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NOTAS CRÍTICAS/CRITICAL NOTICES

The Phenomenological Connection: An Account of Perception and Knowledge*

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Perception and Knowledge: A Phenomenological Account, by Walter Hopp, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, 246 pp., £ 21.84 (pb.).

I. INTRODUCTION

Hopp's 2011 book (henceforth *P&K*) is above all an original defence of the thesis that the subjective character of perceptual experiences consists of their representational content (the "intentionalist" or "reductive representationalist" position), together with a partially original theory of the epistemic justification of beliefs. All together, the work is based on an also largely original theory of the content of perceptual experiences. What immediately marks the book as lying off the beaten track is that it is a work in the analytic tradition of the themes it tackles, *in spite of* the centrality of the phenomenological standpoint the author adopts and his use of some of Husserl's central ideas. My aim in this "Notice" is to outline the position espoused in the book with regard to these themes – both positively and critically – and to provide some additional context for them, so that the reach and significance of the book can be more readily appreciated.

To set the book in context, it is convenient to recall one of the most influential, but not so intuitive, of the epistemological principles put forward in recent decades; the principle which states that "[n]othing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief" [Davidson (2001), p. 141, originally published in 1986]. After all, if in a normal context someone is asked: "Why do you think my glasses are on the kitchen table?", then the answer: "Because I just *saw* them there." seems perfectly rational. However, Davidson was not, of course, appealing to intuition. He came to his pro-

nouncement regarding justification by pointing out the evils of the dualism of “schema and content”: of the dualism, that is, between conceptual system and bare sensory content. Any view that was contrary to Davidson’s principle was supposedly under the grip of this evil dualism, including the – at the time, extraordinarily influential – Quinean brand of empiricism.

Davidson’s pronouncement was congenial to Sellars’ denunciation of the “myth of the given”, as McDowell saw in postulating that in perceptual experience nothing is given that is purely sensorial; nothing is gained that is not conceptually articulated [McDowell (1994)]. That position allowed McDowell to give up the letter of Davidson’s problematic pronouncement without renouncing its spirit: it is not only beliefs that can justify beliefs; *naturally*, perceptual experiences also can, but only because they have conceptual content, which is the same sort of content as beliefs have.

P&K is written in the conviction that, even if it is right to hold that we cannot defend every notion of “the given” – in particular, not if we conceive of it as a “bare presence”, in McDowell’s words – we nevertheless can make promising headway if we focus instead on the clear difference between, on the one hand, merely thinking that something is so; and, on the other, visually – or otherwise perceptually – discovering that it is, effectively, so. This is a perspective that Hopp attributes (rightly, it seems) to Husserl and his “phenomenological account” of perception and basic empirical knowledge.

P&K is indeed written entirely from the standpoint of this purportedly key contrast; but we find in it nothing of the Husserl-vindictory attitude still to be found in phenomenological authors conversant with the analytic tradition, such as Shaun Gallagher or Dan Zahavi. If, for example, Hopp wants to argue that perception has nonconceptual content, his argument is meant to be evaluated with total disregard for whether Husserl in fact endorsed such a view or not. Of course, this way of proceeding can lead not only to praise for alleged contributions of the master, but also to criticism of them and to their revision; just as (neo-)Fregeans have done and continue to do with regard to Frege’s insights. So, in the same way as there is a Fregean strand in the philosophy of language and thought, we can talk of a “Husserlian strand” in the philosophy of mind and in the philosophy of perception and knowledge. And although it would be a distortion to say that Hopp’s book inaugurates such a new strand in the analytic tradition (work by Kevin Mulligan, Christian Beyer and Hopp himself already did that), it should count – jointly with Beyer’s [Beyer (2000)] – as the most sustained effort in that direction to date.

P&K’s broadly “Husserlian view” on perception and its relation to knowledge moves towards its culmination in the proposed intentionalist theory of the subjective or phenomenal character of perceptual experiences, in the second half of chapter 6. This then finally culminates in Hopp’s explanation of his own version of the Husserlian theory of “fulfillment” as accounting for the justification of basic empirical beliefs in the following, final chapter.

