

thinking

togetherness

ANDREJ BOŽIČ (*Ed.*)

THINKING TOGETHERNESS

PHENOMENOLOGY AND SOCIALITY

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PHENOMENOLOGY AND SOCIALITY

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Zixuan Liu

WHAT IS THE IRREALITY OF SOCIAL REALITY?

HIGHER VISIBILITY TRANSCENDENTAL INTENTIONALITY

Abstract: Social reality is distinct from brute physical reality. Its irreality is neither fictional, eidetic, nor idealized; nor is it irreducibly imposed on physical objects. Taking linguistic form as an example, I propose a transcendental, anti-naturalistic account: the irreality of social reality results from the higher visibility of intentional correlation, which is transcendental in the sense that it is not located in real spacetime; rather, the latter is located within the former. The article shows that mainstream accounts of collective intention (content, mode, subject, and relation) do not have to be mutually exclusive, and can complement each other. The article also proposes a mechanism for pre-reflective plural self-awareness in its most basic form: congruence with like-minded individuals. Our fear of the group mind is rooted in the metaphysical mystification of the mind–body relationship through naturalism, which rejects transcendentalism in favor of an increasingly technological concept of humanity.

Keywords: social ontology, irreality, transcendentalism, naturalism, collective intention, pre-reflectiveness.

1. Introduction

Social reality embodies a paradoxical ontological status. On the one hand, nothing is more real than the work we do and the money we use every day in our living world. On the other hand, we cannot perceive an institution or promise in the same way as we perceive brute, physical reality. Through enactment, “something changes in the world” (Reinach 1989, 247), and legal realities, like property, begin to exist, but nevertheless unfulfilled claims would remain even if all humans died (Loidolt 2016). Legal judgements are unreal objects, insofar as they do not belong to nature (Schreier 1924, 44), and, for Husserl, the cultural meaning of a piece of music is unreal (*Hua IX*, 116–117, 398–399). Some theorists even hold that there are no real social groups (cf. Ritchie 2015, Thomasson 2019).

How can this this irreality be understood? Various approaches are possible:

(1) A strong naturalistic account: Searle (2010, 201) claims that economic and physical realities are distinct, as the former are “products of massive fantasy [...]”. As long as everyone shares the fantasy and has confidence in it, the system will work just fine.” According to this view, only physical objects are real, and therefore social realities are unreal. Nonetheless, this approach fails to do ontological justice to social reality (Smith 2014), and is inconsistent with Searle’s commitment to describing the *status quo* without challenging it (Buekens 2014).

(2) It could be argued that social reality is unreal, because it is eidetic. However, this is not convincing: for example, the UN is a social reality, but also an individual institution.

(3) Another approach would be to argue that social reality is unreal, because it is idealized, like a perfect mathematical triangle that is nowhere to be found in the real world, in which all objects are vague. However, race and occupation—both forms of social reality—lack precise boundaries.

64 (4) A weak naturalistic account: despite its irreducibility to physical reality, social reality requires a physical basis. In other words, social reality is unreal, because it is irreducibly superscribed on its physical underpinnings (Smith 2014; Smith and Searle 2003).

Although a few lines from Husserl may support this “superscribed” account (nature exists at a lower level than culture [*Hua XXV, 97*]), I would argue against it in favor of a transcendental account: *the irreality of social reality originates from the higher visibility of intentional correlation*, which is unreal because of its *transcendentality*. Intentionality is transcendental in the sense that it is not located in real spacetime; rather, the latter is located within the former.

To illustrate, Section 2 provides an excellent example from Husserl: the linguistic form of natural language. A state of affairs (“the tree is green”) is unreal, that is, it is not located in real spacetime. This is not because of the eidetic concepts “tree” and “green,” or because the logical form is idealized, since it is an individual state of affairs described in natural language. What differentiates a state of affairs from a perceived physical object is that, while the congruence (*Deckung*) between the attended objects (the tree is the dominating [*herrschend*] aim, while its leaves are the serving [*dienend*] aims)

is implicit in perception, the very “teleological” relationship between different aims becomes explicit in linguistic forms like “subject,” “predicate,” “is,” or “has.” The linguistic form is not imposed on the physical percept, but merely makes explicit what was implicit. Thus, the irrealty of a state of affairs results from the greater visibility of the congruence, i.e., the “teleological relationship” between the attended objects, and not from superscription.

With this in mind, Section 3 introduces Husserl’s account of cultural items. Cultural meaning is purpose-property (*Zweckbestimmung*) and is intelligible only with reference to correlative subjectivity. While echoing the above example, Husserl’s account reveals that cultural meaning is in fact intentional correlation. This leads us to the central thesis: social reality is irreal, because it makes transcendental intentionality more visible. Intentional correlation is transcendental in the sense that it is not located within real spacetime, but rather encompasses it. Physical objects are also intentional achievements, but their irrealty is less visible, because the corresponding intentional activities are more passive. Hence, irrealty is not imposed upon physical reality, but stems from the higher visibility of transcendental intentionality. Section 3.2 demonstrates the advantages of this account: it bridges the gap between intentionality and the irrealty of social reality, and renews our understanding of meaning and information while upholding social ontology’s commitment to description. Section 3.3 responds to potential objections that: (1) intentionality is located in objective time and thus my account overlooks the historicity of social reality; (2) intentionality can be naturalized.

