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ON FILOZOFÓWNA'S CRITICISM OF BLAUSTEIN'S PHENOMENOLOGY OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE*

WITOLD PŁOTKA

PhD in Philosophy, Dr. habil., Associate Professor.

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Institute of Philosophy.

01-815 Warsaw, Poland.

E-mail: witoldplotka@gmail.com; w.plotka@uksw.edu.pl

Phenomenology originates in a critical assessment of descriptive psychology. In this regard, scholars emphasize mainly the problem of psychologism. Yet, the question of a methodological divide between both approaches is rather at the margins of contemporary scholarship. In the present paper, I analyze and discuss the 1931–32 debate held by Irena Filozofówna and Leopold Blaustein as a case study of the phenomenology-psychology divide. The debate addresses the structure of aesthetic experience, as well as a methodological background for describing psychic life. My main task is to present arguments, concepts, and methodologies of the opposing positions. To do so, in Sect. (1) I outline biographical sketches of Filozofówna and Blaustein. They were members of the Lvov-Warsaw School, but they presented different approaches: whereas Filozofówna advocated descriptive and experimental psychology, Blaustein—educated not only by Twardowski, but also by Ingarden, and Husserl—referred to the phenomenological tradition too. Sect. (2) summarizes Blaustein's phenomenological aesthetics. His approach consists in analyzing aesthetic experience as a combination of nonreducible presentations. His key observation is that different types of art require different presentations, say, imaginative, schematic, or symbolic. In Sect. (3), I analyze Filozofówna's criticism of this approach. Her main argument consists in emphasizing judgments as a necessary element of every lived experience. She claims that Blaustein comprehends acts as intentional, i.e., as presenting their objects as “such and such,” but by doing so, he confuses presentations with judgments. In this section I follow Blaustein's replies to Filozofówna's criticism. In Sect. (4), I analyze Filozofówna's argument that Blaustein adopted an ineffective method, since he was too hasty in accepting unjustified hypotheses. In Sect. (5), I ask about a theoretical background of Filozofówna's criticism, and I juxtapose both positions.

Keywords: descriptive psychology, phenomenological method, aesthetic experience, hypothesis, description, theory of presentations, Filozofówna, Blaustein.

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КРИТИКА ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИИ ЭСТЕТИЧЕСКОГО ОПЫТА БЛАУШТАЙНА В ТРУДАХ ИРЕНЬ ФИЛОЗОФОВНЫ*

ВИТОЛЬД ПЛОТКА

Доктор философских наук, доцент.

Варшавский университет Кардинала Стефана Вышинского, Институт философии.

01-815 Варшава, Польша

E-mail: witoldplotka@gmail.com; w.plotka@uksw.edu.pl

Феноменология берет свое начало в критической оценке описательной психологии. В этой связи ученые акцентируют внимание главным образом на проблеме психологизма. Тем не менее, вопрос о методологическом разрыве между обоими подходами находится, скорее, на периферии современной науки. В настоящей статье я анализирую и обсуждаю дебаты 1931–1932 годов, проведенные Иреней Филозофовной и Леопольдом Блауштайном, в качестве примера разделения феноменологии и психологии. Дискуссия посвящена структуре эстетического опыта, а также методологическим основам описания психической жизни. Моя главная задача заключается в том, чтобы представить аргументы, концепции и методологии противоположных позиций. Для этого в разделе (1) я излагаю биографические очерки Филозофовны и Блауштайна. Они были представителями Львовско-Варшавской школы, но представляли разные подходы: в то время как Филозофовна выступала за описательную и экспериментальную психологию, Блауштайн, получивший образование не только у Твардовского, но и у Ингардена, и Гуссерля, также ссылался на феноменологическую традицию. Раздел (2) резюмирует феноменологическую эстетику Блауштайна. Его подход заключается в анализе эстетического опыта как совокупности несводимых друг к другу представлений. Ключевое наблюдение Блауштайна состоит в том, что разные виды искусства требуют разных представлений, скажем, образных, схематических или символических. В разделе (3) я анализирую критику Филозофовной этого подхода. Ее главный аргумент подчеркивает роль суждения в качестве необходимого элемента всякого пережитого опыта. Филозофовна утверждает, что Блауштайн рассматривает действия с точки зрения преднамеренности, то есть как представление своих объектов как “таких-то и таких-то”, но, поступая таким образом, он путает представления с суждениями. В этом разделе я так же рассматриваю ответы Блауштайна на критику Филозофовны. В разделе (4) я анализирую аргумент Филозофовны о том, что Блауштайн использовал неэффективный метод, поскольку он слишком поспешно принял необоснованные гипотезы. В разделе (5) я задаю вопрос о теоретическом основании критики Филозофовны и сопоставляю обе позиции.

Ключевые слова: описательная психология, феноменологический метод, эстетический опыт, гипотеза, описание, теория презентаций, Филозофовна, Блауштейн.

