III Texts on the lowest essence in contrast to the universal of sort and genus. On the function of fantasy (1917/18)

No. 8

<The individual and its essence. The different forms of the consciousness of a universality: the concrete essence of mere repetition as a first universal thing, the sort as a second universal thing and the genus as abstract essence>[[1]](#footnote-1)

Individual, its essence, its qualities, inner qualities.[[2]](#footnote-2) Individual, what it is and what it has. It is a sound, a color, it has some duration, it has a level of sound, a timbre. It is a C (a sound with the level C).[[3]](#footnote-3)

The substrate of changes and unchanges, the substrate of qualities that are lasting through the unchange or change, and [substrate] which lasts itself, insofar as it is something identical, keeping itself through the whole duration as the carrier of qualities, [substrate] which persists. Every quality itself <is> something persisting “through” duration.

The substrate with its qualities – the fulfilled duration itself. The comparison in attitude towards the substrate, towards the persisting, lasting, to the sound that changes, to its moments, pieces of content; or towards the fulfilled extent, towards the “distribution” of the [120] moments, pieces of content, each has itself a fulfilling of the extent. The distribution of intensity, the distribution of quality, the distribution of timbre, the transits from brightness towards numbness, etc. Multiple individuals that are alike, <in> coex<istence> quasi local differences (right above, left below, without going over, without motion), temporal in the succession.

Comparison and generalization.

As the case may be emerge in the synthetic consciousness of the comparison, and at first of the summarizing consideration, grasping the sensuous single thing, and keeping it together with the other one: the concrete essence as some common thing, the single thing as some single thing of the concrete essence. But a moment emerges as well (the likeness only concerns this moment), e.g. brightness or loud, silent. A member emerges from a group that is unified through sensuous likeness, deviating from the likeness in that way that a sensuous similarity goes through, which is an especially big similarity though for a part of the group, possibly a similarity *in concreto*, whereas there is indeed the similarity for the deviating member of the further group or for an enlarged group, but the likeness does not stretch on all moments: a series of similar sounds C, and then a D and then again louder C; or a series of sounds that are all C, but one suddenly soft, the other ones similar as to the intensity as well; or a new timbre: all C, some <by the> violin, some <by the> flute or some <C> lasting for the same duration, but then one lasting only shortly. Directions of the similarity, according to quality, intensity, etc.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The common, the moment C, <is> properly speaking not a part in itself that was only linked, the loud sound, the soft one, the sound of the violin or the flute, the sharp one or the round one. The thing that emerges commonly, in the coincidence of the similar, but the common not merely singularizing itself, but modifying itself, this common therefore emerges in the “comparison” or in the sensuous consciousness of similarity-likeness, and on the other hand, the moment emerges in the single thing. But if I do not have any comparison, I am still able to “analyze”, pay attention to the moments, [121] or without any spontaneity of the paying attention. They can force themselves on me. But the question is, whether sensuous similarities do not always play their part <as well>. But many of them play their part <as well>. Why do I follow the one? We arrive at the dispositional “psychology” there? The moments, every <moment has> its essence, each <is> singularization of an essence, but not any more in such a way as the concrete essence of mere repetition. The individualizing difference does not modify the essence, does not give any special mode to it. But every other difference does.

Genus and sort. Similarities of a different level of height. Acoustically: sound – noise. Sounds C, D <are> immediate moments of the concrete essence. Full concrete essences <are> standing among similarities and these similarities overreaching all moments. <For example> sound: All sounds are similar, which intensity etc. <ever> they have. But all intensities are simply similar as well, and this similarity also engages, likewise for every moment, the similarity of all special intensities, all special timbres, etc. The universal similarity of all sounds and their unity, their identical of the coincidence. The generic universal therefore includes the generic universal quality, intensity, etc.

The moment of the intensity – every moment intensity “includes” the universal intensity? Includes = coincidence. But this moment does not combine with other ones in the specialization on this intensity, only modifying itself by that (taking on a mode). “Coincidence”: Is the universal given here through some pushing over? There is simply the separating: The one universal is some same thing compared to some combined-different thing. The generic universal though does not <behave in such a way>. The thing that is alike or else the similar agrees in the pushing over. It actually becomes one. The distance vanishes, there is none, or the duality remains in the distance.

If a connection of similarity or equality presents itself, and relations of coincidence and of non-coincidence are inserted in that, or rather, relations of the similarity, likeness and difference, then the following has to be considered: the coincidence happens or the relation of the similarity regarding α, β, etc. α <is similar to> an α’, β a β’, but α is not similar to β’, etc. Likewise, if there is a difference between ς and ς’, then ς is different from α’ as well, [122] β’, etc., but it does not “differ” from them. It is something determined we are talking about here under the titles coincidence and differentiation, and differentiation is not to be confused with being different in quite another sense. Some exact investigation of all possible relations at hand is still needed. We have the corresponding of the moments of coincidence, [corresponding] which certainly also includes a relation between the “different” moments themselves as moments of a whole and a relation of different not coinciding moments, insofar as a “connection” has already been made through the coincidence of the respective moments and thereby for the whole ones. And then we have a relation of the difference, based on corresponding, for the individualizing determinations. Is this, we will ask, not the same in the end as for the non-individualizing ones? A relation of coincidence with a distance? And how about the relation of color and sound in the coexistence or succession?

