

# Towards a Metaphysics of Representation

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August 23, 2018, Ligerz, “The Metaphysics of Representation”

## The Overall Project

My present plan is to start with an Aristotelian slogan – **perception is intake of form without matter** – and work my way ‘upwards’ the ‘hierarchy’ from perception to thought. The central idea, to be found in *De Anima*, may be cashed out as follows: Perception naturally occurs, as a biological phenomenon. Its veridicality is primitive: we can never be deceived by it with respect to its proper objects. These proper sensibles are prior to their perception in the order of explanation: we explain sight as the sense that gives us colours, not colours as the things that are the objects of sight. In all types of perception, the medium accounts for the transmission of form that is taken in by the alteration of the sense (where this alteration *is* the perception). Seeing perception as emerging in this way as the joint outcome of three factors – the form to be seen, the form transmitted and seen by the perceiver, and the intervening medium – makes understandable how it can be both intrinsic and relational.

Representational states being intrinsic, they ‘mirror’ the world as it appears to some perceiver, i.e. as perspectival and perceiver-oriented. Being relational at the same time, they connect perceivers to things outside of them, and make themselves evaluable in terms of external objects. Because an understanding of representation as self-location places the ‘subjective’ and ‘phenomenal’ elements in the *mode*, rather than the *content* of the attitude, allowing for an adverbialist, rather than propositionalist analysis of it, it makes an objectivist notion of content possible. Such a notion can be found in Aristotle, and the present project aims to defend his central idea: **representation is coformality**, the sharing of ‘form’ between what is represented and what represents. As the medievals realised, the account of perception as intake of form may be generalised to representation more generally if, for more complex mental states, we draw an act/content distinction – as Duns Scotus did between the ‘subjectively’ present (accident of) thinking and the ‘objectively’ present external form. On such a generalised conception, the form taken in from *a* is what *a* is represented as; and to represent *a* as *F* is to have *F* as *a*’s form in mind. Such having forms in mind as *the forms of a* is a separate mental operation: it has its natural home in perception, and is only subsequently, and on this basis, performed autonomously. Intentionality is thus explained as the having in mind of a qualitative content (form) in a certain way.

To account for states that exhibit primarily not only representational or intentional features (as do, respectively, perception and intention/desire/wishing), but both in an equally fundamental way, a third primitive element is needed: an **attitude** the subjects takes on what it represents. Such an ‘active’ component explains how the represented form is taken to be and relates it to the formal object of the mental state in question, thus generating its correctness conditions. In fear, for example, the subject both represents something as dangerous *and* has a negative, flight-inducing attitude towards it; in belief, the subject entertains a thought, and assents to it. In both cases, it is the attitude that ‘generates’ the content, as it were, as it takes the form (itself taken in a way) to relate to what it is a form of. With linguistic representation, finally, the form is externalised – it is the linguistic items themselves, taken in a way, that may be said to reach out to what they are about.

## Two Types of Perspectivity

What we see, what we feel and what we represent have their perspectivity in common. This does not by itself entail that their perspectivity has to be explained in the same way, nor that it is of the same type. The perspectivity of perception is partly physiological, partly a question about the perceptual milieu and partly a matter of the relative orientation of perceiver and perceived: what I see when I see the stick is how half-immersed sticks, in this situation, look to me from where I am. The perspectivity of emotions is at least in part explained by their being reactions by specific emoters to specific situations: what is dangerous to me is perhaps not dangerous to you. This may justify an account of the formal objects as being itself perspectival: the correctness of my fear could then be said to turn not on danger *tout court*, but on danger-for-me-now-here. With representation generally, many different factors may matter for perspectivity: while some of them may also be attributed to the formal object (e.g. assertability-in-the-philosophy-seminar), or even to the direct object (e.g. Hesperus rather than Phosphorus), others are types of medium- or message-specificity (e.g. ‘analog’ representations exploiting my contingent discrimination thresholds, de-se or de-nunc representation that makes the content itself dependent on the representer or, even more specifically, the act of representing itself).

I hope some clarification may be achieved by distinguishing two closely related, but distinct features of at least some mental states: intentionality and representation.

