Charting the Contours of Husserl's Notion of Empathy
A Reappraisal

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Abstract: Apart from its mainstream construal as a more sincere and/or heartfelt variant of sympathy, for Husserl—and in phenomenology, generally—empathy (*Einfühlung* or *Fremderfuhrung*) is a special type of intentional act that, at its core, seeks to facilitate interpersonal understanding and communication by effectively enabling vicarious grasp of experiences. The empathic experience is necessarily non-inferential, highly intuitive, and modally a form of analogical apperception premised on a certain notion of associative pairing. In this paper, I aim to offer a largely singular & coherent reading of Husserlian empathy—notwithstanding the various thematic reformulations that the topic underwent throughout the course of Husserl's intellectual life—that's faithful to the original texts and ideas, and at the same time includes critical contemporary commentary. We start by setting up the egological phenomenological context thereby rendering visible its putative solipsistic core. We then move to an in-depth analysis of the workings and functions of phenomenological empathy. This is followed by a brief discussion on Edith Stein's contributions and a final section on the notion's relevance for thinking on intersubjectivity and objectivity.

Keywords: empathy, transcendental phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, apperception, pairing, intersubjectivity

I.   Introduction

Husserlian phenomenology, loosely put, is the study of conscious experience from a first-person viewpoint. In so being, it is at the same time also the study of consciousness, which is both the pre-condition for and common denominator of all experience. And since consciousness penetrates almost every segment of human life, phenomenology is simultaneously also the study of conscious subjectivity, of what it means

to be a human subject. While the hard sciences and many other branches of philosophical thought are also geared towards similar goals, phenomenology is distinct in its pursuit in that it sets as its primary end the objective analysis of experience in the manner that it is *given* to experiencing subjects. It does, however, come off as particularly oxymoronic when the words "objectivity" and "subjective" experience are used in the same breath. This is precisely the challenge that the German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) undertakes, for the most part, as his life-long project.

In truth, however, the subjective experience of objects—or, more accurately, things—demands a mode of inquiry quite different from the subjective experience of other subjects. Learning about and communicating with living, feeling, thinking human beings who resemble us in many ways and inhabit our onto-social spheres of being, is a complex process. Furthermore, when it comes to grasping the mental attributes of these fellow human cohabitants, the challenge is even more severe. But it is nonetheless a necessity if we are to fairly assess the human condition in its multidimensional fullness. This is where we are introduced with the notion of empathy. But *contra* its usage in common parlance as some heightened form of sympathy, empathy (*Einfühlung* or *Fremderfuhrung*), originally borrowed from German philosopher Theodor Lipps, is a much more valuable concept for Husserl, who first wrote on the subject in 1905 (Kern 11). For one, it enables recognition of the other *qua* subject. Secondly, it allows one to access the contents of the mental life of the other. And still further, it makes it possible for one to experience these contents in the manner that the other would experience them—i.e., from, as it were, a secondary first-person viewpoint. In sum, it would be fair to maintain, on Husserl's account, that empathy is at bottom a special, highly intuitive intentional act which stands in stark opposition to the many other similar inference or imitation-based processes that enable us to form judgements about the

other and their mental states. Simply put, empathy is intuitive and it isn't an inference or imitation *per se*.

Although such an understanding of empathy is quite different from many of the contemporary interventions in the area largely from a cognitive neuroscientific perspective (see Conclusion) yet its modern import is undeniable. We must ask: why is this renewed interest in empathy important right now? The simple answer is: because empathy is important right now. Phenomenology has always maintained a close interaction with the social & political world. Intersubjective matters like compassion, oppression, pain, violence, and ultimately, emancipation, have occupied a central place in it. In a climate like ours, empathy is one of the founding pillars on which the very possibility of a better future stands.

