

Husserl on Perception: A Nonrepresentationalism That Nearly Was

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Abstract: There is a longstanding debate among Husserl scholars about whether Husserl thinks perception involves mental representation. The debate, I believe, has not been settled. I deny that the existentialist-inspired charge of representationalism about perception in Husserl is precise enough to stick. Given a clearer understanding of just what mental representation amounts to, I contend that those who defend Husserl against the accusation of representationalism fare little better than Husserl's existentialist-leaning critics. I argue that he is in fact a representationalist about perception insofar as it involves a noematic sense. Nevertheless, Husserl opens up the possibility for a representation-free form of perceiving in certain later discussions of the matter in which he suggests that some perceptual states lack noematic sense. What they lack in noematic sense is compensated for by other means, namely, by two sorts of affect and their functional interrelation with abilities for bodily movement. The texts that entertain this possibility, though, severely limit the scope of its actual occurrence. Husserl never commits to a generally or substantially nonrepresentational view of perception. I attempt to sketch out, however, what this nonrepresentationalism about perception that Husserl nearly landed on might look like, rearranging various more or less familiar elements already present in his theory of perception to that end.

1. The Existentialist Critique of Husserl on Perception

There is a venerable tradition of attributing to Edmund Husserl the view that sensory perception is a representational capacity. This importantly stems from the work of the existential phenomenologists like Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who are well-known critics of Husserl's sensualist account of perception as presented in texts like *Ideas I*. Husserl provokes their ire due to his positing of immanent hyletic data and requirement that they be apprehended or interpreted to yield world-directed perceiving. In Merleau-Ponty's famous preface to the *Phenomenology of Perception*, he links Husserl's notion of sense-bestowal (*Sinngebung*) to the idea that '[t]he world is precisely that thing of which we form a representation' (Merleau-Ponty 2002: xiii). *Pace* Husserl, Merleau-Ponty would like to understand perception as a more intimate relation with things than that. Subsequently, in the same work, Merleau-Ponty explicitly abandons the Husserlian analysis of intentionality applied to perception for purportedly reducing perceptual experience (or key ingredients thereof) to an internal, private episode of the perceiving subject (Merleau-Ponty 2002: 471–472). Komarine

Romdenh-Romluc summarizes Merleau-Ponty's perspective, thus: 'Husserl's earlier conception of phenomenology [...] presupposes a Cartesian view of experience as inner representations whose qualities remain the same whether or not they present the world correctly' (Romdenh-Romluc 2011: 22).

Whatever differences Sartre may have with Merleau-Ponty about the nature of sensory perception, the two identify the same ostensible flaw in Husserl's approach to that subject matter. Both reject his claim that perception arises from a subjective act that confers meaning or sense (*Sinn*) upon otherwise meaningless sensory givens. In Sartre's words: 'I apprehend only the green of the foliage and never the sensation of green nor even the "quasi-green" which Husserl posits as the hyletic material which the intention animates into green-as-object' (Sartre 1956: 416). Merleau-Ponty echoes these remarks, saying: '[R]ed and green are not sensations. They are sensed, and quality is not an element of consciousness, but a property of the object. This red patch that I see on the carpet [...] would not literally be the same if it were not the "woolly red" of a carpet' (Merleau-Ponty 2002: 5).

A view like Husserl's, so construed, is unacceptable because it drives a wedge between perceiver and perceived, denying us, as perceivers, the direct and practically engaged access to the real we seem to enjoy in perceiving. A veil of meaningless sensation is interposed between mind and world and, apparently, the perceiver must interpret those sensations like a text, one step removed from its referent and practically uninvolved with it. The judgment of these existential phenomenologists has proved influential (Dreyfus 1982, 2000), and some Husserl scholars have accepted its portrayal of Husserl as a representationalist about perception, without necessarily agreeing with the critical import of that accusation (McIntyre 1986). Whatever the merit of those worries, it has to be admitted that Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, even if they are sometimes read as principled antirepresentationalists, were not especially interested in the notion of mental representation. They sought to avoid both empiricist sense-data theories and intellectualist renderings of perception as a kind of judgment because these accounts misconstrue our relation to the world in perceiving. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty follow Martin Heidegger in thinking of the subject as essentially, immediately, and indissolubly related to its world.

The broadly existentialist worry about Husserl, moreover, is less about his theory of perception *per se* than the consequences that his account of perception has for his overall philosophical outlook. The existentialists are anything but oblivious to the role that Husserl's understanding of perception plays in his major methodological device, the phenomenological reduction, and the form of transcendental idealism it thereby leads Husserl to endorse. In laying out the phenomenological reduction, Husserl argues in *Ideas I* that consciousness is 'absolute', that it is a *sui generis* entity with no necessary ontological ties to or dependence upon any other existing entity. One piece of evidence Husserl adduces in favor of this claim is that we can conceive of experience—and at bottom, perceptual experience—descending into a state of pure noise, as it were. That is, the flow of sensory givens in such conditions would not function to present any mind-independent object. And yet, Husserl supposes that consciousness itself

would abide in this extreme state of disarray. In short, if that is so, then it is possible for consciousness to be and the world, in a maximally broad and inclusive sense, not to be.

Notice the reference to sensory experience in Husserl's reasoning. This reference is decisive (Philipse 1995). The argument fails if sensory experience is inherently intentional and enables direct contact with the real as such. But it does not, for Husserl, since sensory givens must be interpreted or apprehended and thereby enter as parts into full-fledged intentional episodes of perception. So, even though Husserl denies that nonintentional sensory givens are a 'veil of experience', i.e., the proper objects to which perceptual experience is directed, his view of sensory experience nevertheless erects a barrier of sorts between the subject *qua* perceiver and the world by securing the absolute ontological independence of former *vis-à-vis* the latter. Whether this account reflects Husserl's final word on the matter is beside the point, which is just that *this* particular line of thought is what spurred Heidegger's, Sartre's, and Merleau-Ponty's critical remarks about Husserl's theory of perception. The issue of mental representation is not the main point of contention in this historical quarrel between Husserl and his philosophical progeny.

In light of that fact, it is worth wondering whether it is true that there can be no place for mental representation in an existentialist-leaning account of sensory perception. It may be that classically conceived sense data and perceptual judgments have no part in our fundamental stance as being-in-the-world, but why should we think representation *per se* has no part in it either? Perhaps it's conceivable that we represent in our being-in-the-world, even if the latter does not reduce without remainder to the former. With respect to Heidegger's view, some have affirmed this possibility (Christensen 1997, 1998), and others have denied it (Wrathall 1998; Blattner 1999). The issue of mental representation in the phenomenology of perception, it seems, is far from being a simple open-and-shut case. For that matter, just as with the existential-leaning phenomenologists, neither is representation an especially central notion to Husserl. He uses the term *Vorstellung*, and that can indeed be rendered 'representation'. But one would be guilty of anachronism to let current connotations of mental representation straightaway color one's understanding of Husserl's talk of *Vorstellungen*. At least, a case would need to be made for doing so. We are apparently in need of a clearer idea of just what mental representation is and how it might figure in perception.

