

Recalcitrant Emotions: A Phenomenological View

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Abstract. In this paper, I sketch an account of emotion that is based on a close analogy with a Husserlian account of perception. I also make use of the approach that I have limned, viz., to articulate a view of the kind of “conflict without contradiction” (CWC) which may obtain between a recalcitrant emotion and a judgment. My main contention is that CWC can be accounted for by appeal to the rationality of perception and emotion, conceived as responsiveness to experiential evidence. The conflicts in question can be regarded as obtaining between different strands of evidence, and our perceptual and emotional experiences can be thus conflicted even among themselves, not only in the special case of a conflict with a judgment.

Keywords: recalcitrant emotion, perception, phenomenology, rationality

Nepaklusniosios emocijos: fenomenologinis požiūris

Santrauka. Straipsnyje apibrėžiamas požiūris į emocijas, pagrįstas artima analogija su Husserlio požiūriu į suvokimą. Išreikštoji prieiga taip pat pasitelkiama ir tyrime, t. y. siekiant išreikšti tam tikrą „konfliktą be prieštaravimo“, kuris gali susidaryti tarp nepaklusniosios emocijos ir sprendimo. Esminis straipsnio teiginys – konfliktas be prieštaravimo gali būti paaiškintas apeliuojant į suvokimo ir emocijos racionalumą, suprantamą kaip atsakas į patirties duomenis. Aptariami konfliktai gali būti siejami su tuo, kad esama skirtingų patirties duomenų gijų, tad žmogaus suvokimo ir emociniai potyriai gali prieštarauti net tarpusavyje, ne tik tais atvejais, kai jie konfliktuoja su sprendimu.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: nepaklusniosios emocijos, suvokimas, fenomenologija, racionalumas

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1. Introduction

According to perceptualist theories, emotions are a kind of perception, or in some important sense analogous to perception. Such views provide an alternative to feeling theories and judgmentalist theories, and can be regarded as occupying a middle ground between the two, insofar as they conceive of emotions as being intentional, i.e., directed to objects or properties, and thus different from mere non-intentional feelings, but not as amounting to judgments.¹

My first concern in this paper is to sketch a perceptualist account of emotion that is based on a close analogy with a Husserlian account of perception, involving the well-known Husserlian ideas of perceptual fulfillment and disappointment, i.e., a kind of experiential confirmation and disconfirmation.² The peculiar view that I propose has not, to the best of my knowledge, been rehearsed by other philosophers. I have, however, reason to believe that the view might be of some interest to philosophers of emotion, and would therefore venture to put before the reader a sketch, which may yet be developed in greater detail and nuance, whether by myself or by anyone prepared to take it up. My view amounts to a very straightforward extension of the core Husserlian view of sensuous perception, with the potential to provide a starting point for a discussion which proceeds to suitably qualify the analogy between perception and emotion – a line I have also pursued in Laasik 2018.³

My second concern will be to make use of the approach that I have limned, viz., to articulate a view of the kind of “conflict without contradiction” (CWC) which may obtain between a recalcitrant emotion and a judgment – thereby making a connection with current debates concerning perceptualism about emotions, and mustering some support for my perceptualist view, insofar as it will be seen to be up to the task of accounting for CWC.

Recalcitrant emotions are such as persist despite our better judgment. E.g., I may judge that I am in no danger of falling, but my fear of falling is not thereby dispelled.

¹ The feeling theory originates with William James, who famously argues that emotions amount to non-intentional feelings that are caused by certain bodily changes, “[W]e feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble, and [it is] not that we cry, strike, or tremble, because we are sorry, angry, or fearful as the case may be” (James 1884: 190). According to the judgment theories, emotions are evaluative judgments. See, e.g., Solomon 1993, Nussbaum 2004.

² To be clear, when I speak about “a Husserlian account of perception”, I mean an account along Husserlian lines, incorporating certain core Husserlian notions and ideas. I do not commit to providing a thoroughly accurate rendition of Edmund Husserl’s actual position, supported by textual exegesis.

³ I cannot claim to be the first or sole proponent of a Husserlian perceptualist view of emotions. John Drummond has developed his perceptualist account in a number of papers: e.g., Drummond 1995, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2009. I will make further remarks on Drummond’s views in another footnote, but here I would note that Drummond has also offered a detailed discussion of recalcitrant emotions, viz., in Drummond 2004.

I would also add that I do not entirely discount the possibility that Husserl may not have held a perceptualist view of emotions at all. E.g., Panos Theodorou (2014: 627) argues that on Husserl’s view emotions are a kind of judgment, while pointing out, in a footnote, that several interpreters do not accept this reading of Husserl without qualification.

