

### 1.3 PHENOMENOLOGY OF E. HUSSERL

### 1.3 ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИЯ Э. ГУССЕРЛЯ

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## CATEGORIAL INTUITION AND PASSIVE SYNTHESIS IN HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

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The aim of this article is to show that Husserl's later analyses of the perceptual syntheses (for instance in *Analyses concerning passive and active syntheses*) dispense with the notion of categorial intuition, carefully described in the *Sixth Logical Investigation* (1901). In order to show this result, initially I reconstruct Husserl's notion of categorial intuition described in "Logical Investigations", relating it to the problem of evident knowledge conceived as intuitive fulfillment of signifying acts. Categorial intuition is founded on simple intuitions, although it cannot be reduced to them. Simple intuitions only offer a global grasping of the intended object, with partial perceptual intentions continually fused therein. In its turn, categorial intuition consists in *a new sort of act*, the result of a covering synthesis between *disclosed partial perceptual intentions* and the *global perception* in which those same intentions had already been operating, although implicitly. It is highlighted that in this synthesis intuition depends on signifying intentions that guide the selection of intuitive aspects to be synthesized. It follows from this that the categorial components of the so called categorial intuition come from outside the very sphere of perception. In contrast with this position, Husserl, in later texts describes, by means of the notion of passive synthesis, the genesis of categoriality in the very realm of sensibility, which allows him to formulate a new approach to clarify the phenomenological sources of knowledge.

*Key words:* Husserl, categorial intuition, knowledge, fulfillment, signification, perceptual explication, passive synthesis.

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# КАТЕГОРИАЛЬНАЯ ИНТУИЦИЯ И ПАССИВНЫЙ СИНТЕЗ В ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИИ ГУССЕЛЯ

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Цель этой статьи – показать, что анализ синтезов восприятия в поздней философии Гуссерля (например, в *Анализе пассивных и активных синтезов*) обходится без такого понятия как категориальная интуиция, подробно описанного в шестом разделе “Логических исследований” (1901). Для того, чтобы продемонстрировать этот результат, прежде всего я провожу реконструкцию Гуссерлевского понятия категориальной интуиции, описанного в “Логических исследованиях”, в том, что касается проблемы очевидного познания, понятого как интуитивное исполнение акта означивания. Категориальная интуиция опирается на простые интуиции, хотя и не может быть сведена к ним. Простые интуиции позволяют ухватить интендируемый предмет только в общих чертах, с примешанными к нему частичными интенциями восприятия. Категориальная интуиция, в свою очередь, состоит в *акте нового рода*, который представляет собой синтез наложения *раскрытых частичных интенций* восприятия и *глобального восприятия*, именно того, в котором эти интенции уже действовали, хотя и скрытым образом. Стоит подчеркнуть, что в этом синтезе интуиция зависит от интенции означивания, которая управляет тем, какие интуитивные аспекты должны быть синтезированы. Из этого следует, что категориальные компоненты так называемой категориальной интуиции приходят отнюдь не из сферы восприятия, а извне. С этой позицией контрастирует то, как Гуссерль в поздних текстах, используя понятие пассивного синтеза, описывает генезис категориального в рамках самой сферы чувственного, что позволяет ему сформулировать новый подход к прояснению феноменологических источников познания.

*Ключевые слова:* Гуссерль, категориальная интуиция, познание, наполнение, значение, разворачивание восприятия, пассивный синтез.

## I. THE MAIN QUESTION

The phenomenological analysis of knowledge advanced in “Logical Investigations” (hereafter, LI) is the main occasion where Husserl clarifies the intentional role of categorial intuition<sup>2</sup>. In the *Sixth Investigation*, genuine or evident knowledge is presented as the result of a synthesis between two kinds of intentional acts, signification and intuition. The objective pole of the act, at first

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<sup>2</sup> English translations of Husserl’s work are given first, followed by the references in the Husserliana (Hua) edition.

intended only by “empty” meanings, becomes apprehensible in its intuitive richness. In other words, the signifying intentional matter is fulfilled by intuitive contents. Accordingly, knowing is characterized as a *founded* act built upon founding (or simple) acts synthesized. A founded synthetic act constitutes a new intentional unit that posits *new* objective poles, not grasped by the simple acts. The most basic example of knowing given by Husserl is *nominal classification*, in which a word or expression that names something is fulfilled through an intuitive apprehension of the named object<sup>3</sup>. As a general result, the objective pole of knowing is neither a mere signification nor sensible contents, but rather *an intuited object recognized through a signifying expression*. And the *intuitive* givenness that fulfills the signifying intention is what guarantees the evidence of knowledge.

Husserl tries to encompass more complex cases of knowing (through judgments or propositions) with this scheme. Unlike what occurs in nominal classification, judgments contain grammatical articulations, in which different categorial functions are at work. For example, in the judgment “S is p,” both the categorial function *subject* and the categorial function *predicate* operate, and the statement as a whole is structured as a *predicative form* (marked by the copula “is”). For a judgment to express evident knowledge, a fulfilling synthesis must occur between the intentional matters of the founding acts involved<sup>4</sup>. But since the signifying intentional matter includes logical articulations, it follows that a kind of intuition capable of offering fulfillment to categorially complex signifying intentions is needed. That is the point at which Husserl develops the idea of *categorial intuition*. Through this notion, one preserves for complex judgements the general scheme proposed in the analysis of nominal classification<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> “The relation, as one of naming, is mediated, not merely by acts of meaning, but by acts of recognition, which are here also acts of *classification*. The perceived object is *recognized* for an inkpot, known as one, and insofar as the act of meaning is most intimately one with an act of classification, and this latter, as recognition of the perceived object, is again intimately one with the act of perception, the expression seems to be *applied* to the thing and to clothe it like a garment” (Husserl, 2001b, 202; Husserl, 1984, 559).

<sup>4</sup> As Husserl states, “in the case of a perceptual statement, not only the inwrought nominal presentations are fulfilled: the whole meaning of the statement finds fulfillment through the underlying percept” (Husserl, 2001b, 271, slightly modified; Husserl, 1984, 657).