We represent things to the extent that we construe or take them as being some way or another. For instance, in asserting 'There are eight planets in our solar system', I make a claim about some state of affairs' obtaining in the world. The *meaning* of that proposition, its *semantic content*, presents the world as being a certain way, and if it is that way, the proposition is true.¹ The basic idea generalizes. What makes a representation representational is its semantic character. As Robert Cummins puts it:

When we suppose a system to harbor cognitive representations, we are supposing that the system harbors states, or perhaps even objects, that are semantically individuated. Thus, the central question about mental

representation is this: What is it for a mental state to have a semantic property? (Cummins 1991: 11)

Now, perceiving is not obviously like uttering a sentence. It is not clear that a percept relates to a proposition in the way that a linguistic expression does. But, just as a proposition construes the world as being some way, perception may also allow a perceiver to construe the world in its own way (see, e.g., McDowell 1996). It may not have propositional content (but see Searle 1983 and Tye 2000); yet, it is plausibly understood as bearing semantic properties of a nonpropositional sort, possibly even possessing its own *perceptual content*, a *sui generis* species of meaning (e.g., as in Burge 2010). Indeed, the current debate about whether perception is representational has very clearly come down to the issue of whether perception has content, i.e., whether it involves taking the world to be some way and is thus susceptible to getting things wrong, having accuracy conditions of some sort (Siegel 2010; Schellenberg 2011). So, let us call perceiving representational if perception has content, that is, if perceiving captures the perceived under some more or less abstract description or mode of presentation, which (to belabor the point) may or may not be propositional in nature.

2. Husserl as a Representationalist About Perception

The ecumenical understanding of representation just introduced does not entail the crude idea of an internal mental icon presented to a homunculus in lieu of reality itself, and neither does it necessarily favor the intellectualist account that burdens percepts with propositional content. This *semantic* notion of representation—that representation is tied to meaning, whether linguistic or perceptual—is now common. Of course, it emerged as something like a consensus (or lowest common denominator) understanding of representation after Husserl, and so we ought, as I said, to be cautious about reading it into his use of the term *Vorstellung* (Bernet, Kern, and Marbach 1993: 119). It would, of course, be another kind of anachronism to suppose that contemporary representationalists about perception must endorse one of the two types of view just described and to then acquit Husserl of the charge of representationalism about perception because he subscribes to neither of them.

Defenders of Husserl sometimes commit this second anachronism in their hasty dismissals of mental representation in his thought. In such instances, denying representationalism about perception in Husserl has amounted to no more than denying very naïve and crude conceptions which few if any representationalists would now find tenable. It is insufficient to argue that Husserl did not subscribe to the view that perceivers grasp reality only indirectly and have direct access only to their own private, internal idea-theaters (Cobb-Stevens 1990). To illustrate, take Dermot Moran's summary judgment:

Following Husserl, phenomenologists reject out of hand representationalist approaches to the problem of intentionality. In

particular, the view of the mind as a self-enclosed box through which the arrow of intentionality has to cross in order to make contact with extra-mental objectivities is thought to be nonsensical. (Moran 2013: 331)

The claim is especially unwarranted, given Moran's qualification of the claim in a footnote. In the footnote, he clarifies that espousing mental representations is objectionable just in case it commits one to an indirect theory of perception but that the idea of (representational) content *per se* is not objectionable (Moran 2013: 341–341).² In other words, Moran admits that Husserl may well be a representationalist about (perceptual) intentionality. Moran and others are not wrong to deny that Husserl is a representationalist, provided the notion of mental representation that assessment takes for granted is very narrow. At the same time, however, such assessments lack relevance for current debates about mental representation, where a much less restrictive notion of mental representation is operative.

A similar criticism of mental representation is proffered by Thomas Szanto (2012), whose discussion has the express purpose of putting Husserl in dialogue with contemporary analytic philosophy of mind on the issue. Szanto understands mental representations as intramental entities of a symbolic-pictorial nature. As Gianfranco Soldati notes, it would be surprising if, in a post-Wittgensteinian landscape, such were the state of the art for current theories of mental representation (Soldati 2014). Much like Szanto, Beth Preston (1994) concedes that Husserl attributes content to mental states like perceiving but denies that this puts him in the same camp as arch-cognitivist representationalists like Jerry Fodor. One important difference for Preston—and this seems right—is that Fodor-style representationalism is burdened with the naturalist assumption, which Husserl would surely reject, that content-bearing mental states must be physical symbols. Yet, that assumption, as Preston recognizes, is not a necessary feature of theories of mental representation (Preston 1994: 227–228). A representational theory need not frame itself as explaining the emergence of meaning from meaningless physical tokens *à la* Fodor.

More generally, and returning to Szanto's claim, even if we describe mental representations as 'states', it doesn't follow that the latter are 'entities' in any troublesome sense. Galen Strawson has noted the ambiguity of the word 'state' in this context, namely, that it may refer to a state that is in the mind—in which case perhaps we should harbor suspicions about its entity-hood—or a state that the mind is in (Strawson 2008). The latter sense should not be offensive phenomenologically. Mental states may then be thought of as states of the mind's activity and therefore moments, pieces, or patterns of that activity, as even some representationalist-cum-computationalist views allow (Boden 1988: 247). Mark Rowlands (2010) holds to the view that mental states like perception are states we are in, states of our activity. His representationalism is one—even one inspired in part by Husserl—that treats perception as a world-disclosing, representation-laden activity. And this idea is not terribly far from Ruth Millikan's (1995) conception of pushmi-pullyu representation or Andy Clark's (1998)

action-oriented representation. The standard phenomenological objections to representationalism about perception do not obviously apply to these views.

As we observed already, it is not enough to let Husserl off the hook of representationalism to show that he doesn't ascribe propositional content to perceiving (e.g., as in Lotz 2007a: 155) or to point out the immediacy and nondiscursive character of perceiving as understood by Husserl (again, as in Lotz 2007a: 156–157). Content, the *meaning*, need not be propositional, and there is no reason to think mental representation is in all its varieties a clunky, slow-paced, deliberate, consciously initiated and guided affair. We may well represent more or less fluidly and 'automatically'. Perhaps we get into the habit of construing things in this way or that in perceiving. There is no absurdity in the idea, at the very least. Husserl's notion of horizon makes no difference, either, in whether or not perceiving is representational, as Christian Lotz suggests it does (Lotz 2007a: 158–163). Intentional states like perceiving are composed of a thematic core and an unthematic 'horizon', according to Husserl. There are important points of divergence between these two broad features of intentional episodes, but, for us, what matters is that there is no fundamental difference when it comes to their *content*.