In this paper, I seek to present a thorough exposition of Husserlian empathy. I begin with some exordial remarks that go towards setting the stage for the emergence of the concept. I then proceed to an in-depth, sequential analysis of the idea, exploring its nuances and subtleties in detail. I also offer a brief account of Edith Stein's contributions to the field. Next I explore some aspects of empathy vis-à-vis notions of reciprocity, intersubjectivity, and objectivity. Finally, I end with some general comments on the notion's contemporary relevance.

II.   Subjectivity, Intersubjectivity, and the Threat of *Solus Ipse*

Let us start with a broad-brush account of phenomenology and its onto-epistemic corollaries. In an attempt to found philosophy in the subject(ive) as a prerequisite for attaining objective knowledge—quite in a Cartesian vein—Husserlian phenomenology starts its journey by investigating the indubitable individual self as *a being existing in a surrounding*. The surrounding (*Umwelt*), for Husserl, is that what's "always already there" (Moran and Cohen 190) as an environing backdrop against which all things are experienced. In other words, it is the set of perennially underpinned pre-epistemological natural, social,

historical, cultural givens that condition, structure and constitute subjectivity. This meta-subjective matrix of conditions, cross-hatched with what falls in the subject's everyday quotidian experience, constitutes their *lifeworld*. Empirical sciences, in Husserl's view, operate at the level of the lifeworld and are hence fundamentally unequipped to achieve objective knowledge.

The self is capable of experiences, both external and internal.[1] Stripping these experiences of their empirical baggage by employing the methodological operation known as *epoché* gives them the form of pure or transcendental experiences, which then lead to the perception of pure or transcendental selfhood. The primary task at hand for the transcendental self is to reconstitute its experiences from scratch without falling back on anything derived from the senses or realist doctrine.

All conscious experiences intend an object (an idea that Husserl borrowed from Brentano's Third Thesis) but are at the same time mediated by the self's inherent situatedness. This, however, is not good news for the phenomenologist since it is at this point that the philosophy, unwittingly or otherwise, gets ensnared in the possibility of an all-engulfing solipsism (Husserl, *Meditations* 89)—one of those dead-ends in philosophy from which it's very difficult to return unless one agrees to take refuge in some facile idea of God. It is ultimately a state of self-captivity, one that affords no access to the vast majority of things that fall outside of one's direct field of experience. Let's take, for instance, a scenario where I am trying to think of how it feels to be in a state of abject poverty. Intentionality holds that my thought be directed at an actual experience of the object for it to be really a thought *of* said object. At the same time, in virtue of my specific subjective location—which is to say, my social privilege—, it is perfectly plausible for me to have never experienced even a semblance of poverty, let alone abject poverty.

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[1] In fact, this feature is embedded in its very essence: the self is an experiencing self, a *res experiens*, as it were, with its primordial experience of itself as the very ground of all cogitations.

But in trying to force myself into thinking about it, I concoct a false experience in my mind, name it "abject poverty", and thereby mislead myself into believing that my thinking has ended in success. What happened here is that I failed to step out of my subjective context. I was imprisoned in myself by myself. Extending the same argument to the apprehension of another human being—instead of just any "object"—would bring us to the conclusion that strictly subjectivised intentional-phenomenology is prone to self-bondage where the other, that is, another human subject, is completely out of reach.

This is the famous *problem of other minds*. As Paul Ricoeur puts it in his seminal text on Husserl: "How do we get from this admitted and accepted solipsism to the constitution of the other?" (Ricoeur 123). The account goes as follows: one of the absolutely crucial things that selves experience as external to them are other selves. This experience, however, differs greatly from all other experiences in that the other is *recognized as* a self (albeit foreign), i.e., as a subject just like me with similar capacities and properties. Despite being an object of the self's experience, this object is not really an object, but an experiencing subject. Any presumption of solipsism fails to explain such a scenario (unless it conceives of the other as ultimately an illusion, a position we'll not be addressing here). Hence there must be an intervening factor—something like an intermediary apparatus—that can help phenomenology bridge this explanatory gap.