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1. INTRODUCTION: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND MAIN THESES

In 1931–1932, readers of two important academic journals in Poland—*Przegląd Filozoficzny* (*The Philosophical Review*) and *Polskie Archiwum Psychologii* (*Polish Archive of Psychology*)—could follow an interesting debate between Irena Filozofówna (1906–1967) and Leopold Blaustein (1905–1942 [or 1944])¹. The debate concerned the object and structure of lived experiences, as well as the methodological ground for describing psychic life. Both thinkers were members of the Lvov-Warsaw School², a philosophical group established by Kazimierz Twardowski (1866–1938) after he arrived in Lvov from Vienna, where he studied under Franz Brentano (1838–1917). In the 1930s, so at the time of the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate, the School was advanced not only in philosophy and logic (as it used to be in the 1900s), but also in mathematics, psychology and the humanities. Blaustein was a direct student of Twardowski in Lvov, but his original philosophy was shaped also by—to mention only the most important influences—Edmund Husserl (1889–1938), under whom he had studied in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1925, Roman Ingarden (1893–1970)³, his teacher in Lvov, and Carl Stumpf (1848–1936), whom he had met in Berlin in 1927–1928. Filozofówna, in turn, was educated in Warsaw by Twardowski's students, including a logician Tadeusz Kotarbiński (1886–1981)⁴, and a philosopher and psychologist Władysław Witwicki (1878–1948)⁵, her doctoral supervisor. Just as Filozofówna, Blaustein can be included in a psychological trend of the Lvov-Warsaw School (Rzepa, 1992; 1993). However—

¹ In a chronological order, see (1) Filozofówna's (1931b) critical review of Blaustein's (1930) *Przedstawienia imaginatywne* (*Imaginative Presentations*); (2) Blaustein's (1931b) extensive (critical) response to Filozofówna, and (3) Filozofówna's (1931a) short reply to Blaustein; (4) Filozofówna's (1932a) (rather neutral) review of Blaustein's (1931a) *Przedstawienia schematyczne i symboliczne* (*Schematic and Symbolic Presentations*), and (5) her critical review of the same book, yet published in another journal (Filozofówna, 1932b); (6) Blaustein's (1932) reply to the review, and, finally, (7) Filozofówna's (1932c) short comment to Blaustein's response. Both, Filozofówna and Blaustein, did later refer to this debate in their works. It was discussed also by other scholars, e.g., (Wiegner, 1932b).

² Filozofówna is listed as a member of the Lvov-Warsaw School by Woleński (1985, 338) in Polish edition of his excellent study on the School; yet, her name is missing in the list published in the English version of the book (Woleński, 1989, 352–353). In his recent publications Woleński explicitly includes Filozofówna among members of the School. E.g. (Woleński, 2019, 28–29). See also (Pakszys, 1998a, 81).

³ The influences of Ingarden's philosophy on Blaustein are discussed in: (Płotka, 2020a). Blaustein studied under Ingarden in Lvov after 1925 when Ingarden became a Docent at the university there. See also Ingarden's note on Blaustein (Ingarden, 1963, 86–88).

⁴ See (Pakszys, 1998b, 60).

⁵ On Witwicki's contribution to the controversy over the method—descriptive psychology, or phenomenology — see (Płotka, 2020b, 150–154).

er, whereas Blaustein used descriptive and phenomenological tools in his research, Filozofówna — like her teacher, Witwicki—was closer to the tradition of experimental psychology. Given this, the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate seems to contribute to the complex history of early phenomenology in Poland⁶, which was developed in a perennial discussion with descriptive psychology (cf. Płotka, 2017; 2020c). In this regard, my general aim in this paper is to present the main arguments Filozofówna advanced against Blaustein and to define both positions in the debate. Before discussing this aim in more detail, let me start with a few biographical remarks.

Irena Schiller (*née* Filozofówna) was a psychologist, pedagogist, and theater historian⁷. She studied at the Warsaw University at the end of the 1920s. There she met Witwicki, one of the leading figures of Polish psychology. Filozofówna was inspired by Witwicki to study the psychology of creativity. Already in her master's thesis (defended in 1930) she used psychological tools to describe lived experiences of actors on stage. In her 1932 paper on Konstantin Stanislavski's method, she emphasized that to understand actors' performance, one had to focus on their lived experiences (Filozofówna, 1932d, 340–341). Filozofówna gained her doctoral degree in philosophy in 1932. The thesis—*Badania psychologiczne nad grą aktora na scenie (Psychological Studies on the Actor's Performance on a Stage)*—was written under Witwicki and is regarded today as a pioneering work in the psychology of theater (cf. Mróz, Kociuba & Osterloff, 2017). In an article published on the basis of that work, Filozofówna (1935, 159–160) explains that she used the method of a questionnaire survey, since both introspection and observation failed to give access to actors' lived experiences. In 1933, she began her work at the State Institute of Theater (Państwowy Instytut Sztuki Teatralnej, PIST), where she met her future husband Leon Schiller (they married in 1949). In 1941–1942 she was imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto, and later—as a medical orderly—she participated in the Warsaw Uprising. After World War II, her main focus became theater studies. She died in 1967 in Warsaw.

Blaustein studied at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lvov in 1923–1927. Already in 1925, after recommendations of both his teacher in logic—Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz (1890–1963)—and Ingarden, he went for a few weeks to Freiburg im Breisgau. There he had an opportunity to hear Husserl's lectures on phenomenological psychology. After his return to Poland, Blaustein completed his doctoral thesis on Husserl's theory of act and content. The thesis was written under Twardowski. For Blaustein, this early work—published in 1928 as the very first monograph on Husserl in Poland—was an

⁶ See, e.g., (Byrne, 2020; Piwowarczyk, 2020).