The intentional core of a percept is the perceived precisely as it presents itself in the momentary, real-time flow of perceiving, e.g., the side(s) of a visually presented cube facing the perceiver at a certain remove, in certain lighting conditions, at a certain time. The intentional horizon, on the other hand, affords the perceiver tacit awareness of possible (e.g., expected) perceptual encounters with the perceived, e.g., a tacit directedness to other visible sides of the object, its appearance in other lighting conditions, from closer by. Husserl refers to the latter as 'unfulfilled, expectant and accompanying *meanings*' (Husserl 1991: 96–97/62; emphasis mine). He is abundantly clear on the semantic character of horizational intending. In the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl says of the 'prefigurative' function of an intentional state, i.e., its horizational component, that it 'implicitly contains the sense' of that state. Lest there be any doubt what he means by 'sense', he explains that it specifies certain conditions of satisfaction for the intentional state in question, that is, its *content* (Husserl 1991: 94/59).

Whereas the content of the thematic core of an intentional state has a high degree of determinacy, the horizon 'is indeterminate as to content, or not completely determined, but it is never completely empty' (Husserl 1973a: 32). This relatively indeterminate content represents the intentional object under some aspect or mode of presentation, a 'determination' of the object that 'is anticipated in terms of a type' (Husserl 1973a: 36). The horizon thus makes possible for the intentional state to which it belongs its potential (dis)confirmation in the course of experience, depending on whether or not future encounters conform to the anticipated type. So, the horizon only complicates and enriches the representational (i.e., noematic) content of perceiving. Far from supporting the denial of representationalism in Husserl, it seems rather to confirm the charge of representationalism. Naturally, all of these generic features of intentional states and their core/horizon structuring carry over into the analysis of perceptual

intentionality. Indeed, perception is, for Husserl, the paradigm case of intentional content articulated in a core/horizon structure. The perceived is not merely construed in its present state, taken as is, but with the addition of an intentional horizon, it is now given as situated in relation to many other possible states as well.

While I have just discussed several attempts to distance Husserl from a representationalist view of intentionality and perception, there are those who find it natural to depict Husserl's theory of perception as involving mental representation. Kevin Mulligan attributes to Husserl the view that 'perceptual content represents public objects in public space' (Mulligan 1995: 202). Mulligan, though, does not dwell on the issue of mental representation. Elsewhere, there are interpretations on offer of Husserl's notion of the noema that conceive of the noema as an essential component of intentional states by virtue of which the latter qualify as mental representations (*avant la letter*, of course), inasmuch as the noema is a bearer of content or meaning of some kind (Cunningham 1986; Smith 2007; Romano 2015).

David Woodruff Smith conveys the basic idea thus in his generic gloss of Husserl's theory of the noema: 'A systematic analysis of [the] structures of meaning in the noema, and their *semantic* correlation with acts and their objects, would define a "pure logic" of consciousness [...]' (Smith 2007: 282; emphasis mine). To understand the noema, on such a view, is to give a semantics of consciousness, perceptual or otherwise, i.e., to explain how it is meaning-laden and thereby able to represent the world. The following portrayal of Husserl's view of intentionality offered by Steven Crowell effectively makes the same underlying point: 'Intentionality [...] is the experience of something *as something*. Thus all intentional states involve a *meaning* (the "as") through which some object is purportedly present to consciousness' (Crowell 2013: 16; emphasis mine). Intentionality, again, is thought of here as a way in which one has a take on things as being thus and so, a means of representing them. This view of Husserl—i.e., as preoccupied with meaning—is not uncommon, and in light of the generic semantic view of representation presently on the table, we seem to find Husserl much closer to representationalism than many might have supposed.

Tellingly, the collection of all possible noematic characteristics for a given intended object is termed the object's noematic *sense* (*Sinn*), and Husserl often casually refers to an individual noematic characteristic as a sense. As to perception, he states: 'Perception, for example, has its noema, most basically its perceptual sense, i.e., the perceived as perceived' (Husserl 1982: 182/214). Clarifying what such a sense might contain, he continues: "'In" the [...] perception [...], we find, as indefeasibly belonging to its essence, the perceived as perceived, to be expressed as "material thing," "plant," "tree," "blossoming"; and so forth' (Husserl 1982: 184/216). There is much debate surrounding precisely how to understand the noema,³ but this much seems clear regardless of those complications: Intentional directedness to objects in perception is secured by means of perceptual sense, which is a relatively abstract description or set of descriptions of the object. These descriptions include, as we saw, determinations of the intentional referent anticipated in their type, thanks to the intentional state's horizontal component.

Perception in that way targets its objects under certain modes of presentation and allows the perceiver to have a perceptual take on the world. It is difficult to see why we should not think of perception when described that way as possessing representational content. Carleton Christensen has drawn just this conclusion. He is admirably straightforward: 'It is clear enough that according to Husserl objective sense [in perception] constitutes that element of total perceptual intentional content which accomplishes representation of how things objectively are' (Christensen 2013: 114). So, it is that 'in virtue of its objective sense [perceptual] intentional content represents something as something' (115). Perception, he adds, is characterized in Husserl's account of it by its 'quasi-semantic' nature (121). Christensen only hesitates to simply label it semantic because its content, on his analysis of Husserl's view, is not propositional. Husserl's theory of perception, then—regardless of its many contentious details and given the generic notion of representation currently on the table—is aptly labeled representational.

3. Husserl's Antirepresentationalism About Perception

I have so far tried to explain why Husserl should be viewed as a representationalist about perception. Surprisingly, in light of the preceding, one finds in Husserl's later reflections on instinctive intentionality in perception (especially in *Husserliana* volumes XV, Husserl 1973c; XXXIX, Husserl 2008; and XLII, Husserl 2014) an account of perception according to which there are—or so I will argue—some instances of fully nonrepresentational but still intentional perceiving. Crucial to understanding Husserl's later admission of a type of representation-free perception is his longstanding belief that perceiving is an active process and one that is tightly interconnected with and partly constituted by affective elements. I'll first lay out Husserl's understanding of affect in perception in its representation-friendly guise and then introduce the later nonrepresentational conception of an affectively driven perception. If that is right, then Husserl's view cannot be characterized as *wholly* representational or nonrepresentational. I admit, though, that his later nonrepresentationalist concession is something of a marginal case and that Husserl takes perceiving to be largely a representational affair. I thus find in the late Husserl's work on perception a nonrepresentationalism that *nearly* was. A form of nonrepresentational perceiving is admitted alongside representation-laden perceiving but kept within very narrow confines.

3.1. *The Role of Affect in Perceiving*

Husserl maintains in later texts that affection is an essential ingredient to perception, to the extent that perception requires a theory of perceptual attention which affection aids in explaining. In one place, he states categorically that every perceptual experience has both an affective 'form' and an intentional 'content' (a *Was*) (Husserl 2006: 189; 252). For Husserl, nothing catches one's attention without provoking a perceptual interest, which, he maintains, is determined by a

feeling of sorts (Hua 2000: §4; Husserl 1973a: §19). Affect is a 'form' for perceptual attention to the extent that its peculiar structure is congruent in a way with other components of a perceptual intentional state, i.e., its sensory and noematic components. Affection is temporally extended such that the flow of affective experience, a dynamic complex of feelings of relative tension or relaxation, correlates phase-for-phase with, say, a corresponding flow of visual or tactile sensation and matching determinations of noematic content. How a perceiver navigates the onslaught of exteroceptive sensation is a function of both the noematic sense determining the content of the perceiving and the affective experience exerting motivational force on it.

