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**Mind's Eye: Conscious Perception and  
Phenomenological Unity  
A Comparative Study Between Augustinianism  
and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind**

**Abstract:** In contemporary theories, it is thought that the subject essentially initiates conscious perception. St. Augustine is one of the philosophers who acknowledges this idea via his active perception notion. In Section 1, I will address Augustine's distinction between vision or *visio* and cognition or *cogitatio*. In Section 2, I will focus on Augustine's notion of *intentio* to demonstrate the supremacy of the soul or the will of the soul as both the initiator and regulator of conscious awareness. In section 3, I will discuss the contemporary notions of the

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phenomenology of particularity and object-posting as theories to uphold the inclusion of cognitive phenomenology in the domain of conscious perception. Finally, I will show how these notions of perception perfectly align with conscious awareness as two conspicuous processes of polyadic relations depicted in *De Trinitate*.

**Keywords:** *visio*, *cogitatio*, *intentio*, perceptual and cognitive phenomenology, phenomenology of particularity.

**Título: O olho da mente: Percepção consciente e unidade fenomenológica. Um estudo comparativo entre o agostinianismo e a filosofia contemporânea da mente.**

**Resumo:** Nas teorias contemporâneas, pensa-se que é essencialmente o sujeito quem inicia a percepção consciente. Santo Agostinho é um dos filósofos que reconhece esta ideia através da sua noção de percepção ativa. Na secção 1, abordarei a distinção que Agostinho faz entre visão ou *visio* e cognição ou *cogitatio*. Na secção 2, centrar-me-ei na noção de *intentio* de Agostinho para demonstrar a supremacia da alma ou da vontade da alma como iniciadora e reguladora da consciência. Na secção 3, discutirei as noções contemporâneas da fenomenologia da particularidade e da posição de objetos como teorias para defender a inclusão da fenomenologia cognitiva no domínio da percepção consciente. Por fim, mostrarei como estas noções de percepção se alinham perfeitamente com a percepção consciente como dois processos conspícuos de relações poliádicas retratadas no *De Trinitate*.

**Palavras-chave:** *visio, cogitatio, intentio*, fenomenologia perceptiva e cognitiva, fenomenologia da particularidade.

We accept the reality of the world with which we're presented.

It's as simple as that.

Christof, *The Truman Show*

The philosophy of perception inhabits a special place among all the historical and contemporary philosophical discourses. Philosophers are generally inclined to comprehend perception from the epistemic standpoint since the object of perception is usually seen as what exhibits the perceptual consciousness. But I am not committed to the epistemic endeavour rather my quest is *what it is like to*<sup>2</sup> perceive this or that. In this article, I want to argue that perceptual consciousness is fundamentally a mental activity or rather it is essentially subject-centric and therefore has to be evaluated within the milieu of the entire phenomenological framework encompassing the “for-me<sup>3</sup>”-

<sup>2</sup> This term is taken from T. NAGEL, «What is it like to be a bat?» in *The Philosophical Review* 83-4, (1974) 435.

<https://doi.org/10.2307/2183914>

<sup>3</sup> U. KRIEGEL, *Subjective Consciousness: A Self-Representational Theory*. Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York 2009.

ness of the subject of experience in the forefront as opposed to the causal implication of mind-independent objects over the experiencer's mind. I want to show that Augustine was among the first philosophers to acknowledge that perception, through his theory of active perception, cannot be conceived of as a distinct category but as an integral component of total experiential givenness.