The first 5 chapters contain an extended inquiry into the contents of perception. Chapter 1 is devoted to clarifying the notion of content itself—especially the content of perception. Chapter 2 is an exposition of the arguments for “experiential conceptualism” – the view that the contents of perceptual experiential states are conceptual – that are out there on the market. Chapters 3 and 4 provide detailed criticism of experiential conceptualism and the arguments for it. Meanwhile, chapter 5 is devoted to contrasting conceptual and nonconceptual content; and the first part of chapter 6 to criticizing the relational view of experience, which is regarded as the main rival account of the one put forward in the book. All of this is preceded by a brief introduction in which the author reviews the contents of the book and tries to explain the sense or senses in which he is going to give a phenomenological account of his subject.

II. ON THE NOTION OF CONTENT

Well then, to begin with, what is content? First we should put to rest an old use of the term ‘content’ through which it was applied to sensory input (this use is present in Husserl’s own work and, indeed, reflected in Davidson’s “dualism of schema and content” alluded to above). Nowadays – as Hopp reminds us – when talking of the content of a mental state, one means the objects and/or properties that are supposedly represented in that state, or the ways in which these are represented, or both. Thus Peacocke, for the specific case of perceptual experiences, explains to us: “I use the phrase ‘the content of experience’ to cover not only the objects, properties and relations perceived, but also the ways they are perceived” [Peacocke (2001), p. 241]. Also representative is Crane’s formulation, when he describes “the propositional content of an experience” as “the way it represents the world as being” [Crane (2006), p. 136]. However – Hopp holds – phrases such as the “ways the world is represented as being”, “ways the world (objects, etc.) is (are) represented”, “ways the world appears” and even “modes of presentation” are ambiguous [*P&K*, pp. 11 and 22] in that authors are often unclear as to whether they mean “a way of the world or a way of mindedness” [*P&K*, p. 11]. Hopp’s analogy is this: in one sense, two pictures (a certain type of painting and a photograph, say) can represent a landscape in the same way (the same houses, mountains, relative heights, etc.); in another sense, they represent it in different ways, one “impressionistically”, the other, say, in clear lines. Hopp holds that the former identity is an identity in *what* is depicted, while the later difference concerns properties of the depiction itself: *how* those pictures depict what is depicted.

Could the notion of content as applied to mental states (“mental content” for short) be similarly identical with regard to the *what*, but differ with regard to the *how*, in agreement with the analogy? This does not seem to be

possible under the current views. Even when the notion of mental content, as applied to experiences, is inspired in Frege's notion of a "mode of presentation" or "sense" this would not seem to hold.¹

Hopp seems to proceed as if the intuitive difference between the two interpretations of the "ways" were built into a Husserlian account of content. The general idea in this sort of account is that (mental) contents are those properties of mental states *in virtue of which* they are about the objects, the properties and relations they are indeed about, *in the specific manner in which they are directed to them* [*P&K*, pp. 29-30]. Accordingly, the intuitive difference (rightly) emphasized by Hopp between beliefs or judgements and perceptual experiences, should be located in the contents so conceived.

A distinction between type-contents and token-contents plays a key role in Hopp's Husserlian account. The former – which different mental events can share – are really the "aboutness-bestowing properties" (of mental states) – something abstract –. The latter are the instances of those properties in particular mental acts – something concrete –. This "instantiation account" comes from Husserl's *Logical Investigations*;² and in its general outline, it agrees with Fodor's account, as Hopp notes:

[T]o claim that MOPs [modes of presentation] must be *mental* objects [= entities] is quite compatible with also claiming that they are *abstract* objects, and that abstract objects are *not* mental. The apparent tension is reconciled by taking MOPs-qua-things-in-the-head to be tokens of which MOPs-qua-abstract-objects are the types [Fodor (1998), p. 20].

