, 10/117-118.

75. Hua 4/147.

76. Hua 4/146, Ms. D 12 III 24. It is the very same hyletic content which is interpreted first as a property of the experienced object, and then as a localized sensation in the corresponding experiencing part of the body. When it is apprehended as a property of the object, it brings the object to appearance, when it is apprehended as being localized in for instance the hand, it brings the body to appearance (Hua 5/12, 5/123).

77. Ms. D 10 11a. Cf. Hua 13/386, 14/75, 15/297, 15/301.

78. The attempt to counter this thesis with reference to experiences such as nausea and dizziness, which are very much self-aware although they lack intentional objects is bound to fail. Not only is it rather doubtful whether it is possible to be dizzy and nauseous without at the same time perceiving some objects. Somebody who were only dizzy or nauseous, would probably faint. More importantly however, there are reasons to deny that these fundamental types of affectivity are only attendant phenomena, and instead follow Heidegger in his characterization: "*Die Stimmung hat je schon das In-der-Welt-sein als Ganzes erschlossen und macht ein Sichrichten auf... allererst möglich*"(Heidegger 1986, p.137. Cf. Sartre 1943, p.404).

79. Benoist 1994, pp. 57, 61, Bernet 1994, p.321, Ricoeur 1990, p.380.

80. Hua 14/75, Ms. D 12 III 14, 19.

81. Hua 15/300, 14/457, 14/462, 9/197, 13/263. According to Husserl it is this double-appearance of the body, this remarkable interplay between ipseity and alterity characterizing our bodily self-awareness, which enables us to recognize embodied Others as other subjects (Hua 8/62). My embodied self-awareness comprises per definition an *exteriority*, and when my left hand touches my right, I am experiencing myself in a manner that anticipates both the way in which an Other would experience me, and the way in which I would experience an Other.

82. Hua 1/128.

83. Derrida 1967, p.88, Bernet 1994, p.173.

84. Landgrebe 1963, pp.116-117, Landgrebe 1982, p.81, Landgrebe 1974, p.476. Cf. Hua 15/324, 13/292, Ms. D 10 IV 15, Brand 1955, p.47, Straus 1956, pp.243, 254-255, 372, Claesges 1964, pp.100, 143,

85. Hua 10/100.

86. Ms. B III 9 105b. This interpretation is confirmed by some intriguing remarks by Husserl, which suggest that reflection presupposes a differentiated field of hetero-affection. Thus Husserl appears to claim that only a consciousness affected by differentiated unities can remain awake, whereas a gradual diminishing of this differentiation would eventually make consciousness fall asleep (Hua 9/486, 11/149, 11/160, Ms. C 8 5a-b). This state of complete non-differentiation (the state of the dreamless sleeping) is not nothing, but merely the zero limit of conscious vitality (*Bewußtseinslebendigkeit*) (Hua 11/167, 14/156). It is a state without affection, a state where no intentional action can take place, and consequently a state that excludes the possibility of a thematic self-awareness (Hua 14/53-54).

87. Ms. C 16 68a. Cf. Ms. C 10 2b.

88. Brand 1955, p.74. Cf. Seebohm 1962, pp.126-127, Hart 1989, p. 58.

89. Derrida 1967, pp. 89, 92. It is interesting to notice that the position of Frank (and Henrich) finds unexpected support in the writings of Michel Henry (1963 and 1990). To account for his phenomenological analysis of self-affection would, however, lead too far.

90. Cf. Hua 10/115. To quote Sartre: "Le problème n'est pas tellement de chercher l'existence de la conscience non-thétique de soi: tout le monde l'est à chaque instant; tout le monde en jouit, si je puis dire. Le problème sera de savoir comment nous pouvons passer de la conscience non-thétique de soi, qui est l'être de la conscience, à la connaissance réflexive qui se fonde sur elle-même." (Sartre 1948, p.63).

91. Ms. C 3 69a.

92. Held 1981, p.192.

93. Frank 1990, pp.10, 83, 113, 1991a, pp.16-17, 1991b, pp.589, 591. These reflections are developed by Henrich in an unpublished manuscript, which Frank summarizes in Frank 1991b, pp.590-599.

94. Frank 1990, pp.125, 135, Frank 1991b, p.599.

95. For a large scale confrontation between the theories of self-awareness found in recent analytical philosophy of mind, in the Heidelberg-School, and in phenomenology see my *Self-awareness and Alterity* (in preparation).

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