What defines perceptual consciousness? According to the conventional view, perceptual awareness is formed by the objects we are aware of during conscious perception. According to the traditional response, perceptual consciousness is developed by a subject's sensory knowledge of a specific peculiar object, and this object can be reinterpreted in many different ways. It has been identified as a unique particular, such as sensory data or quale. It may refer to an abstract object like a property, property-cluster, universal, phenomenal, proposition, or intentional object. It defines conscious perception from the aspect of the object of that perceptual state and this is exactly my point of departure. I would like to make a new start, and I will take you on this journey with me, which is different but much more relatable. I will demonstrate how perceptual consciousness is formed by engaging perceptual capacities in the way described by Susanna Schellenberg, and I will attempt to explain it through the "for-me" ness of the subject. In short, I shall concentrate on the subject of conscious perception in contrast to the object-centric approach, and I will attempt to present

a connection between Augustin's ideas of active perception and *cogitatio*<sup>4</sup> with the *intentio*<sup>5</sup> of the soul. Additionally, I hope to demonstrate how these concepts align with the contemporary framework of "phenomenological particularity" and the holistic approach of phenomenology.

In section 1, I will talk about Augustine's conceptual understanding of active perception and *Intentio*. Section 2 will cover the contemporary theories of perception and Brentano's mature theory of immanent intentionality. Finally, in section 3, I will try to find out certain parallels between these two approaches.

### **Augustine and Active Perception**

St. Augustine has been a very important figure in the history of Philosophy, especially in the philosophy of perception. Honestly speaking, it is not easy to decode Augustine beyond the theological issues of early Christianity. But when the theological glasses are

<sup>4</sup> T. NAWAR, «Augustine on active perception, awareness, and representation», *Phronesis*, 66-1 (2020) 84–110.

<https://doi.org/10.1163/15685284-BJA10035>

<sup>5</sup> J. F. SILVA, «Intentionality in Medieval Augustinianism», *Phänomenologische Forschungen* 2 (2018) 25–44.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27118145>

removed, it would be realised that Augustine's critique of object-centric perception is seen as a useful remedy for conscious perception. The analogy between the divine Trinity and perception can be challenging to understand. In perception, there are three distinct natures: the external thing, the body (with sense organs), and the soul (with its powers). When applying the comparison, it's important to note that while the divine Trinity has a common essence, the object and cognitive subject are separate entities, corporal and spiritual. However, Augustine's investigation into physical and spiritual vision, concentrating on the "eye of the body" and "eye of the mind," reveals an intricate comprehension of spiritual vision based on his physical vision paradigm. Augustine's theory of active perception suggests that our awareness of everyday objects and their properties cannot be defined simply by their causal efficacy. In *De Trinitate*<sup>6</sup>, Augustine explicitly denies causal efficaciousness to the corporal body over the soul. It is a kind of antagonist to the prevailing idea of that time which was the Aristotelian notion of perception. Aristotle explains perception following his general theory of change. He understands perception as a causal relation between the perceived object and the power of

<sup>6</sup> V. CASTON, «Augustine and the Greeks on Intentionality», in Dominik Perler (eds.), *Ancient and Medieval Theories of Intentionality*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2001, p. 33–41.

the soul. It is a passive process, in the sense that the organs and the powers of the senses are acted upon by perceptible objects. On the contrary, Augustine believes that perceiving is not something the subject undergoes; it is something he or she does. To have a coherent understanding of this we need to look into Augustine's theory of perception in detail. Before digging into the main thesis, I want to give a disclaimer that I have compared some of the Augustinian jargon with the vocabulary of contemporary analytic philosophy of mind to draw parallels.

### **Conceptual Analysis of Active Perception**

Based on the holy Trinity, Augustine's framework for vision identifies three elements: the sensible object, vision, and sense. Perception is influenced by the object's shape and the mind's focus. He wrote: shine through the eyes and touch whatever we see.<sup>7</sup>

But what does it imply? We will take a look at Augustine's approach to physical vision. First and foremost, the spectator must initiate vision. Sensation originates in the body of the perceiver, not the body that is viewed. To see an object, one must concentrate.

<sup>7</sup> Augustine, *De trinitate* 9.3.3: «Quia radios qui per eos emicant et quidquid cernimus tangunt.» See also *De trinitate* 9.6.11: «Ista vero aut praesentia sensu corporis tangimus».