<sup>5</sup> Husserl describes other types of categorial intuition, such as ideation (LI, VI, § 52), whereby the *general idea* of the object in question may be intuitively apprehended. In the present article I focus exclusively on the categorial intuition that fulfills perceptual judgments of the type “S is p”.

Thanks to the excellent work of commentators throughout the decades, this general function of the categorial intuition within the *Sixth Investigation* seems to have been elucidated<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, commentators usually agree that in later texts such as “Analyses concerning Passive and Active Syntheses”, “Formal and Transcendental Logic”, “Experience and Judgment”, Husserl reformulates his analysis of knowledge in some important aspects, particularly regarding the role of perception in cognitive syntheses. Husserl admits in such texts that the categorial functions of judgements are already predelineated in perception<sup>7</sup>. In this text I intend to explore the fate of categorial intuition in front of these analyses of perception. My thesis is that when confronted with later descriptions of perceptual syntheses categorial intuition *loses its epistemic function*. In order to show it, I contrast the conception of knowledge established in the *Sixth Logical Investigation* with an alternative standpoint regarding the role of categoriality in perceptual experience. I will follow a matured version of this alternative conception as expounded in the courses published as “Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis” (henceforth cited as APAS), which were taught in the 1920s. It is obvious that it was not only in this decade and by means of this text that Husserl abruptly came across to this alternative position. Certainly there is a gradual development of this position, which I do not intend to reconstruct here<sup>8</sup>. However, in APAS Husserl takes up in a new analytical key the project of clarifying the sources of knowledge proposed in “Logical Investigation”, which makes easier the comparison between the two distinct positions constructed by the author. My aim is to focus on the way the alternative conception of categoriality contained in APAS offers a privileged occasion to understand why the kind of categorial intuition to which Husserl dedicated most of his Sixth Investigation is no longer necessary to explain how acts of knowledge are ordered.

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<sup>6</sup> Among several important commentators on categorial intuition, the following contributions should be emphasized: Bernet (1988), Cobb-Stevens (1990), Sokolowski (1991), Lohmar (2001), Benoist (2008). The latter two are of particular relevance for what follows.

<sup>7</sup> On this topic, see, for instance, Welton (1982), Bégout (2000), Mohanty (2011, chapter 10).

<sup>8</sup> Some of Husserl’s important texts to follow the genesis of the notions discussed in APAS are “On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time” (1893-1917), the final part from the course “Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge”, from 1906-1907, the course “Thing and Space”, from 1907, and the texts collected in the Husserliana “Wahrnehmung und Aufmerksamkeit” (Volume 38).

## II. THE CATEGORIAL INTUITION IN LOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

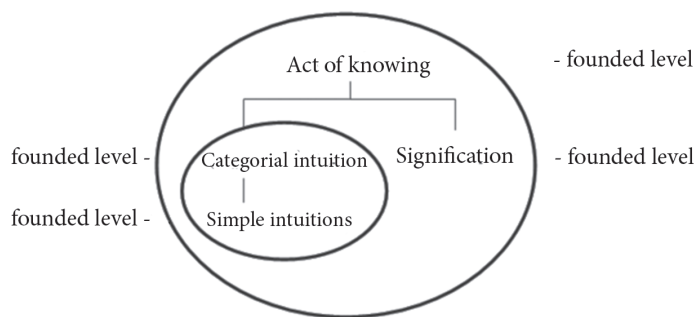
In this section I present the main components of categorial intuition understood as a founded act. It is in § 45 of the *Sixth Logical Investigation* that Husserl announces the need for an expansion of the sphere of sensibility as normally understood, for the purpose of clarifying the structure of evident judicative knowledge. It is stated that “there must at least be an act which renders identical services to the categorial elements of meaning that merely sensuous perception renders to the material elements” (Husserl, 2001b, 280; Husserl, 1984, 671). According to Husserl, simple sensuous perception provides intuitive fulfillment for signifying elements not logically articulated (the terms “paper” and “white,” for instance). Still, categorial forms (expressed, for instance, by the copula “is” in the judgment “the paper is white”) cannot be fulfilled by simple intuitions, as they are not sensible objects that can be immediately perceived. By means of such categorial forms, objects are intended as *articulated* (including relations between their constituent parts or between different objects) and not in isolation. Husserl insists that categorial relations are not just pure meanings, since they can be *intuitively apprehended*: “the object with these categorial forms is not merely referred to, as in the case where meanings function purely symbolically, but it is set before our very eyes in just these forms. In other words, it is not just thought of, but intuited or perceived” (Husserl, 2001b, 280; Husserl, 1984, 671). According to him, the evident knowledge of categorially formed objects (or “state of affairs” (*Sachverhalten*)) expressed by judgments requires the intuitive fulfillment of categorial relations. The solution presented in § 45 expands the sphere of sensibility in regard to the traditional notion of a direct givenness of sensible contents. This kind of givenness does not exhaust the realm of sensibility, since some sort of intuition capable of providing fulfillment for the categorial formations of signifying intentions in judgments must exist. The intuition sought is precisely *categorial intuition*, a specific intentional act without which, Husserl believes, evident judicative knowledge would be unattainable.

In order to render the functioning of categorial intuition more clearly visible, Husserl elaborates a contrast in §§ 46 and 47 of the *Sixth Logical Investigation* between this kind of intuition and the simple sensible intuition. Simple intuitions are directed to real sensuous objects, which are directly given. The important characteristic to emphasize here is that “sensuous objects are present in perception *at a single act level*: they do not need to be constituted in many-rayed fashion in acts of higher levels, whose objects are set up for them by way of other objects, already

constituted in other acts” (Husserl, 2001b, 282; Husserl, 1984, 674). Sensible intuition is *simple*: it presents its objective pole without resorting to simpler previous acts of any sort as conditions for doing so. Simplicity here is understood as the absence of intentional foundation. Sensible intuition operates on a single act level; it does not presuppose and is not built upon a more fundamental layer of acts.