The question of possibility of access to the other and their experiential content is of critical importance to phenomenology because the whole edifice of intersubjectivity is founded on it. And since intersubjectivity constitutes the bedrock of all social life and existence, the stakes are quite high here: denial of the possibility of experiencing the other *qua* experiencing subject immediately eliminates any possibility of efficient communication and understanding between them and, by extension, all hopes of engaging in what Husserl calls "social acts"—common intentional acts that constitute a common social world. All attempts at

constructing and participating in socialities are thereby outrightly preempted. Such concessions would fly directly in the face of Husserl's ultimate quasi-Leibnizian aim of establishing an internally harmonious *community of monads* (figurative for transcendental intersubjectivity), which is a state where individuated transcendental egos are inextricably intertwined with other individuated transcendental egos as part of the tapestry of a collective human lifeworld. This is a view that sits at the heart of his goal of erecting a sociological phenomenology, a programmatic move away from its previous egological counterpart. In order, therefore, to salvage phenomenology from a fate as depicted above, it becomes important to posit a layer or mechanism that can serve as the indispensable interface between the self and the other. This is what Husserl and his philosophical heirs term as empathy.

III.   The Notion of Empathy

Husserl characterises empathy as an intentional act undertaken by the self that leads into an alter self. Broadly, it can be construed as a subject's *sui generis* (Stein 11) capacity for successful sense-making of a foreign subject's experiential life *as lived by them*. It also means the mechanism via which one recognizes the other as a subject. Two clarificatory remarks need to be made here. One, that, contrary to its use in common parlance, such sense-making is not merely restricted to emotional states like joy or grief, and applies to the entire array of cognitive and experiential states of the other (Moran and Cohen 95). The second crucial comment is that empathy captures the other's experiences without actually living through them. In order for one to empathically grasp the other's sorrow, the former need not be sorrowful himself. Recognizing the experience of the emotion as belonging to the other is enough. To sum up in Edith Stein's (*Empathy* 19) words, empathy has a certain "double-sidedness" built into it where it is given as "an experience of our own announcing another one."

In analysing the intentional nature of empathic experience, we go back to Husserl's standard model of intentionality, where we find three modes of intending an object by a subject's conscious reflection, namely, the signitive (i.e., symbolic-linguistic representation), the pictorial (i.e., imaginary representation), and the perceptual (i.e., sensory representation), arranged hierarchically from low to high in terms of their relative efficacy in accurately presenting their objects. Among these three, only perceptual intentionality can produce their objects in their direct, intuitive bodily presence; the rest are symbolic in nature and hence result only in indirect presentations (Husserl, *Ideas I* 9, 13). As regards which of these categories empathy can be classed under, the favoured view today (Zahavi, "Gallese" 226) is that empathy is quasi-perceptual, meaning it's both similar and dissimilar to perception in certain key ways. Its similarity lies in the fact that the empathised experience is "given directly, unmediated and non-inferentially as present here and now" (Zahavi, "Intentionality" 134). It differs from perception in that, unlike perception, its object isn't given in an originary mode (i.e., in the way their original owner experiences it) (Husserl, *Ideas I* 10; Stein 10). The givenness of the object to the one experiencing it first-hand will always be different from that of the one accessing it via empathic mediation (Zahavi, "Gallese" 233). The difference is necessitated by the very need for positing a separate psychic phenomenon like empathy. Empathically accessing the other in their originality would imply that the self has transposed into the other, bypassing and disregarding their specific subjective situations (Husserl, *Meditations* 109). Such would be a state of total identification between the self and other, and hence is an obvious impossibility.