**Intentionality** A mental state is intentional iff it is ‘directed’ towards something outside itself, where this directedness exhibits the ‘presence in absence’ feature, i.e. a ‘pointer’ ‘standing in’ for something (at least potentially) absent.

**Representation** A mental state is representational iff it is either correct or incorrect, i.e. can be assessed in terms of its ‘fit’ to the world, i.e. in terms of what (if any) information its occurrence has.

According to Brentano, intentionality is the mark of the mental: it is the feature whereby some internal state reaches out to the world, directing the mental subject towards such (potentially absent) features. Correctness conditions specify such intentional content, but – being conditions – do not themselves require this content to be satisfied. If I am looking for the Holy Grail, for example, my activity is directed towards, and rationalisable only with respect to the Holy Grail, which, or so we shall assume, does not exist. I am intentionally directed towards the Holy Grail, without standing in a relation to it: there is nothing, after all, for me to stand in a relation to. While searching, it is in my search that the Holy Grail is ‘present’ to me, as the thing I am looking for; that it is ‘present’ to me here just means that there are conditions, if it is non-pathological, that determine when my search would be successful. For this, I do not have to be able to describe the Holy Grail, and even less to uniquely identify it; it is enough if ‘I know it when I see it’ and would then regard my search as successful.

According to Dretske, it is transmission of information, in particular along causal links, that explains how things like us succeed in representing the world. While natural signs, such as smoke indicating fire, may be (and, according to the orthodox Shannon-Weaver theory of information, are) information about their causes, they do not encode this information in a format suitable for its transmission. Information transmission in full-blown human communication, on the other hand, is incredibly complicated: not only do people lie and mislead, neither mean what they say nor say what they mean, but a number of complicated ‘uptake’ conditions on the side of the hearer must be fulfilled for information to be transmitted (communicative acts have to be understood).

Both intentionality and representation ‘involve’, in some way, the world, or something outside their media; both give us a sense in which mental states are ‘about’ something else. They do so, however, in slightly different ways: they differ in how they cross-cut two distinctions commonly identified with each other: while representation is intrinsic, but also relational, intentionality is non-relational, but also extrinsic.

## Intrinsicness and Relationality

As commonly introduced, intrinsic properties of *a*

1. are / account for / ground ‘how *a* is by itself’, are exemplified by *a* ‘in virtue of the way it is in itself’;
2. make for genuine similarity, are ‘non-disjunctive’, have ‘non-gerrymandered’ extensions;
3. are shared by *a* and its duplicates / replicas / perfect copies.

It is the first feature that excludes *having a brother*, for that property of me involves my brother; it is the second that excludes *grue*, for being *grue* is being green and examined before *t* or being blue and examined at or after *t*; it is the third that excludes *not being accompanied by a unicorn*, for that property could be lacked by a perfect replica of the entire universe, existing in a larger world that also contains some unicorn.

In some metaphysical systems, intrinsic properties are supposed to play certain theoretical roles. They

1. are qualitative natures of combinatorial units;
2. make for real, as opposed to Cambridge change;
3. do not entail, nor are entailed by the existence of any other things wholly distinct from their bearers.

Combinatorial units – “substances” in one sense of this term – are the elements that are recombined when describing alternative possibilities. Socrates becoming taller than Simmias is a real change for Socrates when Socrates grows, but a Cambridge change for him if Simmias becomes smaller. A (neo-)Humean ban on necessary connections between distinct existences is restricted to their intrinsic properties: that my being such that Socrates is white entails that he is white is not a reason to deny me that property, but rather a reason to think it is not non-relational.

It has turned out surprisingly difficult to turn this intuitive notion into a precise definition. According to the most discussed proposal, by Lewis & Langton (1998), a property is intrinsic if it does not distinguish between things that have the same pure, non-disjunctive and non-co-disjunctive properties that are independent of loneliness and of accompaniment.<sup>1</sup>

At least *prima facie*, the relational/non-relational contrast is different. Non-relational properties of *a*

1. do not ‘essentially mention’ other things than *a*;
2. do not ‘stem from’ metaphysically / conceptually / explanatorily prior relations *a* has;
3. are ‘genuinely monadic’;

Saying of me that I am Michael’s brother ‘essentially mentions’ Michael – which is why it is an ascription of an ‘impure’ property. It is also a derivative property, presupposing (and mentioning) the prior relation of brotherhood that obtains between me and him, and it is for this reason not ‘genuinely monadic’, but a de-relativisation of a relation, i.e. a relational property.