In turn, categorial intuition does not take place at a single level, since it is founded on sensible intuitions, and the objective pole of the former (state of affairs) is founded on the objective pole of the latter (sensible objects). Husserl’s position is that states of affairs are *new* objects that can only appear through corresponding categorial acts. He adds, however, that “the new objectlike formation [*Gegenständlichkeit*] is based on the older one; it has objectlike relation to what appears in the basic acts” (Husserl, 2001b, 282, transl. modified; Husserl, 1984, 675). Hence, categorial intuition is epistemically dependent on simple intuitive acts. Through the latter alone no state of affairs is yet apprehended; still, without recourse to the simple sensible apprehension of objects, the constitution of categorial intuitive apprehensions of states of affairs would not be possible<sup>9</sup>.

It is important to note that the introduction of categorial intuition complicates the Husserlian analysis of knowledge. At the beginning of his *Sixth Logical Investigation* the author emphasizes that knowing is to be understood as a founded act due to its being derived from a synthesis between two basic intentional acts, signification and intuition. However, at least in cases of judicative or propositional knowledge there is an *additional level of foundation* at work, a level that is internal to the very intuition that fulfills the signifying intention. After all, categorial intuition is itself presented by Husserl as being founded. The following scheme makes explicit the doubly-founded character of knowing:



<sup>9</sup> In § 49, Husserl clarifies his position by affirming that states of affairs are not new *real* objects, nor do they imply the addition of new *real* qualities to sensible objects. States of affairs present mundane objects “standing before us [...] in a *new manner*” (Husserl, 2001b, 289; Husserl, 1984, 686), that is, within different categorial relations.

The constitution of a categorially articulated act of knowing involves at least *two* levels of epistemic foundation. The first is rather evident: knowing is an act constructed through a fulfillment synthesis between a signifying intention and an intuitive intention. But there is a second level, internal to that global foundation: in the case of categorially articulated knowledge the fulfilling intuition cannot merely be a simple sensible intuition, but rather a categorial one, itself founded on simple intuitions.

Let us focus on the foundation that makes the categorial intuitive act possible. In § 47 of *Sixth Logical Investigation* Husserl characterizes, in greater detail, the simple sensible intuition. In it there is already a particular type of synthesis, namely, the *fusion of sense-contents* correlated to partial perceptual intentions that gradually present their intended objects<sup>10</sup>. Thus, it is true that simple intuition apprehends sensible objects in isolation, but such intuition itself *is not an isolated act*, but a continuous flow in which several perceptual intentions partially grasp the intended object. However, as had been made clear in § 46, even considering that multiple partial intentions compose the perception of a single isolated sensible object, the *simplicity* of such a perception remains unaltered, since the intentional foundation of a new act-character does *not* occur in this case. The partial acts of perception are not synthesized, in the sense of engendering a new sort of intentional act, but are fused into a uniform object presentation while remaining at one and the same intentional level<sup>11</sup>.

Another particularity of simple intuition is that “in sense-perception the ‘external thing’ appears in one blow, as soon as our glance falls upon it” (Husserl, 2001b, 283, trans. modified; Husserl, 1984, 676). As we have just seen, the sensible object is intended in its totality or unity, even though this supposes the constant fusing of different partial intentions, each of which grasps certain aspects of the object. Now it is important to highlight that the partial intentions are always fused into a *global apprehension* of the intended object, or in Husserl’s words quoted above, the sensible object is grasped “in one blow”<sup>12</sup>. As an example, Husserl says that “whether I look at this book from above or below, from inside or outside, I always

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<sup>10</sup> “The unity of perception takes place as a *straightforward* unity, as an immediate fusion of part-intentions, without the addition of new act-intentions” (Husserl, 2001b, 284, transl. modified; Husserl, 1984, 677).

<sup>11</sup> “The act of perception also is always a homogeneous unity, which gives the object ‘presence’ in a simple, immediate way” (Husserl, 2001b, 284; Husserl, 1984, 677).

<sup>12</sup> “In the continuous running on of individual percepts, we continuously perceive the single, selfsame object” (Husserl, 2001b, 284; Husserl, 1984, 678).



see *this book*. It is always one and the same thing, and that not merely in some purely physical sense, but in the view of our perceptions themselves.” (Husserl, 2001b, 284, transl. modified; Husserl, 1984, 677). This passage makes it clear that in a simple sensible intuition, perceptual intentions are directed to the object *as a totality*. Hence, even though sense-perception involves a fusion of several partial apprehensions the object as a whole is immediately given, so that a *global perception* constantly imposes itself as the outcome of simple perceptions<sup>13</sup>. And it is precisely through the relations between this global perception and the partial perceptual intentions fused in it that categorial intuitions are made possible. The exhibition of partial sense-intentions and their synthesis with the global perception provide categorial articulations with intuitive fulfillment, as we shall see<sup>14</sup>.

In § 48, Husserl attempts to explain how the intuitive character of the judicative intention “A is  $\alpha$ ” (regarding a perceived object) is formed. It is stated that an act of perception grasps A as a whole, at one blow and in straightforward fashion. A second act of perception is trained upon  $\alpha$ , the part or dependent moment, that belongs constitutively to A. These two acts are not merely performed together, or after one another, in the manner of disjointed experiences; rather are they bound together in a single act in whose synthesis A is first given as containing  $\alpha$  in itself (Husserl, 2001b, 287; Husserl, 1984, 681-682).

There is, thus, the disclosure of a partial intention that intends the aspect  $\alpha$  of the object A in question and that is synthesized with the global intention that captures A (wherein the partial intention of  $\alpha$  was already implicit). In such a synthesis, a predicative categorial relation is concretely displayed, and may be then intuitively fulfilled.

It is important to highlight: despite categorial intuition be founded on simple intuitions (that is, on the global perception of the intended object and on the partial intentions continually fused therein), it cannot be reduced to simple intuitions. Categorial intuition consists in *a new sort of act*, the result of a covering (*Deckung*) synthesis between *disclosed partial intentions* and the *global perception* in which those

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<sup>13</sup> “The individual percepts of our series have a continuous unity. [...] In this unity, our manifold acts are not merely fused into a phenomenological whole, but into *one act*, more precisely, into *one perception*” Husserl, 2001b, 284, transl. modified; Husserl, 1984, 678). Findlay severely compromises the understanding of the final portion of this passage by employing “one concept” rather than “one perception” in his translation. Husserl’s point here is just that the sensible object is given, in the founding intuitive level, in one global apprehension – a point entirely unrelated to “concepts”.