⁷ For a more detailed biography, see (Timoszewicz, 1994).

introduction to his original research on aesthetic experience as a combination of presentations. In the 1930s he was doing research on various aesthetic phenomena, e.g., listening to the radio, watching a movie in the cinema, or a stage play in a theater. It is therefore justified to recognize Blaustein, following Pazura (1966, 90) and Ptaszek (2011, 120), as a member of the Polish phenomenological school in aesthetics. Unfortunately, Blaustein's major work in aesthetics—*Die ästhetische Perzeption*—was lost during World War II. The exact date of Blaustein's death is unknown. He died in the Lvov Ghetto probably in 1942, or in 1944.

As shown above, both Filozofówna and Blaustein were interested in aesthetics. Yet, as already claimed, their views on the aesthetic theory diverged. Filozofówna's criticism of Blaustein's phenomenology of aesthetic experience stems from her early theory of actors' performance. Namely, in her early studies, Filozofówna (1932d, 344–345; 1935, 179–180) used Meinong's idea of assumptions (*Annahmen*), i.e., fantasy experiences that are placed between representation and judgments; the main idea that Filozofówna took over from Meinong is that whereas judgments are object-directed and accompanied by conviction, assumptions lack conviction (Meinong, 1910, 3). According to her, an actor comprehends the world represented on stage due to her or his *assumptions*, i.e., one does not believe that the world represented on stage is true. In the light of assumptions, an actor develops a distance to her or his emotions and is then able to perform fictional, or fantasy emotions. Filozofówna generalized this theory to claim that experience is *always* a combination of presentations and judgments. With this in mind, Filozofówna criticized Blaustein since—as she argues—he did not include the propositional attitude in his description of aesthetic experience. Curiously enough, in *Przedstawienie imaginatywne (Imaginative Presentations)* Blaustein (1930, 39) explicitly held that his descriptions of a viewer's experience in the theater were in accordance with Meinong's theory of assumptions. Hence, the following question arises: Is Filozofówna's criticism justified at all? And if so, to what extent is it correct? In any case, their discussion concerned methodological issues as well. Insofar as Filozofówna opted for a more naturalistic method, she criticized “subjective” consequences of Blaustein's phenomenological attitude. As we can see, then, the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate clearly contributed to the history of the phenomenological movement. Yet, it is largely forgotten in contemporary scholarship on early phenomenology. In other words, this paper is an attempt to enrich our understanding of the history of phenomenology by clarifying in more detail Filozofówna's critical assessment of Blaustein's theory, as well as his response to that criticism.

To begin with (Sect. 2), I will present the main theses of Blaustein's aesthetics. Filozofówna critically reviewed two books by Blaustein: *Przedstawienia imagi-*

natywne (Imaginative Presentations) and *Przedstawienia schematyczne i symboliczne (Schematic and Symbolic Presentations)*. Blaustein's point of departure in both books is that aesthetic experience is a complex lived experience which consists in unifying different presentations. This theory follows in the tradition of Brentano, and as such it was formulated as a supplementation of Twardowski's theory of presentations. Next (Sect. 3), I discuss Filozofówna's critical evaluation of Blaustein's theory of the structure of aesthetic experience. As we will see, the key argument against Blaustein lies in the thesis that experience is always embedded in a propositional attitude, whereas for him judgments are unnecessary to experience something. Finally (Sect. 4), I will focus on methodological issues to show Filozofówna's criticism of Blaustein's "subjectivism." According to her view, Blaustein is able to describe only "his" personal experiences, and for this reason he fails to present a justified theory of lived experiences. This leads Filozofówna to ask the question about a value of a psychological description.

2. THE BASICS OF BLAUSTEIN'S AESTHETIC THEORY

Blaustein's aesthetics, just as his philosophy in general (Miskiewicz, 2009, 182–183), can be divided into two periods: (1) in the first (1923–1931) he was focused primarily on the theoretical foundations of aesthetics, e.g., he attempted to define the object of aesthetic inquiry, or to formulate a classification of aesthetic experiences; (2) later (1932–1939) he carried out concrete research of various aesthetic phenomena; e.g., experiences of people watching a theater play. Filozofówna criticized his early, theoretical studies, i.e., *Przedstawienia imaginatywne (Imaginative Presentations)* (Blaustein, 1930) and *Przedstawienia schematyczne i symboliczne (Schematic and Symbolic Presentations)* (Blaustein, 1931a). In this section, I will present an outline of Blaustein's main theses in both books.

In his *Przedstawienia imaginatywne (Imaginative Presentations)*, Blaustein begins his study with a critical evaluation of Twardowski's theory of presentations. For the latter, just as for Brentano⁸, "presentation" designates a separate class of psychic phenomena, different from judgments, or emotions; in a strict sense, "presentation" names the "act of presenting," and as such—unlike in Brentano (cf. Smith, 1994, 157)—it has to be distinguished from content and the object⁹. Next, Twardowski

⁸ "By presentation I do not mean that which is presented, but rather the act of presentation. Thus, hearing a sound, seeing a colored object, feeling warmth or cold, as well as similar states of imagination are examples of what I mean by this term" (Brentano, 1995, 60).