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Within this framework, Section 4 critically examines four mainstream accounts of collective intentionality (content, mode, subject, relation), drawing these accounts back to the congruence (*Deckung*) of various aims and selves within an individual mind, and considering whether collective and individual intentions are in fact analogous. The analysis shows that in practice these accounts are complementary rather than mutually exclusive, and that analytic philosophers are often misled by linguistic differences. Nonetheless, social reality does not necessarily originate from collective *objectual* intention, since we have pre-reflective plural self-awareness (Schmid 2014, 2016), for which I propose a mechanism in its most basic form: congruence with like-minded individuals (*meinesgleichen*) as a form of *non-objectual collective intention*.

Why are we afraid of the group mind? In addition to the “substantivization” of the adverbial self (Schmid 2018) and the commitment to phenomenal consciousness (Szanto 2014), a further source of fear is the metaphysical mystification of mind–body relations through naturalism. Section 5 aims to demystify this *qua* an intentional achievement of association, arguing that increasing technologization of the concept of humanity (*Technologisierung des Menschenbildes*) (Grunwald 2009, 2010) has led naturalists to abandon transcendentalism. This is our *Krisis*.

2. Irreality of the linguistic form

66 In comparison with the perceived tree and its greenness, a state of affairs (*Sachverhalt*) in the linguistic form of natural language, like “The tree is green,” seems to be “irreal,” given that it is not located within the real spacetime. How should we understand this irreality? The first attempt may appeal to the ideality of *eidos* like “tree” and “green.” Nonetheless, even though the eidetic account applies to “tree,” the linguistic copula “is” is individual, since this proposition describes a particular state of affairs. Then we may say that “is” is similar to the idealized exact triangle that is nowhere to be found in the living world, where there are no clear-cut boundaries between various concepts. Still, the linguistic form of this state of affairs is typical; namely, it belongs to natural language, not the idealized, artificial language applied in exact mathematics and logic. If we take a step back, the question becomes: what makes the difference between an individual typical state of affairs described in natural language and a perceived physical thing?

Husserl’s answer consists of two steps. The first is pre-linguistic attention in perception, the foundation of linguistic form. Before attending to a particular intentional object, we already have “global perception” (*Gesamtperzeption*, *Gesamtwahrnehmung*) (*Hua XXXVIII*, 282–283, 292; *Hua XXIV*, 249–251), also called “intentional/objectifying state” (*intentionale Zuständlichkeit*) (*Hua XLIII/I*, 266–267). Such perception is directed towards the whole surrounding world as the “global object” (*Gesamtgegenständlichkeit*) (*Hua Mat VII*, 138–141). The global perception is the ready-made (*bereitliegend*) substrate (*Hua XLIII/I*, 218–219, 321) for attention, which seizes (*erfassen*) an object out and

makes it an object for itself (*Gegenstand für sich*) (*Hua XXXVIII*, 116). Further, I can keep this object “in my grasp” (*im Griff halten*), keep hold of it (*festhalten*) while attending to another (Husserl 1939, 116–123; *Hua XLIII/I*, 34–35, 119, 508, 518). Different events may happen:

(1) The previously attended object is the dominating theme (*herrschendes Thema*), while the present one is the serving one (*dienendes Thema*). For example, I am investigating a plant and attend to it. For the sake of the entire plant, I notice its flowers, trunk, and leaves. The former is the aim I always keep in mind, while the latter are means (*Mittel*) to achieve this aim. When some whole is the dominating aim, Husserl calls this process explication (*Explikation*), the whole *Explikand*, and the parts *Explikat*.

[...] dass sie [die schlichten thematischen Akte] etwas Gegenständliches als Thema für sich, *als herrschendes (auch freies absolutes) Thema* setzen. Ihnen stehen gegenüber Akte, die nicht “Gegenstände” oder Themen für sich, sondern dienende Themen (Mittel-Thema, abhängiges) setzen. (*Hua XLIII/I*, 139; Husserl’s emphasis.)

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[...] that they [the simple thematic acts] set something objective as theme for itself, *as dominating (also free absolute) theme*. Opposite to these acts are those which do not set “objects” or themes for themselves, but serving themes (means-theme, dependent theme).

Immer haben wir zu unterscheiden *schlichte und explizierende Objektivationen* und innerhalb der explizierenden, die ihrem Wesen nach kompliziert sind, herrschende und dienende, wobei aber die herrschenden in den dienenden herrschen und diese den herrschenden einverleibt sind. Eine dienende, einverleibte Objektivation objektiviert nicht als Objekt an und für sich, primär als Abgesehenes, sondern nur als Explikation eines selbständigen, herrschenden Objektivierens. (*Hua XLIII/I*, 184; Husserl’s emphasis.)

We always have to distinguish simple and explicating objectivations and within those explicating, which are complicated by essence, the dominating and serving ones, where the dominating ones are dominating in the serving ones and the latter are incorporated in the dominating

ones. A serving, incorporated objectivation does not objectivate *qua* object in and for itself, primarily as the aimed one, but only as an explication of an independent, dominating objectivating activity.