For any of this to make sense, we need to know what an affect is in the first place. Affection has two fundamentally different types that figure in perceiving. Let us distinguish *intramodal* affects from *intermodal* affects. This is not Husserl's terminology, but it will help clarify what he's up to. An intramodal affect occurs when a sensory experience bears an affective quality intrinsically, i.e., in itself as a monadic property and not by virtue of an association with a distinct and more or less independent affective experience (e.g., an emotional state-like jealousy). The pleasant or painful quality of touch or felt movement, for instance, would seem to qualify as an intramodal affect, a quality of tactile sensation *per se* (Cole and Montero 2007). An intermodal affect, on the other hand, occurs when a sensory experience bears a certain relationship with another sensory experience from another modality. The paradigm case of an intermodal affect, much discussed by Husserl (e.g., Husserl 1989; Husserl 1997), is that of the relationship between kinesthesia and various exteroceptive modalities, with kinesthesia-cum-visual sensation being Husserl's preferred example for phenomenological analysis. Husserl sometimes treats intramodal affect largely independently of intermodal affect (as in Husserl 2001a), but that may be merely a methodological abstraction, one not made in other contexts (as in Husserl 1973a). Let us consider both types of affect and their interrelation a bit more closely.

Husserl describes intramodal affect as the quality of a sensory experience that makes it a *Reiz*, an allure or a stimulus. Importantly, 'stimulus' means neither the 'physical stimulus' (i.e., the mind-independent cause of a sensory experience) nor the physical-physiological impact of the physical stimulus on the perceiver's sensory receptors and nervous system, nor yet the bare presence of a consciously aware moment of sensory experience *per se* (Biceaga 2010: 32). What makes a moment of sensory experience a 'stimulus' in Husserl's sense is the effect it has on perceiving, which he describes as the 'peculiar pull that an object given to consciousness exercises on the ego' (Husserl 2001: 149/196). The 'pull' of this qualitative allure is an appeal to perceptual attention, and when successful, it results in advertence (*Zuwendung*), i.e., drawing a sensory moment into focal attention. The affective pull of two type-identical sensory moments may differ, inasmuch as the affective quality of each does not attach to it simply as an individual sensory moment but as a function of the interplay (at a given instant and over time) of it and many other distinct sensory moments (Husserl 2001a: 150/197; Husserl 1973a: 76). Indeed, affect is a quality that every moment of

conscious experience possesses, only in varying degrees (Husserl 2001a: 162/210). Intramodal affect, then, is that quality of sensory experiences by virtue of which they command or (potentially) influence attention within some modality.

Husserl gives little sustained description of the phenomenal character of intramodal affect *per se*, with only occasional reference to its character of 'awakening', its 'intensity', or its (relative) 'tempo' 'tension', and focuses instead on its function in the overall economy of the perceiving process.⁴ In that regard, he conceives of the 'pull' of affect as motivating certain typical patterns within perceptual processes, mainly ones conforming to basic associative principles, although Husserl suggests that the pull of affect may also tend in directions shaped by instinctive preferences of some sort (Husserl 2001a: 150/198) (more on instinct shortly). As a 'unitary tendency toward the future' (Husserl 2001a: 156/204; Husserl 1973a: 80), intramodal affect helps make the activity of perceiving coherent by guiding attention in order-conducive directions. Perceiving, for Husserl, is a 'productive', synthetic process, a matter of establishing order in a sensory array, ultimately order that enables the perceiving activity to take on object-presenting content, thus accruing noematic sense. Intramodal affect is an essential ingredient to that process. Abstracting from the details of the associative mechanisms underlying the process, this sort of affect steers perceptual attention to highlight 'prominences' (*Abhebungen*) in the sensory array. Thanks to it, we perceive not a block of sensory noise but, minimally, a sensory array structured into a prominent foreground and an unprominent background (Husserl 1973a: 77).

Intramodal affection provides a *motivation* for unity and order but would be significantly or entirely lacking in efficacy without the involvement of intermodal affect (Lotz 2007b: 44–48). For intramodal affect to perform its function, it must be able to influence the diachronic course of the sensory array, since its function is to engender unity in the ongoing perceiving process. It is not obvious how intramodal affect by itself could realize the 'possibilities of transition' that it indicates (Husserl 1973a: 83). It must link up with some ability that enables the perceiver to follow up on the directions that it indicates. This ability, Husserl specifies, is the ability to move the body. He thus gives a kind of sensorimotor account of perception. Kinesthetic sensation is the product of this ability, and the tight connection between kinesthetic experience and exteroceptive perception is evidence of this (Bernet, Kern, and Marbach 1993: 130–140). Husserl describes the kinesthetic sensations as 'consequences of perceptive tendencies' and as symptomatic of the bodily 'activities' essential to following through with those tendencies (Husserl 1973a: 84).

The relation Husserl aims to highlight here is thoroughgoing: '[B]eginning with the first advertence of the ego, perception is animated by perceptual tendencies, tendencies of the continued overflowing of apperceptions into apperceptions, tendencies to run through multiplicities of kinesthesia and in this way to set in motion a flow of "images"' (Husserl 1973a: 84; translation modified). These intermodal affects, the kinestheses, help explain how intramodal affect can indirectly influence the course of sensory perceiving in order to articulate sensory unities. This is possible because intermodal affects are the product of abilities that

are directly influenced by intramodal affects and they themselves have a direct influence on the course of the sensory flow. In addition, the temporally extended sensory unities indicated by the functional biases (e.g., of association) governing intermodal affect are paralleled by the corresponding flow of kinesthetic sensation phase-for-phase throughout the perceptual process.

Importantly, the intermodal affect's influence on the flow of sensory experience can lead to coherent, meaningful experience only if the guidance it provides attention can lead to the (possible) fulfillment of some noematic content. Inducing movement of the head and neck, then, may alter the optic flow, resulting in a sensory array that is amenable to being *taken as* presenting some object or feature thereof. Perception is constituted by the intimate temporal interlocking of sensory experience, motor competence, affective experience, and noematic content. Husserl draws attention to the noematic constraint on affect in perceiving and the intimate relation between the two when he describes intermodal affect as involving 'a specific feeling of satisfaction in this [perceptual] enrichment [of perceived content] and, in relation to this horizon of expanding and heightening enrichment, a striving "to come ever closer" to the object, to take possession of its "self" ever more completely' (Husserl 1973a: 86). The feeling or affect is thus in a way structurally parallel or congruent (but importantly *not* identical) to perceptual noematic sense (Husserl 2001a: §32; Husserl 1973a: §17; Husserl 2008: 100). So, the initial claim, and one that Husserl seems to have held from very early on, is merely that, in perceiving, there is a representational component (the noematic sense) that is structurally interwoven with congruent affective components and the exercise of corresponding bodily abilities.

