

The Case for Intrinsic Theory: II. An Examination of a Conception of Consciousness₄ as Intrinsic, Necessary, and Concomitant

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The present article is the second one in a series and begins to spell out the case for the intrinsic kind of theory of consciousness₄. According to such theory, a mental-occurrence instance is conscious₄ (i.e., an immediate object of occurrent awareness) on its own, that is, as a part of its own internal structure. Considered here are a prominent phenomenologist's argument in favor of an intrinsic theory of consciousness₄, and his conception of how such inner awareness occurs in the case of objectivating mental acts, which are all conscious₄ in his view. Every objectivating act is a mental-occurrence instance that includes outer awareness, that is, awareness of something lying (or seeming to lie) externally to the act. Every objectivating act presents an object distinct from itself, conveys awareness of that object, and — allegedly as a mere by-product or concomitant — conveys awareness of itself. This article emphasizes the question of what property of outer awareness it is that necessarily, as has been claimed, brings along with it inner awareness of the respective objectivating act. Also, this article begins to argue that, in the very occurrence of any conscious₄ objectivating act, inner awareness is "interwoven" with outer awareness. Inner awareness is a part of the "thematizing" activity of any conscious₄ mental act, rather than being "marginal," that is, a merely implicit concomitant of the act.

This is the second in a series of articles belonging to the scientific field of inquiry called the psychology of consciousness (Farthing, 1992). On pain of arbitrary incompleteness, the psychology of consciousness must include systematic investigation of "consciousness₄" (Natsoulas, 1994c), which is the general topic of the present series. Throughout these articles, I shall be addressing the following question: What is it that makes a conscious mental-

occurrence instance conscious? Drawing from the literature, I shall present the positive case for a certain category of answer to the latter question, which I call the intrinsic kind of theory of consciousness₄. Also, wherever it seems possible, I will be trying to develop the case for intrinsic theory somewhat further.

The initial installment was intended to serve as a general introduction to the series (Natsoulas, 1996). I spelled out there the following two matters among others: (a) what I mean by a mental-occurrence instance's being conscious or, equivalently, by a mental-occurrence instance's possessing the property of consciousness₄ (Natsoulas, 1994c); and (b) what kind of theory it is that I am calling an intrinsic theory of consciousness₄, or how this kind of theory is to be distinguished from other kinds of account for the same phenomenon especially from the appendage kind of account (Natsoulas, 1993b), which psychologists may find, to begin with, more attractive than intrinsic theory, because of their implicit reliance on the stimulus-response formula.

The reader can usefully consult the first article in this series, though it is not essential for achieving a good grasp of the points that make up the present installment.

I shall begin to lay out here, with close attention to detail, the specific arguments for intrinsic theory that have been advanced in the literature from various theoretical perspectives (e.g., Gurwitsch, 1950/1985). Before I begin, let me again bring out, albeit rather briefly, the meanings of the three main concepts with which I shall be working. In the preceding installment, I promised to make a special effort to keep the reader apprised of how I am using my main terms.

1. As before, I shall speak of *mental-occurrence instances*, rather than of mental occurrences, states, or events. My purpose in so speaking is to keep the following fact before the reader's mind. My intended referents are always individual pulses of mentality (which, by the way, William James would describe as "the most concrete thing for a psychologist"). Whenever I speak simply of a certain mental-occurrence instance, it is a concrete particular item, not an abstract type of happening, that I mean to refer to. To borrow and modify Gustav Bergmann's (1960) analogy, the mental-occurrence instance that just took place in me is, ontologically, like the burst of a tone that took place on a certain specific occasion.

As models for my concrete mental pulses, I have in mind the basic durational components of James's (1890/1950) famous stream of consciousness. In a recent article, which addressed the distinction between the object and content of consciousness in the sense of occurrent awareness, here is how I characterized these basic durational components:

James's (1890/[1950]) stream consists of a "sensibly" (i.e., subjectively) continuous succession of unitary states, or integral pulses, of consciousness. These are the stream's minimal temporal sections that give veridical or nonveridical consciousness [i.e., occurrent awareness] of, or as though of, something, which can be anything perceivable, feelable, imaginable, thinkable, or internally apprehensible. (Natsoulas, 1994b, p. 239)

These basic segments of the stream no doubt vary in their individual duration. But, as I have elsewhere argued (Natsoulas, 1992–1993), according to James's implicit understanding of the stream, the states of consciousness successively comprising the stream are discrete states, rather than being continuous each of them with the next one, that is, a single continuous process.

This understanding would entail, of course, that each of the successive pulses of consciousness that make up James's stream possesses natural boundaries. Which may contradict how the phenomenologists Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith recently characterized the stream of consciousness in a general chapter on Edmund Husserl's philosophy. Smith and Smith (1995) wrote,

It should not be supposed however that conscious experience divides neatly into unitary act-shaped lumps; rather, the stream of consciousness is so rich and complicated that it can be parsed into acts, their parts and moments, in a variety of different ways. (p. 21)

Rich and complicated the stream of consciousness certainly is; and, therefore, it is variously describable. But were Smith and Smith suggesting something more: that no such occurrence as a discrete mental act exists? Were these authors suggesting that the stream is temporally continuous, that is, a single ongoing mental process? If so, the stream would stop and start up again, but it would not consist of pulses of consciousness. It would not be made up of any kind of natural unit.

