Is What We See in the Picture the Same as What the Picture Presents?

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Introduction

In this paper, first, I want to claim that, if an experience of *seeing-in* is a *substantively* cognitively penetrated form of perceptual experience, as Wollheim (2003a) claimed, then *pace* Brown (2010) and Hopkins (1998:chap.6,2003:161), what one sees in the picture not merely matches, but properly coincides with what the picture presents, i.e., its *figurative* content. Secondly, I also want to claim that this coincidence does not mean that seeing-in turns out to be either a form of mental imagery or a form of imagination, paradigmatically socially-based (typically in terms of make-believe games), as some people have claimed (Walton 1990, Dorsch 2016). For, by expanding what Wollheim said on this concern, I will stress that a seeing-in experience is a *sui generis* perceptual experience, notably, a properly fusional *twofold* perceptual experience, in which the configuration fold (CF) constrains the recognitional fold (RF) as regards their respective contents. (Wollheim grasped this point only partially, in his mere talking of such folds as inseparable: 1987:46).

The architecture of this paper is the following. In Section 1, I argue for the basically unitarianist idea that what one sees in a picture coincides with what the picture presents, the *Marriage approach* in Hopkins' (1998:128) terminology. In Section 2, I claim that this coincidence does not undermine the perceptual character of the seeing-in experience, although *sui generis*.

1. An Argument in Favor of Marriagism

For Wollheim (1980,1987,1998,2003a,2003b), a seeing-in experience is a *sui generis* twofold yet genuine perceptual experience. For it is made out of two different folds, the *configurational fold* (CF), in which one perceptually grasps the picture's *vehicle*, the physical basis of a picture, and the *recognitional fold* (RF), in which one perceptually grasps the scene that a picture presents (Nanay 2022), which Wollheim takes as identical with the picture's *subject*. As Wollheim (1987:46) said, this distinctive character of the seeing-in experience has to do with the fact that neither fold coincides with the corresponding perceptual experience, either of the picture's vehicle or of the picture's subject, taken in isolation. So, entertaining this experience amounts to entertaining a proper *fusion* experience, in which the two folds are interpenetrated (Voltolini 2020a): "[t]he two folds occur simultaneously, as part of an integrated whole" (Hopkins 2003:161).

Now, two examples provided by Wollheim himself (2003b) contribute to raise the question as to whether what one sees in a picture not merely matches, but properly coincides with what the picture presents, the picture's subject in Wollheim's terms; as one may further qualify it, the *figurative* content of a picture. I merely speak of figurative content, not of *depictive* (or representational) content, to take into account the case of *pareidolias*, i.e., items that are not pictorial representations viz. *depictions*, yet allow for a proper seeing-in experience. In the classical examples Wollheim borrows from Leonardo, pareidolias are experientially affected by seeing-in in one's looking "at damp-

stained walls or at stones or broken colour and discern there scenes of battle or violent action and mysterious landscapes" (1980:145). Thus, although pareidolias are not depictions because they are not representations of something, they have figurative content just as depictions, while however failing to have depictive content, unlike depictions themselves.

As regards the above question, the first example is Matisse's *The Green Stripe*, a pictorial representation of Matisse's wife (in front of a multicolored background) (Fig. 1). The second example is Parmigianino's *Madonna with the Long Neck*, a classical pictorial representation of Virgin Mary with her child (in a crowd of people) (Fig. 2).
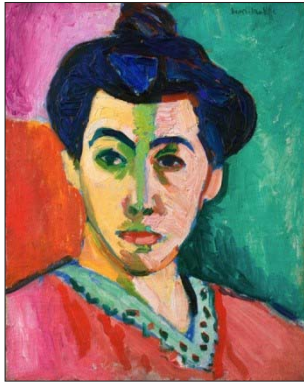
Fig. 1. (from Artchive)   **Fig. 2.** (from Artstor)