It is worth dwelling on the details of just how affective experience is congruent or interlocks systematically with noematic content on Husserl's representation-friendly view. To begin with, think of how a certain affective state pertains to what stands in the foreground at some particular phase of the optic flow, to continue with Husserl's preferred case of visual experience. Its salience is *felt*. That is its allure, its intramodal affective quality. It could be that what is prominent in the optic flow is the result of prior intervention in the flow of visual sensation *via* influence of intermodal affective sensation on bodily ability, yielding the pertinent sensory unity and parallel kinesthetic flow. Affect, of course, not only drives but is also driven. That is, uncontrolled changes in the sensory flow induce changes in the flow of intramodal affect, which can then kick in to influence the perceptual process in the way just described. In either case, one's attention is aroused in advertence.

The background, too, is felt, namely, in intramodal affective 'tendencies' that are so named because they stand in a position to capture one's focal attention. An intramodal affective tendency corresponds on the one hand to an ability to take control of the affective flow in order to induce some change in the optic flow (e.g., to bring to focal attention). Depending on the relevance of the possible change involved, affective tendencies exert some degree of motivational pressure on perceptual attention without actually compelling it. On the other hand, these tendencies only dispose the perceiver to induce change in the optic flow in this

way because they are presently felt moments of an occurrent phase of the intramodal affective flow (Husserl 2001a: 168/217). What is prominent is what is most affectively alluring, and, given a decrease in its allure, peripherally present moments in the sensory flow are waiting in the wings as competitors to take charge and stand out as the most alluring and therefore attention-commanding moment of the sensory flow (Husserl 2001a: 149–150/197). In a given phase of the intramodal affective flow, then, there are also peripheral or extra-focal arousals that correspond to peripheral moments of the sensory flow.

Putting together the two previous points, we can say that, for a given occurrent phase of the intramodal affective flow, there is what I'll call an intramodal affective profile that maps onto the overall structuring of the optic flow, i.e., in terms of its (relatively) prominent (focal) and less prominent (extra-focal) moments. With this in mind, notice how the structure of the intramodal affective profile mirrors the structure of the contents of the noematic sense. The noematic sense presents the object identically through the perceptual process, but at each phase, that sense is structured in a peculiar way. There is a core of that noematic sense that is fulfilled in the present phase of perceiving, by virtue of which the perceiving is presented with what it perceives 'in the flesh' (*leibhaftig*). But that core of fulfilled content of the noematic sense is embedded within a perceptual horizon, a network of noematic contents representing features of the perceived that may potentially be but presently aren't fulfilled by direct sensory exposure to the perceived.

The intramodal affect profile, a slice or overall portrait of the affect flow at a given moment, is thus articulated so as to anticipate the various phases of perceptual sense passing from intention to fulfillment. It follows that the successive and continuous elapse of affect profiles will display characteristic structural transformations as a profile-by-profile transition takes place from empty intention to fulfillment. Of course, perceiving is not about keeping track of those phase-wise alterations but about the *Gestalt*-like unities to which it seeks to call attention across them. And likewise, Husserl insists that the congruent kinesthetic sensation (the intermodal affect) is not tracked in detail moment by moment, but that it is felt in medium-duration transitions that mesh with the *Gestalt*-like sensory unities called for by intramodal affect (Husserl 2001a: 15/52; Sheets-Johnstone 2007: 367). This dynamic is pervasive in perception, which Husserl thinks is constantly either at least tracking an identical perceived object by consistently and continuously having it presented under some aspect or tracking the perceived in changes that both conform to the already presented aspect and present it under additional, more determinate aspects (Husserl 1991: §18–19).

By virtue of its position in the temporally extended process of perceiving, each moment of an affect profile has an affective vector (whose direction is determined by intramodal affect, affected by bodily abilities, and followed up by ensuing intermodal affects), indicating its link to subsequent affect profiles given its prior trajectory and the composition of affective allures in the occurrent affect profile to which it belongs. At the outset, an intentional act is characterized by a feeling of tension, and the fulfillment coincides with a feeling of resolution, with various shades of feeling between these extremes (Husserl 2004: 104–105, 186; Husserl

2006: 94). The feeling of tension is determined by the relative disparity between the present core of sensory experience and the noematic content to be fulfilled in an intention, a tension that will be more acutely felt in cases of ongoing perceptual search or in cases when sensory experience suddenly fails to conform to the content of an ongoing act of perceiving (Husserl 1973a: 85–86). When it takes this form, Husserl speaks of perceiving as a kind of ‘striving’. Call the complex way that affective states map onto a perceptual (noematic) sense an affect schema.⁵ An affect schema encompasses the static affect profile corresponding to the focal/nonfocal structure of the present phase of the sensory flow as well as the dynamic vector of an affect profile insofar as this keeps pace phase-wise with transitions from empty intention to fulfillment.

It is crucial to note that the affect schema does not itself represent any property of the object, present or co-present. Nor would it make any sense to suppose that it does. Remember, at this point, we are supposing that the affective component is congruent with the noematic sense (Wehrle 2015: 50). The noematic sense is what does the representational work, and Husserl does not make the extraneous supposition that the affective component and the noematic sense both represent what is perceived. Apart from that explanatory consideration, an example may help to clarify the point. The situation with affect generally is exemplified by that of one of its constituents, namely, the intermodal affect of kinesthesia. Kinesthetic feelings, e.g., feelings of eye movement or turning of the head, accompany visual perception, for instance. But the same series of kinesthetic feelings can accompany diverse perceptual experiences (Husserl 1997: §49).⁶ So, the kinesthetic feelings, while certainly not irrelevant, nevertheless do not represent the properties of what I perceive.

It seems entirely reasonable to think that something similar holds for intramodal affect. The pull, tension, arousal, etc. felt in perceiving are qualities attaching to a given sensory moment that could just as well attach to some other, and they in fact do so under suitable conditions. Husserl notes in *Thing and Space* that kinesthetic sensations have a functional connection with exteroceptive sensation (Husserl 1997: 169–170/143–144), and, even though the quality enjoyed in intramodal affect *inheres* in sensory moments as a monadic property (i.e., is not relationally associated with them in the same way as kinesthetic sensations are), it nevertheless appears also to have only a functional relation to them. That a given intramodal affect attaches to a given sensory moment is a function of multiple determining factors and not an essential connection between the two. Husserl provides an illustration, describing how, ordinarily, in a relatively quiet place, the sudden occurrence of a whistle will have an overwhelmingly strong intramodal affective pull, whereas when one is in conversation with an ‘important person’, a type-identical recurrence of the whistle blast may not (Husserl 1973a: 78).