Perhaps Smith and Smith were saying, rather, something else that would agree with what I have been attributing to James as having been his implicit view at the time of *The Principles*. Perhaps they were saying something along the following lines:

Those temporal sections of the stream of consciousness that are usually considered to be unitary mental acts, or unitary mental-occurrence instances, often may actually consist of more than a single mental act or mental-occurrence instance. For example, an emotion, feeling, or perceptual experience of something is often considered to go on well beyond the time that it takes for a single basic durational component of the stream of consciousness to occur. Mental episodes, let us call them, are temporal sections of the stream that possess some sort of unity or continuity and consist of a sequence of more basic mental-occurrence instances. (cf. Natsoulas, 1992–1993)

I should also mention two differences between the fundamental mental-occurrence instances that I am positing and James's pulsational states of consciousness, each of which is supposed to constitute fully, albeit briefly, one or

another stream of thought or consciousness: (a) Unlike James, I do not subscribe to a dualist construal of the relation between the mental and the physical. In my view, every mental-occurrence instance that in fact does take place is a kind of neurophysiological happening which occurs in the brain of a human being or in the brain of another, similar animal. Although it is as yet unknown which ones, among all such happenings in the brain, are the happenings that are numerically identical to the mental-occurrence instances, mind-body dualism seems to me to be the still more problematical understanding. If one tries very hard to make good sympathetic sense of James's dualism in *The Principles*, or of the substance dualism of John C. Eccles (1987), or of the property dualism of John R. Searle (1992), one will find out how quickly such views lead to ultimate mystery. In this connection, see my previous, separate efforts to comprehend these three dualist solutions to the mind-body problem (Natsoulas, 1991, 1992–1993, 1994a). The same can rightly be said about Husserl's dualism of essences, mental and physical, that are supposed to belong to every mental occurrence instance (see D.W. Smith, 1995). (b) Again contrary to James, I hold that not all actual mental-occurrence instances are components of one or another stream of consciousness, given what their being such components would entail. In my view, some mental-occurrence instances are not conscious₄ for the reason that they cannot instantiate the property of consciousness₄; whereas, according to James, all of the pulses of mentality that have actually constituted one or another stream of consciousness were in fact, or at least they could have been, conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances. In other words, I can find no good reason to join with James (1890/1950; or with Searle [1992]) in rejecting the existence of nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instances that are necessarily, rather than adventitiously, nonconscious₄. In this connection, I side instead with Sigmund Freud, as I have interpreted his account of the conscious and the nonconscious (Natsoulas, 1985).

2. A natural question to ask is, of course, what property the property of consciousness₄ is to which I have been referring. The words *conscious* and *consciousness* have a number of ordinary meanings (Dewey, 1906; Lewis, 1967; Natsoulas, 1994c). And, in addition, some psychologists have exercised their right to give to these same words theoretically based, technical meanings. I have been construing consciousness₄ as a property that is instantiated by some mental-occurrence instances. Also, I have written of individual human beings, of other animals, and even of disconnected cerebral hemispheres, as being conscious₄, as having consciousness₄ of some of the mental-occurrence instances that take place within them. A conscious₄ mental-occurrence instance is, for my purposes, a unitary pulse of mentality and an immediate object of occurrent awareness. As all mental-occurrence instances are, a conscious₄ mental-occurrence instance is an occurrent part

of a human being or other animal, and it may give occurrent awareness of something else — in addition to giving, if intrinsic theory is right, occurrent awareness of itself; or, if appendage theory is right, being accompanied by a distinct occurrent awareness of it (Rosenthal, 1986, 1993).

The fact of occurrent awareness's being immediately directed on a mental-occurrence instance is one and the same fact as the mental-occurrence instance's instantiating the property of consciousness₄. The occurrent awareness to which I am here referring is "immediate" in the sense that this awareness is not based on awareness of something else from which there is inferred the presence of the mental-occurrence instance which is the awareness's object.

There are, as I mentioned, other senses of *conscious* and *consciousness* (Dewey, 1906; Lewis, 1967; Natsoulas, 1994c). Thus, whether or not a mental-occurrence instance is conscious₄, this mental-occurrence instance may be rightly described as conscious, or as an instance of consciousness, in a different sense: that is, simply because it is, or includes as part of itself, an awareness of or as though of something actual.

3. An *intrinsic theory of consciousness₄* is distinguished from other theories of the same phenomenon by its main thesis: to the effect that any conscious₄ mental-occurrence instance, merely by virtue of its occurrence, involves immediate awareness of itself. Nothing more needs to happen; a conscious₄ mental occurrence instance possesses the property of consciousness₄ intrinsically. The consciousness₄ property is not a relation between the mental-occurrence instance and something else, according to intrinsic theory. It is a property of the mental-occurrence instance's own structure (cf. D.W. Smith, 1989).

As I have already mentioned, any appendage theory of consciousness₄ holds, in contrast, that what makes a conscious₄ mental-occurrence instance conscious₄ is this instance's being accompanied by a distinct mental-occurrence instance that is an occurrent awareness and has the first mental-occurrence as its immediate object (Natsoulas, 1992, 1993b). Appendage theory thereby implicitly draws a certain contrast that requires explication and justification: namely, between a mental-occurrence instance and anything else, other than a mental-occurrence instance, that might be an immediate object of an occurrent awareness. Any other kind of happening although accompanied by immediate occurrent awareness of it does not qualify for the designation a conscious occurrence. There would seem to be something about how one is aware of a mental-occurrence instance that makes the difference, that makes the mental-occurrence instance a conscious sort of occurrence, whereas a bolt of lightning say, is not a conscious sort of occurrence notwithstanding that someone has occurrent awareness of it which is not inferentially based.