Relational properties are also supposed to play certain theoretical roles. Non-relational properties

1. are wholly qualitative: their nature is exhausted by how the things that have them are;
2. are non-haecceitistic: may be shared by distinct indiscernibles;
3. are pure, i.e. entirely general, i.e. do not involve particulars.

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1. A property is pure iff its exemplification does not imply the existence of anything else than the thing exemplifying it. Something is accompanied iff it does not coexist with a contingent wholly distinct thing and it is lonely iff it coexists only with its proper parts (if it has any). A property is independent of loneliness (accompaniment) iff it is both possible that it is had and that it is lacked by a lonely (accompanied) thing. A property is *disjunctive* iff it can be expressed by a disjunctive predicate but is not natural and much less natural than either of its disjuncts. The pure, non-disjunctive and non-co-disjunctive properties independent of loneliness and accompaniment are called “basic intrinsic” by Lewis and Langton. Their definition says that a property is intrinsic iff it supervenes on basic intrinsic properties, or, equivalently, iff it never differs between duplicates (where two things are duplicates iff they have the same basic intrinsic properties).

If Michael has an indiscernible twin, everything qualitative ascribable to me by predicating "...is Michael's brother" could still be true of me, and I could still lack the property (being rather the brother of his twin); conversely, my qualitatively identical twin could lack it if Michael does not coexist with him; hence, a general description of the world, not involving names or referential devices, will not fix whether or not I am *Michael's* brother (rather than the brother of his indiscernible twin).

Attempts at defining relationality of properties have mainly focussed on purity. A property  $P$  is called "impure" iff there is a relation  $R$  and a  $y$ , such that whenever anything,  $x$ , has the property, it also stands in relation  $R$  to  $y$ . Metaphysically, relational properties have been characterised as properties that are individuated with reference to relations (Hochberg 1988: 196): to say that, generally and as a matter of logical truth, if  $a = b$ , then  $\lambda x(aRx) = \lambda x(bRx)$ , we need to quantify over relations.<sup>2</sup>

The two distinctions crosscut. Here are some examples of the relational intrinsic:

- *having a as a part*: this is intrinsic because it only turns on how its bearer is by itself, but relational, because it mentions  $a$  (and not its duplicate!) as its part.
- the value of Diana's dress: this is its intrinsic value because it is not determined in terms of what you can buy for it, why you want to have it or any other external determinants, but is the value it has in virtue of what it is in itself, i.e. in virtue of being *Diana's* dress; it is still relational, however, because a dress worn by her indiscernible twin would be (much?) less valuable.
- *being of a crime* of some punishment: this is intrinsic if the punishment is reserved for this crime, and intimately depending on it, as e.g. a specifically destined act of reparation is; it is still relational, however, for the punishment relates the punished to the crime they committed: qualitatively the same punishment for another crime would relate the punished to something else.

Here are some examples of the non-relational extrinsic:

- *not being accompanied by a unicorn*: this is an extrinsic property of everything there is because everything there is could be just as it is and a unicorn exist in addition; it is not a relational property, however, because no relation can relate you to something that does not exist.
- *being all there is*: this is extrinsic by the same token, but also non-relational, unless you posit ontologically dubious and (arguably) paradoxical existing 'totality states of affairs'.
- *being surprising* of an event: this is extrinsic, because an event has it only if embedded in a certain context, within which it is surprising; it is non-relational, however, because you can wholly and completely appreciate this characteristic without remembering or otherwise knowing what has gone before.