3.2. *Affectively-Driven, Nonrepresentational Perception and Its Limits*

The move Husserl makes that allows him to conceive of some perceiving in nonrepresentational terms is, roughly, to decouple noematic content and affect

schema, eliminating the former and preserving the latter. That is, he seems to hold that there are cases where perceiving is guided solely by the affect schema independently of any perceptual sense and its noematic content. What we had been considering earlier in this section was the idea of a threefold structuring of perception, where perception involves congruent affective schema, noema, and (exteroceptive) sensation all bound together, and now, we are considering the idea that perceiving can carry on with affect *directly* influencing the sensory flow without being regulated by a noematic sense.

Even in some of his earliest writings on perception, Husserl allows that we occasionally enjoy affective states that give rise to quasi-acts lacking a noematic sense. Moods, for instance, can instigate certain quasi-intentional behaviors that lack a sense, since the mood is unmoored from reality. If one wakes up on the wrong side of the bed, this foul mood says nothing at all about the world (Husserl 2004, 180). Yet, a foul mood will determinately affect the kinds of responses one is disposed to take toward what one sees and encounters perceptually while in that state. It shapes the seeing activity itself (Wehrle 2015, 59). Something similar is true of curiosity, which is a better example because it is less easily written off as merely caused, nonintentional experience. Curiosity concerns precisely what one lacks familiarity with. One is blindly drawn in some direction by an 'irresistible allure', a feeling lacking a corresponding sense (Husserl 2004: 186).

Now, since at least the time of the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl maintains that feelings are of two sorts. They can be mere nonintentional states, and they can also be intentional in the specific sense that they qualify as *Vorstellungen* by serving to construe their objects in one way or another (Husserl 2001b: 109–112). Within the post-*Ideas I* terminology, the latter intentional feelings exhibit intentionality just in case they add to the overall noematic content of some more basic intentional state (e.g., a percept) (Hua 2001a: 5–6/278). So, within the earlier framework, feelings are only intentional if they have noematic content, i.e., if they *represent* their objects. We are now considering a third option that does not fit Husserl's early classification, a possibility already entertained by Alia Al-Saji (Al-Saji 2000: 52). The affect schema I have been describing is *intentional without being representational* just in case it affords a perceiver directedness toward the world without putting the perceiver in contact with things under any aspect.

Husserl maintains that (a subset of) what he terms 'instinctive' affection falls into this third category. Some forms of feeling—such as the curiosity guiding perceptual exploration or, perhaps not independently, the kinesthetic feeling that bears on perceiving—should be understood as possessing 'undisclosed [*unenthüllten*] instinctive goals' (Husserl 2006: 253). '[O]riginal affection', Husserl says, is an 'instinct, thus a kind of empty striving still lacking the 'presentation of a goal'. (Husserl 2006: 326). Such instinct, as the raw form of affection forming the lowest level of conscious life, is marked precisely by its blindness, by the fact that it does not 'present a goal', and so lacks the resources to give the perceiver a take on things.⁷ In instinct, the subject is drawn into a subtly articulated affective experience and, in a sense, feels its way through reality, yet without having a firm grasp *in medias res* of what it is up to. The reference to a 'goal' here refers to the

conditions of fulfillment for a given intentional state, which would be determined by its noematic contents. What is perceived in such instinctively guided episodes is presented without any relation to a perceptual noematic sense, the function of which is precisely that it specifies the conditions for fulfillment of perceptual experiences. Such perceiving, then, is content-free and nonrepresentational.

It may perhaps be tempting to think at this point that Husserl has not eliminated but only altered his representationalism. Now, one might say, the noematic sense is not informing us of how things are in the world and projecting perceptual expectations of how they might be, but a perceiver sees, in affectively driven perception, something *as* alluring, or *as* calling for attention. And that, perhaps, is a content of sorts.⁸ I have already indicated at the end of §3.1 that Husserl himself gives us reason to reject the idea that the affect involved in perception is representational. At bottom, the point was that affect is simply too indeterminate to do the job called for in representing the world. Let me add, though, an additional reason for thinking that this suggestion is mistaken. To say that something perceived affects the perceiver or commands the perceiver's attention is not to say that the perceiver sees the perceived as affecting them nor as commanding their attention. If that were so, then, as is typically assumed to be the case for representation generally, there must be room for possible misrepresentation. We are supposing that to represent is to take the world to be some way, and whenever one has a take on things, one's take may turn out to be a mistake.

I struggle, however, to conceive of how one might misrepresent something as alluring or as commanding one's attention. The misrepresentation would require seeing something that seemed to be alluring or attention-grabbing, where this was not in fact the case. There just doesn't seem to be any room for a mismatch like that here. The point is equally effective if it is suggested that the affect involved in perceiving represents the perceiver in some sense, rather than affect representing the perceived, so that perceiving may have content concerning the perceiver, e.g., as affected. Of course, errors on the perceiver's part about being affected by the perceived (taken in the object or perceiver-representing way) can and do crop up in memory and judgments made about perception. That possibility is immaterial, since with it, we have shifted away from perception proper, where our sole interest lies now. Affectively driven perception cannot be representational if it lacks accuracy conditions, if it cannot misrepresent things. It may still have success conditions, unmoored from considerations of accuracy, insofar as a perceiving activity is more or less apt for guiding action. A lack of action-guiding aptness would not constitute a misrepresentation, an inaccuracy, but a practical maladjustment.⁹

It must be noted that Husserl affords only a relatively restricted place in his theory of perception to the type of nonrepresentational perceiving just described. It is in instinct, and only in its earliest occurrences in developmental time, that such perceiving takes place. And there is good reason to think that Husserl doesn't believe it extends very far into the developmental arc of conscious life. That is because he holds that the repeated occurrence of an initially blind type of

instinctive intentional state has a tendency to accumulate noematic sense and thus representational content (Husserl 2006: 253; Husserl 2008: 317–318; Husserl 2014: 222). The ‘goal’ that is not apparent from the start makes itself apparent in due time (Pugliese 2009: 148–149; Mensch 2010: 224). So, perception driven by instinctive curiosity will begin blind—i.e., not guided by a noematic sense specifying conditions of its fulfillment and thereby allowing it to represent what it perceives—only to transition into the ‘light’, thanks to the mechanism of association, which enables it eventually to take on noematic sense. Husserl’s minimal allowance for some instances of nonrepresentational perceiving, far from undermining his general commitment to a representational view, actually explains and reinforces that view. Representation-laden perceiving is born from and supplants representation-free perceiving.

4. Developing Husserl’s Latent Nonrepresentationalism

Based on the preceding section, it seems obviously right to say that Husserl admits a form of representation-free perceiving in some of his later writings on perception. Still, many details about it remain unclear. His lengthiest discussions on instinctive, affectively guided perception remain only fragments and tentative sketches, after all. Nevertheless, I think some of the details can be filled in by integrating insights from elsewhere in his work on perception into the account of instinctive, affectively driven perceiving. In fact, I think Husserl provides considerable resources for developing a more generally applicable nonrepresentationalist view of perception. The function of affect schemas on this view would not only provide a kind of training wheels for perception but also a means of getting along regularly in perceiving, which infants and adults alike may enjoy. This suggests another sense, then, to the nonrepresentationalism of Husserl’s that *nearly* was—that is, one he would have recognized if only he had suitably arranged the pieces of the puzzle that he already had in his possession.