Hopp explains in this first chapter his version of the instantiation account in some detail, although it is in later chapters that he shows how his version is made specific for the case of perceptual experiences. For the moment, he shows its intuitive advantages with the help of an analogy; and he is explicit about not claiming to have decisively established his account [*P&K*, p. 35]. A particular point to keep in mind for what follows is that, according to his account, the difference between propositional content and states of affairs is huge. A content is a "bearer of aboutness", while a state of affairs – just like a particular (extra-mental) object or a property – is nothing of the sort, but is precisely the kind of thing bearers of aboutness are about.

III. CRITICISM OF EXPERIENTIAL CONCEPTUALISM

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of Hopp's book are devoted to a presentation and criticism of several varieties of *experiential conceptualism* – that is, the view that the content of perceptual experiences is conceptual –. In the first of these, one of the things that is likely to attract the reader's attention is Hopp's

critical discussion of the well-known and controversial views of Norwood Hanson and Thomas Kuhn that perception is always theory laden. The most detailed criticism, however, is to be found in the discussion of McDowell's and Brewer's support of experiential conceptualism in chapter 3.

A lasting contribution of McDowell's is to have emphasized the connections between reflections on content and reflections on epistemic warrant. His original thesis was that only if the contents of perceptual experiences are conceptual can empirical beliefs be epistemically justified or warranted in any way. This introduced a novel form of argument for the conceptualist position regarding the content of perceptual experience: when it is joined with the anti-Davidsonian premise that perceptual experiences can indeed offer warrant or justification for empirical beliefs, it leads to the conclusion that the content of perceptual experiences is conceptual. Hopp refers to this as the *epistemological argument* in favour of the claim that perceptual experiences have conceptual content and discusses McDowell's thesis in the context of critical comments on McDowell's overall position about the given and the space of reasons.

Now, is it true that only if experiences and thought have the same sort of content can perceptual experiences justify empirical beliefs in some way; or – in McDowell's own formulation – that the “relations in virtue of which a judgement is warranted” must “hold between potential exercises of conceptual faculties” [McDowell (1994), p. 7]? Hopp's discussion of McDowell is an immediate application of the point about the radical difference between propositional contents and states of affairs that was emphasized above as an integral part of Hopp's theory of content (see the end of section II). Thus, when he comments on McDowell's specific tenet that worldly facts themselves can be both the contents of experiences and of judgements [see McDowell (1994), p. 26], and in such a way are fit to be given as reasons, he says: “But not all worldly facts are ‘potential exercises of conceptual capacities.’ A cat's being on a mat is not a potential exercise of anything” [P&K, pp. 90-91]. Of course, someone who, like McDowell, is in the grip of the identification of states of affairs with propositional contents might protest by claiming that the state of affairs consisting of a (certain) cat being on a mat can be both “an aspect of the layout of the world: it [can] be how things are” [McDowell, *loc. cit.*] and also the propositional content (*that a certain cat – that cat – is on a mat*) of a judgement. Nevertheless, Hopp's discussion may have succeeded in transferring the burden of proof onto the person who launches the complaint: he or she would need to give an account of propositions and states of affairs that shows how this identification is not a mystery or a fallacy. In the absence of such an account, Hopp might be entitled to conclude that:

[the idea that a judgement could be justified by something other than standing in relations to denizens of the space of reasons in the narrow sense – potential exercises of conceptual capacities – is something that McDowell does find intelligible, and rightly so. He finds it intelligible that a state of affairs, a layout of the world itself, can stand in a reason-giving relation to an act of judgment, in which case he does, after all, endorse the view that the space of reasons extends more widely than the space of concepts [*P&K*, p. 92].

Hopp next proceeds to an extended discussion of Bill Brewer's defence of McDowell's original thesis, which he credits with supplying the clearest formulation of the epistemological argument. However, it is not clear what this discussion is meant to achieve. In the conclusion to the chapter, he claims [p. 101]: "None of the arguments considered above [i.e. the arguments by McDowell and Brewer] comes close to establishing any version of experiential conceptualism." But if this was all that Hopp was aiming for, his exposition could and should have been better organized; something akin to what can be found – with regard specifically to Brewer – in the excellent criticism in Lerman (2010).