For *marriagists*, let me so call those who defend the Marriage approach, what one sees in these pictures not merely matches, but properly coincides with what these pictures respectively present; namely, first, the face and the chest of an ordinary woman on a multicolored background, and second, a hieratic woman holding her child on her knees while being adored by a crowd of people. *Pace* Hopkins' (2003:161) reservations, Wollheim himself (2003b) seems to endorse this approach. Definitely, for him the two paintings have an ordinary figurative content: "[w]hen Parmigianino painted the Madonna with a long neck, the Madonna whom he represented is not, despite the title given to his picture, a longnecked Madonna. When Matisse painted a stroke of green down his wife's face, he was not representing a woman who had a green line down her face." (2003b:143). Since for him the figurativity of a picture is fixed by the relevant seeing-in experience, one may plausibly guess that for him, the ordinary figurative contents that the paintings respectively present match or even coincide with what one sees in the respective seeing-in experiences.[1] Wittgenstein is perhaps even more explicit on this concern. In the black-and-white photo of some individuals, he says, "I saw […] a boy with slicked-back blond hair and a dirty light-coloured jacket, and a man with dark hair, standing in front of a machine which was made in part of castings painted black, and in part of finished, smooth axles, gears, etc., and next to it a grating made of light galvanized wire. The finished iron parts were iron coloured, the boy's hair was blond, the castings black, the grating zinc-coloured, despite the fact that everything was depicted simply in lighter and darker shades of the photographic paper." (1977:III§117)

For *separatists* instead, those who defend the *Separation account* (Brown 2010, Hopkins 1998:128,2003), the answer to that question is instead the opposite. For them, the situation with such pictures is just like the one that, *pace* Wittgenstein, affects black-and-white pictures. What one sees in all these pictures respectively – certain black-and-white scenes, a green-striped female face standing on her chest, a long-necked lady with a baby and some people around – differs from what the picture presents – normally colored scenarios, the face and the chest of an ordinary distinguished lady, a hieratic lady with her child faced by some people around.[2]

In order to address the question, note immediately that with pareidolias, the situation is the same. In the following case, do we see a human face in the Martian rocks that the pareidolia also presents, or is such a face merely what the pareidolia presents, since what we effectively see in such rocks is rather a para–human face (Fig. 3)?

Fig. 3. https://en.wikipedia. org/wiki/Cydonia_(Mars)

Moreover, focusing on pareidolias is relevant for our present purposes. For the fact that the problem may arise also as regards pareidolias shows that a certain way to interpret Separatism must be immediately discarded. For some people, instead of talking of a picture as merely involving the two items respectively mobilized by the two folds of the seeing–in experience, i.e., the picture's vehicle and the picture's subject viz. its figurative content, a third item must be involved as well; namely, the picture's *Sujet*, i.e., what the picture is *about*, its depictive content (Husserl 2006, Wiesing 2010, Voltolini 2015, Nanay 2018, Kulvicki 2020). In the above examples of Matisse and Parmigianino, the respective *Sujets* of such pictures are M.me Matisse and the Virgin Mary with Jesus. Yet in their not being depictions, i.e., in their failing to be pictorial representations *of* something, pareidolias lack a *Sujet*. Hence, one cannot reinterpret in the wake of Separatism the difference between what one sees in a picture and what the picture presents as a difference between what one sees in the picture taken as being the same as what the picture presents, on the one hand, and what the picture is about on the other hand (Husserl 2006, Nanay 2018). For as I said, the problem exemplified by Wollheim's examples and also by the Wittgenstein's one may also arise with pareidolias, which however lack aboutness, as we have just seen.

But once we put the *Sujet* aside, who is right between marriagists and separatists? In what follows, I will put forward an argument in favor of Marriagism, which is in line with things that Wollheim said on this concern.

The argument runs as follows. If what one sees in the relevant pictures differed from what the pictures present, as separatists claim, one would see odd things in such pictures. For example, in Matisse's case, in his picture one would see a woman with a green-striped face (in front of a multicolored background), while in Parmigianino's case, one would see a long–necked woman (along with other people). One may call such things *aliens*, by admittedly using this word metaphorically. Yet unlike *other* cases, one does not see aliens in the above pictures. Indeed, there is a difference between the case of such pictures and the case of other pictures in which one really sees aliens. This difference has to do with how one *completes* what one sees in a picture. Hence, what one sees in such pictures coincides with what those pictures present.