But serving themes are not necessarily real parts of the dominating one. The soil, air, and sunlight can serve the dominating theme, as well. And Husserl calls this process “connecting” (*beziehen*) or “observation that goes out” (*hinausgehende Betrachtung*) as opposed to explication, the observation that goes in (*hineingehende Betrachtung*) (*Hua XXXI*, 20, 67–70).

(2) Different themes may enjoy equal status. I am appreciating a canvas, both entirely and in detail (*Hua XLIII/I*, 136). A better example would be a collection: I pay attention to a bird, a cloud, and a piece of music. Each is equally “object for itself” (*Das Zusammengenommene ist jedes Gegenstand für sich*. [*Hua XXXI*, 190.])

(3) Furthermore, a whole can be a mere “passage” (*Durchgang*) to its parts, namely the former is serving the latter. For a fruit cultivator *qua* fruit cultivator, a boulevard is of interest only for the sake of the trees (*Hua XXXI*, 136).

68 (4) A formerly serving theme can now become a dominating one. As an example, I develop an independent interest in the flowers, so I ignore the tree (*Hua XXXI*, 140). These parts alienate themselves from their motherland (*sich seinem Mutterboden entfremdet*), and are rendered objects for themselves (*zu einem Gegenstand für sich gemacht*) (*Hua XXXI*, 169). Of course, some kinds of objects have a stronger disposition to be a dominating theme (*Hua XXXI*, 140–141).

Nevertheless, at this level, there is still no predicative synthesis like “the tree is green/has flowers” (*Hua XXXI*, 124). Indeed, the attended objects are the first step, the necessary foundation, but the second one is indispensable. Something new must take place (*Hua XXXI*, 127). For example, during the explication, the partial congruence (*Deckung*), the form of synthesis between the dominating aim (the tree) and the serving one (a flower) takes place *implicitly*. I am paying attention to the themes but not to their congruence. It is in the predication that this congruence, this thematic relation is made *explicit* in “is,” “has,” “and”:

Der “Blick” richtet sich, wird man sagen, auf das G, das als das durch die Explikationsbewegung als weiß Bestimmtes bewusst ist und in der Wiederholung dieses Übergangs auf die Einheit, auf das “Identische”,

auf das "Ist", in dem das explizierte G sich mit dem Explikat identifiziert: und das kommt in der Prädikation zum Ausdruck [...]. (Hua XXXI, 125–126; my emphasis.)

The "gaze" points, man will say, to the G, of which one is conscious of as something determined as white in the explication-movement, and in the repetition of this transition to the unity, to the "identical", to the "Is," in which the explicated G identifies itself with the Explikat: and that comes to the expression [...].

Der erfassende Blick lebt im Identifizieren, *im Erfassen des Ist*, im Erfassen des Sich-Bestimmens als weiß. Im Explizieren bestimmt sich das Objekt *implicite* als weiß, nämlich es verdeutlicht sich, *aber das "Sich-Bestimmen-als" ist nicht erfasst*. Erfassend im Blick sich bestimmen kann nur, was explikativ schon bestimmt ist. Das originäre Erfassen von "G ist weiß" setzt die Explikation voraus, und das als weiß explizierte G erhält die Funktion des Subjekts und ist der notwendige Anfang für den prädikativen Prozess, der nur verlaufen kann in der Form "G ist α ". (Hua XXXI, 128; my emphasis.)

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The seizing gaze lives in the identifying, *in the seizing of Is*, in the seizing of being determined as white. In explication, the object is determined *implicite* as white, namely it is elucidated, *but the "being-determined-as" is not seized*. Only what is already determined through explication can be determined during seizing in the gaze. The original seizing of "G is white" presupposes the explication, and the G explicated as white receives the function of subject and is the necessary start for the predicative process, which can only run in the form "G is α ."

Im Ist kommt die Form der Synthese zwischen Explikand und Explikat zum Ausdruck (und zwar jedes in seiner Form), und sie ist in der Prädikation Bestandteil des ganzen, zur Setzung kommenden "Sachverhalts". (Hua XXXI, 129; my emphasis.)

The form of synthesis between Explikand and Explikat comes to expression in Is (and each in its form), and in the predication, the form is a part of the entire "state of affairs" that is set.

In this way, different implicit thematic relations are made explicit in different linguistic forms: (1) “dominating–serving” is made explicit in the subject–predicate form (the tree is green/has flowers) or attributive form (the greenness of the tree); whereas (2) “equal” is made explicit in the conjunctive or disjunctive form (a book and/or a bike).

Therefore, it is the more explicit relations between aims or the higher visibility of “teleological”¹ relations that differentiate a state of affairs from the attended percept, that differentiate the unreal from the real. The unreality is not superimposed, but results from the higher visibility of “*Deckung*.”

3. Irreality of cultural meaning

3.1. Visibility of transcendentalism

70 Undoubtedly, linguistic form is a cultural item. According to Husserl, cultural meaning (*kultureller Sinn*) or spirituality (*Geistigkeit*) is “purpose-property” (*Zweckbestimmung*) and involved in “purpose-active doing” (*zwecktätiges Tun*) (*Hua IX*, 113–118). Further examples would confirm this view. (1) Using the sun as a *Zeitgeber*, I endow it with cultural meaning without shaping it physically. (2) According to Reinach (1989, 247), it is enactment from a third party that creates the social reality “property.” But such “something [which] has changed in the world” is not physical but teleological: a mediation of a third party becomes necessary. The same goes for Schreier’s (1924) legal interpretation. (3) I am eating a cake that I bought from a seller who purchased it from a manufacturer. The aims of consumer, seller, and manufacturer coincide in this cultural item. This still holds, even if I bake the cake on my own and eat it.