IV.   Perception and Apperception in Husserl

It is also equally essential to understand how perception works in the Husserlian system. Perception is the "intuitive experience of a transcendent object in one's surrounding world" (Jardine 277). Unlike the conventional depictions of perception, we never really meet a

physical object in its spatiotemporal fullness in our empirical interactions with it. Sense-perceptual outlook *tout court*, by virtue of its being perpetually perspectival, disallows object-perception. It is the mind that produces the complete perception of an object—hence the object is considered transcendental—by piecing together profiles perceived and profiles absent from our given sensory frame (Husserl, *Meditations* 122). Absences arrive on the back of presences as co-presences of sorts, to the effect that whenever the latter is perceived, the former is also *eo ipso* co-perceived. These co-perceived or apperceived sides of an object are said to be given appresentationally. Hence both presences and appresences go into making object-perception possible.

To be noted is the fact that apperceptual awarenesses don't arrive *after* their perceptual counterparts, but rather *with* them; object-perception is instantaneous. Such a requirement mandates temporal concurrence between the two events, and cannot be achieved by some mode of mental inference. As to why appresences are so crucial to presences, Zahavi notes that perhaps perceptions draw their meaning from and are constitutively reliant on those which are not perceived but exist nonetheless.

Empathy can be said to follow a similar course, wherein the other's mental life is apperceived along with concrete perceptions of (parts of) their observable body. This empathic apperception, however, is of a double nature (Jardine 279). It involves apperception of both physical, bodily absences (i.e., physical aspects missing in a certain perceptual frame) as well as non-physical absences. While one can get a better handle on the former by adjusting their spatial location, the latter is always off-limits, always inaccessible to perception. One can simply move about from their current vantage point in order to be able to view the missing aspects of the other's physical body, but the missing aspects of the mind—their deeper thoughts, intentions, sentiments, etc.—can never be perceived in a similar manner.

This doubly apperceptive character of empathy captures the mental - a sort of "psychic fluidum" (Husserl, *Ideas II* 250) - and the physical as a thoroughly fused whole (Jardine 278; Husserl, *Ideas II* 248). The living body "filled with the soul through and through" (Husserl, *Ideas II* 252), as the physically encountered mark in empathic perception, is expressive of that intrinsic wholeness. This body, however, isn't to be taken as a signifier that's signifying a mind hidden in plain sight, so to say. The two co-inhere in a transcendental "unity of the 'expression' and the 'expressed'" (Husserl, *Ideas II* 248). But still, the true object of empathy is not the expressive body, nor the psychophysical whole. On the contrary, empathy, primarily and vitally, intends a *person*, a *complete* human being and not just bits and pieces. The other apprehended in empathy is given as a living subject (Jardine 280; Husserl, *Ideas II* 240) who houses and *is* the unity between corporeality and spirituality. They are the foremost referent in all my empathic intentions that are directed towards their own intentions, i.e., experiential states. In empathising with someone who has lost their mother, I am grieving[2] because *they* are grieving and not because they are *grieving*. It is also important to note that empathic perception, like any other perception, is not immune from error and stands always open to correction (Zahavi, "Gallese" 232). Hence, that in and of itself isn't an argument against the quasi-perceptual character of empathy.

V.   Empathy as *Sui Generis* Analogy

The mode of operation of Husserl's empathy is to be understood as some form of analogy. This component coupled with double-apperception go into making empathic acquaintance with an other's psychic life possible. Analogy, however, is a nuanced concept. First, let's look at what it is not. It can neither be a "thinking act" nor an "inference", says Husserl (*Meditations* 111), since both of those processes entail a necessary

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[2] Though strictly speaking that's not a necessity, merely understanding the other's feeling would suffice; see "similarity assumption" (Overgaard 178)