<sup>14</sup> In this topic, I adhere closely to the very refined interpretation provided by Lohmar (2001, 660-673 in particular).



same intentions had already been operating, although implicitly. Husserl touches on that point as § 48 continues:

[In] the narrowing down of our total perception to one specific perception, the part-intention to  $\alpha$  will not be torn out of the total appearance of A, so as to break up the latter's unity, but an independent act will have  $\alpha$  as its own perceptual object. At the same time, one's continuously operative total perception will "cover" this specific perception in respect with one implicit part-intention. (Husserl, 2001b, 287, transl. modified; Husserl, 1984, 682)

A particular perceptual intention is rendered explicit and, correlatively, a constituent aspect of the object ( $\alpha$ , in this case) is emphasized; that aspect, however, had already been present in the global perception. In this way, a covering synthesis between intentions takes place; from this point on, the object of the global apprehension will be intended *through* the emphasized partial aspect. Categorical intuitive content is provided by the unity that results when there is a covering synthesis between the two types of simple sensible apprehensions (partial and global). Accordingly, a categorical intuition cannot be understood as a mere sensible intuition; rather, it is the unification (through a process of covering) of an explicit partial perceptual intention with the global perception of the intended object; and the resulting unity is what provides intuitive fulfillment for categorical forms. The *categorical* aspect of the founded intuition, which exceeds the scope of sensible content gathered through simple intuitions, stems from the *covering synthesis* between partial intentions and a global perception. It is this kind of synthesis that guarantees evidence to categorially articulated signifying intentions. As Husserl states, the covering unity between global and partial intentions "will not set itself up as our object, but will help to set up another object. It will act representatively, and to such effect that, A will now appear to contain  $\alpha$  in itself (or, with a reversed direction,  $\alpha$  will appear as contained in A)" (Husserl, 2001b, 287; Husserl, 1984, 682). That is how categorical intuition occurs, and a new type of object – a state of affairs – appears. States of affairs are precisely those relations that are expressed in judgments (such as, for instance, the predicative relation present in "A is  $\alpha$ "), and they can only be intuitively given through the covering between partial intentions and simple global intentions, which founds a new kind of intuition.

It should be noted that there are structural differences in regard to the twofold-foundation that constitutes evident judicative knowledge. We have seen that the foundation of categorical intuition requires a covering synthesis, a synthetic mode that is distinct from simple intuition (whose autonomous mode of synthesis is the

continuous fusion of contents). In categorial intuition, partial intentions that are normally implicit become explicit, and are overlaid onto the global perception of which they were already an intrinsic part. Here, a covering of intentional matters takes place such as occurs in the synthesis between categorial intuition and signification, the general synthesis on which the act of knowing, in a strict sense, is founded. It does not seem accurate, however, to speak of a *fulfilling synthesis* at the founding level of categorial intuition. After all, the purpose at that stage is just to make *partial* intuitive content coincide with the *global* givenness of the object. Fulfillment, conversely, involves the formulation of *empty* intentions, whose matter is then covered by *fully intuitive* data. And that is the main characteristic of knowing in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*: a synthesis between significations (empty intentions) and intuition (that offers fulfillment to them). At this level, it is precisely the covering of the matters of such acts that brings about the intuitive givenness of that which had until then only been symbolically intended. Thus, in the case of the synthesis between signification and intuition, covering is also fulfilling. It is worth noting, then: while there is a double synthetic foundation in the act of knowing, the fulfilling synthesis (that characterizes knowing) only takes place at the higher level of relations between different intentional modalities, and not at the level of the establishment of categorial intuition on simple intuitions. We shall see that in APAS Husserl revises this conception. Before this, however, there is an additional topic that should be emphasized.

### III. MEANING AND THOUGHT IN LOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Through the notion of categorial intuition, Husserl intends to elucidate how significations, which are by themselves empty intentions, can be intuitively fulfilled. But the realm of intuition does not in itself shed any light on the *origin* of categorial significations, which derives autonomously from thought acts. According to § 63 of *Logical Investigation*, “*the realm of meaning is [...] much wider than that of intuition*, i.e. than the total realm of possible fulfillment” (Husserl, 2001b, 312; Husserl, 1984, 721), which means that pure thought, operating through categorically-formed significations, is independent from intuition. By themselves, significations can be combined rather freely, regardless of intuitive restrictions. Signifying acts are, thus, ordered with no recourse to intuitions; they are, instead, submitted to “*purely logic-grammatical laws*” (Husserl, 2001b, 313; Husserl, 1984, 723) that set

the possibilities for sense-bearing statements<sup>15</sup>. In turn, intuitive content by itself harbors no categorial relation. At most, this content functions as *an instance of confirmation* for categorial articulations, originated in the sphere of pure thought. In § 62, Husserl states: “with real [intuited] contents none of the categorial forms which fit them is necessarily given: there is abundant freedom to connect and relate, to generalize and subsume, etc.” (Husserl, 2001b, 309; Husserl, 1984, 716). The point here is that intuition contributes neither to the creation nor to the ordering of categoriality, serving only to provide occasions for the evident confirmation of logical articulations not originally stemming from the intuitive field<sup>16</sup>. Hence, there is a discontinuity between intuition and thought in what concerns the genesis and operation of categoriality. This latter is but the set of logical functions through which pure thought orders and expresses itself, free of external restrictions. Intuition, in turn, is not in itself the bearer of categoriality, but, in the constitution of knowing, merely has the power to confirm or disconfirm the categorial relations that are produced by pure thinking.

The above conclusion is perfectly applicable to *simple perceiving*, which presents only sensible objects in isolation, and not *any relations* between them or their constituent parts. And, as we have seen, Husserl expends great effort in conceiving the *categorial* intuition, through which occurs not only the evident apprehension of isolated objects, but also of *logical relations*. We have seen that in simple intuition there are multiple partial intentions that, having been fused together, do not explicitly appear as such. What prominently appears through simple intuition is the global perception of the intended object as a whole. Categorial intuition derives from the disclosure of certain partial intentions and their covering synthesis with a global perception, so that intuitiveness can be given to different types of relations as formulated in judgments. Husserl thus establishes a type of intuition that offers evidence to judicative categorial relations. But this ascription of evidence is nothing other than the “shaping” of intuition by something intentionally different from it.