Back to our starting question: if purpose-property characterizes cultural items, how can it account for the unreality of social reality? The sun used as *Zeitgeber* and legal modifications involved have cultural meaning thanks to the purpose-property, and at least they involve no literal physical change. Ritchie’s (2013) definition of a social group provides a further example. A chess club and a debate club can have extensionally the same members, yet they are different groups. Ritchie argues that this is, because they are realizations

1 Here, “teleological” does not imply a final end or theological meaning.

of different functional structures—and function as means for a purpose is a purpose-property.

But what enables purpose-property to establish irreality? Cultural items have a particular connection with subjectivity, with the subjectivity that has a purpose (*Hua IX*, 384). However deep a cultural item seems to be incorporated in the physical world, it can only be what it is with reference to the subjectivity that brings about the cultural meaning (*Hua XXXVII*, 308). Thus purpose-property indicates a special, a more visible form of intentional correlation. And here is the origin of irreality: *intentionality is not located in physical spacetime; rather, the latter is a component of the former. In this way, intentionality “transcends” real spacetime and is thus “transcendental.”*

However, this argument by no means implies that physical objects have no purpose-property and no transcendental, no irreality. On the contrary, physical nature is also an intentional achievement—color and extension are both conditioned by the normality of perception. The reason, why we believe that physical reality is independent of subjectivity, objective “*an sich*,” is that many intentional mechanisms involved in the constitution of physical nature are *more passive* (like the fusion of sensation fields or the aforementioned global perception) than those for social reality, so the purpose-property is *less visible*. For this reason, traditionally, *Geisteswissenschaften* only attempted to understand the more visible purpose-property; hence, the nature seems to be “unintelligible” (*Hua VIII*, 239). By contrast, Husserl delineated his transcendental phenomenology as “*absolute, universale Geisteswissenschaft*” (*Hua VIII*, 276–280, 287, 361), which seeks not only to understand cultural items, but also physical and biological nature as intentional achievements.

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Therefore, the irreality of social reality is not superscribed on physical objects, but results from the higher visibility of intentionality that transcends the physical spacetime by encompassing it. Visibility can increase in several ways:

(1) As a higher level of consciousness, e.g., from the fusion of sensation fields to global perception, to perception with attention, and, finally, to linguistic form in natural language, conceptualization, and idealization in exact mathematics and logic.

(2) As a special case of (1), with the help of Shaftesbury, Husserl described “active motivation,” “active control,” or “free will” as reflective (self-)regulation

(*Regelung*), (self-)determination (*Bestimmung*), (self-)shaping (*Gestaltung*), (self-)normalization; the “self-” is in brackets, since it is also possible to regulate others (*Hua XXXVII*, 159–165; *Hua VIII*, 105, 154–155). By contrast, passive motivation is the non-reflective one, like habits are the passive one (*Hua XXXVII*, 110–111, 331).

(3) On reshaped physical objects (artefacts), purpose-property is more visible than the ones without reshaping (the sun used as a *Zeitgeber*).

Intentionality is less visible in perceived physical reality in all these three manners. It is an interesting fact to notice that the more visible the intentionality is, the more likely one would ascribe polarized descriptions like “fiction” and “construct” or “absolute” and “sacred” at the same time to the intentional object—mathematical concepts, the theoretical substance in natural science.

3.2. *Advantages*

72 The first advantage of this account is a natural bridge from irreality of social reality to intentionality. Since the collective intention is believed to play a central role in social ontology, Section 4 will further expound upon it within this framework.

The second advantage concerns meaning. In fact, a dominant sense of “meaning” in Husserl is *the intended as such* (*Vermeintes als solches*), which is opposed to “*der Gegenstand schlechthin*” (the object plainly). The latter is the object when someone is perceiving or judging, whereas the former is found in reflection upon the previous perception or judgement, namely, by regarding what was previously perceived or judged now becomes a part of intentionality, as the intentional correlate of the (external) object. Such objectivity *qua* intentional correlate is termed “the intended as such” (*Vermeintes als solches*), which Husserl considered to be identical with *meaning* (*Sinn*), as an “object” in quotation marks.

[...] Naiv urteilend vollziehen wir einfach das überzeugte Meinen, es sei das und das; unser Bewußtsein ist dabei das des Wahrhaftseins des betreffenden Sachverhalts. Ebenso wie unser naives Wahrnehmen, das schlichte Bewußtsein ist vom Dasein und sogar leibhaftigen Dasein

des Wahrnehmungsgegenstands. Was so bewußt ist, heißt *schlechthin Gegenstand* bzw. *Sachverhalt*.

Wesentliche Veränderung geht vor in unserer Bewußtseinsweise, wenn wir vom naiven Wahrnehmen oder Urteilen übergehen in die Einstellung, bei der das vermeinte Was, *der Sinn* des eben noch naiv vollzogenen Aktes zum Thema gemacht, also eine eigene Art der Reflexion geübt wird. [...] Aber nun ist er nicht mehr *Gegenstand, Sachverhalt schlechthin*, da er nun nicht mehr als seiende Wirklichkeit einfach dasteht. [...] Und nun sehen wir uns an und machen zu einem eigenen Thema *das vermeinte Was, und das ist der Sinn* (<gleichsam> in *Anführungszeichen*).