Be that as it may, there is also positive development in these mainly critical chapters. In particular, Hopp applies a conceptual clarification presented at the beginning of chapter 2, where he articulates clearly a sense in which, according to the instantiation theory of content, it can rightly be said that in perception we are always aware of "conceptually organized" items – if we are still inclined to use this misleading phrase at all –. Thus, a (certain) cat being on a mat, as any state of affairs, is "conceptually organized" in the sense of being an *object* (a complex one) of a propositional content (a whole composed of concepts), which is an *ideal* content. Only if, and when, the state of affairs becomes the object of the right kind of mental state can it rightly be said that it is a *conceptualized object*; where the right kind here is a mental state that instantiates the ideal content alluded to. But this happens only accidentally; it could be that it never happens to the immense majority of real or possible states of affairs. In any case, the state of affairs of a (certain) cat being on a mat, like any state of affairs, is clearly *not* a "conceptually organized" entity in the sense of being a concept or a whole composed of concepts [see *P&K*, pp. 84-85].

I feel that with the introduction of these distinctions (which, by the way, seem to be there already in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, at least potentially) Hopp has hammered the right kind of nails in the right places – the sort of thing that can really support a complex development –. The door is now open for him to maintain, without a trace of paradox, that in some sorts of mental states – in perceptual experiences, particularly – "we are directly aware of 'conceptually organized' *objects* by means of non-conceptual *contents*" (*loc. cit.*). In effect, all that follows from saying that something is a 'con-

ceptually organized' object is that it is a *possible* object of a state with conceptual content, not that it is or will be such an object. In saying this, it is assumed that it is intelligible that different kinds of contents can take hold of the same object; something that is indeed allowed in Hopp's theory of content.

IV. HORIZONTAL CONTENT

The pages Hopp devotes explicitly to the elucidation of the notion of horizon and to horizontal contents (pp. 53-60 in chapter 2, and section 5.3, chapter 5) are in my view among the best in the book.³ The introduction of horizons into the theory of perception responds both to the truism that physical objects have more perceptible features than those we can capture in one single perceptual experience (one "snapshot"), and to the more substantial thesis that they are *experienced* as having more features, as is shown by the fact that "if we treated the momentary experience as a complete presentation of its object, then we would construe any other experience [of it] to be of a different thing" (*P&K*, p. 54). Suppose in effect that we walk through the countryside and see a house, face on. It belongs to our perceiving the house *as* a (country) house that we anticipate certain things about it; we anticipate, say, that it has some windows round the back. This should not be construed as if we said to ourselves: "This house has windows at the rear". But it seems that such a likelihood must be present somehow, to the extent to which we would be surprised if we walked round to the back and saw no windows there. Thus, if the content of perception should be what determines which object is perceived—the reasoning goes—these anticipatory suppositions must belong to the content. It is this sort of contents that are called "horizontal contents" in *P&K*.

Horizontal contents are of several kinds and usually also rather intricate. The preceding example – one of Husserl's own – will perhaps be familiar to many readers; but think now of the (possible) perception of a deer. We normally anticipate that, in moving towards it, it will move (away) – exactly the opposite expectation compared to the house –. So much so that, if it did not move, we would begin to be uncertain about our perception, perhaps finally finding out that it was a wooden carving of a deer that we are – and were – looking at. What this example reveals is that "horizontal contents anticipate not only changes in experience brought about by your own movement, but changes in experience brought about by changes in the object itself – including those changes in the object that would come about through [our] own activity—" (*P&K*, p. 57).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect in Hopp's discussion of horizontal contents is found in the arguments he gives to show – for what it is worth, convincingly, I think – that horizontal contents are not concepts – even if they

share with (observational) concepts the capacity to be recognized as applying to the objects they do apply to – and, moreover, that they are not conceptual contents. Thus, they do not contribute to make the seeing of a house *as* a house an event with conceptual content.⁴ Hopp's line of argument leans heavily on the contrast to be found between concepts and horzonal contents in the dynamic aspects of perception: horzonal contents change continuously when the subject moves or the perceived object or situation changes, so that they are continuously updated; not so concepts.