## Representation: intrinsic, but relational

Virtually any state can be used as a representation: you can decide to use a red flag to represent danger and you can take your aching muscles as a sign that you should not have walked that far. Such representational contents, however, derive from contingent dispositions to interpret the relevant states in certain ways. Since you could equally well take red flags or aching muscles to represent something different (that the communists are marching or that your work-out has been successful, for example), neither the red flag nor the aching muscles have their representational content intrinsically. Independently of what properties they intrinsically have, we *use* them as signs for other things, we *bestow* on them the representational powers they have. Not all powers of representation, however, are derivative in this sense. Our propositional attitudes and our perceptions, for example, do not seem to derive their representational contents from other

2. The reason why loving-Superman and loving-Clark-Kent is one and the same property (and Lois Lane, as a matter of logic, exemplifies one iff she exemplifies the other), is that Superman is Clark Kent; therefore, the properties are not atomic, but derelativations of the prior relation of loving.

states by the use we make of them: they have their content originally, not in virtue of being interpreted by some other mental state.

Many things may thus be said to have content, but most of them do so indirectly: they have content in virtue, for example, of having been produced in a certain way or with certain intentions, or of standing in some relation to other things that have content. The most important such relation is that of some things expressing other things. It is in virtue of expressing my beliefs that my utterances have content, and – subject to certain constraints – the beliefs expressed determine what content they have.

That some representational properties are exemplified intrinsically by some things follows from the following argument:

- (i) Some things have representational properties.
- (ii) If something exemplifies a representational property extrinsically, it does so in virtue of there being something else that bestows it with this representational property.
- (iii) In order for something to bestow something else with a representational property, the first thing needs to exemplify this representational property itself.
- (iv) The transmission of representational powers can neither go on forever, nor go in circle: it must be started by something.
- (v) A thing that has a representational property that is not bestowed upon it by something else exemplifies it intrinsically.

Take the representational property *that rabbits are present*, exemplified by my utterance of “Lo, a rabbit”. It is exemplified extrinsically: my utterance could be just as it is by itself and express another belief, or no belief at all. By (ii), this representational property is bestowed upon my utterance by something else – something which, by (iii), has it itself. By (iv), we conclude that the regress must stop, and by (v) we know that it must stop with something that *intrinsically* means that rabbits are present.

Representational properties like *meaning that Fa*, *representing a to be F* or *thinking of a as F* are intrinsically exemplified by some thing  $x$  iff  $x$  exemplifies the property independently of how matters stand with respect to other things than  $x$  – no further properties have to be exemplified for other things for my thought, e.g., to represent  $a$  to be  $F$ .

Even when they are exemplified intrinsically, however, representational properties are still relational: they connect their bearers to the things they are about. If my thought, for example, represents  $a$  to be  $F$ , it stands in the relation of aboutness to  $a$  and in the predication relation to the universal  $F$ . It is in virtue of these relations that my thought can stand in for  $a$ 's being  $F$ , and be in some sense a substitute of this external fact.<sup>3</sup>

### **Intentionality: non-relational, but extrinsic**

According to what Chisholm (1952: 56) calls “Brentano’s Thesis” – that intentionality is the mark of the mental – intentional properties are extrinsic, but non-relational. They are extrinsic, because they are signs, but non-relational, because they are characterised by “intentional inexistence”: psychological states may exist even in the absence of what they are about.

The representationality of some properties has to be sharply distinguished from their intentionality. A property of something is intentional iff it is *taken to be* about something else than itself. It is so taken to be if

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3. Different accounts of this relation of standing-in have been proposed, from Aristotle’s ‘being-a-token-of’ – “It is not possible to converse by bringing in the objects themselves, but instead of the objects we use words as tokens”, *Sophistici Elenchi* 1, 165a6-8 – to the scholastic modes of objective existence.

we attribute to it conditions under which it may be said to be correct. Correctness conditions specify the intentional content, but – being conditions – do not themselves require this content to be satisfied.<sup>4</sup>

Because they are outward-directed, and cannot be accounted for without reference to their intentional objects, intentional states are extrinsic: they are what they are in virtue of participating in a complex process, which not only involves their objects and their bearer, but also a process of interpretation or understanding.<sup>5</sup>