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<sup>15</sup> Renaudie (2007) develops with detail that point.

<sup>16</sup> To be fair, in § 62 Husserl acknowledges minimally that the intuited material imposes limits on categorial operations, which implies that, in a way, the categorial depends on restrictions that do not stem exclusively from the sphere of pure thought: “[...] these pure laws cannot prescribe what forms a *given matter* can assume, but can only tell us that when it, and any matter in general, assumes a certain form, or is capable of assuming it, a definitely limited circle of further forms remains open to the same matter” (Husserl, 2001b, 311; Husserl, 1984, 719-20). However, Husserl does not explore the consequences of this conception regarding the problem of the origin of the categorial relations in connection with intuitive acts. As we shall see, that is precisely what he attempts in APAS.

After all, it is from the perspective of that which signification categorially delimits that the intuitive content is mobilized so as to be synthesized into a categorial intuition. As noted by Jocelyn Benoist, in knowing, intuition is molded according to signification or, in other words, intuition operates in exclusive accordance with that which signifying intentions set up as a target to be attained (Benoist, 2008, 211). The making explicit and synthesizing of a partial intention with the global perception (where it was implicit), in order to constitute categorial intuition as a founded act, is a process guided by the signifying intention, which proposes a certain categorial relation for confirmation by perceptual life. For example, it is because the statement “the paper is white” functions as a guide for the act of knowing that the partial perceptual intention that emphasizes the color of the object (rather than others that emphasize its shape or texture) is made explicit and synthesized with the global apprehension of the white paper. Thus, it is because simple intuitions *are submitted to* relations imposed by signifying intentions that certain intuited data are synthesized in a specific fashion so as to provide intuitive fulfillment for the categorial articulations at work in a particular case. Nevertheless, the logical articulations grasped with evidence *do not derive from* the intuitive content, but rather from the pure categorial thinking expressed by judgments. These logical articulations, fully formed prior to their being intuitively confirmed or disconfirmed, guide the selection of the perceptual intentions that will be synthesized in categorial intuition. In that way, intuition simply “allows itself” to be molded by the categorial relations expressed in statements at stake. And nothing in the Sixth Investigation indicates that intuition *bears by itself* categoriality or, in other words, that intuition renders logical relations explicit independently of being constrained into doing so by judicative intentions. According to Husserl’s analysis in this text, categorial articulations are originally exterior to intuition, and the latter’s sole function in the act of knowing is to verify the evidence of logical relations that, at first, bear no connection to it whatsoever.

In spite of this, what is presupposed in *Logical Investigations* is that intuition “*accepts*” the logical restrictions from judgments, so to speak. As we have just seen, that certain simple partial intentions are made explicit rather than others is something that reveals the prominence of signification in the ordering of knowledge. But how intuition *can be guided* by logical relations originally external to it? It seems that there must be *continuity* of some sort between sensibility and categorial understanding – a topic left unexplored in *Logical Investigations* –, which would explain this permeability of intuition in regard to categorial forms. If there truly

were a complete discontinuity between the two realms concerning the genesis and functioning of categorial relations, with the latter being exclusively derived from pure thought, it would be unclear why intuitive acts, which have an *autonomous synthetic ordering*, would be led by complex structures *extrinsic* to their original functioning. Husserl solves this problem in APAS<sup>17</sup>, as we shall see from now on.

#### IV. PERCEPTUAL SYNTHESIS IN APAS

It is worth to mention that the global project of APAS is close to that of *Logical Investigations*, which allows us to evaluate in a privileged way Husserl's conceptual changes regarding categorial intuition. In APAS' introductory section, Husserl presents an extensive reflection on logic as the general theory of rational justification of knowledge (Cf. Husserl, 2001a, §§ 1-10; Husserl, 1974, 351-378). There, Husserl formulates a diagnosis similar to that with which "Prolegomena to pure logic" (first volume of *Logical Investigations*): contemporary sciences are incomplete as to theoretical rationality, since there is no clarity regarding the basic conditions that ascribe legitimacy to knowledge<sup>18</sup>. It is a task of phenomenology to clarify the subjective sources that guarantee the evident givenness of logical validity. In APAS, Husserl takes up the general lines of this project of phenomenological founding of knowledge; however, in the light of a new approach: the genetic method<sup>19</sup>. This method explores subjectivity from its most basic constituent layers and, in this way, it makes explicit that the very theoretical thinking (correlated to its objective scope) is rooted in pre-theoretical syntheses turned to the sensible world. Husserl asserts:

[...] it is impossible to understand what thinking [...] is in the specific sense in order to be able to be expressed by language and universal words and in order to provide a science, a theory, if we do not go back prior to this thinking, back to those acts and accomplishments that make up the most expansive part of our life. (Husserl, 2001a, 32; Husserl, 1974, 373)

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<sup>17</sup> For the following passages, I shall employ A. Steinbock's remarkable edition ("Analyses concerning passive and active synthesis" – henceforth cited as APAS) that brought together fragments of a lecture course taught by Husserl in the 1920s separately presented in four different volumes of the *Husserliana* (Hua XI, XIV, XVII and XXXI). For more information on that particular edition, see Steinbock's introduction to APAS.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Husserl 2001b, vol. 1, 15; Husserl, 1975, § 4.

<sup>19</sup> It is not my intention to put forward a detailed exposition of this method, but to reconstruct some results from it concerning the role of categoriality in knowledge. For detailed considerations on the specificity of the genetic phenomenology, cf. Steinbock (1998), Montavont (1999), Biceaga (2010).

The author points here to the pre-theoretical life of consciousness (in its intuitive function) as condition to the conceptual activity whereby thought brings forth scientific knowledge, now investigated from its rooting in sensible experience as epistemic ground for the superior intentional acts.