V. THE RELATIONAL VIEW OF PERCEPTION AND DISJUNCTIVISM

In the last decade or so, the so-called relational view of perception has been forcefully advocated by philosophers such as Bill Brewer (after his change of heart from conceptualism), John Campbell, William Fish and Michael Martin. The view complements the so-called naive theory of perception with a view regarding the phenomenal or subjective character of perceptual experience, according to which, in veridical cases, this is constituted by the objects and/or properties perceived and the conditions in which they are perceived.

There are several aspects of the relational view with which Hopp explicitly agrees (*P&K*, pp. 149-153), beginning with the idea of direct perception – the central trait of the naive theory –. However, he concurs with critics of the view that the analysis of hallucinations constitutes its most visible problem: if objects are constitutive of the phenomenal character of veridical experiences, what is there to say about the phenomenal character of hallucinations? Much ingenuity has been deployed by relationalists to tackle this problem. For example, Martin has championed the view that the only thing to be said about this is to point to a negative feature: hallucinations (some of them at least) are phenomenally indistinguishable from veridical perceptions. However, since, according to the relational view, phenomenal indistinguishability does not imply identity of phenomenal character (something on which, by the way, Hopp agrees), nothing by way of a positive characterization is implied.

A number of philosophers of perception have felt that the issue cannot be left at that point and Hopp, in spite of his partial affinity to relationalist views, concurs. Some of those who complain allege a need for further explanation of the phenomenal indistinguishability at stake [see Vega-Encabo (2010) for fair criticism along this line]. Hopp concentrates on arguing that the forms of disjunctivism advocated by relationalists fail to characterize hallucinations as errors (*P&K*, pp. 154-160). This is then used to argue that hallucinations must have intentional content.

Thus, the chapter has two parts: one critical (of the relational view) and the other positive—the development of Hopp’s version of the intentionalist (reductive representationalist) position regarding the phenomenal character of perceptual experiences.⁵ The first part is intertwined with positive suggestions, as criticism of the disjunctivist positions of the relationalists is followed by bringing aspects of self-consciousness to bear on the discussion; such as the consciousness of time, the arguably felt incompleteness in isolated perceptual snapshots of physical objects and the different aspects of bodily awareness in perception (cf. *P&K*, pp. 164-172). The development of the positive part (pp. 172-188) results in a view according to which, while the content of veridical perceptual experiences is directed towards individual objects, the content of hallucinations cannot be. Because of their content, then, veridical experiences are “object involving” – incidentally, another major point of agreement with relationalists –. In contrast, hallucinations may have—as veridical experiences also do—contents directed toward properties. The reasons for this “moderately disjunctive” view lie ultimately in the Husserlian view that the content (and the phenomenal character) of “snapshot” perceptual-like experiences is to be determined in relation to larger systems of possible experiences of which they form part; those systems being intimately related to the horizons of the experiences. Hopp develops this view in what might be the densest pages of the book; I am not sure that his account ultimately succeeds.

VI. “FULFILMENT” AND THE JUSTIFICATIONS OF BELIEFS

Finally, the time to deploy Hopp’s version of Husserl’s theory of fulfilment arrives with chapter 7. In my view, the right perspective with which to confront this theory is as a proposal for trying to make sense of the sort of knowledge perception can deliver; that sort being one among a short list of paradigmatic distinct sorts of knowledge among which – if Williamson (2005) is right – only Wittgensteinian “family resemblances” hold. To that end, the Husserlian perspective exploits an idea of “fulfilment” which can nowadays be seen as related to the familiar Searlean notions of “conditions of satisfaction” and “direction of fit” [see Beyer (1997), § I].