Physical vision involves both effort and selectivity from the observer. Before the vision was produced, there already existed a will which to form the sense attached to the body to be perceived. Two of Augustine's tenets must be understood to fully comprehend this. The Metaphysical Principle (MP) states that material things cannot affect spiritual entities such as the soul. This correlates through the Epistemological Principle (EP), which states that material objects cannot trigger cognitive acts of the soul. Let me illustrate this with an example of when we present something in front of the audience. Our eyes remain wide open; they receive 'patterns of retinal stimulation' and we see the cluster of people with a definite shape and sizes that constitute the mass. Normally it is thought that solely the eyes receiving patterns of retinal stimulation cause the seeing of the mass. For Augustine, this is not accepted, because of his commitment to the principle of causal containment within the realm of physical things: that is, a perceptual experience of a living thing cannot be caused by whatever constitutes its object. This is the direct derivation from the metaphysical principle and is also linked with the epistemological principle. Augustine's *De Trinitate* describes vision as two distinct processes. The first is the physiological interaction between an object and an organ, where the organ receives the form of the sensible thing through retinal stimulation. However, this is not actually what he meant by conscious perceptual awareness. Seeing is a psychological activity that occurs

at the same time the form is received in the organ. It involves exercising the power to see and be aware of the external thing. The physiological process is a lower-level process that Augustine refers to as a "subspecies," such as "seeing," but the psychological process is a higher-level process known as *cogitatio*. Conscious awareness appears to arise predominantly at the level of *cogitatio*. Thus, Augustine defines *videre* as an activity belonging to the outer man. *Videre* or seeing is a polyadic relation<sup>8</sup> involving three elements:

[A] the object we see [*res quam videmus, corpus quod videtur*, 11.2.2]

[[B] vision or *visio*

and

[C] what holds one's eyesight on the thing being seen as long as it is being seen, i.e. the *intentio* of the soul. [*quod in ea re quae videtur, quamdiu videtur sensum detinet oculorum, id est animi intentio*, 11.2.2.]

[A] is very easy to understand as it is the corporeal object perceived. [B] is the form in the sense that serves as an intermediary between the corporeal and the incorporeal realms and is numerically distinct from [A] which is the form of the external

<sup>8</sup> T. Nawar, «Augustine on active perception, awareness, and representation», *Phronesis*, 66-1, (2020) 84–110.

object. It is a representation (*imago*) and likeness (*similitudo*) of the external mind-independent object and is impressed only by the object seen. Finally, [C] is the desire to see or ‘the will of the soul’ which moves the sense to the sensible thing which is purely psychological. But it is not the full story of conscious awareness of perception. Along with seeing what occurs in the outer man, Augustine illustrates a higher-level process. Cogitation, or *cogitatio*, refers to conscious cognition which takes place in the inner man, or reasoning soul. The act itself, which does involve conscious consciousness, is formed by a polyadic relation that also combines three components, those are:

[D] the form in *memoria* [*forma, species*]

[E] internal vision or *interna visio* that is the form in the inner gaze of the soul [ *acies animi, cf. acies cogitantis, Trin. 11.7.11; contuitus cogitantis, 11.9.16*]

and

[F] that amalgamate together the form in *memoria* and the inner gaze, which is referred to as the will *voluntas* or the *intentio* of the will. [*intentio voluntatis, 11.4.7*]