Intentionality is the flip-side of representation: whereas representational properties are intrinsic, but relational, intentional properties are extrinsic, but non-relational. Taking up an attitude towards the cognitive base turns the latter's relatum into the former's 'intentional object'. Such a 'conversion' of the relatum of a representational state into the intentional object on which an intentional state depends for its existence without being related to it, is what happens in Kantian 'synthesis': when I see a thing as red and white, redness and whiteness hang together by being aspects of the one thing my perception relates me to; when I, however, only imagine a red and white thing, the link can not come from the object alone – it must be 'constructed' by my faculty of imagination, and it is so constructed by my imagining *one* thing as both red and white. This intentional object will therefore be extrinsic, depending for its existence on my act of taking my representational state in a certain way.

### Seeing $x$ to be $F$

Let us consider one version of the argument from illusion:

- 1 A stick in front of me looks bent.
- 2 A stick in front of you looks straight.
- 3 There is at most one stick in front of us.
- 4 No stick can be both bent and straight.
- ∴ 5 In at least one case, one of our perceptual experiences is non-veridical.
- 6 In the non-veridical perceptual experience, one is presented with a mind-dependent intentional object.
- 7 Both perceptual experiences have the same type of intentional object.
- ∴ 8 The intentional object of both experiences is mind-dependent.
- 9 Sticks are not mind-dependent.
- ∴ 10 In neither case do we see the stick.

Hence nothing that may look to have contrary properties is ever seen – a *reductio*. While most attention has been focussed on denying (6) or (7) or both, I would like to focus attention on the description of the situation, i.e. on (1) and (2). My main motivation is that already (5) is implausible: while I may certainly form false beliefs on the basis of one of my perceptual experiences, they themselves are not necessarily misleading: at least on one sense of "looks", the straight stick half-immersed in water does look straight, i.e. looks as straight sticks half in water do.

*Bent-to-me* (i.e. *bent-from-here*) and *straight-to-you* (*straight-from-there*) are not incompatible, so we do not have an analogue of (4); but neither are they properties of experiences, nor of sense-data, nor of points of views or observers. Are they properties of sticks? In a sense yes, but also in another sense no. The property the half-immersed stick appears to have from here, i.e. the one I can correctly describe by painting an inflected line, is a property the stick no longer appears to have once I have taken it out of the water. It is very well possible, however, that the half-immersed stick did not to you appear to have this property, e.g. if you were

4. It is only as an analysis of intentionality, not of representationality, I think, that Aristotle's theory of thoughts being likenesses of objects has any plausibility.

5. This has been particularly stressed by Charles W. Morris: "The properties of being a sign, a designatum, an interpreter, or an interpretant are relational properties which things take on by participating in the functional process of semiosis." (1939: 82)

looking at it from another angle it may have looked straight to you, even when half-immersed in water. When we took the stick out, it started to appear differently to me, but not to you. While *bent to me* certainly was a property the stick appeared (to me) to have, it was not so for you and is now not so for me. When we immersed it in water, there was a look the stick acquired, a look it did not have before: by changing the perceptual milieu and the set of available perspectives on the stick, the stick acquired a new look it did not have before, a look I describe ascribing the perspectival property *bent-to-you* and you describe ascribing the different, but not incompatible property *straight-to-me*.

These perspectival appearance properties are thus not features of perspective-independent things, but rather of appearances, appearances *of* perspective-independent things, to be sure, but not things that are themselves independent of perspectives. Kant is right in thinking that the perception of appearance properties is the perception of appearances, where such appearances are grounded in the things they are appearances of. It is the appearance of the stick half-immersed in water that looks bent-from-here and the same appearance that may look straight-from-here with respect to some other location or observer. It is the change in appearance that is responsible for the fact that once the stick is taken out of the water and seen by both of us in clear air, it may no longer be said to appear bent in any sense. Because appearances are grounded in the things appearing, together with their environment, they are appearances of things – things with which we are in perceptual contact when we perceive the appearances. Can we thus say that the things are only indirectly seen, through their appearances as it were?