Hopp differentiates between *intuitive fulfilment* (as when the anticipation of the rear windows of a house is satisfied) and *epistemic fulfilment*, which requires at least implicit awareness of some sort of coincidence between the fulfilling perceptual experience and the belief or judgement. According to Hopp, the coincidence of which awareness is required for the fulfilment of the latter to take place is the identity of their objects –in the wide sense of the “somethings” they are both about (p. 192) –.⁶

To give a simple example (as it turns out, of the basic variety: primary epistemic fulfilment), consider Alice, who is looking for a friend in a Parisian cafe in the early 50s, when suddenly she realizes that one of the people she is looking at is Simone de Beauvoir, who she is able to recognize by sight because she had attended some talks by her. At that moment, Alice's thought, "Simone de Beauvoir is in the cafe", is fulfilled. This example, similar to one Hopp gives, also illustrates a further aspect in which his theory deviates from Husserl's: the fulfilled thought does not have to happen *before* the fulfilling experience.

The notably large and diverse set of examples that Hopp gives is meant to illustrate necessary conditions for fulfilment; but no complete set of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions is meant to be given. This might even be impossible if concepts such as "fulfilment" and "synthesis" are taken to be open-ended theoretical notions whose meaning is made manifest only through a whole variety of examples and applications.

I will end by briefly relating this account to other (currently) more "mainstream" accounts. In discussion of "dogmatist accounts" of epistemic justification (i.e., accounts that attribute some degree of justification to the mere fact that the subject enjoys perceptual experiences which are adequately related to certain empirical beliefs – see Pryor (2000) –, one point that has surfaced is the need for a principled constraint on the cases to which "dogmatist justification" applies. One proposal that has been advanced as also applicable to empirical knowledge is that the cases in which a perceptual experience justifies a belief with empirical content are those cases in which to have that experience is constitutive of the meaning of the concepts in the belief [see e.g. García-Carpintero (2005)]. Hopp's discussion of "authentic" possession of concepts – one of the necessary conditions for a "synthesis of coincidence" (and so fulfilment) to take place – suggests a modification of this condition (or perhaps only a clarification, depending on exactly how matters are formulated); namely, that the subject possesses and exercises *recognition* concepts of the objects involved in the case (roughly, concepts whose possession requires proficiency in recognizing application instances). To go back to the example at the very beginning of this "Notice": we would then have an account of the correctness of appealing to a visual perception of the glasses to justify our belief concerning their whereabouts.

FINAL

Hopp's book is passionately written, as contemporary philosophy books in the analytic tradition go. Hopp has an interrelated set of positive messages to convey, and he conveys them forcefully: a modified Husserlian theory of the content of perceptual experiences and how this helps to account – again,

along broadly Husserlian lines – for both their phenomenal character and the justification of beliefs and judgements (at least the ones with empirical content). A certain sense of urgency can be detected, which at a few points seems to turn into somewhat undesirable rashness. Throughout the book, analysis is combined with argument, perhaps not always with the degree of subtlety expected of a research paper, but certainly with the meld that should be expected in a good book in the analytic tradition. What is more, the book is clearly written and is even lively. The use of technical jargon belonging to the phenomenological tradition is relatively small (in any case, it is either introduced contextually or conveniently explained), while the proportion of apt examples and attractive intuitive considerations relative to dry argument is high, making the book rather enjoyable to read. And what is ultimately more important, a significant part of its message – and this includes its critical parts – undoubtedly deserves to be attentively listened to and discussed. Some putative contributions – e.g., the distinction between several senses in which an item can be “conceptually organized”, the limitation of *prima facie* perceptual justification or warrant to beliefs with authentically possessed concepts, the discussion of horizontal contents, or indeed the usefulness of the notion of fulfilment – might indeed become lasting contributions to the ensuing philosophical research into the content of perceptual experiences and the justification of beliefs. And the awareness of the Husserlian lineage is distinctive enough to put the focus on the Husserlian strand of analytic philosophy. In the current philosophical panorama in the analytic tradition, this strand is by far the underdog vis-à-vis the Fregean strand. Hopp’s book may contribute to making the balance a little more even.

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NOTES

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¹ A modification of the Fregean framework was attempted with the introduction of “manners” of perception in Peacocke’s (1989), the central trait of which – that it is not in agreement with the Fregean principle of difference for modes of presentation – is preserved in Peacocke’s more recent defence of the claim that perceptual states have nonconceptual content [see Peacocke (2001)].