Augustine describes, that when the soul’s inner gaze, which is something like an inner theatre by which we consciously imagine or contemplate absent corporeal things as well as consciously see present corporeal things settles upon i.e. a form in *memoria*, it is informed by it. [D] is

thereby produced and cogitation (*cogitatio*) takes place. The form impressed upon inner vision, lasts only so long as the inner conscious thought does and the moment one consciously thinks of something else, one's inner gaze is in turn impressed by another form. The form in *memoria* or [D], and the form in the inner gaze or [E] are extremely similar. However, they are numerically distinct, and [E] lasts only so long as the relevant conscious thought or experience *cogitatio* is taking place. In contrast, [D] continues to exist in *memoria* afterward. Cogitation is a higher-level process that involves more than just envisioning or recalling past occurrences. It appears to occur during a fully conscious or diachronically unified conscious experience of things. we integrate several representations into a single experience, allowing us to see objects as unified objects and hear speech as words. Our perception is always united, implying that cogitation is common. Thereby, Augustine considers all ordinary perception as consisting of at least two stages in *De Trinitate*. Augustine attributes seeing or *videre* or perceiving to the outer man, which consists of elements [A] through [C]. This appears to be a lower-level procedure that does not necessitate diachronically unified conscious consciousness while still allowing perception to occur. Additionally, there is the *cogitatio* that Augustine assigns to the inner man, which is the mechanism that connects elements [D] and [F]. This is where diachronically united conscious consciousness is particularly manifested. Ordinary perceptual experience depicts diachronic

unity and conscious awareness; hence, higher order typically occurs at the same time as lower-level perception. Conscious perception happens only at the higher level. At the very least substantive conscious awareness does not seem to be a constituent of perception. In such cases, the activity Augustine attributes to the outer man is taking place. Yet, although the subject hears the sounds produced by a speaker or sees something abruptly, the subject is not consciously aware of what the speaker is saying or what s/he sees. The relevant forms have made their way from the external world into the perceiver's sense(s) but—due to the agent's will or focus being turned elsewhere have not adequately made their way through *memoria* to impinge upon the inner gaze of the soul as unified, conscious experiences. But why it is the case that conscious perception occurs as a unified consciousness with cognition? To understand this, we need to connect this with Augustin's idea of *intentio*.

### **Intentionality in Augustinianism**

In philosophy or to be specific in the philosophy of mind “intentionality” always holds a special position. Broadly intentionality stands for the mind's aboutness or directedness toward the object of experience. Often, we find that Brentano credited St. Augustine for the development of his intuition in Intentionality. However, Augustine has a slightly different story to

uphold which is quite similar to Brentano's revived notion of Intentionality<sup>9</sup>. Augustine's account of intentionality is the general undetermined directedness of the soul to the world, as the result of its way of being in the body. In the last part, I have already discussed Augustine's view on perception, which holds that we are the agents and causes of our cognitive activities, rather than being acted upon by material things. In *De Trinitate* Augustine remarked:

Yet, as I have said, our familiarity with bodies has become so great, and our *intentio* has projected itself outwardly with so wonderful a proclivity towards these bodies, that when it has been withdrawn from the uncertain realm of bodies and fixes its attention on the much more certain and more stable knowledge of the spirit, it again takes refuge in these bodies and seeks rest there from the place where it drew its weakness<sup>10</sup>.

These two terms—*intention* meaning intending or aboutness and *attention* meaning focus or concentration (like a spotlight) on particular attributes of the object of a given mental state—are highly significant in this context. According to Augustine, *intentio* is the soul's power that focuses attention on an object so long it has

<sup>9</sup> U. KRIEDEL, *Brentano's philosophical system: Mind, being, value*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018.

<sup>10</sup> J. F. SILVA, «Intentionality in Medieval Augustinianism», *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, 2 (2018) 25–44. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27118145>

been perceived. His famous utterance: an affection of the body that by itself does not go unnoticed by the soul<sup>11</sup>. It means that in any perceptual experience, the soul is not acted upon by the body or the external thing but acts on the reactions of the body and it is the soul's awareness of these actions that properly constitute conscious awareness. Perception depends on the soul's active attention to the presence of the thing through its form in the body, yet this attention exists before the perception of an external entity because sense is inherent to a living being. In other words, the soul's intending is already present in the sentient being before any particular encounter in a way that is not cognitive, but rather pre-cognitive. The term *pre-cognitive* also means *pre-operational* and not like the way it has been used in phenomenological tradition something as no-relational. That is, soul attention is always there, regardless of whether a cognitive function occurs. And this, I claim, is the result of the soul being the way it is, in other words, maintaining a particular way of being related to the body, which Augustine describes as being wholly in each part of the body. Some philosophers anticipate that this aspect of Augustine might lead to an imbalance between the sensory world and reflective mental life. Perception is undoubtedly very significant for both survival and cognitive functioning. For them, the theorem of the soul's presence