When I say that the wine tastes sweet, I am qualifying the taste as sweet, and only secondarily the wine as having a sweet taste.<sup>6</sup> On one reading, the first qualification is not subject to doubt: in this sense, I am qualifying the taste as tasting-sweet-to-me, something which you cannot dispute. Sometimes, however, I make a stronger claim, not only that the taste is sweet-to-me, but that it is sweet *tout court*, and so that you should taste it as sweet as well, if you are tasting properly. Here we have conceptual space for taste courses and experts, judges and faultless disagreement.

Another dimension of possible disagreement opens up with the secondary qualification: I may be wrong that it is the wine that tastes sweet. This suggests that the ‘extension’ of my assertion is via a *causal* link: I am saying of the taste that it is sweet (and there cannot be doubt about this) and of the wine that it has that taste, i.e. causally produced it (and about this I could be wrong):

For to say that a certain experience is a *seeing that* something is the case, is to do more than describe the experience. It is to characterize it as, so to speak, making an assertion of claim, and – which is the point I wish to stress – to *endorse* that claim. (Sellars 1997: 39)

Things stand differently with colours, or rather with chromatic profiles:<sup>7</sup>

“What puts vision apart from hearing, smell, and taste is that we do not conceive of the visible world as offering us objects of visual awareness and attention distinct from (but coincident with) the concrete objects that we also see.” (Martin 2010: 187), citing O’Shaughnessy (2000: 571–572)

The chromatic profile of a coloured thing (its visual appearance, its look) is more closely tied to it than its taste or its visual shape: the being-the-appearance-of relation here is not causal, but constitutive. Looks are nothing but looks of things, i.e. things looking a certain way. In other terms: for *a* to have a visual look that appears red is both, for the look to be red and for the thing itself to appear red. Two possible sources

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6. The “primary”/“secondary” contrast is from Martin (2010: 183).

7. The switch to chromatic profiles is needed to preserve Aristotle’s claim that they are the proper sensibles of sight: we also see black and white things, transparent things and things that do not have surfaces, such as shadows, holes, holograms and rainbows.

of error present in the case of taste are thereby eliminated: it is not possible that only its look, but not the thing looking a certain way appears red, and the look itself cannot just appear red but fail to be red.

What Mary gets newly acquainted with, when she gets out of her black-and-white room, are not new properties, but new things: the looks things have when they appear to you e.g. in clear daylight. Being an eminent colour scientist, she knew everything there is to know about colours; being equally an eminent psychologist of colour perception, she also knew everything there is to know about visual appearance properties, properties such as *looking red from here*. What she did not know, however, are an important class of things, visual looks – ie. the things that primarily have the colours and in virtue of which coloured things appear the way they do. Instead of

- 1<sup>a</sup> The patch-in-this-light looks-red-to-me.
- 2<sup>a</sup> The patch-in-this-light looks-green-to-you.

we thus have the simpler:

- 1<sup>b</sup> The patch-in-this-light is red.
- 2<sup>b</sup> The patch-in-this-light is green.

To speak of “*x* as it appears” or “*x* as represented” is ambiguous in at least three ways:

**process** the processes of appearing and of representing are different – they differ in their direction, and in what they are grounded in: things appear in virtue of how they are, while subjects represent in virtue of how they are and these grounds are different in the case of the representation of mind-independent matters of fact;

**event** the two processes may still coincide, and thus be the same event: every appearing is then also a being represented, and every representing also a being appeared to: it is in virtue of such coincidence that these events make available the same information, and reveal the same aspect of the world;

**result** the one event that is both adequately described as “*x* appears to *y* as *F*” and “*x* is represented as *F* by *y*” may still have two different results, and modify its two relata in two different ways: as a dancing ‘produces’ both a dancer and a dance, an event of representing/appearing produces both an appearance and a representation.

## Emotions and their Correctness Conditions

Success- or, more generally, **correctness conditions** explain why emotions such as fear represent the world without being propositional attitudes. Emotions, at least in standard cases,<sup>8</sup> stand ‘between’ perceptions and judgements with respect how ‘explicitly’ representational they are and thus afford a model to understand how something may have a mind-to-world direction of fit without being a description of the world that is either true or false. Contrary to some, we thus distinguish emotions both from axiological judgements (“This is dangerous”) and from axiological perceptions (seeing the dog as dangerous).