A radical behaviorist would not acknowledge a problem here. For example, from that perspective, being conscious₄ of having one or another feeling would be assimilated to perceptual awareness of a ceiling light's being on. Both of these awarenesses would be matters of responding discriminatively on the occasion of receiving a certain kind of stimulation.

The following challenging thought may occur to the reader:

Some variety of appendage theory of consciousness₄ has to be the proper account for the following reason. All, or at least some, of the conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances that have taken place in one's mind need not have been conscious₄. These same mental-occurrence instances could have occurred in the absence of any occurrent awareness of them. Suppose that, at a time when some of one's conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances were occurring, one had been, instead, distracted from one's stream of consciousness for a brief or longer time. At that time, if one had been distracted, would not some of the same mental-occurrence instances have occurred non-consciously₄? Suppose, for example, while you are looking at a sunset together with a friend, he or she begins to speak of other things in which you, too, have great interest. If you do not turn away from the sunset, your visual perceptual experiences of it might well continue, although the frequency of your having inner awareness of those experiences would likely decrease under the circumstances. Thus, it would seem that at least some mental-occurrence instances can occur as appendage theory holds: either with or without an accompanying consciousness₄ of them.

However, this argument can lend itself to my purposes. From the intrinsic-theoretical perspective, I can reply as follows:

A particular mental-occurrence instance is either one or the other: it is conscious₄ if it gives occurrent awareness of itself, and nonconscious₄ if it does not. It is irrelevant that a certain conscious₄ mental-occurrence instance, except for its instantiating the property of consciousness₄, is the same as a certain nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instance. Indeed, these might both be visual perceptual experiences of the identical sunset from the identical point of observation. However, their strong resemblance does not mean that they are the same except for their having a certain accompaniment or not. Being conscious₄ and nonconscious₄ respectively, they differ in their phenomenological structure; only conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances instantiate a reflexive such structure. Distraction has the effect of reducing for a time the relative frequency of conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances. The conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances are, according to intrinsic theory, those mental-occurrence instances that, individually, possess a reflexive phenomenological structure.

I should also mention some past work of mine that is directly relevant to the main topic of the present series. Prior to the first installment, I published in this journal two articles devoted respectively (a) to reviewing briefly nine theoretical understandings of consciousness₄ that had appeared in the literature and that seemed to me to qualify as examples of the intrinsic kind of theory of consciousness₄ (Natsoulas, 1993a) and (b) to a consideration at some length of four objections to intrinsic theory published by four appendage theorists of consciousness₄ (Natsoulas, 1989; see "Do Intrinsically Conscious₄ Mental-Occurrence Instances Exist?" in Natsoulas, 1996).

I have also separately published criticism of the competing, appendage kind of account (Natsoulas, 1992, 1993b). However, in this article and in the subsequent articles of the present series, I shall try to edit down all discussions, which will naturally arise as I proceed, that are parts of the negative case in favor of intrinsic theory, that is, all comment or argument that is directed against alternatives to intrinsic theory. My emphasis on the positive, as it were, stems from realizing that the inadequacies of alternative theoretical accounts do not make intrinsic theory any better than it is.

For further introductory comments, see the first installment. The following is the only additional comment regarding the present series that I need to repeat at this point:

I want to be as comprehensive as possible . . . not to omit any argument . . . proffered or any argument that I may develop Even those arguments . . . I would not myself put forth may contribute to convincing some readers Arguments that do not receive a high rating for soundness may nevertheless be susceptible to improvement Or they may inspire . . . better arguments than I will have presented in this series. (Natsoulas, 1995, pp. 8–10)

Although various authors have presented and argued for one or another version of intrinsic theory (e.g., Brentano, 1911/1973; Gurwitsch, 1950/1985; Husserl, 1913/1983; D.W. Smith, 1989), there has been no previous attempt to advance intrinsic theory in general by seeking to bring into play all the arguments in favor of this kind of theory that have been published or that can be placed before the reader for possible acceptance.

A Phenomenologist's Account of Consciousness₄

Every Objectivating Act Conscious₄

In a posthumously published volume with the title *Marginal Consciousness* (1950/1985), the prominent phenomenologist Aaron Gurwitsch argued as follows in favor of his intrinsic-theoretical understanding of the property of consciousness₄:

Following Brentano [1911/1973], we contend that this inner awareness [i.e., consciousness₄] which we have of an act is not a supervenient act distinguished from the [act of which we are aware]. When an act, e.g., the representation of a note, is experienced, it is not as though a second act were superinduced which would have the original act as its "primary" object. There is no supervenient, distinct, and separate representation of the representation of the note, for in that case a *regressus ad infinitum* would be unavoidable. The awareness [i.e., consciousness₄] of each conscious act is, rather, conveyed by the very act itself. (p. 3)

The acts to which Gurwitsch was referring in this passage and elsewhere are, of course, mental acts. Gurwitsch was expressing his own thesis regarding how, the means by which, certain mental-occurrence instances, namely "objectivating acts," are conscious₄. In effect, Gurwitsch was here answering the question: What is it that makes an objectivating act conscious₄?