Last but not least, however, I have recently become aware of Ullrich Melle’s discussion of Husserl’s unpublished manuscripts, where Melle attributes to Husserl a view which appears very similar, in substance, to what I defend in the present paper, while backing it up with textual evidence. Thus, we learn that Husserl has, indeed, described emotional experiences as achieving gradual fulfillments with regard to aspects of the object, analogous to sensuous perceptual experiences (Melle 2019: 201-202). It may well be that, with an upcoming addition to the Husserliana series, the view that I articulate, defend, and apply in the present paper, will be seen as amounting not to an original view of my own, but to a version of Husserl’s actual view.

My basic conception of CWC, and my understanding of its philosophical significance, derive from the views of Sabine Döring, who has covered this ground in several papers.⁴ According to her view, the conflict between the emotion and the judgment is rational, not merely psychological, since it obtains between different representations of the world. However, it does not amount to a logical contradiction, since one does not have to give up the conflicting emotion or judgment, on pain of irrationality (Döring 2009: 240-241).⁵

Döring claims that the possibility of CWC furnishes an important touchstone for “cognitive” theories of emotion, which hold that the content of emotions is such as to be “made true” by the facts (ibid.: 241). Indeed, if it is agreed that recalcitrance involves CWC, then the phenomenon of recalcitrance would seem to yield a reason to favor perceptual theories of emotion over judgmental theories, insofar as the latter appear difficult to reconcile with the idea that the conflict does not amount to a logical contradiction. Yet, unless we achieve a firm grasp of the idea of CWC, we cannot entirely discount reasons to doubt whether persistent emotions are really involved in this special kind of conflict. Alternatively, it may be that the conflict is not rational but merely psychological, or that, while being rational, it does amount to a logical contradiction after all. The problem, thus, is to give an account of CWC.

While I mainly draw upon Döring’s work to set up the present discussion, I will also remark on Döring’s solution to the problem of CWC at the end of my sections 2 and 3, and compare it with mine. She has argued that CWC is best explained by appeal to the peculiar attitudes (i.e., intentional modes) and contents of emotional experiences (ibid.: 242). I will give an alternative account of CWC, viz., one that I take to be in some ways clearer and broader than hers. My main contention is that CWC can be accounted for by appeal to the rationality of perception and emotion, conceived as responsiveness to experiential evidence. The conflicts in question can be regarded as obtaining between different strands of evidence, and our perceptual and emotional experiences can be thus conflicted even among themselves, not only with judgments. A conflict that obtains between an emotion and a judgment, and involves emotional recalcitrance, can thus be viewed as a special case that is best understood by recourse to the context that I have just described.

2. Recalcitrant Perception

I will now present a phenomenological account of perceptual experience, so as to elucidate the phenomenon of recalcitrant perceptual experience. I will begin by articulating certain basics of the view, then focus on aspects of the rationality of perceptual experience. At the end of the section, I will undertake to shore up our rationality in the face of recalcitrant perception, by considering ways in which a subject can manage the recalcitrant experience and CWC.

⁴ See, especially, Döring 2009, 2015a, and 2015b.

⁵ According to Döring, rational conflicts are “conflicts *in content* about how the world actually is” (Döring 2009: 240). In her paper, she repeatedly reminds the reader of the rationality, in this sense, of the pertinent conflicts between emotions and judgments. I refer to the conflicts that she regards as a-rational, as being “merely psychological”.

My basic Husserlian starting point is the familiar idea that perception necessarily involves perceptual anticipations of possible continuations of the perceptual experience, realizing the conditions of the fulfillment or disappointment of the perceptual experience. E.g., if I turn the object around and the back side appears as anticipated, I attain fulfillments with regard to the back side. If it is not as anticipated, I may experience a disappointment. If the lighting improves or I change my perspective of the object, I may attain other fulfillments or disappointments, e.g., concerning the object's colour or shape. On the Husserlian view, the objects given to us (or "constituted") in perception are conceived just in terms of such possibilities of fulfillment and disappointment, their different aspects providing, as it were, rules for what it would take to fulfill or disappoint a sensuous experience. Once we accept this point, we may say that the contents of perceptual experience can be cashed out in terms of fulfillment conditions, or what it takes to bring aspects of objectivity to degrees of immediate givenness. We may say that the contents of perceptual experience are fulfillment conditions.⁶

The basic Husserlian ideas of anticipation, fulfillment, and disappointment, which we have just invoked, form part of a psychological, epistemological, and a constitutive account. We will not be concerned with perceptual psychology here, but will, instead, proceed, to the epistemological significance of the above sketch. The ideas that we have set forth, already enable us to begin to see how perception could be regarded as epistemically rational, in the sense of being responsive to experiential evidence. On our conception, perceptual experience not merely supports beliefs and judgments, but is itself supported by experiential evidence, which accumulates as one explores the object and attains fulfillments.⁷ Alternatively, it may be that the perceptual experience is disappointed, e.g., if the color of the object looks green to one, viz., through a series of appearances, under certain lighting conditions, and then, once the lighting conditions are improved, begins to look red instead, yielding another internally harmonious series of colour appearances, which does, however, conflict with the foregoing series. Here we have a kind of CWC, a conflict between strands of experiential evidence, and thus between different perceptual experiences, or phases of perceptual experience, which nevertheless does not amount to a logical contradiction, since we are not dealing with contents of predicative judgments. It seems that, as a matter of perceptual psychology, such conflicts are promptly resolved in disappointments, with one strand of evidence conclusively prevailing over the other. However, it also seems that at least sometimes the conflict could be somewhat drawn-out, and become a focal concern for the subject, before one experience, or one line of evidence, wins out and a resolution is attained.