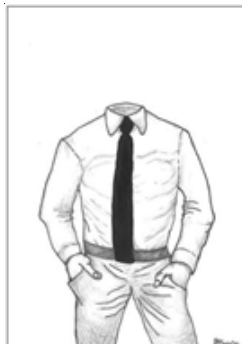To prove my point, compare the difference between these two pictures (Figs. 4–5).

Fig. 4. (by courtesy of Paola Tosti) **Fig. 5.** (by courtesy of Paola Tosti)

In Fig. 4, one sees an alien masculine beheaded body on a white background. Yet in Fig. 5, one does not see a beheaded alien on a white background; instead, one sees an ordinary masculine body on that background. For one opportunely *completes*[3] what one sees in the picture, by adding to it something that corresponds to no painted areas of the picture. This difference corresponds to the difference between the *committments* one endorses while seeing such pictures (Block 1983, Lopes 1996:118). For such committments show how what one sees in a picture must be completed. As regards the first picture, one is committed to the (presented) *absence* of the head of a masculine body: in the picture, one sees a beheaded masculine body.[4] While as regards the second picture, one is committed to the (presented) *presence* of the head of a masculine body: in the picture, one sees a masculine body ordinarily having a head on its top. Granted, performing such a completion does not mean that all details concerning what one sees in the picture viz. what the picture presents, i.e., its subject, must be filled. Indeed, there are pictorial detalis to which one is *inexplicitly not committed*, in the sense that "[i]f it does not go into the matter of *F*–ness, [the picture] is 'inexplicitly non-committal' with respect to *F*" (Lopes 1996:118). For example, as regards that picture, one is implicitly non-committed to whether the (presented) head is haired.[5] Likewise, as regards the first picture, on the one hand one is committed to the *presence* of the (presented) body's lower parts of the legs. Yet on the other hand, one is inexplicitly not committed as regards e.g. the (presented) legs' length. All in all, in both cases what one sees in the pictures coincides with what such pictures present: definitely an alien (among some other things) in the first case, but an ordinary individual (among some other things) in the second case. Now, in allowing one to see in the picture what it presents; namely, an ordinary subject, not an alien one, this second case is perfectly analogous to both the Matisse and the Parmigianino cases, which prompted separatists to postulate – erroneously, to my mind – a difference between what one sees in the picture and what the picture presents. Ditto for the case of a black-and-white picture. As Wittgenstein expressly claimed, in his example, due to the shade contrasts occurring in that picture's vehicle, one is committed to the color of the (presented) boy's hair, although one is implicitly non-committed e.g. to the (presented) boy's particular age.

What I have said precisely accords with what Wollheim meant by saying that one of the features of the seeing–in experience is that such an experience infringes the *localization requirement*: there may be no parts of an *x* in which an *y* is seen in it, since the *x* is not cropped to the contours of its subject (1980:141,150-1). According to Wollheim, one of the cases showing that seeing–in does not fulfill such a requirement occurs when what one sees in the picture viz. what the picture presents is cut off by the frame (*ib.*), which is precisely what happens with Fig. 5. In Wollheim's example, this is shown by Rosselli's *Way to Calvary* (Fig. 6), in which, for example, the presented cross one sees in it

Fig. 6. https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosselli_Cosimo,_Cristo_spogliato_delle_sue_vesti,_Salita_di_Cristo_al_monte_Calvario,_15383,_39729_gw.jpg

is partially cut off by the frame. By looking at it, hardly anyone is obsessed by the thought of how the poor guy might have been crucified via by the 'alien' short cross one allegedly sees in the picture. For in it, anyone sees an ordinary longer cross instead.