Suppose I am standing in a Roman amphitheatre, about to be eaten by a lion. Looking at the hungry, angry, ferocious lion before me, I note certain characteristics, of me, the lion and the situation, that induce me to believe that the lion is dangerous (to me, in this situation) and also to see it as dangerous. In feeling fear of the lion, the world, and some aspect of it in particular, is presented to me as dangerous. By feeling the fear, not just as a consequence of it, I am motivated to flee – this marks a contrast to the judgement that the lion is dangerous. By feeling the fear, not just as a consequence of it, I am in contact with danger and in a position to acquire the concept of danger – this marks a contrast to the perception of the lion as dangerous.

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8. I am setting aside here other, non-standard, types of emotional episodes, such as they occur in cases of cinema emotions, vicarious emotions (such as those, perhaps, involved in empathy), emotional contagion etc.



Taking, with Aquinas, danger to be the formal object of fear, explains this double character of emotions: that they side with perceptions in being themselves motivational, but with judgements in making demands on the world that go beyond how things appear to us to be. That the formal object of fear, danger, is something I evaluate negatively in addition explains why fear is a *negative* emotion, an emotion I would rather not have. That I would rather not have it is a consequence of my metaphysically and logically prior desire to live in a world that is safe (for me); given, however, that I live in a dangerous world, fear is often the appropriate emotion to have.<sup>9</sup>

Emotions share with perceptual experiences that they may persist even if they are known to be incorrect: even if I know that my fear of the lion is based on a hallucination, I still feel it, in the same way I still ‘see’ the lines in the Muller-Lyer illusion as of different length even when I have measured them and found out not to be. They differ from perceptions, however, in that they may be incorrect in two different ways, by being based on an illusionary or hallucinatory perception (the lion is in a cage or there is no lion at all), but also by leading us astray about the axiological properties of their direct object, representing a harmless cat or a robot as dangerous. In this latter case, I not only, as in an illusionary or hallucinatory perceptual experience, have an inaccurate representation of the lion, but I also have the wrong *reaction* to it – whereas, at least in cases of persistent and not self-induced illusions, there is nothing wrong with what I do as a perceiver when I ‘see’ the stick half-immersed in water as bent (how else should I see it?). In some cases, moreover, emotions can be perfectly appropriate even *in the absence* of any direct object, as with *Angst* or the fear of a forthcoming exam (which is itself present, not just an anticipation of some future episode of fear). In such cases at least, whether or not an emotion is appropriate not just as a reaction to the belief but as a reaction to (axiological aspects of) the world depends on the presence or absence of its formal object: it is in this sense that the formal object determines the correctness conditions of the emotion.<sup>10</sup>

Like perceptions, emotions provide *prima facie* and *pro tanto* reasons for axiological beliefs, whether or not they are themselves justified by those beliefs being true. The axiological beliefs are *intentionally* about the formal object: they represent it as being present even when it is not, e.g. when I inappropriately fear the harmless house-spider in front of me. Insofar as the belief inherits this directedness from the emotion that bases it, the emotion itself exhibits such intentionality, or ‘presence-in-absence’ of the formal object.

It is this intentional presence of the formal object that explains why it is irrational to continue to have ‘recalcitrant’ emotions, i.e. emotions known to be inappropriate. It is irrational because the combination of my knowledge and of my emotional state commit me to taking the world in a way it cannot be. We have here a *sui generis* incompatibility of different attitudes, which is not an incompatibility of their contents; the axiological properties that justify my emotional reaction and to which, as their intentional objects, my emotions give me access to are not represented by them, nor by their content. Even though not represented, such properties are made available to beliefs. That (J) and (K) depend in the same way on (I) can thus explain why (J) justifies (K):

(I) The lion is dangerous.

(J) I fear the lion.

(K) I believe that the lion is dangerous.