Shall we say that all sensuous, nay, all simultaneous has a most universal commonness at first and therefore is corresponding, even if in an endlessly ambiguous way? It has a certain “sensuous” unity. And within this we have the special similarities and coincidences, like color and color, sound and sound. We also need to distinguish the different forms of coincidence (forms of relation of the accordance), partial accordance with a “surplus”, as if an object had a corresponding piece within another one, “coinciding” concretely with it, etc. We thus have to systematically search for a separation of the possible cases and a special treatment of each one under a universal description of the common is needed.

The white as such, nay, the concrete as such. The as-such is not a part. But the individual includes something that is a singularization. And it includes, apart from the individualizing duration, that, which stretches over the duration, the content, and this is, as often as we have individuals, and possibly is one that is completely like, and includes moments that may again be completely alike, and that are included in the content. But that, which is in the content, individually, this may be put under idea, may become conscious as singularization of some universal; and this singularization can only become conscious through [123] generalization: this is not a protrusion of the moment here and there perhaps through likeness and differences. This simply results in a protrusion, the individual part; instead the universal, becoming conscious in the consciousness of a universality, emerges here as something new and this as singularizing itself in the single thing.

In the consciousness of universality we grasp the concrete universal and that as such of the mere repetition and the universal of the sort and genus. The former is called the lowest difference. The universal of the repetition is the concrete thing or the universal of its different “moments”. Each moment is in a certain way part and included in the individual essence.[[5]](#footnote-5) Each is something universal itself, or something universal of the repetition corresponds to it. These lowest universalities are related to the concrete as quasi-parts. It is a proper relation of the being included of universalities in universalities.

Quite another relation is that of the sort to the lowest differences that are its own. The sort singularizes itself in the way of specialization, that is, of the lowest differentiation, if we relate it to the lowest differences. These singularize themselves in the way of mere “repetition”, which is something quite different. We have to therefore distinguish different relations here. Of course the relation between genus and sorts (the specialization of the genus, the higher genus in its sorts and sub-sorts) is quite another one than the relation of the lowest sort to the lowest difference. And if we talk about the “being included” in the comparison, then this is simply only a comparison, and it holds most closely true only in the case of singularization in a repetition, whether as a singularization of the repetition of something concrete or of a moment within something concrete.

The first general that of repetition, the second general that of the sort.[[6]](#footnote-6) In the first generalities nothing repeats itself (as if the common was merely included within the concrete things in the way of parts of a second step).

[124] *Principium identitatis indiscernibilium.* There is no actually complete likeness, not something universal of the first kind.

We may say the following regarding the relation between generic and individual <universality>: We call a freestanding essence one, which is not a partial essence of a quantitative multiplication, as such of an extensive or quantitative essence, that is, each essence that does not function as a quantitative singularization of an essence. A predicate corresponds to every freestanding essence (essence, for itself), as for example the predicate colored or a color to the essence color, and a subject, a something as such, having this predicate, corresponds to the predicate in undetermined, “purely formal” universality. This “corresponds” though says in this formal universality, <a> something as such, having this predicate, was possible.

The relation between essence and predicate may be quite different though, depending on choosing the predicate, and this talking about a choice means that a predicate may correspond to an essence in a multiple sense, and likewise a subject in a multiple sense <as well>. The subject may be an individual one or a generic. And this is only an equivalent expression for the predicate possibly being an individual predicate and a generic predicate. Depending on <whether> we prefer the one or the other, simply the “something as such”, that is p, has another sense that is either a certain individual or a certain genus (genus, sort, specific difference) in the transition from empty universality to corresponding determinedness (inserting something that is directly objective, named by its own name). Accordingly thus the whole formal sense of the predication that is either a “subsumption” (in order to use traditional termini, relating a feature to an individual subject) or subordination (according the generic determinacy to a sort) changes. This or something for example is color (namely this individual moment is of the essence “color”), red on the other hand is a color (the sort red is sort of the genus color). Nay, we still have more predicates. This is colored: namely the individual has an abstract essence of the genus color as an eidetic part in its concrete essence. The individual has an abstract moment as an immediate part, that is a single case of an essence (of a certain [125] nuance of red), subordinating itself to the genus color. And this is implied in the predicate “colored”, which thus points back to an individual as a subject (a concrete individual).

1. Autumn 1917. – Editor’s note. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. How do I begin? [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The sound on an extent that is limited on both sides, the sound lasting without limit, and unlimited to the sides of the beginning. The visual field if I turn to it, without beginning and ending. Timely limited sensuous extents. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. On the consciousness of comparing and combining as well as on partial and pure similarity compare appendix XVI (page 127-131). – Editor’s note. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Individual essence ist he singularization of the concrete, which ist he general essence, that is, the general of the repetition of the individual essence. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. On the first general in comparison to the second, founded generalities compare appendix XV (pages 125-127, German edition). – Editor’s note. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)