Wir brauchen übrigens, um den puren Sinn zu erfassen, nicht gerade in Frage zu stellen, wir brauchen nicht kritisch gerichtet <zu> sein [...]. Wir brauchen nicht zu zweifeln, zu negieren [...].

[...] Wir betrachten bloß das *Wahrgenommene als solches*, den “*Wahrnehmungssinn*” [...].

[...] Wir können den Blick rein auf das *Vermeinte als solches* fixiert halten: Diese Einstellung ist die schlicht noematische. (*Hua XXX*, 49–51; my emphasis.)

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[...] Judging naively, we carry out simply the convinced meaning activity that it is this and that; our consciousness is here the consciousness of the truthfulness of the related state of affairs. It is the same with our naïve perceiving activity, which is the simple consciousness of the being-here and even lively being-here of the perception-object. What is conscious in such a way is called *object plainly* or *state of affairs*.

Essential change takes place in our manner of consciousness, if we transit from naïve perceiving or judging activity to the attitude, in which the intended what, *the meaning* of the act that was still naively carried out before, is made into a theme, namely, a particular sort of reflection is exercised. [...] But now it is no more *object, state of affairs plainly*, since it stands no more simply here as an existing reality. [...] And now we observe closely and make *the intended what* into a particular theme, *and that is the meaning* (<as if> in *quotation marks*).

Besides, to grasp the pure meaning, we do not need to put [something] into question, we do not need to critically point towards [it]. [...] We do

not need to doubt, to deny [...].

We observe merely the *perceived as such*, the “*perception-meaning*” [...].

[...] We can fixate the gaze purely on the *intended as such*: this attitude is the plainly noematic one.

Admittedly, Husserl’s theory of meaning is not consistent. In another context, Husserl describes meaning as what stands in an identifying congruence (*Deckung*) relation, e.g., Napoleon as the defeated at Waterloo and Napoleon as the victor of a different battle, whereas the object (*Gegenstand*) is identified in this relation (*Hua XXX*, 199–202). A third description of meaning is the intentional correlate whose validity (e.g., doubtful existence) is abstracted away (*Hua XXX*, 100–101). Such ambiguity may be traced back to *Logical Investigations*, where Husserl argued against psychologism in logics by proposing the irreal and irreell-ity of meaning. Nonetheless, logical concepts are (1) exact, (2) idealized, and (3) eidetic, while Husserl inherited Brentano’s intentionality. Hence, it is not astonishing that these different senses of irreality come into play in a confusing way and result in the notorious debate concerning noema and meaning.

In addition, one can identify meaning and information, since the latter is irreal, because it is defined as being invariant through various speakers, listeners, and physical bearers (Janich 2006, 158). As invariant as it might be, information still requires the intentionally correlated (at least potential) speakers and listeners. And I argue that such irreality results precisely from the transcendental of intentionality.

This still holds true even in Shannon’s (1948) paper. An information system consists of (1) an information source, (2) a transmitter, (3) the channel, (4) the receiver, and (5) the destination. If the system should function for human communication, then the final information source and destination are the analogues of speaker and listener, which are the *users* of this system (cf. Gutmann *et al.* 2010). In addition, Shannon proposed an observer “who can see both what is sent and what is recovered” and “notes the errors” so that the receiver is able to correct the errors. The symbols are meaningful only correlative to the users and observers, but this subjective dimension is exactly

what Shannon abstracted away by binding the meaning to symbols for the sake of quantification. In this way, he realized, materialized the irreal information and naturalized the transcendental intentionality. Thus, there can be no wonder that the information processing metaphor becomes such a strong weapon of naturalism in cognitive psychology.

The third advantage is to uphold social ontology's commitment to description. As Buekens (2014) notes, the holiness of a sacred mountain—not created by the group, but understood as imposed by a supernatural event—is incompatible with Searle's commitment that social ontology should be descriptive and would not question the *status quo*, since arguing that the holiness is a product of collective intentionality instead of the sacred will is already a criticism. By contrast, according to our account, the holy aims set by a holy will and those of the locals coincide; this purpose-property is visible in the sacred mountain. It is not the belongingness to human intention, but the visibility of intentionality (whether god's or human's) that establishes the irreal cultural meaning. Hence, we do not have to impose observer's value on the local inhabitants and revise their ideology.

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3.3. *Objections*

The first possible objection concerns time. It seems wrong to claim that intentionality is not located within the objective time, since all subjects are historical. And if we insist on the irrealty of social reality, the historical dimension would be abstracted away. Three replies can be offered to this objection:

(1) Admittedly, one *can* localize intentionality and cultural meaning within objective spacetime, but this very localization is an intentional achievement, as well, namely enworldening (*Verweltlichung*) (*Hua IX*, 293–294). One may ask again: can this localizing activity localize itself in objective spacetime? I argue not. We require another enworlding experience to localize this one, so that the final one in this chain is always free from localization.