I have no intention to present an exhaustive analysis of APAS here. I would just like to reconstruct some results from this course that allow us to reevaluate the role of categorial intuition. For that, the first topic I highlight in APAS is how Husserl reconsiders the constitutive differences between the two levels of knowledge foundation in such a way that the main characteristic of the general structure of knowing (fulfillment) is shown as also occurring in the very sphere of intuition<sup>20</sup>.

In section 10 of the introduction of APAS, Husserl describes perceiving as a process marked by a double aspect: on one hand, “the object is constantly given to us as unchanged, as the same” (Husserl, 2001a, 34; Husserl, 1974, 374). On the other hand, there is “a constant variation of modes of appearance, perspectives”, so that “we have a consciousness that runs through them and connects them up, a consciousness of the one and the same object” (Husserl, 2001a, 34, Husserl; 1974, 374-375). What is emphasized here as being characteristic of perception is the constitutive relation between *this unitary givenness of the apprehended object as unchanged*, and *its diverse modes of appearance*. Husserl intends to make the complementarity of the two aspects explicit: through different, particular modes of appearance, it is always the same object that is intended. Thus, as the perceptual process unfolds, the identity of the perceived content is established, the latter being intended as, for instance, a single object seen from multiple angles.

As we see, there is an identifying synthesis of the partial modes of manifestation that allow the identity of the perceived object to be recognized. That general scheme is, at first glance, quite similar to the fusion of contents of simple perception described in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*. However, Husserl stresses now not only that the partial modes of givenness by means of which an object’s identity is apprehended are partial. His point is that such modes are *successive*, which means they are ordered in a temporal flow where each partial intention becomes the perceptual theme of a certain now of consciousness, a position they soon lose so that other modes of givenness, that up till then had been merely suggestive of the

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<sup>20</sup> The role of fulfillment in perceptual experience was already highlighted by several commentators. See, for instance, Bernet (1979). My point here is to contrast this latter description of perception with the Sixth Investigation.



possibility of new apprehensions, become the center of attention. Hence, it must be made clear that perceptual intentions are structured in a temporal flow in which they *gain* and *lose* intuitive prominence. That is how the identity of the perceived object is constituted: by means of a process of *gradual manifestation* in which different aspects are directly apprehended, then quickly superseded by others that, in turn, successively become the center of the present awareness.

According to this description, perception offers us a single object by means of multiple partial modes of givenness, *not all of which are presented to consciousness in the same way*, since they are structured successively. In order to make this point clear, Husserl distinguishes, in the perceptual process, “between what is genuinely perceived and what is not genuinely perceived” (Husserl, 2001a, 40; Husserl, 1966, 4). In each perceptual intention this or that particular side or aspect of the object is emphasized, becoming the central theme for present consciousness. But alongside some features presently intuited, other features (recently perceived or yet to be perceived) *are jointly grasped* by perceptual consciousness. That means that perceptual synthesis is not merely a fusion of *effectively intuited contents*, added to one another. Rather, perceptual synthesis occurs between *aspects given intuitively* and *aspects not given intuitively but co-intended in each partial perspective*. It is through that synthesis between different types of perceptual intentions (some effectively intuitive, others not) that the global recognition that confers identity to the perceived object takes place. The fully intuitive intentions are synthesized with others that merely announce additional aspects not currently intuited but still involved in the intuitive givenness, that is, aspects which *are referred to* by the data intuited at a given moment as new data to be perceived or as data already perceived. Thus, the perceptual apprehension of objects always exceeds the momentary grasping of particular intuited data, since it involves aspects not currently apprehended in their intuitive fullness, but implied by the aspect currently perceived.<sup>21</sup> The partial data effectively intuited at each turn are never taken to be the entire object, are not identical with it, but are synthesized with *horizons* of further possible data, so that the object in its global character can be apprehended through the constitutive partiality of each perceptual givenness.

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<sup>21</sup> “It is clear that a non-intuitive pointing beyond or indicating is what characterizes the side actually seen as a mere side, and what provides for the fact that the side is not taken for the thing, but rather, that something transcending the side is intended in consciousness as perceived” (Husserl, 2001a, 41; Husserl, 1966, 4-5).



My point here is that Husserl discusses this passive ordering of perception using terms that in LI had been reserved for the higher-order synthesis that occurs between signification and intuition, and which characterized the specificity of the founded act of knowing. Far from being simply a matter of vocabulary, the question here is the recognition that certain structures, previously attributed exclusively to the relations existing between different intentional modalities, already appear at the level of what LI named “simple intuition” or “simple perception”. Husserl announces in APAS: “we now have to describe the process of perception as a process of acquiring knowledge” (Husserl, 2001a, 44; Husserl, 1966, 8). It should be recalled that, in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*, perception did not by itself constitute knowledge, as the latter was then understood to only occur through a fulfilling synthesis between two different intentional modalities (signification and intuition). In APAS, however, he admits that this particular feature that defines knowledge, the synthesis of fulfillment, already works at the level of the autonomous ordering of simple perception<sup>22</sup>. There are empty intentional prefigurations of experiences that can be *fulfilled* as the aspects anticipated become the impressional intuitive theme for perceptual consciousness. That which had been merely prefigured as something new may attain full intuitive givenness. In this way occurs *the gradual fulfillment of the empty intentions that constitute the horizon for each intuitive act*. Through this process, what had once been vague and undetermined becomes fully determined, so as a minimal degree of *knowledge* can already be found in the course of simple perception, without any guidance or interference from the signifying acts.

## V. CATEGORIALITY IN APAS

As we have just seen, the general structure of the knowing synthesis presented in the *Sixth Logical Investigation* is already at play in the sphere of what this text would call “simple perception”. Now, it must be clarified that the way such perception occurs reveals that at least certain basic *categorial articulations* can already be found at this intentional level. In the final portion of APAS, Husserl discusses the role of active synthesis in the constitution of the notion of object, and in the acquisition of knowledge of objects in general. There, he admits that perception cannot be reduced

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<sup>22</sup> Regarding perception, Husserl says: “now we should consider that this process of fulfillment, which is a specifying fulfillment, is also a process of knowing something more closely” (Husserl, 2001a, 45; Husserl, 1966, 8).

to a passive event. In fact, perception (since there is a cognitive interest present in it, that is, an interest in the determination and recognition of the perceived data (Husserl, 2001a, § 52; Husserl, 2000, § 4)) should be taken as an initial level of subjective activity (Husserl, 2001a, § 49; Husserl, 2000, § 1). Once imbued with this cognitive interest, perception is able to reveal, *with no recourse to explicit significations*, categorial articulations that are intrinsic to its contents.