One will wonder how such affectively guided perceiving can be intentional without representing. After all, noematic content or sense has the express function of establishing contact with the world. It purportedly does so by allowing a flow of mute sensory experience, just noise by itself, to disclose a mind-transcendent world, something on the far side of the sensory flow. The late Husserl is very flexible in his use of ‘intentional’ (and its cognates). It means not only directedness to the world (i.e., mind-independent entities, generally). It also refers to lateral, intraexperiential relations. Hence, he applies intentional vocabulary to phenomena such as time consciousness, association, and kinesthesia, which are not by themselves world-directed but laterally mind-directed, involving moments aiming across the stream of conscious experience to other moments thereof. What we have presently on the table in our conception of affectively guided perceiving are interlaced moments of exteroceptive sensation, intramodal affect, intermodal affect, and bodily abilities (mediating intermodal and intramodal affects). It is tempting to think that we have here only a very elaborate phenomenal syntax,

something which, lacking noematic sense, consists only of lateral experience-to-experience relations and no experience-to-world relations.

This is indeed a perplexing problem for Husserl. It is not a problem, to my awareness, that he deals with clearly and directly. If the point remains unsettled, it may well be that affectively guided perceiving is not world-involving after all. On the one hand, Husserl does regularly speak of instinctive, affectively guided perceiving as though it were directed to things (e.g., to food, to 'nature', to dangerous events, and to fellow persons). On the other hand, Husserl is hesitant to say that a perceiver, in affectively guided perceiving, has an experience of the 'world', since that technical term in his usage refers to horizon-laden experience, which entails as we saw the presence of a certain kind of noematic content. Hence, instinctive experience, as he sometimes conceives it, is directed to a 'pre-world' (Bower 2015). What this means, though, is just that we don't experience the world *as* world, things *as* things, properties *as* properties, etc. In short, we don't represent such things. But if we suppose that we do not see things unless we see them *as such*, we beg the question in favor of representationalism. Intuitively, we can conceive of cases where one sees X but not *as* X (Dretske 1979). If I walk past an acquaintance in a crowd without recognizing them, it seems I've seen them, but not *as* my acquaintance. We identify or register them, but not as acquaintances. The idea is that perceiving may be or enable a relation of sorts not reducible to the semantic 'relation'.¹⁰

I think Husserl's notion of receptivity allows for just this possibility, although I'm not sure he meant for it to do so. In certain texts, Husserl reflects on the nature of perceptual experience at a very high degree of abstraction (Husserl 1973a; Husserl 2001a). In these texts, he abstracts away from perceiving things *as* spatial, *as* bounded individuals, *as* causally interacting with other things, *as* valuable, *as* persons, etc. (Husserl 1973a: 72). He thinks there are perceptual processes more fundamental than those involved in representation-laden perceiving. These are, in fact, just the processes I introduced earlier as noematic accoutrements, i.e., intramodal and intermodal affects, insofar as these influence perceptual attention. Without presupposing the presence of noematic content, Husserl describes these processes as articulating perceived 'unities' or 'objectivities' (*Gegenständlichkeiten*), the latter term sometimes helpfully rendered 'object-like formations' to highlight that one is not perceiving an object *as such* in perceiving one of these. The terminological hesitation is unnecessary, however. If it is inappropriate to say that a perceiver sees an object in an episode of nonrepresentational, affectively driven perceiving because the perceiver doesn't see it *as* an object, it is, by parity of reasoning, just as inappropriate to say that the perceiver sees an 'appearance', 'sense datum', etc. Indeed, if that reasoning were valid, it would be an even greater error to say that the perceiver sees any of the latter (*as such*). Absurdly, one would be barred from specifying at all what the perceiver was perceiving.

At this abstract level, then, perceiving is directed to unities, which I think we can suppose are worldly offerings despite not being perceived *as such*. Husserl describes this sort of perceiving as a kind of 'receptivity' (Husserl 1973a: 79) or even, somewhat curiously, 'receptive action' (Husserl 2001a: 84/127). Receptive

perceiving, he explains, is an act of 'simple having-in-consciousness' of what it perceives, in contrast to the sort of perceiving ('active perception') that construes what it perceives and 'explicates' its sense (Husserl 1973a: 79). Its instances comprise a 'substratum' of perceiving where 'an articulated unity of sensuous data—colors, for example—is not given immediately as an object in experience, for colors are always already'—i.e., outside of mere receptivity—"taken" in experience as colors of concrete things, as colored surfaces, "patches" on an object, etc'. (Husserl 1973a: 73; emphasis added). There is a sense, he holds, in which we experience colors without identifying them as such, i.e., *as* properties of objects or *as* belonging to this or that color category ('red'). We see them, but don't 'take' them to be anything. We simply 'have them' in consciousness. We are directed to colors (*inter alia*), full stop. And this directedness consists in our more or less refined ability to discriminate between them, pick them out, track them in the changing flow of visual sensation (according to laws of association or innate biases), recognize, reidentify, and variously respond to them. We respond to them when they arouse an intramodal affective tendency that in turn motivates the exercise of a bodily ability to alter the course of the perceiving process in a way consistent with some bias on perceptual attention.

At this point, there remains a serious problem—doubtless, the elephant in the room—concerning Husserl's theory of sense data or 'hyletic data'. I've not commented on what these are.¹¹ We would be home free (or much closer to home, at least) if only sensation were itself a world-involving affair. Yet, Husserl often describes sensations as 'immanent', and one naturally understands that he thereby takes them to be mind-bound or intramental, thus cut off from the real. Even if that is correct, I think I can salvage the intentionality, the world-directedness, of affectively guided, nonrepresentational perceiving. Let's recall first what it means when Husserl speaks of something as 'immanent'. He contrasts immanence with transcendence, respectively, as follows: 'On the one hand, [there are] essences of formations belonging to consciousness itself; on the other hand, [there are] essences of individual affairs transcendent to consciousness, thus essences of those individual affairs which only become "manifested" in formations belonging to consciousness [...] by virtue of sensuous appearances' (Husserl 1982: 116–117/140).