⁹ "An object is said to be something real or not real, regardless of whether or not it exists, just as one can talk about the simplicity or complexity of an object, without asking whether or not it exists.

(1995, 81–82) differentiates two basic types of presentations, i.e., imaginaries (*Anschauungen*), which are understood as concrete and direct presentations (*anschauliche Vorstellungen*), and concepts (*Begriffe*) understood, in turn, as general and indirect presentations (*unanschauliche Vorstellungen*). In § 7 of his book, Blaustein (1930, 12–14) refers to the taxonomy of presentations as divided into concepts and imageries; he follows Twardowski also in claiming that imageries should be divided into primary and secondary, secondary imageries being further divided into reproductive and creative. Yet, as Blaustein points out, the criterion of this taxonomy is unclear: is it rather quality, or matter of an act? For him, in turn, every division—imageries *and* concepts, primary *and* secondary imageries, reproductive *and* creative imageries—requires a different criterion. As he writes:

The first division is made on the basis of the different relation of the presenting content to the intentional object in imageries and concepts. In the former, the presenting content is adequate in relation to the object, in the latter it is inadequate. [...] The second division is made on the basis of the variety of elements of the presenting content, which are sensual contents. [...] The third division is made on the basis of the diversity of intentional objects in reproductive and creative imageries. Here we come across a source of very difficult issues, hitherto not sufficiently explained. An important fact for reproductive imageries is the fact that their object is recognized as identical to the object of some past presentation. (Blaustein, 1930, 13–14)

Given this criticism, the main task of *Przedstawienia imaginatywne* (*Imaginative Presentations*) is to formulate a systematic taxonomy of imageries, which can be made on the basis on these different criteria. First, Blaustein adapts Twardowski's idea that presenting content intends its object in such a way that certain elements of the presenting content correspond with the related elements of the intentional object (Blaustein, 1930, 53–54). In this regard, he claims that in perception presenting content functions *as if* it was an image of the presented object. But, if presenting is a two-terms relation, one can say that it can be either *adequate* or *inadequate*. Blaustein states that a perceptual presentation can be described as adequate. Yet, if one sees an actor on a theatre stage, she or he is not *as* an actor, but rather *as* a fictional character, performed by the actor. Blaustein describes this presentation as *quasi-adequate*, and he calls it imaginative.

That in which the reality of an object consists cannot be expressed in words; but most philosophers seem to agree nowadays that objects like piercing tone, tree, grief, motion, are something real, while objects like lack, absence, possibility, etc. are to count as *not* real. Now, just as a real object may at one time exist and at another time not exist, so, too, can something non-real now exist, now not exist" (Twardowski, 1977, 33–34).

To illustrate his theory, Blaustein (1930, 15) describes in his *Przedstawienia imaginatywne (Imaginative Presentations)* an example of watching Shaw's *Caesar and Cleopatra*. While being in the theater, what one sees or experiences directly is *something* that is happening on stage during the play. However, it goes without saying that these events are not meaningless. One "sees" not an actor, but rather Caesar or Cleopatra. These objects are presented as *quasi-adequate* objects. Blaustein describes this phenomenon as being given at once as intuitive (the real words, or movements of actors on stage) and non-intuitive (Caesar meeting Cleopatra). The phenomenon, then, seems to be complex since it encompasses what is perceptually given and what is imaginatively presented *at once*. From a phenomenological viewpoint, Blaustein compares this experience to a hallucinatory experience, but the imaginative presentation lacks a thetic belief; in turn, a hallucination consists in believing that what I see is *true*. So far, then, there is an actor who is given on stage as imaginatively present. But the actor performs his role, which is comprehended only in historical context. After all, Caesar or Cleopatra are historical figures who lived in the past. In this regard, Blaustein draws a distinction between the *reproducing* object (an actor on stage), the *imaginative* object (an actor as, say, Caesar), and the *reproduced* object (Caesar as a historical figure).

In his *Przedstawienia schematyczne i symboliczne (Schematic and Symbolic Presentations)*, Blaustein (1931a) develops his phenomenology of aesthetic experiences by describing inadequate presentations such as, for instance, interpreting a symbol, or a schema (e.g., a map). In these phenomena, as Blaustein puts it, content *quasi-presents* its object. For example, one sees a symbol, but its object is not given due to presenting content, which corresponds to its object; a symbol refers to another object, as in the case of a sandglass that can be a symbol of the passage of time. Next, if one sees a schema, e.g., a map, she or he perceives lines that present their object—say, a city—in *modi quasi*. To illustrate this, Blaustein (1931a, 2) refers in his book to the phenomenon of contemplating the woodcut of Hans Holbein the Younger *The Abbot* from the *Dance of Death* series. One perceives, or presents perceptually a skeleton, yet the skeleton is not the proper object of the artwork since the skeleton *presents symbolically* death. To put it differently, shapes and colors are apprehended by the act in which the skeleton is intuitively given; nonetheless, death is non-intuitively experienced *due to* what is intuitively experienced. For Blaustein, the relation between the skeleton (a symbol) and death (the object indicated by the symbol) is the relation of symbolic representation. One can describe this symbolic, or schematic relation also as embedded in signitive presentations since Blaustein writes here about *meanings* which are unintuitively

given¹⁰. As we will see later, this element is crucial to understanding Filozofówna's criticism.