Of course, if what one sees in the picture coincides with what the picture presents, marriagists must alternatively account for the difference that separatists want to locate by distinguishing between the two things. For the marriagist, that difference mobilizes *the picture's vehicle* as being different in a relevant sense from what one sees in the picture viz. what the picture presents. While entertaining a seeing–in experience, in seeing the vehicle in the CF of that experience, one may certainly see colors and shapes that differ from the colors and shapes that are grasped and attributed to the picture's subject while seeing it in the RF of that

experience. To begin with, as for a black-and-white picture, in the CF of the relevant seeing-in experience one sees black-and-white patches as scattered across the picture's vehicle, while in the RF of that experience one sees ordinarily colored scenes constituting what the picture presents. As is proved by the fact that, if that picture changed its colors by turning its black-and-white patches into faded ones, in the seeing-in experience this change would be attributed to the vehicle, in its CF, not to the picture's subject in its RF. For that subject would remain identical.[6] Ditto for the Matisse and the Parmigianino cases. In Matisse's painting, green is instantiated in (a certain area of) its vehicle seen in the CF of its seeing-in experience, not by the presented face, while in Parmigianino's painting the stretched line is instantiated in (a certain area of) its vehicle seen in the CF of its seeing-in experience, not by the presented neck.

At this point, on behalf of separatists one may ask to the marriagist what justifies their idea that what one sees in the relevant picture is an ordinary object, not an alien one. Perhaps, separatists might go on saying, this may happen in cases like those pointed out by the Matisse and the Parmigianino cases. But how can this be the case with a stick figure, as in the case (Fig. 7) of this picture of the former US President Donald Trump, which is patently taken as a sort of caricature of him (Hopkins 1998:124,128)?

Or, to put it alternatively, why is it that in Fig. 5 we do not see an alien body, just as is admittedly the case in Fig. 4?

On behalf of Wollheim, the answer lies in the idea that the seeing-in experience is *substantively* cognitively penetrated, in particular with respect to its RF. By "substantively cognitively penetrated", I do not mean the facile thesis that the conceptual content of the cognitive central states of a system somehow affects the RF of a seeing-in experience. Instead, I mean the more demanding thesis that the RF of that experience i) has a conceptual content grounded in the cognitive central states of a system;[7] ii) that affects the process underlying that experience as a whole – in other words, such a conceptual import does not merely qualify what some people call a *post-perceptual* phase of a perceptual experience, as on the contrary it admittedly happens with ordinary perceptual experiences (Pylyshyn 2003, Raftopoulos 2009), but it constitutes the content of the RF of

Fig. 7. (by courtesy of Paola Tosti)

a seeing-in experience. As Wollheim glosses: "whatever credence we might give to the role of modularity in perception in general, there is obviously a level of complexity above which it doesn't apply, and there is reason to think that picture perception lies outside its scope" (2003a:10).

That such a substantive cognitive penetration affects the seeing-in's RF is shown by the fact that, such a penetration explains the aforementioned commitments occurring in the relevant seeing-in experiences. Let me start with black-and-white pictures. It is because one knows that ordinary objects and persons are colored that, as Wittgenstein stressed, one sees colored items in the RF of the relevant seeing-in experiences with such pictures. If one did not have that knowledge, one might well see alien black-and-white items in such pictures. Likewise for the case with Wollheim's own example of Rosselli's painting. It is because we independently know the crucifixion story that we see an ordinarily long cross in the condemned's hands. If we didn't know that story, we might take the picture as presenting a shorter cross. Ditto with the Matisse and the Parmigianino cases. It is because one knows how human being normally look like that one sees the face of an ordinary distinguished lady in the first picture and the neck of an ordinary hieratic lady in the second picture. If one did not have that knowledge, one might well see a green striped face in the first picture and an elongated neck in the second picture.

Curiously enough, in this respect pareidolias are on a par with pictures. If one didn't know how Catholic religious authorities are normally dressed, one could hardly say that one sees a papal silhouette in this arrangement of flames (Fig. 8).

Moreover, that the RF of seeing-in experience is substantively cognitively penetrated can be proved utterly independently of the pictorial cases that marriagists interpret as showing that what one sees in a picture coincides with what the picture presents. In fact, if one could not mobilize the relevant concepts, no RF would emerge in one's perception. As this example from Matisse again (Fig. 9) shows.