The objectivating acts are those mental-occurrence instances that present an object other than themselves to the one whose acts they are. In an end-note to this part of his discussion, Gurwitsch stated, without further comment, that he was omitting any consideration of the question whether all mental states are objectivating acts. Evidently, he did not want to discuss whether nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instances also exist. However, Gurwitsch clearly held (a) that all objectivating acts instantiate the property of consciousness₄, and (b) that they all instantiate this property intrinsically. That is, they do so by nothing more than their own occurrence; for example, not by means of a further objectivating act, which, separately from them, "conveys" an awareness of them. Nonconscious₄ objectivating acts do not exist. Such purported acts are pure theoretical fictions. They are imagined to exist by theorists seeking to explain something they do not as yet understand. Moreover, objectivating acts instantiate the property of consciousness₄ not just sometimes, but on every occasion of their occurrence. Consciousness₄ is an essential property of objectivating acts in the sense that no particular instance of an objectivating act can occur that is not an object of inner awareness.

Gurwitsch called this (reflexive) property of the act "the self-awareness of consciousness." In their very occurrence, all objectivating acts convey self-awareness too: as well as awareness of their ("primary") object that lies beyond them individually. No special acts take place that perform the function of giving inner awareness of other acts. No special act embodies the property of consciousness₄ so that another mental act may instantiate it. The latter sentence alludes to the competing, appendage kind of account of consciousness₄. According to appendage theory, inner awareness of any mental act is embodied by an extrinsic appendage to the act.

According to Gurwitsch, in contrast, an objectivating act itself bodily includes both (a) consciousness, or someone's being conscious of something or other, and (b) the self-awareness of consciousness, or someone's having inner awareness of his or her being conscious of something or other. Every objectivating act "presents" an object to the one whose act it is, it "conveys" an awareness of this object, and it "conveys" an awareness of itself as well. In speaking, as we often do, of the "subject" of an act, we do not mean to refer to the topic, content, or object of the act. Rather, we mean to refer to the one to whom the objects of the act are "presented" and to whom the awarenesses are "conveyed" that are intrinsically involved in the act.

Whence the Absurdity of Nonconscious₄ Objectivating Acts?

By way of argument for the intrinsicity of consciousness₄, Gurwitsch proffered the "absurdity" of the counterclaim. It is supposed to be absurd for anyone to claim that an objectivating act can occur without its being conscious₄, without its owner's having inner awareness of the act. Given the present purpose, I must ask: Whence the absurdity of this claim? Why do we perform, as it were, objectivate only consciously₄? Evidently, there is something about any objectivating act, something it intrinsically instantiates, which can explain, which is responsible for, this act's giving awareness of itself as well.

That an objectivating act conveys awareness of itself leaves much to be said. As does spelling out weaknesses in the alternatives to an objectivating act's performing this function on its own. To rule out nonconscious₄ objectivating acts, as Gurwitsch proposes, requires a cogent reply to this question:

Which other, essential property — which property that makes an objectivating act an objectivating act, rather than a different kind of mental-occurrence instance or no mental-occurrence instance at all — cannot be instantiated by an objectivating act unless the act possesses the self-awareness property as well?

After all, an objectivating act may be described justifiably as being very "selective." Needless to say, there are many items of which a particular objectivating act does not give awareness, including items lying near (spatially, temporally, or qualitatively) those of which the act does give awareness. How is it that an objectivating act cannot in any instance, contra Gurwitsch, exclusively "select" objects of awareness external to it? The idea of a mental-occurrence instance as "selective" is, of course, metaphorical. A mental-occurrence instance is not a creature, who can exercise choices. But the point should be clear: of all the objects that objectivating acts could present, only some are "chosen." The others are "ignored." Therefore, why cannot an objectivating act "ignore" itself too?

James's Unavoidable Objects of Consciousness

It is useful to recall James's (1890/1950) following statement, which is concerned with something else that, in his view, cannot be "ignored" by any state of consciousness, that is, by any basic durational component of the stream of consciousness:

Our own bodily position, attitude, condition, is one of the things of which *some* awareness, however inattentive, invariably accompanies the knowledge of whatever else we know. We think; and as we think we feel our bodily selves as the seat of the thinking.

If the thinking be our thinking, it must be suffused through all its parts with that peculiar warmth and intimacy that make it come as ours. (pp. 241–242)

For James, who was an appendage theorist of consciousness₄, every state of consciousness “ignores” itself. And it cannot but do so; it cannot be its own object; it cannot include inner awareness of itself. In contrast, no state of consciousness, in James’s view, can “ignore” the body. Evidently, stimulation from that source, affecting sense receptors and nerve endings, has special power to determine not only the feeling aspect that every basic durational component of the stream of consciousness is supposed to possess. Also, every such component is an objectivating act that presents the body, among other objects, and conveys awareness of the body along with whatever else it conveys awareness of.

Thus, according to James, self-awareness accompanies and is intrinsic to all instances of consciousness; but this self-awareness is body awareness, not the self-awareness of consciousness. According to Gurwitsch, too, self-awareness is involved in all acts of consciousness, but it has for its object the respective objectivating act itself. Somehow, this self-awareness is unavoidable, no more avoidable than awareness of body is for James as long as the consciousness stream continues.

Also, Gurwitsch explicitly agreed with James (1890/1950) as regards our being constantly aware of the body: “As for the facts which James refers to, there is no doubt that . . . some awareness or other of our corporeity is actually there at every moment of conscious life” (p. 28). However, Gurwitsch (1950/1985) argued that body awareness, which indeed, as James states, suffuses the stream of consciousness, is typically marginal and concomitant. That is, “no feature, tinge, or aspect” of our primary awarenesses “derives from the actual bodily condition or is modified by an alteration of this condition” (p. 29).