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

in the body and defining it as the principle of life and the body on the one hand and declaring the soul's supremacy over the corporal body is problematic as it focuses upon the subject who is experiencing and her aspects instead of what makes it "experience it is" or the content of experience.

### **Phenomenology of Perception and Contemporary Theories of Mind**

We all are acquainted with the famous duck/rabbit puzzle. It becomes undetectable what it exhibits but then based on our observational custom along with some conscious effort and practice, we could be able to shift one between the two possibilities. So, what is ultimately depicted in this image? There is no definitive result but most likely, we might assume that it is neither a duck nor a rabbit but simply either-or. It might not seem anything extraordinary, but in commerce with this either-or phenomenon, we could understand that the appearance of the whole world in our consciousness works exactly this way as that very picture puzzle. A detailed comprehension would make the perspective clearer that there are not only two but rather infinite potentials of seeing the world, even the easiest perception may yield different aspects and that very difference is marked by the associated cognitive phenomenology along

with the sensory phenomenology of the perceiving in general. Normally we do not care about this in our daily perception. We just overlook all perceptual annoyances that cannot be immediately and regularly considered. Therefore, we assume that they do not exist for us. But when we continue our awareness in such undecided situations of momentary non-existence, they lead us to an epistemic crisis. Here, crisis typically stands for cognizing, we have to decide what can be seen. In the easiest case, as in the example, there are two possibilities and these possibilities of vision are nothing other than certain cognitive judgment. Deciding what to see means to previously think of a potential corresponding to that judgment. What we cannot decide we are equally unable to see and vice versa. In becoming aware of our actual perception, these phenomena do not remain a quest of academic deliberation but are accessible in an experiential sense. The mental exercise of artificial picture puzzles also be retrieved in our everyday perception.

### **What Is Phenomenology of Perception?**

If I am aware of my perceptions, I know what it feels like to perceive this or that, even if the origin of these perceptions is unclear. Moreover, if I am a perceiver, I not only can but must

detect what it is like to perceive something. The very notion of perceiver necessarily includes how to perceive this or that and the phenomenological inevitability is a unique kind of epistemic security. Perception always involves experiencing something as a single, concrete object. That each of those separate objects is regarded as a distinct specific is almost universally acknowledged. Even people who otherwise tend to reject the idea of the existence of physical objects in the given context, in the final analysis, can hardly reject that we seem to perceive particular individual objects. This notion of perception is known as 'phenomenology of particularity'<sup>12</sup>. It is a component of the experience's entire phenomenology. This notion of the phenomenology of particularity is slippery because only with perception one cannot identify an object as particular. There is already a big debate between the internalist and the externalist regarding this but I am bypassing it right now and accepting the conclusion that we not only perceive things as sight or hear as sounds but perceive things as particular objects and hear as particular words. Perception must be studied from a historical perspective as well as on the foundation of first-person observation. At certain historical points, perception and thinking

<sup>12</sup> M. MONTAGUE, «Perception of Physical Objects: Particularity Fact», in *The Given: Experience and its Content*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2016.

have a general inclination to converge, while apparently, they seem to diverge with an emphasis on one of them. If we alter our perspective and instead of rigidly submitting to the third-person standpoint, consider the first-person perspective, we can validate the convergence of perception and cognizing.