⁶ A more detailed discussion of the basic aspects of the present view can be found, e.g., in Husserl 1997: Sects. II and III.

⁷ This view of perceptual intentionality conforms to Edmund Husserl's view of intentionality generally. For Husserl, the very idea of intentionality involves evidence which could be mustered in support of an intentional "act," whether this "act" be sensuous perceptual or some other kind, e.g., directed at logical or mathematical objects (Husserl 1981: 2. *Abschn.*, 1. *Kap.*).

It is in terms of such anticipations, and fulfillment conditions, that the presence, or constitution, in experience, of objects and their perceptual properties, is conceived.⁸ The Husserlian account of constitution is an account of the necessary and, I believe, sufficient conditions, involving various psychological resources, for our having intentional experiences with certain kinds of content. Constitution has also been explicated as the emergence, in experience, of kinds of unity from kinds of multiplicity, e.g., when the experience of a stable, or constant, spatial objectivity arises from an experience of a multitude of sensations.⁹ But one should treat this idea with some caution, insofar as constitution can involve the revelation of entirely new realms of sense, giving new meaning to unity and multiplicity in the constituted sphere, and rendering it incommensurable with the realms from which the constituting resources are drawn.¹⁰ In this way, constitution involves what may be referred to as different levels, starting, roughly, from correlations between the most rudimentary forms of subjectivity and objectivity, and evolving towards more complex and realistic forms. One instance of such constitutive stratification is the constitutive dependence of predicative experience on pre-predicative experience. Indeed, the idea of constitutive levels can be best understood if we keep in mind the kind of triangulation of which we have been speaking, viz., involving the present sensuous experience, the circumstances under which one has it, and the experienced aspects of objectivities. E.g., in Husserl's discussion of the visual experience of spatial objectivity, interactions between series of visual sensations and series of kinaesthetic sensations (the kinaesthetic circumstances) lead the subject to anticipate how the visual series will continue, and the visual experience thus comes to present the constant shape of an object. An account of how we experience, e.g., aspects of material thinghood or Lifeworldly thinghood, will involve triangulation on other kinds of items, and it will be possible to regard them in more substantial terms than our example of the spatial objectivity.¹¹ Thus, when giving an account of the "constitution," in perceptual experience, of aspects of the Lifeworldly thing, we will surely be able to draw upon not just the kinaesthetic sensations, but the experiencing and experienced moving body in a more robust sense, and speak of the subject's bodily movements (as experienced from the subject's point of view). However, despite such variation, the triangulation as such is required at all levels. We cannot do without a third item – while it may, in certain cases, be possible, indeed, necessary, to pack considerable complexity into our idea of the third item, so as to capture, e.g., one's sense that the experience of an object's shape depends not just on how it looks now and the way in which one is moving, but also on the way the object itself is moving, and shifting its shape, as well as how a pathology of one's visual organs may affect the continuation of the experience.

⁸ I do not propose to equate the meanings of "presence" and "constitution", but I hold that all objectual presence is constituted.

⁹ For an illustration of this leitmotif, see, e.g., Husserl 1997: 152.

¹⁰ Indeed, as is well known, Husserl also refers to the multitudinous sensations by means of the mass term "hyle", regarding them as a sensuous "matter". For a discussion of sensations and their role in perceptual experience, see also Husserl 1997: Sect. II, Ch. 3.

¹¹ For a more detailed account of how different constitutive levels interrelate, with a focus on the levels of the spatial objectivity and material thinghood, see Husserl 1989: Section One.

I have been discussing the Husserlian constitutive approach with a view to making two points. One is that this approach involves the idea of an appropriate direction of clarification, viz., items higher up in the constitutive hierarchy are clarified by recourse to items at the lower levels, in view of the constitutive dependence of the former on the latter. It will be seen that this is precisely my approach, as I seek to understand Döring's cases of CWC, viz., between a recalcitrant emotion and a judgment, by considering other more basic cases of similar conflicts. My second point will become relevant when, in the next section, we consider emotional experiences and the constitution of emotional properties. It is that when we, as part of our philosophical clarification work, analyze experiences for their constitution, we are by no means limited to considering only realistic scenarios, involving realistic aspects of human psychology. Indeed, the very idea of a constitutive hierarchy already jars with the idea of such a thoroughgoing realism, insofar as our analyses of the lower constitutive levels are barred from drawing upon resources only available at the higher levels, thereby excluding any top-down processes, e.g., accounting for the cognitive penetration of our sensuous or emotional experiences.