Within the process of the constitution of the notion of object by consciousness, Husserl recognizes *two* moments belonging to the realm of sensibility or perception, understood as the initial active exercise of intentionality. A third moment, specifically concerning judicative activity, where objectivation is effectively completed (Husserl, 2001a, § 63; Husserl, 2000, § 15), is not dealt with in the present article. It is enough to notice that this third moment stems, genetically, from sensible syntheses. Thus, knowledge expressed by judgments is still regarded as a founded act that requires intuition as a founding layer. The role of intuition, however, is not that of a simple confirmatory instance for categorial articulations that are external to it, as we shall presently see.

As the *first level* in the constitution of objective sense, Husserl presents perception as the *establishment of the perceptual theme*. This simply consists in directing attention towards that which affects the subject (the example privileged by Husserl is that of an unfamiliar sensible object). At this point, the subject just turns towards something which has attracted her attention, and highlights this something (an unexpected sound, or an unknown visual aspect) through cognitive interest. In fact, at this moment, the actual perceptual exploration has not even begun; what occurs is merely the fixation of “the *object* as the substrate and center of a *unitary interest*” (Husserl, 2001a, 290; Husserl, 2000, 18). It should be remarked that at this particular level the notion of object is not yet fully realized. The objectivation of the apprehended data is only beginning; the perceptual theme will be gradually enriched to the point where it is intentionally realized as an object. In this initial level the theme is just “grasped in undifferentiated generality” (Husserl, 2001a, 293; Husserl, 2000, 21). Husserl seems to return to that notion of *global perception* described in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*: the initial perceptual recognition of something is nothing but a turning towards the as-yet-undetermined affecting data, which present a *global something* without exhibiting its parts in any great detail. That is the moment when the affecting *pre-data* effectively become *data*, constituting, even if generically, a perceived theme.

There are certainly differences between what is broached here and that global perception which, in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*, is presented as the normal experience of simple perception. In this text, simple global grasping functions until the implicit partial intentions therein are rendered explicit, something which, in turn, only occurs as required by categorial signifying intentions. In APAS, this undifferentiated apprehension seems to be only an initial moment in the perceptual process, rather than the typical character of perceptual ordering as an autonomous intentional modality. The global perception just indicates the *beginning* of an exploratory process triggered by affection, a beginning which, if the cognitive process continues, is soon overcome and, thus, should *not* be considered a privileged intentional mode. Accordingly, from the perspective of the genetic history of cognitively-interested objectivation, global perception is less an autonomous intentional modality than a transitory stage in the process of the constitution of objective sense.

The *second level* of perceptual activity described by Husserl is the examination of the particular components of the perceived theme. Sometimes Husserl calls this level *perceptual explanation*, that is, the intuitive disclosure of specific determinations of a theme initially apprehended in an undetermined way (Husserl, 2001a, §§ 53-54; Husserl, 2000, §§ 5-6). To paraphrase the example employed by Husserl, a perceived theme S affects a subject, who turns attentively towards it. Motivated by the interest to cognitively explore S, one starts to make explicit the components of this theme ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ...). The emphasis given to each of the constituent aspects does not imply an alteration of the general theme perceived, which remains S. What happens is that sub-themes are being disclosed, and subsequently appear as aspects or determinations of S rather than as new, isolated themes disconnectedly succeeding one another.

It is important to note that in the course of this process *articulations inherent to S* are uncovered, the latter being kept as the central theme while its constituent aspects are emphasized. Here, covering syntheses occur between the intentions that highlight the partial aspects ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ ...) and the central theme, which is now apprehended in a way that is far richer than its initial undetermined givenness. From this point on, the theme S is recognized by means of each of its particular, emphasized aspects. In Husserl's words:

[...] an active synthesis of identification is carried out between S and  $\alpha$ , and it finds the active fulfillment of the thematic intention. The S in this case has passed from the beginning mode of undetermined generality over to the noematically new form of a S, a S that in the explicit identification with  $\alpha$  and in the concentration on  $\alpha$  has

become the determinate S, has become the subject of the determination,  $\alpha$ . (Husserl, 2001a, 295; Husserl, 2000, 23)

Thus, at this second level, a process of perceptual disclosure emphasizes the constituent aspects of the central theme, which is then recognized as the bearer of such and such attributes. This process, the cognitive enrichment of the perceived theme's apprehension, may continue with various degrees of complexity. In what follows the above quotation, Husserl states that the results obtained through identification syntheses are not lost when one intends more and more objective components, but such results complicate the identification of the perceived theme, which is retained by consciousness in an increasingly enhanced form. If the gaze seeks to explicitly intend the characteristic  $\beta$  after having uncovered  $\alpha$ , then it is no longer a question of emphasizing  $\beta$  in relation to an originally undetermined S. The S that is sought is already determined by  $\alpha$ , it is already  $S_{(\alpha)}$ , and so on. Hence, in the course of perceptual exploration, the central theme is gradually enriched with constituent determinations that configure its objective identity.

In this way, at this second level of perceptual activity occurs a disclosure of the *articulations* of the perceived theme. There are remarkable changes, here, in relation to the description of the cognitive process that appears in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*. There, simple perceiving consisted in the fusion of numerous partial intentions through a continuous covering synthesis. And a categorial intuition would be constituted when a new type of synthesis occurred among these simple perceptual intentions. This new kind of synthesis should be capable of unifying a partial intention with the global intention of the perceived object, a global intention in which that same partial intention had already been present, albeit implicitly. In "Logical Investigations", a categorial intuitive synthesis of this sort could only take place under restrictions imposed upon it by signifying intentions that directed the gaze towards a select number of perceived features, relevant for the production of an intuitive givenness able to fulfill the judgment in question. What Husserl presents now is different: simple perceiving develops itself as a cognitive examination of its perceived theme. And the syntheses that fulfill articulations are already present in the very course of perceptual activity, whereas Husserl had previously thought that these syntheses only occurred when signifying intentions came into play. That which was an exclusive characteristic of categorial intuiting, namely, the presence of syntheses capable of bringing out particular aspects of the perceived themes (when such themes are apprehended under some sort of logical

relation), is now understood to already occur in sensible perceiving. In the *Sixth Logical Investigation*, conversely, categorial intuition did not appear as a spontaneous development stemming from simple perceiving, but as a new layer of intuition, a founded act established in relation to signifying intentions.