Whether perceptions are accurate or not, thoughts are a part of perceptual experiences. The basic framework of our thought process is “object-positing”, which is the default configuration. The rudimentary object-positing feature of thought may then be accompanied by other more specific concepts and sensory properties to produce the experiences of objects we generally have. The phenomenology of particularity is explained by this aspect of cognition. "This object" of perceptual experience is delivered by object-positing. Being presented experientially with an identifiable and typically enduring unity is necessary to experience this form of thisness, and object-positing provides a tool for this. There are situations when affixing concepts to a thing through object-posting is misinterpreted by others. Concept-applying may be involved in object-posting, although it is not its core function. It appears likely that animals also recognize objects as continuously existing, unified entities, as do very young children. If this is the case, adult humans may also be capable of object identification even in the absence of a conceptual understanding of objects.

The explanation of how my perception may be considered a perception of this object at all appears to depend on the phenomenological particularity fact. It is the experience of a "this thing" that the perceptual experience involves the object-positing element of the perceptual experience that, given any perception of any object, allows that specific experience to secure external reference to that specific object at all. It is unclear how my impression of this object, or how there gets to be a perception of this at all, in the absence of object-positing. We wouldn't have anything that qualified as a perception of this particular object if we could remove the object-positing feature from the overall phenomenological character of the object-caused experience while simultaneously maintaining all other phenomenological aspects and external connections. Because the object-positing feature has been embedded in the experience, it is difficult to imagine the removal of it. But when we see objects, our perception goes beyond simple colour, shape, and other differences. Understanding the underlying cognitive phenomenological fact of object-positing is essential to comprehend the mechanism of our perception as the entirety of unified objects. But why should they take it as a unified framework and from the subject's perspective? For that, we need to reconsider the notion of Intentionality but this time with Brentano's original terminology.

### **The Convergence Between Augustinianism and Contemporary Philosophy of Mind**

The attempt to find commonalities between Augustinianism and contemporary philosophy of mind is not very straightforward because it is not like the latter is derived or rooted in the former. Both of the approaches have developed at different times with different goals to achieve. One might ask why I am trying even to amalgamate these two theses. My intuition towards the subject and the first-person perspective is very deep and I am very tempted to show that it is not something that is a new inclusion rather it was there from the very beginning, with different terminology and occurrences.

### **Contemporary Notion of Perception as Mental Activity and Augustinianism**

Augustine was the first thinker who challenged the Aristotelian tradition that perceptual awareness is formed by the objects that we are aware of during conscious perception. During the time, it was considered that visual forms were transmitted from the object to the sense organs, allowing for perception. Various theories exist to explain the impact of images on the body and

soul. Despite variances in details, Aristotelian authors viewed perception as a passive process. This aligns with the prevailing orthodox view of perceptual consciousness, which states that it is made up of sensory-aware entities. It is needless to mention this object-centric view is prevalent even today in the discussion of the philosophy of perception and mind.

The object-centric notion is strongly criticized and even denied by some of the current researchers, who believe that perceptual consciousness is constituted by mental activity and is an active process. This might seem a radical proposal but it makes sense on closer scrutiny. The notion that perceptual consciousness arises as a mental activity rejects the widely accepted concept that it is formed by external entities, such as an object or a sense-data, and the mind is nearly inactive regarding sensory awareness. I think this freshly developed concept of perceptual consciousness is way more compatible with the evidence of empirical sciences and psychology rather than classical theories. This notion fits perfectly with Augustin's consideration of the soul's supremacy in conscious awareness. He also upholds the view that conscious awareness is something the subject undergoes; it is something she does and not happens to her. Not only the consideration of the active mental act but his notion is compatible with the idea of "phenomenology of particularity" as it is the logical outcome of the subject-centric position of perception. To elaborate on this, I have used Susanna

Schellenberg's argument in favour of perception as a mental activity. She states,

I. If a subject S is perceptually related to particular  $\alpha$ , then S is employing perceptual capacities C by means of which she discriminates and singles out  $\alpha$ .