Fig. 8. https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2007/
oct/19/poles-see-john-paul-ii-in-bonfire-photo/

Fig. 9. (from Artstor)

As regards this Matissean painting, one can perceive certain elements in front of some other elements; thus, a certain 3D-grouping, i.e., a certain figure/ground segmentation, is grasped in that perception. Yet it is unclear whether one can see anything in this 3D-grouping distribution, so as to have a proper twofold seeing-in experience of this painting. For it is unclear whether one possesses suitable concepts that would help to see a scene in that painting as what it would present.[8]

2. Seeing-in Is Genuinely Perceptual, not Imaginative

So far, so good. Yet at this point a different question arises. If in order to justify the coincidence between what one sees in a picture and what the picture presents one must hold that the RF of a seeing-in experience is substantively cognitively penetrated, what distinguishes it from a form of visually-based mental imagery or anyway of imagination, paradigmatically a form of socially-based imagination articulated in make-believe games, typically one in which one makes believe that the perception of the picture's vehicle is the perception of the picture's subject (Walton 1973,1990, Dorsch 2016)? Granted, in the former case mental imagery floats free. Yet in the latter case, as Walton has been insisting, imagination is grounded, even socially, in the properties that qualify the perception of the vehicle. For whatever is imaginatively true in a socially shared make-believe game of the picture's subject depends on what is really true of the picture's vehicle. So, if it is really true that the vehicle has certain colors and shapes, it is make-believedly true that the subject has an individual of a certain kind endowed with corresponding colors and shapes.

Granted, Wollheim straightforwardly rejected this imaginative option in its first variant, the one appealing to mental imagery. For, he says, seeing a subject in a picture is unlike the activity of mentally imagining something in front of something else, as in the case of Rorschach tests (1980:138). For example, to see a bat in Durer's 1522 picture is unlike to mentally imagine a bat by virtue of seeing a certain patches on a canvas having certain colors and shapes.

Yet in order to stress the difference between the two cases, Wollheim's appeals to the fact that in the latter case there is no standard of correctness, as set by the author's intention (*ib.*). But this move is not enough to utterly dismiss an imaginative account of seeing-in, at least of its RF, by sticking to the second variant of the option, i.e., the make-believe account of imagination. For, as we have seen before, pareidolias also lack a standard of correctness, yet they are affected by a proper seeing-in experience.

So, here is another reason to show that, as regards its RF, seeing-in is not a form of imagination. On the one hand, seeing the Rorschach figure may prompt one not only to freely mentally imagine, but also to groundedly make-believedly see not only a bat, but also a butterfly or whatever else. For the grounding relation holding in make-believe is simply a dependence relation of what is imaginatively true on what is really true. If it is really true that one sees so and so (namely, certain features of the picture's vehicle), it is imaginatively true that one sees such and such (namely, certain features of the picture's subject, whatever they are). Yet on the other hand, seeing in the CF of a seeing-in experience a figure of a bat-like silhouette standing out of a background not only grounds, but *constrains* that in the RF of that experience one only sees a bat flying in front of a background. Wittgenstein (1980) stressed a similar point as regards ambiguous pictures: in the famous duck-rabbit picture one can see either a duck (in one visual organization of its vehicle) or a rabbit (in another visual organization of that vehicle), but nothing more; not a rhino, for instance. With pareidolias, the situation is the same: seeing in the Martian pareidolia a face and not, say, a cat, is constrained by seeing in its vehicle a face-like silhouette.

Now, the most suitable way of capturing how the above sort of constraint works in the case of a seeing-in experience is to start from a suggestion from Wollheim that Wollheim himself unfortunately did not articulate; namely, his already recalled saying (1987) that the two folds of a seeing-in experience are inseparable. For such an inseparability, or better interpenetration, can be accounted for at the level of the *contents* of such folds. The figurative, admittedly *conceptual*, content that is visually grasped in the RF of such an experience, given substantive cognitive penetration, is constrained by the *non-conceptual* content that is visually grasped in the CF of that experience.