Blaustein uses his theory of presentations to reinterpret § 111 of Husserl's *Ideas I* where one finds an interesting interpretation of Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Knight, Death and the Devil*. In that section of *Ideas I*, Husserl (1982, 261) contrasts perception with fantasy: while the former grasps its object as "what exists," the latter "neutralizes" the claim. So, perception is an example of the act in which the object is given itself as something "existing;" here the object is a correlate of the "positing" consciousness. In contrast to perception, fantasy does not "posit" anything; rather it constitutes an object which is not "positioned." Yet, so-called pure fantasy *cannot* be identified with neutrality modification. To highlight the difference, Husserl writes about *mere fantasy* (*bloße Phantasie*), as opposed to *neutrality modification*, which is exemplified by a *neutralized memory* (*neutralisierte Erinnerung*). Here a mere fantasy is a universal reflection, which grasps experiences as such. In turn, neutrality modification is a property of some conscious acts, e.g., memory, negation, etc. In this context, Husserl refers to Dürer, and he writes:

In the first place, let us distinguish the normal perceiving, the correlate of which is the *physical thing*, "engraved print," this print in the portfolio. In the second place, we distinguish the perceptive consciousness in which, within the black, colorless lines, there appear to us the figures of the "knight on his horse," "death," and the "devil." We do not advert to these in aesthetic contemplation as Objects; we rather advert to the realities presented "in the picture"—more precisely stated, to the "*depicted*" realities, to the flesh and blood knight, etc. The consciousness of the "picture" (the small, grey figures in which, by virtue of founded noeses something else is "depictively presented" by similarity) which mediates and makes possible the depicting, is now an example for the neutrality modification of perception. This *depicting picture-Object* is present to us *neither as existing nor as not existing*, nor in any other *positional modality*; or, rather, there is consciousness of it as existing, but as quasi-existing in the neutrality modification of being. (Husserl, 1982, 261–262)

Blaustein (1930, 23–24) assesses Husserl's description as not fully adequate. According to the Polish philosopher, Husserl's attempt to connect Dürer's works with death is unjustified since the skeleton represents death only symbolically and not directly. Rather, this symbolic presentation *is based* on perceptual and imaginative presentations. For Blaustein, then, the phenomenon described by Husserl in § 111 of his *Ideas I* is more complicated than suggested in this work. This phenomenon is temporally constituted and structured as follows: at the beginning one directly *experiences* sense-data, which are *apprehended* in perception as shapes; nonetheless, from

¹⁰ For an elaboration of this issue in Husserl, see (Byrne, 2017).

a phenomenological point of view, one sees not the shapes, but other objects, i.e., a skeleton *through* the shapes. This is made possible by imaginative presentations which present the object of intention. Finally, one realizes that the skeleton *symbolically represents* death. This, in turn, is made possible by symbolic presentations. In any case, as we have seen, Blaustein's aesthetics is founded on the phenomenology of different aesthetic experiences, and it is developed as detailed descriptions of the object, and other moments of these phenomena.

3. WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE?

Blaustein's theory was highly ranked by reviewers. Walter Auerbach (1931, 215), for instance, emphasizes a novelty of the idea of imaginative presentations and their objects. Also, Bohdan Zawadzki (1931, 123–124) and Adam Wiegner (1931, 104; 1932a, 104) appreciate Blaustein's ideas and theoretical distinctions. An exception in this context are critical reviews of Blaustein's works published by *Filozofówna*. Even if she appreciates the "unquestionable value" of Blaustein's detailed descriptions (*Filozofówna*, 1932a, 156), she questions one of his main theses that presentations are different from judgments which can be part of aesthetic experience. This idea follows from a more general observation—taken by Blaustein from Brentano and Twardowski—that judgments are mental phenomena different from presentations. Yet, as shown in Sect. 2, Blaustein introduces in his phenomenology of aesthetic experience schematic and symbolic presentations that are given—as it seems—in the form of signitive intentions. If so, the following problem arises: Do judgments and signitive intentions determine aesthetic experience? Or, to phrase it differently, is aesthetic experience first and foremost a linguistic experience? Contrary to Blaustein, *Filozofówna* claims it is.

Filozofówna asserts that Blaustein's phenomenology of presentations bears the mark of a fundamental mistake: he confuses presentations with judgments. She specifies that Blaustein's analysis of aesthetic experiences in fact takes these experiences as a complex of presentations. Yet, as she argues, he does not extract presentations, i.e., simple intentional acts, from complex acts which comprise, among others, judgments. Consequently, he ascribes features typical for judgments to presentations. In her commentary "W sprawie wyobrażeń imaginatywnych" ("On Imaginative Presentations"), she writes:

Dr. Blaustein claims that in presentations we grasp the presented object as such [*jako ten właśnie*] and as such and such [*jako taki a taki*]; the related judgments or suppositions which are connected in some cases with presentations are the result of this and no other approach to the object due to the matter of the presentation which already attributed

something to the object, yet less clearly. I suppose that this view came from the fact that there were also other elements besides presentations which were used in the analysis of the structure of presentations. They were not extracted from mere complex experiences, which included them, and they were not completely separated from their related judgments. As a result, researchers consider pure presentations as attributed with such properties as “ascribing” features to the object, “interpreting” them, “attributing” features to the object, even “thinking” of it as such and such [*jako o takim a takim*]. It is suspicious for me to use these expressions, although not in a literal sense, to determine the functions of presentations. It is as if I wanted to describe the act of judging in detail and could not say they [i.e., these expressions] describe that in the act of judging I “present” something to myself. I think that presentations are qualitatively different from judgments, that they only present something while only judgments grasp it as such and as such and such; judgments can grasp something falsely, or truly. These are the features of psychological facts called judgments. (Filozofówna, 1931b, 64)

Indeed, Blaustein holds that an imaginative presentation intends its object as *already* equipped with certain properties. In the context of Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* play, which was analyzed above, this description holds for both constituted objects: either concrete words and movements of actors on stage, or the represented characters, like Caesar. So, the object is presented as such (*jako ten właśnie*) and as such and such (*jako taki a taki*). In this regard, Filozofówna states that this description of presentations formulated by Blaustein follows from the analysis of judgments and *not* presentations as such. For her, while judging, one “ascribes” features to the object, or one “interprets” the object as being such and such. Hence, Blaustein’s confusion follows from a vague way of describing judgments as “presenting” their objects. In contrast to Blaustein, then, Filozofówna holds that intending objects as such and such, i.e., the intentional directedness of a presentation, is possible *not* due to matter of the act, but rather due to judgments. To explain this, she refers to the following example: one believes that one sees her or his friend on the street, yet the person turns out to be a stranger; in both cases—i.e., at the very beginning of the experience and later—one has the same perceptual presentation and the same presenting content, but the content is interpreted differently due to different judgments (Filozofówna, 1931b, 64–65). All in all, presentations are *about* their objects, whereas judgments “grasp” or “apprehend” their objects (Filozofówna, 1931a, 188). With this in mind, she formulates an alternative description of the phenomenon of watching a theater play. Her crucial observation lies in comprehending this phenomenon as a complex experience of perceptual presentations *and* judgments. Let us assume that someone knows the cast of a theater play. For instance, she or he knows that X plays the role of Caesar, and Y plays the role of Cleopatra; at the beginning of the play, the viewer keeps judgments, as Filozofówna (1931b, 65) puts it, in the “center” of her or his consciousness; in turn,

perceptual presentations are “at the borderline of consciousness.” Later, however, one assumes *fictive* judgments, and this step changes one’s attitude towards the play. Now, one does not apprehend X and Y, but rather Caesar and Cleopatra. This apprehension is possible because of judgments, and *not* (imaginative) presentations. By claiming this, of course, Filozofówna implicitly accepts Meinong’s theory of assumptions, yet she understands that theory in a radical way: assumptions are to be understood as judgments that are a *necessary* moment of experience. She goes even further to analyze the phenomenon of hallucination. For Blaustein, as shown in Sect. 2, imaginative presentation is comparable with a hallucinatory experience, yet it entails no thetic belief. By contrast, for Filozofówna (1931a, 190–191), the difference does not lie in presentation, but in a different judgment; while hallucinating one *assumes* fictional judgments, but they are “at the borderline of consciousness” (*obwód świadomości*). Here hallucination equals one’s experience in a theater since one can assume different judgments and for this reason one can change her or his attitude to comprehending actors or fictional characters (Filozofówna, 1931a, 190). In any case, Filozofówna concludes that Blaustein’s idea of imaginative presentations is useless, since the idea can be equally described within Twardowski’s theory.

In her review of *Przedstawienia schematyczne i symboliczne* (*Schematic and Symbolic Presentations*)—published in *Polskie Archiwum Psychologii*—Filozofówna (1932b, 76) formulates a similar argument against Blaustein’s view on schematic and symbolic presentations. She claims that these presentations are *not* simple acts, as Blaustein explicitly holds, but are in fact complex acts that combine perceptual presentations with judgments. She questions Blaustein’s argument that if such a combination were possible, one has to accept another, additional judgment that states a similarity between the presenting (a schema, or a symbol) and represented objects (a schematized object, or a symbolized meaning). For her, judgments are always present in such an experience, yet merely as assumptions, which are not explicitly present. These assumptions are present, as Filozofówna puts it, “at the borderline of consciousness” (*obwód świadomości*), but as such they form a complex experience. Therefore, Blaustein is wrong in claiming that one has to actively judge the similarity; here, judgment is present not as an actual experience, but—phenomenologically speaking—only passively.