² Following his former teacher and mentor Dallas Willard – one of the most lucid of Husserl’s interpreters in my view – Hopp mistrusts Husserl’s later “noetic-noematic” account (cf. *P&K*, footnote 10, p. 29, and p. 176). Indeed, the unending controversy regarding the proper interpretation of this later account serves to reinforce the impression that it is hopelessly confused.

³ Horizontal content is one of the two sorts of nonconceptual content that are advocated in the work. The other Hopp labels simply “intuitive content”, meaning that it is the content proper of what he, following Husserl, regards as “intuitive acts”; that is: perceptual experiences (the paradigm of intuitive mental episodes), mental episodes of (pictorial) imagination, and imagistic episodic memories. Hopp introduces this sort of content by appealing to the intuitive contrast between these types of mental episodes and what are called “empty” mental episodes, such as typical episodes of thinking about something or that something is so-and-so, but he does not provide much by way of general positive elaboration. In contrast, the pages devoted to horizontal contents rank, in my view, with Smith and McIntyre’s extended discussion [Smith and McIntyre, (1982)], and they might even improve on it in that Hopp’s discussion is not subject, as the latter is, to the requirements of the controversial Fregean interpretation of Husserl.

⁴ Interestingly, this matter has wide-reaching ramifications that are relevant to the assessment of the relative merits of Husserlian and Heideggerian phenomenologies – see Yoshimi (2009) –.

⁵ Sense data accounts in their classical versions – rivals to both relationalism and intentionalism – are alluded to in passing, always dismissively, but *P&K* ignores recent versions of sense data and other non-reductive representationalist accounts, such as those in García-Carpintero (2001), Chalmers (2004) and (2006) or Thompson (2009). Indeed, there is a little explored affinity of some Husserlian views to sense data theories which oppose internalism [see Fernández Prat (2008)]. For what it is worth, I myself think these accounts deserve more attention. Nevertheless, it would be unfair to make a fuss about the absence of such admittedly minority approaches in the book.

⁶ Thus, on this point Hopp modifies what often is taken to be Husserl’s original account, which requires rather the identity of the contents: according to Hopp’s theory of content, an intuitive mental event and an “empty” one can never have the same content.

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RESUMEN

El libro de Walter Hopp es ante todo un defensa original de la tesis de que el carácter subjetivo de las experiencias perceptivas consiste en su contenido representacional y de una teoría parcialmente original de la justificación epistémica de creencias, concepciones ambas que se fundamentan en el libro a partir de una teoría en gran medida original del contenido de las experiencias perceptivas. El propósito de esta nota es esbozar – tanto positiva como críticamente – la posición que se adopta en el libro en relación con estos temas y proporcionar un contexto algo más amplio, de modo que el alcance y la significación del libro puedan ser mejor apreciados. La nota pretende también mostrar que esta obra se sitúa en una perspectiva neo-husserliana en filosofía analítica de la percepción y el lenguaje que es análoga a las mejor conocidas perspectivas neo-fregeanas en filosofía del lenguaje y el pensamiento, y puede incluso contribuir parcialmente a reequilibrar la balanza entre la rama husserliana y la fregeana de la filosofía actual.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *contenido conceptual, contenido no-conceptual, contenido intuitivo, contenido horizontal, intencionalismo, justificación epistémica*

ABSTRACT

Walter Hopp's book is above all an original defence of the thesis that the subjective character of perceptual experiences consists of their representational content, together with a partially original theory of the epistemic justification of beliefs. These views are based in the book on an also largely original theory of the content of perceptual experiences. My aim in this critical notice is to outline the position espoused in the book with regard to these themes – both positively and critically – and provide some additional context for them, so that the reach and significance of the book can be more readily appreciated. The notice aims further to show that Hopp's work occu-

pies a neo-Husserlian viewpoint in analytic philosophy of perception and language which is analogous to the better known neo-Fregean perspectives in the philosophy of language and thought, and may even contribute to partially redress the balance between the Husserlian and the Fregean strands in current philosophy.

KEYWORDS: *Conceptual Content, Nonconceptual Content, Intuitive Content, Horizontal Content, Intentionalism, Epistemic Justification*