Let me explain this point by reverting to the case of 'aspect dawning' pictures; namely, the case in which at a certain moment a subject 'lights up' in the picture's vehicle. This 'lighting up' is definitely constrained in the following sense. Only when one sees the vehicle as enriched by certain *grouping properties* – the properties for a certain array of elements to be arranged in a certain direction along a certain dimension, in what then becomes the CF of a seeing-in perception having a non-conceptual content – involving a certain silhouette in a certain context –, one also sees a subject in it, in what then becomes the RF of that perception having a conceptual content – involving that there is a *F* in a certain scene. For example, only when one groups certain black and white spots of the vehicle by means of certain subjective contours that enable one to see the vehicle as containing *some horsish silhouettes* standing in front of a certain background, in that vehicle so enriched one can see *a group of horses* (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10. (by courtesy of Paola Tosti)

In (2005), Lopes has criticized the idea that 'aspect dawning' pictures are affected by a proper seeing-in experience. Indeed according to him, the experience of such a picture only exhibits *pseudo-twofoldness*. For according to him, the pseudo design-seeing component of the alleged CF of that

experience, the one that allegedly grasps the design properties of the vehicle, i.e., the properties that should be responsible for what one sees in the vehicle, is not independent of what one allegedly sees in the picture, hence of the alleged RF itself of that experience.

Yet for me that this criticism is not correct. As regards 'aspect-dawning' pictures, first, the CF of their seeing-in experience is at most *weakly* cognitively penetrated (MacPherson 2012). For the relevant concepts – in my example, the concept *horse* – are only responsible for the change in phenomenal character of the perception of the vehicle from time t, when one sees no picture, to time t', when that perception becomes the CF of the seeing-in perceptual experience by means of which one sees a picture. Yet such concepts do not determine the CF's content, which remains non-conceptual. Second, that CF undergoes *cognitive penetration lite* (MacPherson 2012). For such a conceptual influence is only *contingent*: other tokens of the same CF may be not penetrated, not even weakly. As in the following case of the double cross (Fig. 11), in which seeing a certain 3D grouping of the vehicle's black-and-white triangles rather than another one may take place without any conceptual triggering, as Wittgenstein (1980:I§970) originally stressed.
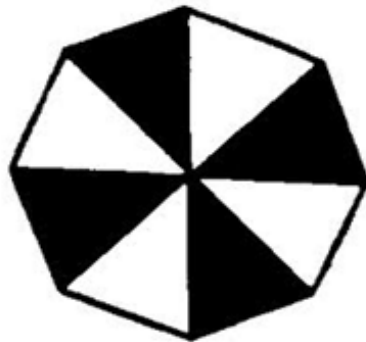

Fig. 11. (personal drawing)

So, even as regards 'aspect-dawning' pictures, the design-seeing component of the CF of their seeing-in experience is independent of what one sees in the picture, hence of the RF of that experience. In any case, my point on constraint is independent of 'aspect dawning' pictures, which for me simply show vividly how the content of the RF of a seeing-in experience is constrained by the content of the CF of that experience. In this respect, let's start from pareidolias again. In the RF of a seeing-in experience, one can see a human face in a Martian rock (Fig. 3) only by virtue of the fact that, in that experience's CF, one organizes facely the relevant elements of the rock.[9] Second, let's move to a proper picture that is similar to a pareidolia but for the fact that it is a pictorial representation *of* something. In the RF of a seeing-in experience, one can see a human being in the aforementioned stick figure of the former US President Donald Trump (Fig. 7), only by virtue of the fact that, in that experience's CF, one organizes humanly the colors and shapes that the vehicle of such a figure instantiates.

Once this is the case with stick figures, the point can be generalized to any picture whatsoever. For example, as for the Rosselli's painting (Fig. 6), in the RF of the seeing-in experience of it one could not see a convict holding a wooden cross in his hands if one had not already arranged suitably, in that experience's CF, the colors and shapes of the patches that are painted in its vehicle.

Conclusions

In this paper, firstly, I have defended a marriagist approach stemming from Wollheim, according to which what one sees in a picture not merely matches, but properly coincides with what that

picture presents. My argument ultimately relies on the independently proved idea that the second fold of a seeing-in experience, the recognitional fold, is substantively cognitively penetrated, as Wollheim originally maintained. Secondly, I have claimed that a seeing-in experience so conceived can remain genuinely perceptual, although in the *sui generis* form of a twofold experience as Wollheim wished, only if one can explain how the conceptual content of its RF is keyed in a suitably non-conceptual content of its CF.