temporal separation between the incidences of two events (viz., the perception of the other's body and the apperception of the other & their experiential content). One such kind of "thinking act" could be the conscious act of imaginative perspective-taking (the sentiment behind "putting yourself in their shoes"). Also off the table is the possibility of merging with or becoming the other in trying to access their mental life, since such an act of total identification would simultaneously be an act of absolute self-abnegation, both of which run counter to phenomenological logic. Empathy isn't also what Theodor Lipps, one of Husserl's contemporaries, took to be: the combined effect of simulating/imitating/mimicking expressions and projecting experiences (Zahavi, "Intentionality" 130). Lipps' psychologistic account in a nutshell goes as follows: witnessing an ostensibly sad countenance elicits by way of imitation a similar expression of sadness in my countenance; as an associated correlate, an actual experience of sadness gushes forth in me; finally, I project this "objectivated" (Moran and Cohen 96) experience onto the other person and mistake it to be their own. The phenomenon of emotional contagion also follows the same structure, wherein one inadvertently catches (like one catches a flu) and mirrors the affectations of the other upon mere exposure. The problem with this view is that unless it proves the "epistemic legitimacy" (Zahavi, "Intentionality" 132) of such projection, the whole affair becomes an assumption. The ramifications to that effect are absurd: the other is wholly out of reach for me and hence all empathic experiences are ultimately forms of self-experience—finding in the other what we ourselves are.

Thus having set his notion of analogising apperception apart from the likes of other similar phenomena like inference, imagination, merging, imitation, contagion and projection, Husserl gets to the crux of his characterisation of empathic analogy: where two bodies share an "associative relation" or likeness by which they are thereby paired, the apprehension of the body of the other as living body is achieved by an

act of "apperceptive transfer" of sense from the living body of the self onto that of the other. At first blush, this notion of "transference" might ring similar to that of Lipps' notion of imitation-plus-projection, except that for Lipps, such sense-transference can only happen between two physical bodies (*Körper*, i.e., the body as externally appearing, one that's made up of dead matter and is perceived/sensed) and not between lived/living bodies (*Leib*; the body as animated with consciousness; one that is capable of perceiving, sensing). Apperceiving the other's lived body, then, means apperceiving the other's body as perceptive. The transference phenomenon also doesn't indicate the transfer of essence (Husserl, *Meditations* 109), but only of sense. The essence of an organism, encapsulated by its unique position of being the nucleus of its peculiar sphere of ownness as situated in a specific lifeworld, is obviously not open to any form of sharing and can't be parted with. The only sense that lends itself to sharing is therefore the distinctive sense of possessing a living body pregnant with all its imbued animacy.

VI.   Associative Pairing and Beyond

Pairing, as the process underlying and facilitating sense-transference, is the phenomenon of past self-experiences passively and involuntarily weighing down upon present outer perceptions (Zahavi, "Gallese" 246; Husserl, *Meditations* 111). Connections forged and associations consolidated as a result of previous exposure to co-incidences leads to the pairing of the two events, in the manner that incidence of one instantly recalls the other, just as the child who's been taught how to use a scissor automatically remembers those functionalities each time they see a new scissor. These analogy-based reminders, followed by sense transfer, according to Husserl, occur instantly and therefore non-inferentially.

Empathic pairing, however, is not the only type of empathy. While it is certainly the first and primordial type, its objects are too rudimentary to account for the entire range of empathic awarenesses that exist. Through

pairing we only ever achieve somatological association, or what has been called a sort of "animal apperception". The next level apprehends the other as a physically acting living body, one that's walking, talking, sleeping, etc. The level still above grasps the directedness in physical acts, for instance, "running of the other in the forest as flight, the hiding behind a stone as a protection from missiles" (Zahavi, "Gallese" 242). Edith Stein contributes significantly in this regard (see next section).

VII.   Edith Stein's Interventions

At this juncture, given its pertinence to the subject under study, it might be of interest to explore in brief some of the contributions made by German philosopher Edith Stein to the Husserlian discourse on. Having worked as a doctoral student under Husserl, and later as his research assistant, Stein significantly refined and fine-tuned the phenomenology of empathy as being a special kind of intentional act, counterposing it to other similar yet competing narratives, significantly, the Millian, Lippsian, Schelerian, and other psychologistic accounts. Her early findings were published in her book titled *On the Problem of Empathy* (1989), which is excerpted from her much larger doctoral thesis.