In his reply to Filozofówna’s criticism, Blaustein (1931b, 180–181; 1932, 366) holds that her reconstruction of his theory is inadequate. In this regard, he formulates *six* counterarguments. *Firstly*, her thesis—ascribed to him—that matter is the main element that determines the intentional relation is wrong. Blaustein’s original taxonomy is based rather on different relations between the presenting content and the

object of presentation. *Secondly*, Blaustein's main idea cannot be reduced to the parallel between presenting–apprehending and perception–judgment. In other words, Filozofówna's main argument that Blaustein obscures the nature of imaginative, symbolic, and schematic presentations as founded on judgments, does not take into account the phenomenological difference in experiencing different objects. He holds that if one accepts Filozofówna's view, one cannot understand the difference in experiencing, among others, a painting, a sculpture, a movie, a theater play, etc.; Blaustein states that differences here are unique (*swoiste*), suggesting that they lie in different ways or modes of experiencing. These different ways of experiencing are evident and, as Blaustein puts it (1932, 366), intuitively unquestionable (*intuicyjnie niewątpliwe*). *Thirdly*, Filozofówna's position is problematic since if only judgments enable one to ascribe features to the object given in presentation, then, one has to make an endless number of judgments before experiencing, because any object is attributed with all its features at the very beginning of experience (Blaustein, 1931b, 182–183). For this reason, presentations enable judgments, and not *vice versa*. *Fourthly*, Filozofówna's view that one is directed towards something undetermined in its features and that only judgments determine these features is problematic. This would suggest that judgments are preceded by undefined or general presentations, whereas judgments actually require rather concrete presentations (Blaustein, 1931b, 183). *Fifthly*, presentations cannot be true or false; only judgments can be either true or false. Contrary to Filozofówna, presentations are either adequate or inadequate (possibly *quasi*-adequate). Finally, Filozofówna's example of the hallucinatory experience presupposes that imagery does not change, which is problematic. Moreover, it does not explain the motive for changing the judgment or the change of attitude. All in all, Filozofówna is wrong in claiming that judgments dominate in aesthetic experience.

Filozofówna's criticism can be clarified in Blaustein's technical language as follows: she confuses two forms of representation, the logical and the psychological. Whereas the former is a logical relation, the latter lies in a subjective experience. For instance, the judgment "S is P" can be either true, or false, yet if one does not represent S as P or non-P, the judgment is incomprehensible for the subject; S is not given "as P." So, paradoxically, if Filozofówna is right in claiming that experience is determined by judgments, one falls in the fallacy of logical psychologism, which consists in reducing judgments (in a logical sense) to mere (psychic) presentations. Blaustein, in turn, while emphasizing a clear distinction between logical and psychological representations can abandon the charge of logical psychologism. Judgments, then, are made on the psychic basis of presentations, yet they are irreducible to presentations. Of course, presentations can justify judgments, yet they are not possible due to judgments.

4. HOW TO DESCRIBE LIVED EXPERIENCES?

In an interesting comment to the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate, Adam Wiegner (1932b) observes that both thinkers indeed discuss the structure of aesthetic experience, yet their polemic addresses methodological issues as well. For Wiegner (1932b, 131–132), they attempt to define basic methodological claims in the studies of consciousness. After a few decades of constant development, the descriptive, or—as he puts it—functional psychology of Brentano, Twardowski, and Husserl, obviously proved its claims and priority over the phenomenal psychology formulated by Mach. Whereas the former is focused on *acts*, the latter investigates *contents* of consciousness. Both Filozofówna and Blaustein, then, describe acts as intentional phenomena. According to Wiegner (1932b, 133), the main disagreement between them arises around the question of *how* to describe acts: either descriptions are always partial, and for this reason they *have* to be supplemented by hypotheses (Filozofówna), or rather they address a *unity*, or a *whole* given directly, and for this reason a phenomenologist should accept as few hypotheses as possible (if any) (Blaustein).

In her criticism, Filozofówna indeed accuses Blaustein of putting forward too many unjustified hypotheses to describe imaginative presentations. First of all, she criticizes the concept of matter as an inseparable part of lived experiences. From Filozofówna's point of view (1931b, 64), Blaustein introduces this hypothetical element to explain the phenomenon of grasping or apprehending the presenting content. In her reply to Blaustein, she even labels matter's function as the "hypothetical function of hypothetical matter" (Filozofówna, 1931a, 187). In contrast to Blaustein, she states that matter functions just as judgments do, and only judgments can be found in lived experiences. She goes even further by claiming that a variety of clear and unclear judgments is present in every experience at once and it is impossible to count them all (Filozofówna, 1932b, 77). If one accepts judgments as moments of lived experiences, the phenomenon of directedness of lived experiences is *explained*, and no further descriptions are necessary. On the contrary, description has to be as "simple" as possible. Filozofówna writes:

Mental phenomena are such an elusive reality that if one tries to put them into words, one is condemned to use metaphors. In such conditions, it is still doubtful whether there are "accurate" descriptions or unjustified hypotheses, and it is impossible to exclude this possibility in many cases. Perhaps the simplicity of the description, which here often serves as an explanation, should be decisive. (Filozofówna, 1932c, 367)

Given the postulate of "simplicity," Filozofówna finally postulates to apply "Ockham's razor" to Blaustein's imaginative presentations since such presentations can be

described in a simpler way, i.e., as a combination or a whole composed of perceptual presentations *and* judgments. Since this argument was discussed above in Sect. 3, I will now focus on methodological issues only. It has to be added that the postulate raised by Filozofówna plays yet another role. For her, descriptions formulated by Blaustein display *subjectivism*, or *latitude*. Filozofówna (1931a, 188) states that even if Blaustein holds that *he* sees imaginative presentations, *she* does not. To omit this problem, one has to accept a theory that *explains* in the *simplest* way a whole group of lived experiences.