Because (J), for its correctness, depends on (I), basing (K) on (J) allows for the transmission of warrant: the justification I have for (J) may be credited to (K), and may account for my knowledge that the lion is dangerous. Emotions, in this way, are intentional (directed towards some formal object, even when the formal object is absent and the emotion inappropriate), *about* an axiological feature of the world, without thereby ascribing or predicating of some worldly item that it exemplifies the feature in question.

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9. I understand this last claim contrastively: given that I react emotionally to the situation at all, fear is one of the right such reactions. We will return to “appropriate” below.

10. I leave open the additional claim that emotions are *individuated* by their formal objects rather than, e.g., by how they feel or by how it is to have them.

## Thinking that $x$ is $F$

Aspect-perception involves a curious doubling, or re-duplication, of content. There is, on the one hand, the (supposedly) real danger in front of me facing me in the shape of a ferocious lion; this is the danger my fear is directed towards and intentionally represents. On the other hand, danger is also an aspect of how the world is given to me: (the feeling of) danger is an aspect of my situation, a feature of how *I* am when faced with the lion. Though not much more than a metaphor, representation-as brings out this double aspect: I represent the dangerous lion as dangerous, and thus correctly.

In Aquinas' theory, perception, the central and paradigmatic case of representation, is the combination of two processes, which together constitute the uptake of form without matter. There is, (i), the **the getting of the (inner) form**: by the application of a representational faculty to something out there in the world, something inner is created (the form of the thing outside in its 'intentional existence', i.e. a structural property of the brain); by being in such a state, we locate ourselves with respect to things outside of us. There is also, (ii), the **the seeing of the (outer) form**: our brain being in such a state causes us to see the form, i.e. to reach out in more or less successful ways to the things we take to be of this form; as a result of this activity, the form out there gets to be seen. It gets to be seen as such-and-such, and in certain ways, in virtue of the way the seeing is done. In different types of representation, the importance of these components varies. In sensation, the first of these components is much more important than the second; the act-aspect is mere awareness, which, as Brentano correctly recognised, is often already contained in the representational state. With imagination, emotion, judging, thinking, and mere supposing – states which do not only have representational properties, but exhibit intentionality as well – the second, mind-to-world aspect becomes more important. Even with such 'higher' forms of cognition, however, the first component never completely disappears: all such mental acts are properly understood as reactions.

Like perception and emotion, belief is a reaction: the representational state is an entertaining of a thought, and the mental act is a type of Stoic assent (in the case of belief; dissent in the case of disbelief). To believe, Augustine says, is 'cum assensione cogitare' (de praed. sanct. 2 5). In the same way that thinking, by the 'affirmative' mode, gives beliefs, it may, by the 'interrogative' mode, give questions, and by the 'mode of conjecture', suppositions. What is belief a reaction to? Brentano may help us here, drawing our attention to the possibility that inner representation is containment (i.e., works roughly in the way in which a quotation name represents what it quotes by surrounding it by quotation marks). Quoting *De Anima* III. 2, p. 425, b, 12, he remarks that a doubling of intentional objects is only needed if we individuate them by the representational states, but not if we individuate them (correctly) by the mental acts directed at it:

“...the presentation [Vorstellung] of the sound is connected with the presentation of the presentation of the sound in such a peculiarly intimate way that the former, by obtaining [indem sie besteht], contributes inwardly to the being of the other [innerlich zum Sein der anderen beiträgt].” (bk. 2, ch. 2, §8, 1874: 167)

The resulting picture is the following: There is thinking going on, and some of it is partitioned into a belief of a certain content by an attitude of assent the subject directs at its own mental state. Such a belief, however, is not a representational vehicle in the traditional sense, that allows the subject to represent something. Rather, the belief, as a mental particular (and thus distinguished from the state of believing), is itself produced by (and thus posterior to) the representing of form. The attitude of assent directed at the immanent object is at the same time, and by the same act, a representation of itself as a psychological state, i.e. a belief. It thus projects its own form onto an amorphous mental process of thinking. There is a peculiar interweaving [“eigentümliche Verwebung”, 1874: 167] of the object of inner presentation (the belief) and the presentation itself (the thinking), and both belong to the same act, the believing.

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