(2) As Flaherty (1991, 1993) argues, conventional time unit like second or year is a product of socialization, hence an *achievement* of collective intentionality. Individuals wish to coordinate with themselves and others so

that one can make plans and take control over one's life. Meanwhile, certain physical processes (stars, pendulum, atoms, etc.) repeat themselves at the same speed under normal conditions. Hence, they are utilized for the sake of coordination.

(3) Irrality of intentionality does not harm historicity. Rather, the historical dimension of intentionality is a transcendental one.

The second objection argues that the attempt to naturalize intentionality is successful so that it is not transcendental. A thorough treatment of this problem is impossible here due to the limit of space, but the critique has a general potency. Representationalism and enactivism are two mainstream naturalistic interpretations of intentionality. The former proposes that an organism uses representation—an image, a symbol (Fodor's language of thought), an activation pattern in a connectivist network, or a state variable/parameter in a dynamic system—to “represent” the intended object. For the latter, intentionality means that a self-organizing organism enacts its environment, whether endowing glucose with the sense “nutrition” (Varela *et al.* 1993; Thompson 2007) or giving an interest-driven response to the environment (Hutto and Myin 2013).²

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I contend that there are serious reasons to doubt both representationalism as well as enactivism. On the one hand, representationalism assumes that the subject is using certain physical processes to “represent,” but it is in fact the wiretapping researcher who deciphers the meaning of the physical processes for the subject. In other words, the physical processes are representations only for the researchers, but this does not guarantee that they are also representations for the subject. On the other hand, enactivism simply maps intentional correlation onto the organism–environment relation. Nonetheless, intention can also be directed towards the interior, towards its development and reproduction—that is quite normal. If these attempts to localize intentionality and meaning in a certain physical area ultimately fail, then transcendentalism is unavoidable and deserves serious consideration.

² The version of enactivism as proposed by Noë and O'Regan (2002) focuses primarily on perception and has no direct implication for intentionality in general. Hence, it will not be discussed here.

4. Collective intentionality and pre-reflective plural self-consciousness

Collective intention plays a central role in current accounts of social reality. As summarized by Szanto (2016), four mainstream explanations of collective intentionality are: (1) the content-account: each individual intends that we-X (Bratman 1993); (2) the mode-account: each individual has the mode “we-intend” (Tuomela 2013); (3) the subject-account: jointly committed individuals intend to act as a body, a singular subject “we” (Gilbert 2009); (4) the relation-account: the collective intention is nothing other than the relations between individuals. Literally, they are different, but are they *de facto* competing against each other? “One shall not let oneself be too guided and possibly misled by language,” but “go after the structure of consciousness in lively intuition” (*Geht man der Struktur des Bewusstseins in lebendiger Intuition nach, so lasse man sich nicht durch die Sprache zu sehr leiten und eventuell irreführen.*) (Hua XLIII/I, 85). How is this possible for collective intention? Even if collective intention is not a projection of individual minds onto a group—the critique of Schmid (2000) of Husserl’s higher-order-person theory—, it is nonetheless an analogue of the individual one, so that a retro-jection onto individual minds possibly provides us with this “*lebendige Intuition*” to examine these four explanations.

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In *First Philosophy* and elsewhere, Husserl proposed that each act or even each experience corresponds to a self; these different selves are unified as an identical self:

Warum sprechen wir aber von *demselben Ich*, das sich auf sich selbst zurück bezieht, seiner selbst in der “Selbstwahrnehmung” inne wird und seines Aktus: wo doch evident ist, daß verschiedene Akte sich übereinander schichten und daß *jeder* Akt *sein* gesondertes Ich, sozusagen als seinen *gesonderten Akt*pol hat—? (Hua VIII, 90; Husserl’s emphasis.)

But why are we speaking of *the same self*, which connects itself back to itself, is aware of itself and its actus in the “self-perception”: when it is indeed evident that different acts layer themselves on each other and *every* act has *its* separate self, so to speak as *its separate act-pole*?

[...] daß die “vielen” Aktpole *in sich evident dasselbe Ich sind* [...] ich sehe, daß es, sich in eine Vielheit von Akten und Aktsubjekten spaltend, doch ein und dasselbe ist, dasselbe Ich, das *sich* da spaltet. Ich sehe, daß Ichleben in Aktivität durchaus nichts anderes ist als ein *Sich-immerfort-in-tätigem-Verhalten-spalten* und daß immer wieder ein allüberschauendes Ich sich etablieren kann, das <ein> alle <jene Akte und Aktsubjekte> identifizierendes ist [...]. (*Hua VIII*, 90–91; Husserl’s emphasis.)

[...] that the “many” act-poles *in themselves are evidently the same self* [...] I see that it, splitting itself into a multitude of acts and act-subjects, is indeed the same one, the same self, which splits itself there. I see that self-living in activity is completely nothing other than an *in-operative-conducting-constantly-self-splitting* activity and that an all-overlooking self can always be established again, which is <a> self that identifies all <those acts and act-subjects> [...].

78 Husserl called this unifying process the identity-synthesis of self, which goes through all experiences, correlatively to the synthesis of objective unity:

[...] Korrelativ geht durch diese Synthesis [Synthesis der gegenständlichen Identität] nicht nur, sondern durch alle Bewußtseinserlebnisse *die Identitätssynthese des Ich* und durch alle Modifikationen der Erlebnisse, durch unbewußte, hindurch. (*Hua IX*, 480; my emphasis.)