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Notes

[1] Indeed, Wollheim ascribes the non-ordinary elements mobilized by those paintings not to their figurative content, fixed by what he there labels the *Representational How*, which "corresponds to a property of the what of representation" (2003b:143), but to what he there labels the *Presentational How*, which he qualifies as follows: "It may reflect a range of things from the expressive vision of the artist, through the artistic pressures of the day, to the artist's technical limitations." (*ivi*).

[2] I choose to focus on the Wollheim cases, since for me they paradigmatically exemplify the situation at issue. Granted, they are not the only cases. As Hopkins (1998:124-8) remarks, cases of pictorial indeterminacy stress the same point. According to him, for marriagists the figurative content of certain pictures is as indeterminate as what one sees in them, while for separatists is the other way around. Yet I am not sure that for marriagists such cases must be interpreted as Hopkins claims. One may rather claim that for marriagists the figurative content of such pictures is just as *determinate* as what one sees in them. See what I will say concerning the following figures 4, 6, and perhaps even 7.

[3] This completion is *amodal*, since no sense modality is involved in it.

[4] For the purposes of this paper, I want to remain neutral as regards whether in that perceptual committment one really *sees* (presented) absences, or one should conceive that committment differently. For a positive answer to this question, see Farennikova (2013,2019).

[5] Hopkins (1998:122,128) takes inexplicit non-committment as a form of content indeterminacy, for him affecting only what the picture presents. This committment differs from *explicit* non-committment, which regards cases of (presented) occlusions. Consider Fig.5 again. In seeing it, one is explicitly not committed on whether there is, say, a (presented) mole on the (presented) left-hand shoulder. For the (presented) dress (presentedly) occludes that (presented) shoulder.

[6] But if there were two pictures indistinguishable in the CFs of their seeing-in experiences that present the very same greyish scene, yet such that the first picture is physically black-and-white while the second picture is physically in color, would such pictures be different in the RFs of such experiences – in the RF of the first experience one would see black-and-white individuals, while in that of the second experience one would see individuals of no particular color – as for Hopkins marriagists are implausibly forced to hold (1998:125)? No. For the background knowledge regarding those pictures and concerning that scene would remain the same. Granted, such pictures may differ in the properties ascribed to what they *depict* – a non-colored vs. a greishly colored *Sujet* – as in Hopkins' example, which mobilizes photos. But as we have seen before, *depictive*

content is out of our present concern, which instead regards whether what we see in a picture coincides with its *figurative* content. The story would be different if one assumed that such pictures present different situations for which a different background knowledge holds (say, a situation knowingly concerning ordinarily colored individuals and one in which individuals are knowingly greyish).

[7] Condition i) is remindful of Pylyshyn's thesis "[i]f a system is cognitively penetrable then the function it computes is sensitive, in a semantically coherent way, to the organism's goals and beliefs, that is, it can be altered in a way that bears some logical relation to what the person knows." (Pylyshyn 1999:343).

[8] Notoriously, Wollheim had been tempted to answer this problem affirmatively. For in one of his last papers he distinguishes between two forms of 'seen-in' contents of a picture. The former, which he calls figurative content, provides the paradigmatic 'seen-in' item of a painting, what is grasped, as he says, through a 'non-abstract' concept: "table, map, window, woman". The latter, which he calls representational content, provides a nonparadigmatic 'seen-in' item of a painting, something that is not grasped through such a concept. For Wollheim, abstract paintings have only representational content, while figurative paintings have both (2001:131). For other arguments in favor of the thesis that seeing-in is substantively cognitively penetrated, cf. Voltolini (2015,2020b).

[9] The fact that seeing-in experiences also occur with pareidolias shows that the CF's content is entirely non-conceptual. For in the case of pareidolias, one does not have to suppose that one is facing a *picture*, which would force the CF to have an at least partially conceptual content.

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