II. If S is employing perceptual capacities C by means of which she discriminates and singles out  $\alpha$ , then S's phenomenal character is constituted by employing perceptual capacities C by means of which she discriminates and singles out  $\alpha$ .

From I–II. If a subject S is perceptually related to particular  $\alpha$ , then S's phenomenal character is constituted by employing perceptual capacities C by means of which she discriminates and singles out  $\alpha$ .

III. If S suffers an illusion or a hallucination as of  $\alpha$ , then S's phenomenal character is constituted by employing perceptual capacities C by means of which she purports to discriminate and single out  $\alpha$ .

IV. If S is perceptually related to  $\alpha$  or suffers an illusion or a hallucination as of  $\alpha$ , then S's phenomenal character is constituted by employing perceptual capacities C, by means of which she (purports to) discriminates and singles out  $\alpha$ .

V. Employing perceptual capacities is a kind of mental activity.

VI. If S is perceptually related to  $\alpha$  or suffers an illusion or a hallucination as of  $\alpha$ , then S's phenomenal character is constituted by a mental activity.

From I–VI. Phenomenal character is constituted by a mental activity.<sup>13</sup>

Separation and singling out the particular from its backgrounds are the basic need for perceiving the particular. Assume that I am looking at the new sneakers that my friend bought which I like too and therefore I am minutely noticing those shoes beyond his attire. When looking at those shoes, I will distinguish their properties from their surroundings. I can separate it by its colour like if it's black, white, or any other colour. I can distinguish its shape from the shape of a T-shirt or pants. Singling out enables visual segmentation and border detection. But the object-centric idea alone cannot make this happen. It is not possible to perceive an object's particularity based on its shape, structure, and colour because colour and shape are merged and cannot exist before an object. Hence one needs to consider the object first in this context. Taking the object, however, does not resolve the issue either.

All object-centric approaches (externalism) make perception a mere case of validating the truth condition which is important but not sufficient to grasp the core of perceptual activity. I have already discussed before in this paper, that perceiving a singularity happens only in the form of 'Phenomenology of

<sup>13</sup> S. SCHELLENBERG, «Perceptual Consciousness as a Mental Activity», *Noûs* 53, 1 (2019) 114–33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12209>.

Particularity' and for that, we must consider the cognitive awareness at the same time that takes the form of "object-posting". A general perception does not only consist of perception rather it includes cognitive functioning at the same time. So, there is a unification of the conscious process. It seems to me that St. Augustine's perspective and contemporary notion of perception blend quite nicely.

Augustine also defines perception as a two-level process; *Videre* or seeing is the lower-level process that happens as the outer man which is similar to seeing something. It typically takes place at a higher level which is known as *cogitatio*. Although, the notion of a particular singular object was not developed at that time; hence the terminology is different but this view is comparable with the phenomenological unity of consciousness. Object-posting typically occurs at "cognition" - *cogitatio* that Augustine assigns to the inner man, which is the mechanism that connects elements [D] and [F]. This is where diachronically united conscious consciousness is particularly manifested. Which is similar to the way cognitive phenomenology gets included in perceptual phenomenology.

### **Subjective Consciousness and Augustinianism**

I am not sure whether it is accurate to find a parallel between the qualitative aspect and *videre* along with "imago" on one hand and the "for-me" aspect and *interna visio* but I find a

strong connection between these two ideas. The original division was made by Uriah Kriegel for all our phenomenal consciousness irrespective of perception, cognition, emotion, or sensation. then there are two distinguishable elements. Suppose, when I have a conscious experience of the aroma of freshly baked cookies then there is a [a] cookie-ish component and a [b] for-me component. The former is known as the qualitative character and the latter is known subjective character. The qualitative character is something that makes the conscious state *it is*, and the subjective character is something that makes a phenomenally conscious *at all*. Similarly, suppose we all perceive the same blue sky but it does not feel the same way for each of us. There is *videre* is the impression of the external object, in this context, the blue sky and is kind of coloured by that object, and *interna visio* is the inner gaze of the soul which is how that *videre* in the form of *memoria* to the subject. That is each subject has a way of perceiving it and this is not the technicalities of perception but it is about ‘*what it is like* to see blue sky’. I believe these two theses converge somewhere. Although it required a more detailed evaluation.