[...] Correlatively, *the identity-synthesis of self* not only goes through this synthesis [synthesis of the objective identity], but through all consciousness-experiences and through all modifications of the experiences, through the unconscious experiences.

To note is that this synthesis of selves takes place “without any identifying activity”; namely, it is *pre-reflective*; it is not the identification in reflection:

Der Ichpol ist konstituiert in der Ichsynthese, die alle aktuellen und potentiellen Akte beständig und *ohne jede identifizierende Aktivität* zur einheitlichen Deckung bringt [...]. (*Hua IX*, 481; my emphasis.)

The self-pole is constituted in the self-synthesis, which constantly and *without any identifying activity* brings all actual and potential acts to the unified congruence [...].

Parallel to the synthesis of intentional objects is not only the identity-synthesis of the self, but also the unification of experiences, which Husserl calls “*universal synthesis*,” whose “index” is the self:

Und wieder muß gesehen werden, daß parallel mit derjenigen beständig waltenden Art der Synthesis, die Einheit und Selbigkeit dieses oder jenes, und so überhaupt *Gegenstände*, als Gegenstände für das Ich, bewußtmacht, umgekehrt das *Ich* selbst der Index einer *universalen* Synthesis ist, durch die all das unendlich mannigfaltige Bewußtsein, das das meine ist, eine universale Einheit hat, nicht die gegenständliche, sondern die *ichliche* bzw. es muß gesehen werden, daß durch diese Art der Synthesis das “stehende und bleibende Ich” dieses Bewußtseinslebens immerfort konstituiert und bewußtgemacht ist. (*Hua VII*, 109; Husserl’s emphasis.)

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And again it must be seen that parallel to the constantly functioning kind of synthesis, which makes aware the unity and sameness of this and that, and in general makes aware *objects*, as objects for the self, while, on the contrary, the *self* is itself an index of a *universal* synthesis, through which all the limitlessly manifold consciousness, which is my consciousness, has a universal unity, not the objective one, but the *self-ic* one, or it must be seen that through this kind of synthesis the “standing and remaining self” of this conscious-life is constantly constituted and made aware.

Hence, there are analogues of collective intention within an individual mind: there are various selves for an individual, and the synthesis/congruence/unification of these selves is parallel to the one of experiences and the one of objects. To illustrate, in a normal perception of a physical object, the visual and the tactile modules are in a congruence relation, parallel to the congruence of the visual selves and the tactile ones. And if there is

disharmony between the visual and the tactile aspect, the corresponding selves are involved in the dispute. Here, the physical object is the “collective” intentional object of different selves. (Of course, we do not require pathological dissociation [Laird 1923] to establish these selves in an individual mind.)

With the “collective intention” at the individual level, we can now proceed to examine the above four explanations:

(1) The content-account: do visual and tactile selves in a normal perception intend that *they* should perceive the same object? Of course not. The selves do not enter the content. But, *nota bene*, the context of Bratman (1993) is planning and agency. As mentioned above, agency, active control or free will is the reflective (self-)control/determination/regulation. For example, I bake a cake badly and I force myself to eat it. For the controlling self, the baking and eating one are objects to be controlled, hence in the content. Here, one should do justice to Bratman’s account.

80 (2) The mode-account: an excellent example to demonstrate why originally separate intentional modes alter when they enter a congruence in disjointed (*zusammenhangslos*) fantasies: a dog in Alice’s Wonderland and another dog with the same properties in Cinderella’s world are not identical, since they are in different worlds. Even if these two worlds are the same (*gleich*), they are not identical as long as the corresponding intentions are in a separate mode. If two worlds merge into one, the intentional modes become “collective,” coinciding in the same object.

(3) The subject-account: as illustrated above, congruence-synthesis of selves occurs parallel to the synthesis of objects and experiences, and thus as a result of the synthesis we have a “higher-order-subject,” e.g., visual and tactile selves act as a singular self, as “one body.” Nonetheless, a higher-order-subject is far weaker than a higher-order-agent, a subject with the ability of reflective self-control.

(4) The relation-account: different selves are in congruence with each other—that is their “relation,” but it does not have to be so strong as “commitment” or “agreement,” which is only possible for an agent.

To summarize, the four accounts may capture different aspects of collective intention, but they are *de facto* complementary rather than mutually exclusive.

In this aspect, I suggest that analytic philosophers are often misled by differences in expressions.

However, collective intention is not necessarily “objectual” as we usually think. The other is Schmid’s “plural pre-reflective self-consciousness” (2014, 2016) that is non-objectual, for which we may offer an account: *the minimum form of such consciousness is the congruence with “the like-minded”* (meinesgleichen). In fact, this is a non-objectual form of intentionality, which includes association and motivation as elementary forms of intentionality (*Hua XXXVII*, 180) and as a tendency (*Tendenz*) between consciousness (*Hua XLIII/III*, 308–311). I term it “consciousness-with” as opposed to “consciousness-about,” which has an object opposed to us (*Gegen-stand vor-stellen*). Thus, pre-reflective plural self-consciousness is a non-objectual collective intentionality.

“Like-minded” does not indicate similarity in all aspects, but the minimum possibility of coordination. A non-human creature can also be like-minded in this sense. “Coordination” does not have to be an agreement or harmony. A dispute also counts as a form of coordination.