The just-quoted remark seems to make two claims, a 'locational' claim and a functional one. To be immanent means to belong to consciousness, not to transcend it. That is the 'locational' claim. It means, further, to possibly also take part in the function of enabling intentional directedness. That is the functional claim. The locational claim deserves a little explanation. Husserl more or less equates 'consciousness' (*Bewusstsein*) with intentional directedness (and not, e.g., phenomenal character) (Husserl 1983: 185/217; Husserl 1991: 72/33). So, to say that something immanent 'belongs to consciousness' means that it is (potentially, at least) a mereological part of an intentionally directed mental state and not whatever that state is intentionally directed toward. The quasi-spatial character of visual sensory experience, for instance, is merely two-dimensional, Husserl claims (Husserl 1977: 161–166/124–127; Husserl 1997: 240–243/203–205).¹² In experiencing it, we do not experience space or things in space. But the sensory

experience serves (or can serve) as a component part of an intentional state that is directed to things 'through' it (although not as in viewing a picture; Husserl 1983: 186/219), so that the two-dimensional visual experience can present three-dimensional space and spatial things. The point is supposed to generalize to other aspects of visual sensation and other sensory modalities.

Sensation, on this understanding, is thus, in a very definite sense, a mind-bound affair. And Husserl typically claims that its relation to world-involving intentionality only arises from the fact that it is caught up in more complex, sophisticated mental machinery, namely, the machinery of noematic content and acts that apprehend and 'animate' the sensory array in terms of such noematic content. Since we're presently exploring what affectively driven sensory perception affords us apart from that intentional machinery, we appear to have reached a dead end. Let me suggest an escape route. We can begin to see the way out by returning to Husserl's example of spatial perception in vision. Husserl supposes that a perceiver's visual capacities supply the perceiver with a two-dimensional array of visual sensation. He suggests that, ordinarily, we take this up in order to see three-dimensional spatial configurations by apprehending (thus, representing) it as being a certain way (Husserl 1997: 240–243/203–205). The specific apprehension involves, he explains, taking the two-dimensional array as belonging to a continuous series of anticipated two-dimensional arrays, a series generated by some bodily movement and paired with the pertinent intermodal kinesthetic affect. When taken together, the bodily movement-congruent series of two-dimensional visual experiences disclose the three-dimensional structure of the perceived.

To give an example (overly simplified, admittedly), the gradual expansion of a certain delimited area of the two-dimensional visual field may be taken as presenting an object's approach and the deformation of a two-dimensional elliptical figure into a circular one may be taken as presenting an object's rotation. Now, it is remarkably simple how that representational account can be revised in a nonrepresentational way. Husserl has in fact shown us the way in his representation-laden account. He only denies the sufficiency of visual sensation for spatial perception at a given moment. In an instant, presented with a fixed, static array of visual sensation, no three-dimensional spatial structure is discernible. And so he says it must be apprehended, it must be interpreted in light of perceptual expectations involving possible series of visual sensations that work together to present things' three-dimensional spatial structure. All along the way, as well, Husserl supposes that the perceiver must anticipate the oncoming flow of visual sensations that will reveal something three dimensionally.

But notice that when the sensory array is in fact transformed and deformed over time, Husserl allows that it does make the three-dimensional structure of things discernible to the perceiver. True, Husserl speaks of raw sensory experience as indeterminate 'stuff' or 'material' that needs working up in order for the perceiver to have perceptual access to things. Nevertheless, sensory experience is only *relatively* indeterminate. Sensation is *ambiguous*, rather than being utterly unstructured experiential noise (Husserl 1982: 206–207/242; Williford 2013). That must be so, if a perceiver is supposed to make contact with things *in* or *through*

(i.e., by means of) sensation. It allows multiple interpretations or construals, construals that importantly enable a snapshot-like snippet of sensation to link up in certain ways with antecedent and successive sensations to bring forth the structure of the momentary sensation. In other words, synchronically, visual sensation does not reveal (e.g.) three-dimensional structure, but it may do so diachronically.¹³ The apparent poverty of sensation (i.e., without apprehension) is due only to the artificial focus on it as an ever-vanishing and instantaneous snippet of experience.

Of course, as we have seen, things are not so simple. The elapse of sensation enables contact with things *provided* that suitable intramodal affective qualities attach to it that motivate bodily movements governing the oncoming course of sensation in an order-conducive way (i.e., consistent with certain perceptual biases) and also generating congruent intermodal kinesthetic experience. These affective and motor accompaniments of sensation can be thought of as doing the disambiguating work on sensation that relieves it of the indeterminacy Husserl felt held it back from counting itself as inherently intentional and object-directed. Even with these complications, what we see is a set of resources at or near the level of sensation itself. Perceiving, so construed, is not an experiential jumble with only phenomenal syntax *sans* experience-to-world relations but an activity that relates to the world insofar as it is sensitive and responsive to the structure of the world that constantly affects it. Husserl took us very near to a generalizable, nonrepresentational account of affectively driven perception. No essential ingredient needs to be added. The elements are there, and I hope I've indicated how they might be pieced together and make plausible the idea that perceiving can make contact with the world without representing it or having it presented under some noematically determined aspect.

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NOTES

¹ Regarding my example, the precise number of planets in our solar system may not in fact be eight. See Batygin and Brown (2016).

² Steven Crowell does something similar in his recent book. He presents a critique of representationalism that is largely irrelevant to many contemporary accounts of mental representation and acknowledges the narrow scope of his critique in a footnote (Crowell 2013: 15). He does situate the critique in the body of his text in relation to Kant's views, but the reader easily gets the impression that it is a wholesale critique of theories of mental representation and not only of one variant thereof.

³ See Drummond and Embree (1992) for a variety of viewpoints on the issue.

⁴ Christian Lotz has provided the most detailed account of affect's experiential characteristics that I am aware of. See Lotz (2007b).

⁵ This terminology is similar to Maren Wehrle's talk of an 'affect horizon' (Wehrle 2015: 61).

⁶ Michael Shim (2011) makes the converse point, which is also relevant here.

⁷ For additional discussion of this phenomenon by Husserl, see Husserl (1973b: 333–335), Husserl (1973c: 329–330), Husserl (2008: 317–318), and Husserl (2006: 225–226, 326–327).

⁸ I thank an anonymous referee for pressing me on this point.

⁹ This seems to me the upshot of some nonrepresentational views of perception that conceive of perceiving as a sensorimotor process and perceptual capacities as sensorimotor ones. See Myin and Degenaar (2014). I only gesture in this direction now to get across the gist of an idea that demands lengthier elaboration, which I cannot provide here.

¹⁰ Travis (2013) defends a view like this, as does Romano (2015), but from a phenomenological angle.

¹¹ See Gallagher (1986) for a brief but detailed summary of Husserl's notion of hyletic data.

¹² I do not endorse Husserl's description of visual sensation as two-dimensional. I think it would be right to say, as he does, that a particular snapshot of sensation is spatially ambiguous, but it does not follow that it thereby loses a spatial dimension. The same point can be made for other qualities of visual sensation and sensation from other sensory modalities. Nevertheless, in my analysis, I want to show how we can arrive at a nonrepresentational view of perception with minimal modifications to the familiar understanding of Husserl's views.

¹³ This is a point that psychologist J.J. Gibson recognized more clearly than Husserl did in his work on vision. See Gibson (1979). Romano (2016) similarly recommends revising the classic phenomenological approach to perception, exemplified by Husserl (among others) in a way that brings it closer to Gibson's view of perception.

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