I shall not examine Gurwitsch’s grounds for the latter claim. Note it well for later comparison with the marginal status Gurwitsch also assigned to consciousness₄, while insisting consciousness₄ is intrinsic to every objectivating act. Evidently, as will be seen, intrinsic inner awareness is no more integrated with its object, in Gurwitsch’s book, than the appended inner awarenesses are held to be by the competing kind of theory.

An Essential Concomitant of Outer Awareness

It would seem to be because objectivating acts involve outer awareness (i.e., awareness of something beyond themselves) that they must also involve inner awareness according to Gurwitsch. This necessary link is owed to the fact that such acts present their primary objects; these objects confront us, appear to our consciousness. Gurwitsch’s argument amounts merely to saying,

How could the primary object of an objectivating act be an object presented to consciousness without the act's also conveying awareness of its object's being thus presented? There obviously must be inner awareness, as well, every time that one has outer awareness. It is absurd to think otherwise, as anyone can see.

Gurwitsch adds that inner awareness is not just part of every objectivating act; it is a necessary, a priori condition for the act's existence.

I find a little puzzling Gurwitsch's (1950/1985) stating, in an endnote, that this necessary condition which he has just proposed in the text is "in harmony with the existence of an act of consciousness consisting in nothing but its being experienced" (p. 107). From Gurwitsch's further statements in the endnote, I am tempted to take him to mean that such an act, as he just mentioned, would be one that does not involve inner awareness. However, this interpretation cannot stand in light of Gurwitsch's insistence that any experienced act must be an object of inner awareness. Perhaps Gurwitsch's puzzling statement has reference, rather, to his intrinsic theory of consciousness₄. That is, nothing more than the act itself needs to occur in order for that necessary condition which is inner awareness to be met.

Another endnote to this part of the discussion is more helpful in achieving its purpose. Here, Gurwitsch (1950/1985) explains what he means by an a priori condition for consciousness:

By such conditions are meant invariant structures exhibited by acts of consciousness either quite in general or by all acts of a certain class (e.g., perception, memory, etc.) of such a nature that the act in question cannot exist or be what it is unless it fulfills the a priori structural conditions. (p. 108)

Therefore, it would seem, the internal structure of any objectivating act is such that an objectivating act is, among other things, an awareness of itself. An answer is needed to the question of what specifically this structure is which must involve inner awareness.

The Argument

Before discussing further why an objectivating act cannot "ignore" itself along with the myriad other items it does not give awareness of, let me take a moment to spell out Gurwitsch's argument for the intrinsicity of consciousness₄. The following statement is a somewhat enriched yet faithful rendering of Gurwitsch's argument.

Were it proposed, instead, that inner awareness requires a further objectivating act to take place, an act that has the first objectivating act as its object, there would be no end to the series of special objectivating acts that must follow upon any objectivating act's occurrence. This is because (a) an objectivating act is necessarily conscious₄, and

(b) it would be conscious₄, according to the alternative hypothesis, by being the object of a further objectivating act. Like all objectivating acts, this further act, too, would have to be conscious₄, which would require a further objectivating act according to an appendage kind of account of consciousness₄. And so on. The stream of consciousness could, therefore, never arrive at a point where its components were again directed on something lying beyond the stream — unless this outer awareness occurred simultaneously with the unending sequence of objectivating acts directed on other objectivating acts. Even so, the stream, being limited in its possible breadth, would quickly fill up with simultaneous sequences of such objectivating acts; in this way preventing the awareness of anything further that lies externally to the stream.

Gurwitsch's argument would seem to be sound as a piece of reasoning. The problem lies, rather, with his premise: the one that rules out nonconscious₄ objectivating acts. Again, we want to know what it is Gurwitsch is proposing to be absurd about the idea of an objectivating act of which there is no inner awareness? Does an absence of inner awareness somehow entail an absence of consciousness altogether? In undergoing a nonconscious₄ objectivating act, supposing that such acts exist, would one not have awareness of the primary object that a corresponding conscious₄ objectivating act might also have presented?

Consider briefly the relevant views of two other prominent theorists of consciousness, who happen not to be in agreement with Gurwitsch regarding the absurdity of admitting nonconscious₄ objectivating acts. For these theorists, to be aware of something is not, definitionally, to be consciously₄ aware of it. (a) Nevertheless, one of them, Franz Brentano, argued at some length that nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instances do not actually exist. Brentano distinguished between mental-occurrence instances' being states of consciousness (i.e., instances of someone's being conscious of an object) and their being themselves objects of consciousness. And he argued that every mental-occurrence instance is both a state of consciousness and an object of consciousness. However, before arguing that all mental-occurrence instances are objects of consciousness, Brentano (1911/1973) explained that he could not join John Locke and John Stuart Mill in judging the idea of nonconscious₄ mental acts to be absurd:

A person who raises the question of whether there is an unconscious consciousness is not being ridiculous in the same way he would be had he asked whether there is a non-red redness. An unconscious consciousness is no more a contradiction in terms than an unseen case of seeing. (p. 102)