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The actual contact is not a necessary condition for “like-mindedness.” For example, any *potential* subject that perceives that same world similarly can be like-minded. Hence, such pre-reflective congruence with “the like-minded” is more fundamental than empathy (*Einführung*).

Highly organized relations like “jointed commitment” (Schmid 2013) are not required for the minimum degree of pre-reflective plural awareness. Even a “feature group” (e.g., the Blacks) can pre-reflectively have the feature of “us.” If we understand pre-reflective self-consciousness in terms of self-congruence, instead of Henry’s (1990, 110, 118) and Zahavi’s (2004) self-affection, we can perhaps clarify the mechanism of the plural one.³

5. Concluding remarks

In this article, I have argued against the weak naturalistic account concerning the irrealty of social reality, which states that social facts are superscribed

³ As far as I can see, there is no potential that self-affection could account for the plural one.

upon brute physical ones. Instead, with the example of linguistic form in natural language, I have shown that this irrealty results from the higher visibility of transcendental intentionality: intentional correlation is not located in real spacetime, but encompasses the latter, and thus transcends it. The irreal transcendentalty is more implicit in physical nature, but not imposed on it. This account bridges the irrealty of social reality and intentionality, has significant implications for our understanding of meaning and information, and upholds social ontology's commitment to description. Within this framework, I argue that four explanations of collective intention do not exclude but complement each other. In addition, collective intention is not necessarily objectual considering the pre-reflective plural self-consciousness, which we describe as non-objectual collective intentionality: the congruence with "like-minded individuals."

82 Nonetheless, a ghost haunts social ontology on every corner: *why are we afraid of the group mind?* Besides historical instrumentalization, besides substantialization of the adverbial self (Schmid 2018) and the commitment to phenomenal consciousness (Szanto 2014), another reason lies deeply at the roots of our age: the metaphysical mystification of the mind-body relation through naturalism. By contrast, according to Husserl, the mind-body relation is an intentional achievement of induction-association, even in the case of one's own body:

Es ist nun aber klar, daß jede derartige Erfahrung von Unphysischem als zu Physischem seinsmäßig Zugehörigem (ob nun in der Gleichzeitigkeit oder zeitlichen Folge) nichts anderes ist als Erfahrung desselben als *induktiv* <ihm> Zugehörigen. [...] Das wiederum besagt nichts anderes: eine Einheit der verweisenden Erwartung geht von dem sinnlich Daseienden auf das Mitseiende über; und diese Erwartung erfüllt sich natürlich im wahrnehmungsmäßigen Mitgegebensein des Psychischen. So ist in der Wahrnehmung *meiner eigenen Leiblichkeit* die evidente Zugehörigkeit des inneren "ich bewege" zu der äußerlich erfahrenen physischen Handbewegung nichts anderes als innerer Verlauf im erwartungsmäßigen Mit-dasein-müssen mit der zugleich ablaufenden äußerlichen Handbewegung. Dieses erwartungsmäßige

“muß” expliziert sich aber evidenterweise als entsprungen aus wiederholtem Zusammen-wahrgenommen-sein als zusammen daseiend und somit als Kraft eines induktiven “muß” [...]. (*Hua IX*, 136–137; my emphasis.)

But now it is clear that every one of such experiences of the non-physical *qua* something belonging to the physical (whether at the same time or in temporal sequence) is nothing other than as the experience of the very same *qua inductively* belonging to the physical. This again means nothing other than: a unity of indicating anticipation transits from the one that is sensuously here to the one that is along-with; and this anticipation fulfills itself naturally in the being-given-along-with of the psychic. In this way, in the perception of *my own bodiness*, the evident belongingness of the internal “I move” to the externally experienced physical hand-movement is nothing other than the internal process in the anticipatorily must-be-there-along-with the simultaneously proceeding external hand-movement. This “must” can nonetheless be explicated as evidently originating from repeatedly being-perceived-together as being there together and therefore as the potency of an inductive “must” [...].

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For example, some tactile sensations are relatively independent of other experiences, while a finger as an intentional object is relatively independent of the other, but these two invariants covariate. As a result, they are associated and the tactile sensation is localized in the finger. The same concerns the localization of a functional area in neuroscience, except that the latter association is done rather by the researcher than the subject.

This is a transcendental clarification of the mind–body relation. It by no means supports parallelism (*Hua IX*, 138), since the relation is an empirical achievement of association, not an *a priori* absolute metaphysical judgement. If an intentional object and, e.g., the pre-reflective We-consciousness covariate as relative invariants in a similar way, a group mind is nothing spooky. On the contrary, the naturalists’ abandonment of transcendentalism necessarily results in the mystification of the mind–body relation and in the fear of group mind, since they can hardly imagine a consciousness associated with a non-human-like body. Why do they abandon transcendentalism? It is not their own fault,

but the atmosphere of our time: one seems not to feel relieved and satisfied until one identifies the human being as a machine. Such technologization of the human image (*Technisierung des Menschenbildes*) is well justified, if limited within its boundaries (Grunwald 2009, 2010); but when we start to *define* the human being as a machine, that becomes our *Krisis*. And if Husserl responded to this problem with transcendentalism, my reply can only be the same.

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