Many of her interventions have already been touched upon in this article. For example, the idea that empathy is a *sui generis* and unitary act irreducible to other forms of phenomena and not divisible into constituent inferential micro-phenomena. Further, the previously discussed inextricability of the expressed and the expression in empathic (co-)givenness has also been taken up by Stein (*Empathy* 75–84) as depicting a core feature of empathy. In this way empathic experiences transcend sensory modalities. A single sense-impression produces a compound effect on the perceiver, where the entire mental state of the other, including their complete range of sensory activations, becomes available to the empath. The other important insight that Stein (*Empathy* 10) emphasises is the direct but non-originary/non-primordial nature of empathic acquisition. Even though empathy produces the other's

experience with an immediacy (i.e., non-mediated, hence direct) it is still secondary, in that it still lacks the value that the original experience had for the other as a first-time and first-hand event. It's similar to the act of remembrance: in remembrance the experience of an object is produced directly in our mind. Yet the remembered experience isn't the same as the perceptual experience of the original event. But empathy isn't the same as remembrance, expectations, or fantasy. It departs from the aforementioned in producing experiences that might have never been/can never at all be experienced perceptually by the experiencer. Also, the subject who empathises is different from the subject who undergoes the original experiences, unlike the subject who remembers, anticipates, or contemplates, where the subjects are the same. Thus empathy can't produce the object in its embodied form—since that would entail breaking out of one's subjective location—but can merely replicate the experience of it to a great degree.

The essence of Stein's account consists in her explication of empathy as a phenomenon comprising three levels. She writes:

> . . . [T]here are three levels or modalities of accomplishment even if in a concrete case people do not always go through all levels but are often satisfied with one of the lower ones. These are (1) emergence of the experience, (2) the fulfilling explication, and (3) the comprehensive objectification of the explained experience. On the first and third levels, the representation exhibits the non-primordial parallel to perception, and on the second level it exhibits the non-primordial parallel to the having of the experience. (Stein, *Empathy* 10)

In the abovementioned three-fold scheme, the first corresponds to the basic function of empathy as capturing isolated experiences of the other, say, perceiving the other's joy from the broad smile on their countenance. It is the second—namely, the explication of the initially captured bare-experience—that lays out the entire contextual tapestry against which the former is made sense of and thereby enables grasp of wider intentions. So, to continue the previous example, explicative fulfilment would imply that I not only capture the other's joy but also the context behind it, say,

their experience of getting selected for a job which can finally support their ailing mother. Such a notion of explication, though not expressly stated by Stein, has to be understood as some form of imagination on the part of the empath. Notably, explication can also extend to complex, higher order facts such as the other's social situation as well as what kind of person they are. Finally, in the third step, the empathically acquired sense and contextual sense get encapsulated into a singular intentional object, say, when after knowing the background of the other's joy I continue to feel the other's *joy* specifically, and not some diffused or mixed state of feelings. Knowledge of the context doesn't make me lose sight of the initial experience. Hence, empathy ultimately retains its intentional core.

VIII.   Rethinking the Self, Inter-Self, and Objectivity

Intentionality insofar as it is a feature of solely individual consciousness fails to make sense of collective realities thereby leaving us with the rather dismal picture of being disengaged, atomised individuals. Reality manifests in such cases as completely relative, wholly contingent on subjective preference. Such a view is thoroughly idealistic and untenable since agreement and engagement do exist between people on common truths, shared modes of being, and the general fact of our collective subjection to overarching structures. This makes it essential for intersubjectivity to exist and common intentional paradigms that enable it.