Brentano thus implied that an object's being presented by a mental act need not involve inner awareness of its being presented. By this I do not mean that Brentano allowed that nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instances do exist: rather, merely that Brentano could imagine their existence. That is, although it is likely a mistake to do so, there need be nothing contradictory

in the countenancing of nonconscious₄ mental-occurrence instances, as other theorists, whom Brentano mentioned by name, had done. (b) As is well known, Freud's nonconscious wishes, too, are supposed to be objectivating acts. They are wishes for certain states of affairs, however unrealistic, bizarre, and unacceptable these states of affairs may be. In Gurwitsch's sense, a wish presents an object other than the wish itself; any wish involves such a presentation. Yet, according to the Freudian theory (see Natsoulas, 1985), inner awareness of a nonconscious wish is impossible, whether the wish is only preconscious or it is dynamically unconscious. Even when, owing to an extended course of psychoanalytic therapy, unconscious wishes become preconscious (a crucial goal of this form of psychotherapy), one can have inner awareness only of their conscious counterparts, which the unconscious wishes cause to be evoked in the perception-consciousness system of Freud's mental apparatus. That is, one can have inner awareness only of wishes that are conscious₄ mental-occurrence instances, never of the nonconscious wishes themselves (Natsoulas, 1985). Thus, some objectivating acts do their job — of presenting an object, in Gurwitsch's sense, and conveying awareness of this object to their owner — in such a way that not only escapes inner awareness entirely, but also is necessarily outside the possibility of such awareness, according to the Freudian theory.

In contrast, according to Gurwitsch, not only is there awareness of both primary and secondary objects in the case of some objectivating acts (as Brentano and Freud would also hold, since they too are intrinsic theorists of consciousness₄), but this dual awareness is supposed by Gurwitsch (and by Brentano) to be a feature of every instance of every objectivating act. Therefore, as I have already queried: there must be something involved in an objectivating act's presenting its primary object that brings along an occurrent awareness as well of the objectivating act itself. Recall Gurwitsch on the structure of an objectivating act, its necessarily involving, as an a priori condition of its existence, inner awareness of itself.

The Key Assumption?

Notwithstanding his use of the term *representation*, rather than *presentation*, Gurwitsch (1950/1985) seems to be saying in the following sentence something rather close to what I have just stated regarding an act's presenting its primary object. "The representation of a [musical] note is so intimately connected and so inextricably interwoven with the awareness of the representation that the former by its very existence contributes to the existence of the latter" (p. 4). Accordingly, an auditory presentation of a note played on the piano necessarily involves awareness of that auditory presentation. And the two, the presentation and the awareness of same, are not just perfectly associated: They are "interwoven" with each other.

As I see it, the latter is a highly significant (and true) characterization of their relation. It would seem to mean (however, see the next subsection) that a presentation and the inner awareness of it are one and the same. They are one and the same in a sense that goes beyond the theoretical fact that they both belong to one and the same mental-occurrence instance.

Therefore, I am led to inquire regarding the presentation of its primary object that takes place in an objectivating act: What is it for this object of the act to be present to one? And is the following not the key assumption underlying Gurwitsch's consciousness₄ requirement for all objectivating acts?

The mental presence of an object essentially involves having awareness not simply of the object, but also of the object's presence, of the object's being presented by the mental act.

Thus, all objectivating acts having the sun, say, as their primary object would be awarenesses of the sun as being presented.

Better to say, instead, that these acts are awarenesses of "the sun's being presented." This will seem a small and perhaps an unimportant difference in expression. However, the latter phrase is better than "the sun as being presented" because I am trying to call attention to an awareness that does not amount simply to bringing the sun under a certain heading. An awareness of the sun's being presented to one is not simply an awareness of the sun as having a certain property; it is not a matter of the awareness's predicating of the sun its possessing a certain property. Awareness of the sun's being presented to one is awareness of this happening itself: the sun's being presented to one.

Of course, its being presented to one is not intrinsic to the sun. Nor is the sun's being presented a relational property, between the sun and the awareness of the sun, in the same sense as the causal relation between them is a relational property. Presenting the sun is a property instantiated by individual awarenesses of the sun, which are evoked reliably by stimulation arising from the sun. To be aware of the property of the sun's being presented is to be aware of no less than one's awareness of the sun.

Thus, key to Gurwitsch's view may be (a) that all objectivating acts involve an awareness of their object, the presence of their object, and an awareness of the object's presence and (b) that being aware of this object depends not only on its presence to one, but also on an awareness of the object's presence to one. The latter dependence must be, of course, explained and justified by any theorist who claims it to be the case. To such a theorist, I must pose the question: Why cannot an objectivating act "ignore" its object's being presented? Why cannot awareness of the object occur without awareness of the object's presence? Why can we not have awareness of the

object with (some of) its other properties, without awareness as well of the object's being presented to us?

Consciousness₄ as Intrinsic Concomitant Awareness

In the following passage, however, Gurwitsch (1950/1985) would seem to be claiming, to the contrary, that an objectivating act completely "ignores" its object's presence, in the sense of the object's being presented by the act. Note that where Gurwitsch refers to the "theme" of an objectivating act in the following passage, he means what he has already called the primary object of the objectivating act, as distinct from this act's secondary object, which is the act itself. Thus, Gurwitsch is describing the primary awareness that is involved in an objectivating act; and, significantly, he is arguing that this primary awareness (of the theme) is completely unaffected by the somehow necessary awareness of the act's secondary object.