The better to prepare us for a discussion of recalcitrant experiences, I will add certain further ideas to the foregoing discussion of the rationality of perception. What we have said thus far may give rise to the concern that the phenomena of fulfillment and disappointment per se do not suffice to establish that perception is rational, insofar as one could perhaps think of them as something that just happens to the perceiver without his active involvement. If it is indeed the case that the perceiver just undergoes fulfillments and disappointments passively, then it would seem that we cannot speak about him as being either rational or irrational, and, so to speak, hold him praiseworthy or blameworthy accordingly. However, on the present view, the subject pursues fulfillments, and opens himself up to disappointments, as part of a pursuit of various epistemic and practical aims. Although we cannot, e.g., choose when to be disappointed, we can nevertheless actively pursue fulfillments and render ourselves open to disappointments, with the idea of "optimality" of givenness as guiding idea.¹² Such a process is responsive to the fullnesses, considered as evidence, that we ongoingly attain. Clearly, there are many ways in which our pursuit of fulfillments could go, when perceptually engaging with an object or a larger scene. E.g., we could be cultivating a focus on certain details in which we are primarily interested, to the exclusion of others, or skipping back and double-checking what we have already covered, so as to deal with possibilities of forgetting and change. We could be primarily seeking to bring into view new aspects of the object, or just keeping an eye on what is already in plain view. Let us call such series and patterns of fulfillment, "coverage" – a term I first introduced in (Laasik 2019b). Let us also say that the pursuit of a certain kind of coverage is due to a perceptual-level "mindset", i.e., perceptual interests and one's ways of going about satisfying them, sensitive to one's perceptual capacities

¹² For Husserl's discussion of optimality in perceptual experience, see Husserl 1997: § 36. For a recent comprehensive overview of Husserl's views on this topic, see Doyon 2018.

and the changeable perceptual circumstances.¹³ For her mindset and the related coverage, the perceiver can be held epistemically and practically praise- or blameworthy. E.g., a failure to open up to possible disappointment, viz., by neglecting to take a closer look at the crucial detail that could reveal the object as other than what one takes it to be, can render one epistemically blameworthy, or irrational.

We are now ready to speak about perceptual illusions, particularly ones that may persist in the face of one's better judgment, as is the case with the Müller-Lyer illusion. Our phenomenological take on illusions (and hallucinations) is rooted in the very idea of perceptual experience that we have hitherto been discussing. I believe that, considered from the phenomenological perspective, illusions are closely connected with disappointments. Indeed, some phenomenologists have argued that an illusion just is what is revealed as such in the further course of one's perceptual experience.¹⁴ One reason to doubt this view is there are illusions like the Müller-Lyer illusion, which seem near-incorrigible in this way: we normally cannot help but see the two lines as being of unequal length. Even so, I believe that disappointment is an important aspect of a first-personal account of illusion. Remember that a constitutive, hierarchical account involves the idea that it is possible to clarify higher-level phenomena by appeal to the more basic, lower-level phenomena. This is the perspective that we ought to cultivate in elucidating persistent illusions. A constitutive account of illusions should take as its starting point the cases where disillusionment takes place by perceptual disappointment, to be suitably complemented, at higher constitutive levels, by references to other, intellectual and intersubjective sources of disillusionment. As for the perceptually near-incorrigible Müller-Lyer illusion, we need to account for it in its specificity, but we should not mistake it for a paradigmatic case of illusion. Rather, it needs to be regarded in the context of the more basic cases, where we may take ourselves to have been subject to an illusion if we have experienced, or expect to experience, a disappointment. In a situation stripped of more complex psychological resources, this is what it takes to grasp the illusoriness of an experience.

¹³ I borrow this expression ("*Einstellung*") and perhaps also the rough idea from Herbert Leyendecker, an early phenomenologist who was a member of the Munich and Göttingen Phenomenological Circles. While mindsets are an important concern for Leyendecker, he does not define the term, but merely elucidates it by offering miscellaneous examples and clarifications. E.g., we are told that the mindset of searching "works like a sieve, which lets fall through everything that does not fit, so that only that is spotted wherein I, in my attitude, as I search, "remain hanging" with my glance" (Leyendecker 1913, p. 52). Tracing the notion back to the psychology of Leyendecker's day, Kevin Mulligan elucidates it as "the higher-order unity of modes, tendencies, and dispositions which is often the function of determinate types of interest and attention" (Mulligan 1995, p. 204). Mulligan regards Leyendecker's incorporation of this notion into philosophy as a fruitful, indeed "elegant development of Husserl's account of the connection between optimality and interest" (ibid.). I would translate Leyendecker's "*Einstellung*" as "attitude", but we have already used this term, viz., in the above introductory remarks on Döring's view, in the sense of an intentional mode (vs. content). Mulligan, on his part, translates "*Einstellung*" as "set".