Among capacities that are necessary to posit, prove, and perpetuate the intersubjective order, empathy is one of the foremost.[3] Empathy enables the creation (in consciousness) of an objective, intersubjective world (Husserl, *Meditations* 107) by dovetailing (as constitutionally "interwoven" (Moran 2016)) the self with the other—subjects are not just for themselves but also for others, in that they have a being-for-each-other. As Zahavi ("Gallese" 244) writes: "The meaning the world has for

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[3] If not the only one; see Jardine 273

the other affects the meaning it has for me". The view of the self and the other as being two mutually exclusive sets is somewhat blurred when this element of dialectical reciprocity is factored in. Needless to say, this is a deeply Hegelian theme: the act of recognizing an other *qua* subject brings with it the recognition of how the other recognizes me *qua* subject. What Husserl adds to this is the dimension where this reciprocal conferral of meaning leads to the constitution of collective subjective situations of common intentionality, something that lets us construct a shared social reality and the very notion of objectivity itself as its intentional correlate (Walsh 260).

In his Fifth Meditation, Husserl provides a roadmap of how the objective world is constituted in subjective experience. It commences with the primordial ipseity/alterity distinction where the "other ego" is understood as that which is "excluded from my own concrete being" (Husserl, *Meditations* 107). From this very acknowledgement, an alteration, which is but an accumulation, of meaning follows—what he terms a "universal superaddition of sense"—in and by which my primordial world takes on the appearance of an objective world. This ensuing suprasubjective world is a space that's identical for everyone, including myself. In other words, the recognition of the first other-ego opens up a new infinite domain of possible alterity. This communalized horizon is the objective world as we know it and belongs to the transcendental *We* with its own intersubjective sphere of ownness. It is in this way that the Husserlian *I* reaches out to the *Thou*, in many ways becomes it, and ultimately leads to the constitution of a *We* which constructs and holds together all machinations of an objective nature and world. Note, however, that even though We-subjectivity seems to emerge ontologically later than I-subjectivity, it is not really the case. Husserl (*Meditations*) already writes in the Second Meditation that "in a certain manner, transcendental solipsism is only a subordinate stage philosophically [to transcendental intersubjectivity]" (30).

The transfer of sense between two paired bodies is always also a "mutual awakening" (Husserl, *Meditations* 113)—a reciprocal transfer of sense. The awareness of how I am given to the other leads to a newer and better understanding of myself which ultimately contributes to my self-identity as a human being (Zahavi, "Gallese" 245). In Ideas II (175), Husserl writes, "It is only with empathy . . . that the closed unity, man, is constituted, and I transfer this unity subsequently to myself". Empathy, therefore, is shown to have two roles: first, that constitutive of self-identity and what subsequently deepens self-understanding; second, getting to actually understand the other's gamut of experiences. However, this complicates matters (see Zahavi, "Gallese" 238 for more). Subjects do not always experience their own bodies in the same way as the other's; there are blindspots in self-perception, for instance, in trying to see the back of my own head, or have a look at my own eyes (Walsh 263). Owing to such a lack of primordial bodily commonality, then, they can't be paired up and can't allow the carrying over of analogizing apperception to take place at all. Perhaps the only identifiable associative similarity between the lived bodies of the self and the other is what Zahavi ("Gallese" 239) called their "two-sidedness": their incessant vacillation between the internal *Leib* and the external *Körper*—the latter being a kind of otherness-within-self—as a "remarkable interplay between *ipseity* and *alterity*".

IX.   Concluding Remarks

Husserl's problematization of empathy and intersubjectivity continues to cast its shadow on the philosophical and scientific discourses of this day, be it in the traditionally analytical fields like social cognition in cognitive science (for instance, in encounters between Theory-Theory and Simulation-Theory), in the domain of ethics (mainly, care ethics), or in the phenomenological philosophies of Max Scheler, Edith Stein, Merleau-Ponty, Alfred Schutz, and Emmanuel Levinas, among others, as something that stands at the heart of all interpersonal relations and, if one may, the human condition itself. It is fairly certain that developing a

thorough understanding of it is crucial to understanding many deeper issues that build off it. Hence, even though scholars continue to remain divided in their views on many of the most rudimentary questions in the area, fresher, if not straightaway better, perspectives are encouraged by way of more critical engagement with the topic.

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