Our theme is the thing perceived, the note listened to, the mathematical theorem thought of, etc., and not the perceiving, listening, thinking, etc. Our theme is that which appears through the experienced act and not this act itself or the fact that we are experiencing it. What appears, taken in the noematic sense, i.e., precisely and exactly as it actually appears, does not include the fact of its appearance or the awareness of this fact among its elements and constituents. In an exhaustive description of the theme, the inner awareness of the act through which the theme is given does not appear as an ingredient of that which is given. The theme does not derive any tinge or feature of its perspective, orientation, positional index, etc., from the self-awareness of the act through which it is experienced. Being experienced and the inner awareness of being experienced are not of material concern and relevancy to the theme as it stands before the experiencing subject's mind. Thus the self-awareness which accompanies every act of consciousness proves a marginal datum. (p. 4)

Thus, Gurwitsch directly contradicts what I suggested in the preceding subsection might be the key assumption that could make sense of his consciousness₄ requirement for objectivating acts. From Gurwitsch's perspective, the consciousness₄ requirement evidently must be explained otherwise: that is, not in terms of what is necessarily involved in being aware of the theme, or primary object, of the act. Gurwitsch is not saying here as he did just previously: that inner awareness is "interwoven" with outer awareness. Rather, he is now saying that awareness of the primary object does not derive even a "tinge" from the inner awareness that is a necessary concomitant of it. Compare this claim of phenomenological independence with Gurwitsch's similar treatment of that marginal body awareness which, in his view, accompanies all of the objectivating acts that do not have the body as their primary object (see my earlier subsection on James).

If outer awareness (i.e., awareness of something else) and inner awareness are not "interwoven" after all, what is the relation between them? What is

the proposed “intimate connection” between them supposed to be? How is their necessary concomitance to be explained?

Gurwitsch (1950/1985) goes on to state, “By its very existence in presenting us with the object proper, the thematic activity arouses and conveys the awareness of itself as a by-product” (p. 4). Thus, inner awareness (or consciousness₄) would seem to be, according to Gurwitsch, produced by the objectivating act that is its object. Inner awareness is added on, it is an appendage to the objectivating act — an appendage that is, however, not distinct from the act, but is a proper part of the act. As we have previously seen, for Gurwitsch, inner awareness is not itself an objectivating act, nor is inner awareness embodied in an objectivating act that is distinct from the object of inner awareness. Gurwitsch states at this point that, although inner awareness depends on the thematic activity involved in the act, it is not secondary to that activity in a temporal sense. That is, inner awareness is produced just as the respective outer awareness is being produced; both inner and outer awarenesses are produced in the single occurrence that is the respective objectivating act.

Yet outer awareness is supposed not to be at all “tinged” by the presence of this by-product which coexists with it in the identical act. The above quotation from Gurwitsch states in effect that the outer awareness involved in an objectivating act is as though inner awareness were not actually a part of the identical objectivating act. Remarkably, this is not very different from an appendage account of consciousness₄ — a point on which I shall dwell briefly in the sequel to this article.

Gurwitsch cites Brentano as holding much the same view as his own: namely, that the self-awareness which accompanies every objectivating act is a “marginal datum.” Gurwitsch quotes the following sentence from Brentano (1911/1973) to demonstrate the parallel in their thinking on this point. “The act of hearing appears to be directed toward sound in the most proper sense of the term, and because of this it seems to apprehend itself incidentally and as something additional” (p. 128). I shall address Brentano’s classic and still important intrinsic conception of inner awareness later on in the present series of articles. It will be seen then that, for Brentano, inner awareness and outer awareness are indeed “interwoven,” rather than taking place in parallel, as Gurwitsch would seem to hold.

Concluding Comments

Let me conclude this article with three categories of comment, which I cannot fully develop here, regarding the material that I have presented so far. In the next article of the present series, I shall return to Gurwitsch’s intrinsic account of consciousness₄, and I shall further pursue the issues

raised in the present article. The following comments indicate some directions in which my discussion of the arguments for intrinsic theory will proceed in the near term.

1. Consciousness₄ as Intrinsic Primary Awareness

I shall contrast consciousness₄ conceived of as intrinsic concomitant awareness with consciousness₄ conceived of as intrinsic primary awareness. In this connection, let me say the following. The passage from Gurwitsch (1950/1985) regarding inner awareness as marginal, which I quoted near the beginning of the preceding subsection, gives me a certain impression. I do not say it is a valid impression: only that it is useful for casting light on Gurwitsch's version of intrinsic theory. Gurwitsch gives me the impression of his having partially capitulated to certain critics of intrinsic theory, namely to those who imply that we have firsthand knowledge regarding what, for example, straightforward perceptual experience is like.

As we have seen, Gurwitsch is the kind of intrinsic theorist who does not admit nonconscious₄ visual perceptual experiences. However, there are other intrinsic theorists who do admit them, and I believe it is theoretically consistent for these theorists to do so. However, from these theorists' perspective, straightforward visual perceptual experience is experience of which there is no inner awareness at all. It is the kind of visual perceptual experience that is posited for explanatory purposes: in order to explain the occurrence of a feeling, of a piece of behavior, or of some other presumed effect of the perceptual experience.