### **Intentionality and Augustinianism**

It is well known, that Brentano took up the Scholastic notion of *intentio* at the end of the 19th century. Brentano

explicitly pointed to the Scholastic antecedents of his discussion on intentional relations, and this hint has regularly been taken up by philosophers and historians of philosophy. But I have already claimed that Brentano and his notion of intentionality was often misinterpreted. However, I have tried to understand Brentano's notion of intentionality with immanent approaches. The assertion that there is no such thing as unconscious consciousness serves as the foundation for Brentano's theory of intentionality is quite similar to Augustine's famous connotation '*nam sensum puto esse, non latere animam quod patitur corpus*'.<sup>14</sup> That might be translated as: sense-perception (*sensus*), something the body undergoes which is not hidden from the soul.<sup>15</sup>

So, the meeting point is the similarity that one is having the bodily affection of representation but the person is not conscious of it, which seems impossible. Now if we translate this in Brentano's terminology then it could be said that if we have a conscious mental state then we are conscious about it. This convergence also opens the propensity to assume the similarity of awareness and awareness thesis and the "not hidden from the soul"

<sup>14</sup>T. NAWAR, «Augustine on active perception, awareness, and representation», *Phronesis*, 66-1 (2020) 84–110. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15685284-BJA10035>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

assertion. Augustine points out that *intentio* is the power of the soul that fixes the sense of sight on the object that is seen as long as it is seen. As we can see from Augustine *intentio* is the power of the soul and not the mental state. Intentionality concerning the mature account Brentano also is an intrinsic property of subjects. This interpretation explores intentionality as an inherent, non-relational characteristic, and considers it as a property of subjects rather than intentional acts. Intentionality is an integral component of phenomenal directedness that individuals can only truly comprehend through personal experience. Augustine continued that the soul's intending is already present in the sentient being before any particular encounter in a way that is not cognitive, but rather pre-cognitive. And this, I claim, is the result of the soul being the way it is, in other words, maintaining a particular way of being related to the body, which Augustine describes as being wholly in each part of the body.

I have always believed that the “for-me” ness could be a stepping stone for comprehending the “me” as the subject of experience. I mentioned that the duck/rabbit puzzle is the prototype of all kinds of perception. Given that granted, the question remains significant why do some even perceive it as a duck and others as a rabbit? I think it highlights something more primitive than just the ‘phenomenology of particularity’ as it provides a glimpse of the subject of how and why she has developed such a perception. The

answer could be manifold as it has to do with the social-cultural contest with which the subject is co-related, her particular way of body (brain comes under this set), and evaluation history. Although, it was not Augustine's primary goal to talk about something like this. Yet, somehow bottom of the line, I am convinced that when he uttered that it is the soul's being a particular way in the body is one of the primitive references of the embodied mind that emphasizes the significance of an agent's physical body in cognitive abilities. Exactly like Augustine, I believe that the soul is the guiding principle but without this particular kind of flesh or blood, the inclination could be different.

### **Final Remark**

Manifesting an adequate alliance between Augustinism and contemporary approaches demands significant effort in developing an articulated framework for the translation and systematization of various perspectives and conceptual elaborations, as well as extending far beyond. This is simply the first step or rather in the developing stage. Such a framework can only be the outcome of long-term engagement among open-minded experts from both fields. This collection is primarily meant to serve as the initial stage in such a collaboration. I do

not claim to cover all possible bases or even go all the way. The papers highlight key similarities between phenomenology and medieval philosophy, paving the path for further research in this area.