¹⁴ In a recent debate, Andrea Staiti (2015: 123-141) has argued that this idea captures the very essence of illusion. He presents this view as part of his critique of Claude Romano's "conjunctivist" view of illusion and hallucination. See Romano 2011 and 2012. Staiti's position is, in turn, criticized by Søren Overgaard (2018: 41-42), who espouses a "disjunctivist" view. In Laasik 2019a, I consider this debate in relation to Leyendecker's views.

To conclude our discussion of perception, let us briefly compare our ideas with Döring's view, which she brings to bear on emotions.¹⁵ Döring (2009: 243-244) has argued that, in accounting for CWC, we need, on the one hand, to appeal to the non-conceptual content of perceptions (and emotions), which she associates with the idea that perceptions (and emotions) do not enter into inferential relations but have a non-inferential logic of their own. In the paper just cited, the idea of a non-inferential logic of perception (or emotion) is not characterised positively, but is, instead, elucidated and supported by appeal to the failure of the idea of inferential relations involving perceptions (or emotions). For example, we are invited to agree with Tim Crane regarding the impossibility of inferring the perception of an object as being F and G, from the perception of it as F and the perception of it as G. On the basis of this and other examples, we are invited to draw the conclusion that perceptions (and emotions) are unlike beliefs "in that they do not stand in evidential relations, where evidential relations are one kind of inferential relations" (ibid.: 244).

I would draw the reader's attention to the multiple negativity of Döring's discussion, as highlighted by these brief pointers. While Döring effectively argues that there is *no* inferential perceptual justification, we draw upon Husserl's view that there *is* non-inferential perceptual justification, viz., conceived in terms of fulfillment, as part of a layered constitutive account. This perspective allows us to be open to differences between the various constitutive levels: by contrast with the more basic cases, where it seems, as a matter of psychological fact, that evidential conflicts between phases of sensuous experience tend to be resolved by disappointments fairly straightforwardly, it may well be that the conflicts between the perceptual experience, and the belief or judgment, persist. The subject may fail to revise his beliefs in the face of overwhelming sensuous evidence, or he may be unable to see the object differently, despite harboring a well-supported belief to the effect that he is subject to an illusion.

On the other hand, Döring's explanation of CWC also involves an appeal to what she takes to be a peculiar feature of the perceptual and emotional attitudes (ibid.: 244-246). Specifically, "neither emotion nor perception 'aim at truth' in the sense that the subject must *necessarily* regard their content as true. ... But this need not, and does not, prevent the subject from regarding these contents as true *by default*" (ibid.: 245). Insofar as "we treat our emotions and perceptions as cognitive mental subsystems whose function is to register stimuli so as to provide us with information about our environment" (ibid.), we regard these systems as reliable but fallible. We do not, Döring avers, regard the content of each particular element of the system as true, as we do in the case of elements of the system of judgment and belief. Even if the perception or the emotion persists in the face of better judgment, there is no contradiction, and the subject is not rendered irrational, and yet this is a "rational conflict" because the perceptions and the emotions are regarded as true by default.

¹⁵ To be clear, anyone wishing to make critical objections to Döring's position, would do well to study the remarkable body of work that she has produced in the philosophy of emotion, viz., concerning recalcitrant emotions, emotions as affective perception, and our epistemic and practical rationality. See, e.g., Döring 2003, 2007, 2015a, and 2015b. To note, in Döring and Lutz (2015), she and her co-author contend that we should refrain from unduly assimilating emotion to perception, and propose to look for a more *sui generis* approach.

In response to Bennett Helm's view to the effect that the conflict between recalcitrant perception and belief is a-rational, Döring duly notes that in many cases we are able to calibrate our perceptual (as well as emotional) experiences, and, in the recalcitrant cases, are in a position to withdraw our confidence from the illusory experience (ibid: 245-246). While not objecting to this point, I believe that we can aim for a deeper understanding of the recalcitrant and other cases by invoking the ideas of mindset and coverage. Thus, in all cases of unresolved conflict, we can be regarded as being either rational or irrational, depending on whether we assume the right mindset towards them, and aim for the right kind of coverage. Optimally, in such cases, one needs to render oneself open to disappointment as far as possible, so as to resolve the CWC at the level of perception, viz., by taking a closer look at the crucial details, examining the object from different perspectives, etc. Indeed, even in the Müller-Lyer case, this is the right way to respond to the evidence, except if one is in a position to believe, not just that the two lines are of equal length, but also that the illusion is perceptually incorrigible. In that case, we should, indeed, just quarantine the recalcitrant experience—but it is a case that we are now able to regard in its proper context of other, more basic CWC.