Filozofówna is right in claiming that Blaustein accepts hypotheses in describing phenomena. In his *Przedstawienia imaginatywne (Imaginative Presentations)* he explicitly describes the matter of an act as a hypothetical element, which is ascribed to the function of apprehending the object (Blaustein, 1930, 64). But, again, the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate does not address the problem of *whether* hypotheses are necessary, but rather *how* they can be verified and justified in phenomenology. Blaustein (1930, 8, fn. 1) holds that hypotheses are “absolutely essential and useful,” but they are justified *only* on the basis of a rigorous description. For him, a description *elucidates* a phenomenon which can be *explained* only by hypotheses. So, if one asks about the functions or causes of a phenomenon, one has to overcome the descriptive level to accept a hypothesis (Blaustein, 1931a, 144). Let me emphasize clearly that for Blaustein a hypothesis is justified *on the basis* of a concrete description, whereas for Filozofówna a theory (which is accepted at the very beginning of research) is sufficient for accepting a hypothesis. In a word, according to Blaustein, a description is the ultimate justificatory factor in phenomenology. For this reason, he does not accept Filozofówna’s postulate to use “Ockham’s razor” since this tool is useless in the field of phenomena; rather, one has to describe phenomena in their richness (Blaustein, 1932, 366).

To omit the problem of subjectivism, Blaustein attempts to show that description is direct and held within psychological reduction, which consists in suspending the subjective perspective. For Blaustein, the fundamental task of phenomenology is to describe what is experienced and so to *directly* account for the moments of lived experiences. The description is based on introspection and retrospection by taking note of what is currently experienced (Blaustein, 1931b, 184, 185, fn. 1). Blaustein (1931b, 183) understands introspection as clear and explicit seeing and considers it as infallible. Retrospection also allows for capturing ongoing lived experiences. Thanks to the direct nature of both forms of cognition, description is supposed to be free of (unnecessary) hypotheses, and focus on what is given. To phrase it differently, description reveals the structures of consciousness that are not mere psychic entities of an

individual person, but also surpass the particular life of an individual. This last point is evident in Blaustein's discussion with Filozofówna, when he implicitly formulates the postulate of the universality of psychological description. For him this means that universality entails an analysis of *types* of experiences, instead of *essences* of phenomena. The procedure enables one to reject the objection of subjectivism, which reduces the object to mere concrete psychic experiences. It may be added that the description postulated by Blaustein is based on whether it is adequate for the investigated object and "fertile," i.e., whether it can be applied to "numerous related problems" (Blaustein, 1932, 366). By contrast, for Filozofówna, the description is "simple" if it entails a hypothesis which enables one to exclude vague notions, and reduce (*via* "Ockham's razor") unnecessary phenomena.

5. CONCLUSION

At the end, let me note that a few years after her reviews were published, Filozofówna (1935, 180) confessed that her debate with Blaustein was left without any decisive conclusion. Despite this, the debate is still naturally valuable for a number of reasons. First of all, it marked an interesting chapter in the history of early phenomenology since it presented a rare moment of confrontation between two distinct, yet intertwined approaches: descriptive psychology and phenomenology. Even though phenomenology was born in a dialogue with descriptive psychology, it defined its basics in opposition to the latter. After all, even Husserl struggled with the label of a "descriptive psychologist" for decades (cf. Fissette, 2018). What is the difference between both approaches? In their debate, Filozofówna, as well as Blaustein attempted to present essential differences between their views and they tried to formulate their arguments clearly. Given this, the main task of the present study was to analyze the Filozofówna–Blaustein debate exactly as a confrontation of descriptive psychology with phenomenology. My further aim was to define both positions as presented in a series of papers. How, then, can we summarize the debate?

Filozofówna's criticism of Blaustein addressed two main points of his phenomenology of aesthetic experience. First, he seemed to be wrong in claiming that there are different types of presentations—say, imaginative, symbolic, or schematic—involved in different acts. For Filozofówna, Blaustein comprehended acts as intentional, i.e., as presenting their object as "such and such," but by doing so, he confused presentations with judgments. Only judgments serve to grasp or apprehend objects. By contrast, acts are at least *about* objects. Consequently, Blaustein's description can refer to perceptual presentations and judgments as sufficient to understand aesthetic experience.

Second, Blaustein adopted an ineffective method since he was too hasty in accepting unjustified hypotheses. According to Filozofówna, hypotheses have to “simplify” a description by accepting as few elements as possible. Blaustein’s descriptions, however, were—in her view—too complicated, since he claimed to accept too many classes of mental phenomena. Of course, both charges followed from Filozofówna’s theoretical background: Meinong’s theory of assumptions and Witwicki’s (1930, 258, 428) descriptive psychology which accepted the view that judgments are *necessary* elements of perception. In his response to Filozofówna, Blaustein attempted to formulate such descriptions which make evident the necessity of accepting imaginative, symbolic and schematic presentations besides perceptive presentations and judgments. Next, he tried to show that the descriptive method used by him had a justificatory function since it was rooted in introspection, and as such it provided evident, i.e., infallible observations. In contrast to Filozofówna, he claimed that such a description enabled one to accept some hypotheses, but not *vice versa*. In doing so, Blaustein followed his teachers, Twardowski and Husserl. Even if neither Filozofówna nor Blaustein did change their original positions, this study made clear the methodological reasons why the debate was seemingly inconclusive.

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