This is a very important conclusion. That which was once attributed to categorial intuition (as a founded act) is actually a part of the process of exploration that unfolds within simple sensibility, which means that the categorial character of intuition takes place independently of the instrumentalization of perception as an activity that confirms signifying intentions. In “Logical Investigations”, categorial intuition only appeared in the context of the intuitive fulfillment of judicative forms, which were ordered in and by themselves, with no appeal to the realm of sensibility. Now Husserl suggests that sensibility is not merely that domain where one may find evident confirmation for categorial formations originating from a different intentional modality (pure thinking). Rather, the author admits that some relations constitutive of the perceived theme (in other words, certain categorial forms) are already operational in the domain of sensibility. Elementary categorial forms are prefigured in sensible life in such a way that the judicative exercise of these categorial forms, far from consisting in an *ex nihilo* invention of categoriality, should be understood as a re-elaboration and expansion of something that originates in perception. After presenting perceptual explanation, Husserl states that

we realize here that the consciousness of something like a determination of the object and correlatively of the substrate – the subject of determinations in such processes [...] – only now arise at all: we notice that in the articulated activity and in the unity of the encompassing synthesis, which synthesis connects the succession of the acts grasping S,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , ..., an original formation of sense is constituted with respect to the objective sense of S and the emergent  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , ..., a formation of sense by virtue of which the terms “subject” and “determination” originally gain their significance. (Husserl, 2001a, 292-293; Husserl, 2000, 20)

Hence, perceptual exploration arranges intuitive content according to the forms “subject” and “determination” or “predicate”. These forms, commonly recognized in judicative thinking, are already present in perception, which reveals itself not only as an instance of confirmation for categorial signifying intentions, but as the *source* of at least some categorial relations, which are subsequently elaborated by pure thinking. As we have seen, the very unfolding of sensible perception offers the perceived theme as a *substrate* for *determinations* that are gradually uncovered. The covering syntheses between partial aspects and the central perceived theme thus prefigure the *form* of the simple predicative judgment (“S is p”). That basic

form would not, then, be derived from the *a priori* laws of pure thinking, since such form is foreshadowed as a result of the perceptual examination of the constituent articulations present in a perceived theme. And more: this intuitive grasping of the articulations that compose the perceived theme does not need to be attributed to some special kind of founded intuition, an intuition that, guided by logical forms supposedly extrinsic to the normal way perception works (fusion of contents) would impose “uncommon” relations between simple perceptual intentions. Rather, the disclosure of categorial relations can be understood to occur in the simple exploratory exercise of perception, without any appeal to a notion of founded intuition, that is, without any appeal to a type of synthesis other than the one that spontaneously occurs in sensible perception.

It is true, as we have also seen, that Husserl reconsiders the basic mode of functioning of so-called simple perception, which is no longer understood, as seemed to be the case in the *Sixth Logical Investigation*, as a continuous fusion of effectively perceived data. As previously mentioned, relations of fulfillment can already be found in perception, since the apprehension of partial data points to new horizons of data to be apprehended, suggesting an exploratory course. And now we see that, in this fulfilling perceptual process, minimal categorial articulations are rendered explicit without influence from signifying intentions. In APAS, Husserl considers that partial intuitive intentions that highlight particular determinations of a global perceived theme (by means of fulfilling empty anticipations co-intended with previous partial perceptual acts) function explicitly within sensible life, constituting categorial forms. In “Logical Investigations”, all categorial forms were deployed *from outside* the realm of sensibility (as signifying intentions), and only then would there be an attempt to render explicit the relations of sensible covering capable of fulfilling the judgments in which these categorial forms operated. That particular intuitive fulfillment was attributed to a second-order perceiving, a founded perceiving that altered the common synthetic ordering process found in simple perceiving.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

I have reconstructed two ways Husserl conceives the relation between categoriality and sensibility. In “Logical Investigations”, the partial intentions included in the global recognition of the perceived object did not appear by themselves, and remained dormant in the usual flow of sensible life. The imposition of certain *extrinsic* categorial forms was required for the relations between partial



intentions and the global perceptual determination to appear. Yet that appearance was disruptive of the normal functioning of simple perception, and inaugurated a new level of sensibility, the categorial intuition. In APAS, Husserl reconsiders the mode of functioning of simple perceiving: in its *immanent unfolding*, the exhibition of partial aspects in relation to the global perceived theme already occurs. Hence, it is *not* necessary that *signifying* intentions awake the covering syntheses that are implicit in perceptual life, founding a new kind of intuitive act. Quite the opposite, in fact: some elementary categorial forms are implied in the modes of apprehension at work in simple sensibility. In this way *the notion of categorial intuition as a founded act that fulfills judgments of perception becomes unnecessary*, since, in order to ascribe intuitiveness to the categorial structures, one is no longer required to suppose that there must be a foundation intrinsic to sensibility<sup>23</sup>. If one follows the genetic ordering of perceptual activity, it becomes clear that the fulfillment of categorial forms has its roots in the syntheses through which perception autonomously explores its themes. Thus, the notion of a categorial intuition is replaced by the very process of perceptual explication, where categorial forms inherent to intuitive syntheses already function. In this way, the genetic continuity between sensibility and judgment, which “Logical Investigations” only supposed without explaining it, is made explicit: signification can guide intuition in higher acts of knowledge because its basic forms take part in the normal unfolding of sensibility.

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<sup>23</sup> Other important kind of categorial intuition presented in “Logical Investigations”, ideation, is maintained by Husserl until his last texts. The conceptual consequences from the latter descriptions of the perceptual syntheses for ideation will be the subject of another article.



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