3. Recalcitrant Emotion

I will now sketch an account of emotions, in particular, recalcitrant ones, based on the example of fear, pursuing a close analogy with the above account of perception. In a nutshell, I propose to consider emotions in terms of the Husserlian ideas of anticipations, fulfillments, and disappointments, and conceive of the presence of value properties in terms of fulfillment conditions; to regard the emotional fulfillments and disappointments (a kind of immediate confirmation and disconfirmation) as possessed of an epistemological and constitutive significance; and to conceive of the constitution of value properties in terms of something like the triangulation among visual sensations, kinaesthetic sensations, and spatial properties. The constitutively basic items will be regarded as suitable for clarifying that which is constitutively non-basic, and we will permit ourselves appeals to certain imaginary, indeed, un-realistic, emotional scenarios as part of our constitutive account.

Take, for example, my episodic fear of my neighbor's Rottweiler. According to our phenomenological account, I experience the dog as having the emotional property of fearsomeness. As I interact with it, I experience fulfillments or disappointments, confirming or disconfirming my emotional experience. Analogous to my sensuous perceptual experience, say, of an object's shape, these fulfillments and disappointments are made possible by my anticipations with regard to how the emotion will modulate as it unfolds, e.g., intensifying as the animal approaches, making shivers run down my spine as it bares its teeth and slobbers, rendering me almost paralyzed with fear as it reaches to sniff at my leg, evoking images of terrific pain and injury as it emits a growl. If the animal then lingers, but without appearing prone to imminent attack, I may expect to feel a cautious, muted relief and a return of composure. When it altogether loses interest in me and trots off, the fear should abate, as I become aware of its psychological and physical toll, leaving

me shaken and exhausted. If the episode unfolds in such a predictable manner, I gain fulfillments, evidence of the dog's fearsomeness. If, to my surprise, the approach of the canine just brings a smile to my face, I am disappointed in the sense that the experiential evidence runs counter to anticipation, attesting to the dog's not being fearsome at all. While in the case of the sensuous perceptual experience of shape, the anticipations were due to the interactions of series of visual and kinaesthetic sensations, we are now dealing with the interactions of something like fearful feelings and other first-personal manifestations of fear, and, on the other hand, the relevant perceptually experienced circumstances, e.g., as I hear the dog barking, see it coming, or feel its muzzle move up my leg.

Yet, considering the complexities of real-life fears, there might seem to be aspects and cases of fearful episodes that do not so clearly fit the proposed approach. A fear may just strike one, without there being any change in one's sensuous perceptual experience of one's circumstances, and then just vanish again—having perhaps to do with one's general mindframe or what thoughts and associations may be running through one's head. Also, different people are likely to experience fear in different circumstances, making it difficult to attribute one specific pattern, or rule, of fulfillments to all cases. Finally, when having a negative emotion like the fear of the Rottweiler, people seem to be primarily pursuing safety and seeking to rid themselves of the emotion, instead of pursuing fulfillments of the various aspects of the fear – as a connoisseur might observantly stroll around a sculpture, taking in the complexities of its shape.

I expect that, being presented with these considerations, the reader is likely to judge that a good deal still needs to be done to duly clarify my view, and may, indeed, harbor objections to it, perhaps along the lines of the above pointers. I will therefore, so to speak, try to put myself into the position of such a reader, casting the following discussion, including various clarifications of my ideas, as replies to three possible objections.

The first objection is that my idea seems an irremediable non-starter, insofar as emotions are not obviously responsive to changes in circumstances in the same way as sensuous perception is, with objects and properties appearing in regular, predictable series of appearances. By contrast, emotions may sometimes seem too mercurial, and at other times too flat, for this idea to work. A person's emotional state may change without any particularly significant changes in his outward circumstances, and sometimes stay the same despite great changes therein. Moreover, different people's emotional lives are obviously rather different, making it difficult to come up with something like a unique rule, or pattern, that captures the fulfillments in terms of which we might be able to conceive of, say, fear.

Yet, I believe that we can defend our account, and the Husserlian analogy between perception and emotion, from this objection. In the context of a Husserlian constitutive account, we can base our view on rule-governed scenarios involving something like proto-emotions, where we abstract away from most of the complexities of actual human emotions. We need a conception on which the rudiments of a certain kind of emotion are still recognizable, and which incorporates the core Husserlian idea of intuitive evidence, integrating fulfillment and disappointment with the changing circumstances. Thus, our conception of fear may be anchored in something like a proto-subject's proto-fear, which