Gurwitsch's above description does not conform to the phenomenology of those visual perceptual experiences that are a product and part of a kind of seeing that is different from straightforward seeing: a kind of seeing that takes place usually upon adopting an introspective attitude with reference to one's seeing. Elsewhere, I have called such seeing "reflective seeing." It is that particular mode of functioning of the visual perceptual system which produces a stream of reflective visual perceptual experience. Each of the pulses of mentality that constitute the stream of reflective visual experience conveys awareness of itself. Thus, reflective seeing is the source of all of our firsthand knowledge regarding what visual perceptual experience is like. It is when we have reflective visual perceptual experience that we have awareness of, among other things, environmental objects' being presented to us and of our being aware of them. Moreover, reflective visual perceptual experience is not such that the individual pulses composing it contain separate, distinct awarenesses of the primary and secondary objects (consciousness₄ as intrinsic concomitant awareness). Instead, they are experiences in the very occurrence of which one has awareness of their primary objects' appearing to

one (consciousness₄ as intrinsic primary awareness). This is a far cry from either the marginal inner awareness Gurwitsch proposed or the appended inner awareness appendage theory proposes.

2. *An Error of Interpretation?*

Given that any awareness of a mental act qualifies as an inner awareness of it if the awareness is not inferentially based, it is accurate to say that Gurwitsch (1950/1985) includes in his "Chapter One: The Self-Awareness of Consciousness" two kinds of inner awareness: the kind that I have been discussing as though it were the only kind for Gurwitsch, as well as another, appendage kind of inner awareness. In that chapter, Gurwitsch expresses his view that the inner awareness which is intrinsic to every objectivating act is a "precondition" for the occurrence of a distinct objectivating act that has the first objectivating act as its theme, or primary object. The occurrence of this additional objectivating act is an instance of "reflection," in Gurwitsch's term. Gurwitsch emphatically distinguishes between an act of reflection and the inner awareness that is its precondition. Gurwitsch (1950/1985) states,

Whereas the consciousness and knowledge which we have about a grasped act is conveyed by a special and specific act supervenient to the former, viz., the apprehending act as distinct from the apprehended act, the self-awareness of an experienced act is, as we have seen, not due to any mental fact outside the experienced act, but rather is implied in the latter as an intrinsic component. (p. 6)

For one thing, inner awareness is an essential ingredient of any objectivating act, whereas an act of reflection, being a distinct objectivating act from the objectivating act of which it, too, is an awareness, may or may not occur. According to Gurwitsch, it depends on our "free choice" whether we will be reflectively aware of (i.e., whether we will undergo an act of reflection directed on) any objectivating act — including, in turn, any act of reflection.

It would seem that Gurwitsch's sense in which inner awareness is a precondition for reflection is that an act of reflection renders explicit what is already present, but only implicit, in the objectivating act apprehended by the act of reflection. The implicitness of an act's self-awareness may be the explanation for Gurwitsch's claim that inner awareness does not "tinge" the outer awareness on which it is directed and together with which it is part of the identical objectivating act. If inner awareness were entirely implicit, it could be a product of, but it would not participate in the thematizing activity that constitutes the objectivating act of which it is a part.

Therefore, I need to consider whether I have erred in interpreting Gurwitsch's treatment of inner awareness as though it were an account of consciousness₄? I defined consciousness₄ as any occurrent awareness having a

mental-occurrence instance for its immediate object? My error, if such it turns out to be, would be understandable given how Gurwitsch characterized inner awareness. For example, (a) an inner awareness is conveyed by the very objectivating act that is the object of that inner awareness, (b) a certain objectivating act presents us with both a musical note and the awareness of hearing the note, and (c) it is absurd that we could have consciousness of an object without being conscious of this fact. These statements appear to imply that intrinsic inner awareness is occurrent.

3. *The Experience of an Enduring Act*

Of course, these modes of expression may not be communicating Gurwitsch's actual thinking about inner awareness. Some attention to the functions assigned by Gurwitsch to what he called inner awareness (or self-awareness) may help to clear matters up. Do these functions require an occurrent inner awareness? For now, let me briefly focus on one function, assigned by Gurwitsch to inner awareness, that would seem to contradict his claim that inner awareness does not even "tinge" outer awareness, though both inner and outer awareness be parts of the identical objectivating act.

According to Gurwitsch, each act of consciousness takes time to occur and, in that time, the act passes through a succession of phases. Throughout these phases, the act is a continuous occurrence, without interruptions between its phases. The act is both unitary and undergoes change; it is a single process. Moreover: "Each of the succeeding phases must include elements [i.e., "essential ingredients," not "accessory facts," of the phase] which represent or, better, express its connectedness and intrinsic relatedness with other phases" (Gurwitsch, 1950/1985, p. 7). These essential ingredients of each phase of an act of consciousness are forms of awareness that have for their objects past or future phases of that same instance of the act. These representational elements are not merely implicit conditions for the separate occurrence of awarenesses in the form of distinct objectivating acts. Gurwitsch (1950/1985) speaks of them, rather, as "pervading" the present phase of an enduring act. He also states that the phases of the act which preceded the present phase and are about to succeed the present phase are literally "contained in the structure and constitution of the phase in question" (p. 8). This means that the present phase includes awareness of those other phases of the act. In fact, awarenesses that are either "retentions" or "pro-tentions" are held to be a crucial part of having inner awareness of an enduring act as such. Thus, Gurwitsch (1950/1985) writes, "The enduring act which is experienced now was also experienced a moment ago and this 'having been present' co-constitutes its 'being present' and its being experienced as displaying itself in time" (p. 9).

There is a further step that needs to be cogently taken. In the next installment, I shall take that step and conclude from there that inner awareness, being intrinsic and occurrent, affects the content of outer awareness that is conveyed by the respective objectivating act. I shall argue that this is the case according to Gurwitsch's own account, notwithstanding his insistence to the contrary.

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