displays the simple dynamic of intensifying when the fearsome object looms greater and abating when it looms lesser. Here our conception of fear just barely gains its first foothold, under circumstances suggestive of a less than fully constituted perceptual world.¹⁶ We can think of our realistic emotions as obtaining when sufficient complexity accrues to something like this simple basis. As we pursue the analogy with perception in the more complicated cases, viz., by regarding emotional content in terms of fulfillment conditions, we need not identify the emotionally relevant circumstances, and the changes thereof, with the perceptually relevant ones (e.g., the unfolding of series of kinaesthetic sensations, etc.). Indeed, one way of complicating emotional situations is by allowing and providing for circumstances in which the object of the emotion is not (continuously) present in sensuous perception.¹⁷ This constitutive approach offers a kind of grasp as to what the constitutive rules for the various emotional properties might be like, but we cannot expect these rules to be entirely transparent to the subject of the emotion, or even to the phenomenologist. Indeed, if our account pretended to excessive transparency and predictability of emotions, there would be reason to suspect that it has lost touch with the realities of our emotional life. When we normally experience our own and other people's emotions, we can basically make sense of them, but they are not entirely transparent to us: emotions can be confusing and unpredictable. It is not a flaw of our sketch of a constitutive analysis if it reflects this partial opacity. The philosophical yield of the view consists in an analysis of emotional intentionality, viz., in terms of the core elements of the Husserlian account of sensuous perception—which enables us to do better than leave emotional intentionality *sui generis* and mysterious.

For another objection, it might be suggested that our analogy between perception and emotion fails, because the idea of an emotional disappointment is problematic. In particular, one might question the applicability of the idea of a disappointment as a sudden surprise, explosive, as it were, of the emotional content, revelatory of the object's never having had the pertinent value property.

In reply, I would, on the one hand, point out that even sensuous perceptual disappointments do not need to be of this “explosive” kind. Both in the case of sensuous perception, and emotion, is it, in principle, possible that the evidential conflict is resolved in this abrupt and conclusive manner, or that there is a less abrupt or less definitive resolution.¹⁸ For a closely related point, it seems that there is no necessary connection between a disappointment and the adjunct emotion of a sudden surprise. The more

¹⁶ I have conjured up an imaginary scenario that meets our present needs. Somebody else might come up with a different one, and, likewise, hold it before the mind's eye, in seeking to extend to emotions the idea of the kind of constitutive triangulation of which we spoke in the previous section.

¹⁷ In this case, there would be no sensuous perceptual fullness. However, if such a scenario is integrated into the fulfillment conditions for an emotion, we could still be achieving emotional fulfillments. Indeed, if there were no emotional fullness involved, we would not be dealing with an emotion at all, but perhaps a mere empty evaluative judgment.

¹⁸ Pertinent to this, Husserl discusses a case where perceptual experience vacillates between a man-apprehension and a mannequin-apprehension, remaining doubtful, as it were, even if one of the conflicting apprehensions temporarily gains the upper hand (Husserl 1973: 92).

fundamental issue is whether it is possible to tell the difference between cases where an object is revealed as having had and lost a certain value property, and cases where an object is revealed as never having had the value property at all. Here, someone might be inclined to believe that there is no way to tell the difference, or that the latter kind of case is rare, and that emotional disappointment is therefore rare, and somehow insignificant. In my view, the difference between the former and the latter kind of case may often be subtle, and we may not normally give this difference much thought, because many situations do not call for discriminating between them. E.g., whether the object was never really fearsome, or whether it merely ceased to be fearsome, I am not in fear of it now, giving me reason to believe that I am not in any danger and can therefore concern myself with other matters. However, it could be possible to tell the difference by reflection as to whether one has the sense that one's previous episode of fear was appropriate or inappropriate. Its inappropriateness may, for example, be signaled by an oncoming feeling of embarrassment.¹⁹ This would render the embarrassment a mark of emotional disappointment, at least in the case of some emotions.

The more reason to believe that the difference between a disappointment and a mere experience of value change is accessible to us, I believe that a disappointment is never just a rebuttal of one body of evidence by another, but, rather, a kind of undercutting, or undermining. One's sense of appropriateness or inappropriateness is therefore not just associated with one's sense of the weight of two bodies of evidence *vis-à-vis* each other, but with a sense of whether or not one of the two has been vitiated, corrupted, or enfeebled. E.g., my most recent experiences of the object's color lead me to realize that my previous color experiences must have been due to a trick of the ambient lighting. Or, my initial fears of the fearsome-seeming dog are left discredited by the ensuing experience of how pleasant it feels to interact with the animal. (I may now be embarrassed at these fears.) In sum, I believe that there is a difference between cases where an object is experienced as having lost a value property, and where it is experienced (in a disappointment) as never having had the value property, and I have no reason to believe that the second kind of case is somehow so rare or improbable as to render otious any appeals to emotional disappointments.

¹⁹ This idea has been proposed by John Drummond (2004: 122-124). Drummond's view is perceptualist in the sense that he takes emotions to be directed to value properties, and revelatory of them by immediate insight. Importantly, he distinguishes three ways in which an emotion can be revealed as inappropriate. First, the emotion may have a basis in putative facts that fail to obtain. E.g., I may be afraid of what I take to be a wayside snake, but it is, in fact, merely a fallen tree branch. Second, the emotion may be revealed as inappropriate by another emotion. E.g., if I fear dogs to the point that I am even afraid of a cute little puppy, then it may transpire that my fear, at one point, gives way to embarrassment at my fearfulness, and the embarrassment reveals the fear as inappropriate. Third, the emotion may conflict with one's considered value judgment. E.g., one's disgust at seeing a person bearing the marks of terrible injuries, may come up against one's judgment to the effect that this is an inappropriate emotional reaction..

I accept this analysis. As far as I know, Drummond does not expressly discuss whether the conflict between the emotion and the judgment is rightly regarded as a CWC. The crucial difference between my approach and Drummond's is that, unlike Drummond, I regard the emotional experience as presenting value properties through a process of rule-governed variation, thus pursuing the closer analogy between perception and emotion.

Here is a third objection to consider: our account involves the idea of a pursuit of emotional fulfillments, in something like an exploration of an emotional property, with the aim of achieving a fuller revelation of it; yet this idea may not seem to sit well with the way we experience negative emotions. In the case of positive emotions, it does seem plausible that one explores their different aspects, indeed, with relish, to gain a more complete sense of the object's potential for arousing and sustaining positive emotion—in much the same way that one might follow a perceptual interest in examining aspects of an object in sensuous perception. This does not, however, seem like an adequate picture of the way we experience negative emotions like fear, despair, or disgust. To address this worry, we can draw upon the idea of perceptual optimalities. Namely, it seems to me that we often live with negative emotions, and pursue our experience of them, in such a way as to facilitate finding a way out of these emotions: the optimal coverage is such as to render oneself open to an emotional disappointment (or, alternatively, to the waning and disappearance of the emotion), thereby also opening up to other, more positive emotions. One cannot will away negative emotions but one can, as it were, manage them. E.g., confronting one's negative emotions is sometimes a good way to overcome them. Thus, in Werner Herzog's documentary *The Great Ecstasy of Woodcarver Steiner*, Walter Steiner, a champion ski jumper, suffers a terrible fall. Nevertheless, he is determined to make another jump in the same competition – and he does so – because he knows that if he does not, at once, confront his fear, he may never be able to conquer it and jump again.

Let us take stock of the main aspects of the perception-emotion analogy. We have presented emotions, with a focus on the example of fear, as being responsive to experiential evidence, based on the idea that they are like perceptual experiences in having fulfillment-conditional content. As part of the fulfillment-based idea, we have accepted that emotions can be involved in evidential conflicts, which can be resolved in disappointments, and which involve no logical contradiction. Now we face the task of using these ideas to account for the CWC between recalcitrant emotions and one's better judgment. Our discussion of ski jumper Steiner already implicitly contains the answer to this problem: in response to this kind of CWC, we can and should assume the mindset of managing our emotion by pursuing a certain kind of coverage, which will render us open to a disappointment and show us the way out of the unwarranted (and unwanted) affective mindset. I would emphasize that such management of emotions is not only pragmatically but also epistemically significant: e.g., Steiner, we may suppose, is aiming for an emotional insight into the incorrectness, misguidedness of his fear. This is the way to handle recalcitrant emotions, except perhaps in special cases where one has reason to believe that it would not help. In such exceptional cases, one should, indeed, just “quarantine” the emotion, so that it cannot influence one's beliefs or actions.

This view is similar to Döring's in that we have proposed to account for emotional CWC by offering a view of the contents and attitudes of recalcitrant emotional experiences. We have allied ourselves with Döring in accounting for CWC in quasi-perceptual terms, involving both the contents and attitudes of emotional experiences. Yet, by contrast with Döring, we have given an account of non-inferential justification in positive terms, viz.,

by invoking fulfillment. The ideas of fulfillment and disappointment also spare us the need to articulate emotional CWC by appeal to the notion of a reliable but fallible emotional cognitive system. Befitting a phenomenological approach, we have tried to be faithful to the subject's perspective of his emotional experiences, and the appeal to a reliable system clearly clashes with this (not particularly parochial, as far as I can tell) commitment. The view that sensuous perceptual experiences are reliable though fallible may not flagrantly clash with first-personal data. However, applied to emotional experiences, the idea clearly amounts to an extrinsic imposition, since subjects are liable to assume all kinds of complex postures with regard to the reliability of emotional experiences.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have rehearsed a kind of Husserlian perceptualist view of emotions. By appealing to the Husserlian ideas of fulfillment and disappointment, and by conceiving of perceptual and emotional contents in terms of fulfillment conditions, I have presented a picture on which both perception and emotion are rational, in the sense of being responsive to experiential evidence. I have also made use of this perceptualist view in accounting for the so-called conflicts without contradiction between a recalcitrant emotion and a judgment. With resolution of evidential conflicts at different constitutive levels being part of the subject's response to evidence, we have elucidated the recalcitrant emotions and the CWC by invoking aspects of the larger context of our emotional lives. In discussing the CWC, I took as my starting point Sabine Döring's setup of the problem of CWC, as well as her instructive reflections on its broader philosophical significance. I also briefly compared my solution with hers.

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