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Husserl's *Ideen*

Husserl's *Ideen*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PHENOMENOLOGY

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Editors

Husserl's *Ideen*



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Preface

This work celebrates the centennial of Edmund Husserl's *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, I. Buch, Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie* (1913), arguably the founding text of the still robustly continuing phenomenological tradition. As our Introduction explains, most of the chapters first concisely show how the major followers in the phenomenological tradition related to the *Ideen* and then the authors of these chapters go on to offer substantial contributions in or on phenomenology.

We organizers of this celebration are deeply grateful to the contributors for their chapters and patience during its long development and also to Dr. Daniel Marcelle and Mr. Elliot Shaw for help as research assistants in ways too many to count.

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Introduction

Although phenomenology itself as a movement began well before the appearance of Husserl's *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, I. Buch, Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie* in 1913, it is no exaggeration to say that this work, which Husserl himself considered the definitive formulation of his whole philosophical project of transcendental phenomenology, the methodological keystone of which is the transcendental reduction, has since served as the starting point for discussions about Husserl's phenomenological approach and phenomenology in general. It was published as the first volume of the *Jahruch für Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, which would remain by far the most important venue for publications in phenomenology for the next two decades in Germany, i.e., until shortly after Husserl's retirement in 1928. The contributions in this volume demonstrate not only that, but also how this was the case for most of the major figures in the twentieth century tradition that much later would come to be known in the English-speaking world as "Continental Philosophy." In fact, much of what unites this wider tradition up through the present day is the reception and critical reaction to the basic concepts and approaches introduced there for the first time. What also becomes clear is that the companion work, posthumously published much later as Book Two of the same work and widely known as *Ideen II*, was also a strong influence on several of these key figures, although to a lesser extent and often without explicitly being recognized as such.

The Project and First Effect of the *Ideen*

Edmund Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900–1901) was chiefly devoted to the theory of logic and mathematics, brought him international recognition, and gave rise to the first phenomenological "schools," first one around Husserl himself at Göttingen and then, inspired by his work, a second one at Munich. Ludwig Landgrebe—research assistant to Husserl in the 1920s and one of his closest

collaborators and most loyal followers until the end of Husserl's life—reports, however, that while still at Göttingen,

Husserl drafted the outline of phenomenology as the universal philosophical science. Its fundamental methodological principle was what Husserl called the phenomenological reduction. ... As such, the reduction reveals the ego for which everything has meaning. Hence, phenomenology took on the character of a new style of transcendental philosophy, which repeats and improves Kant's mediation between Empiricism and Rationalism in a modern way. Husserl presented its program and its systematic outline in the *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* (1913) ... of which, however, only the first part was completed. (Completion of the second part was hindered by the outbreak of World War I). With this work, Husserl wanted to give his students a manual. The result, however, was just the opposite: most of his students took Husserl's turn to transcendental philosophy as a lapse back into the old system of thought and therefore rejected it. Because of this turn, as well as the war, the phenomenological school fell apart.¹

Landgrebe's assessment confirms the centrality of *Ideen I* in Husserl's own mind as the key to his project and in the minds of those who chose to or declined to adopt this work as a guide-book for their own work. In retrospect, looking back at the history of Continental Philosophy throughout the twentieth and now into the twenty-first century, it is clear that the critical discussion of the opportunities and limitations of this approach as laid out in the *Ideen I* and applied in the *Ideen II* shows that the significance of Husserl's work as a whole has continued to serve as a point of orientation for this tradition even in those cases where thinkers in this tradition have questioned, qualified, or rejected some of the basic tenets of Husserlian phenomenology as described in these works.

The impact of *Ideen I*, composed in Göttingen in 1912 and 1913 for publication in the first volume of the *Jahrbuch*² was immediate and significant. The history of *Ideen II*, based on manuscripts composed soon afterwards in Göttingen und Freiburg, gathered together and worked out as a draft by Edith Stein in Freiburg, but unpublished until after the war, is much more complicated and begins only later.

The Freiburg School and Beyond

Husserl was called to Freiburg in 1916 and taught there until he retired. Landgrebe began as Husserl's assistant in 1923, the year after the second printing of "*Ideen I*" or simply "the *Ideen*," as it is usually referred to, and was thus well informed about Husserl's intentions as well as his disappointment. Husserl had hoped that this work would represent a breakthrough that subsequent scholars would use as their guidebook and starting point as they took the concepts and methods described there and applied them to specific areas of phenomenological research. Landgrebe's assessment shows how the discussion took a more critical bent from the outset and

¹ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/277553/Edmund-Husserl>

² For a detailed description of the genesis of the manuscript, see the "Einleitung des Herausgebers" by Karl Schuhmann to the 1976 edition of *Ideen I* (Hua III, xv–lvii).

how Husserl's own expectations about how subsequent phenomenological work would proceed were initially disappointed.

As assistant, Landgrebe had also worked on Husserl's "*Ideen II*," which was not published until 1952,³ but was also known earlier to Edith Stein, who assembled the first version from lecture and research manuscripts when she served as Husserl's assistant from 1916 until 1919, as well as to Martin Heidegger, and, later, to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, also in manuscript form. An overview of the significance of this Second Book for the historical and human sciences is provided below in Chap. 8; the important influence it had on the latter two thinkers' work is laid out below in Chaps. 4, 11, and 22.

During this so-called "Freiburg period" and thereafter, when *Ideen I* was accepted as the basic text for phenomenology, new students and colleagues were attracted to what can be considered Husserl's mature thought. (In later years the phenomenologist interestingly referred to his *Logische Untersuchungen* as "pre-philosophical.") Besides Germany, subsequently influential students then came from Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Japan, Lithuania, Spain, and the United States. After Husserl's retirement yet other important figures, some working with him, learned from the *Ideen*.

The Organization of This Volume

Most of the contributors in this volume were invited because they could first of all write concise descriptions of the *Ideen*'s influence on a major influential figure in our tradition, but also because they were engaged in original work in or on phenomenology. The historical sketches are not substitutes for the desirable book-length treatments, but they show the spreading impact of the *Ideen* in the twentieth century. (There are course many more substantial figures in the tradition of continental philosophy, e.g., Klaus Held, Jean-Luc Marion, Thomas Seebohm, and Bernhard Waldenfels, who do not have chapters on them here because their work is still ongoing.) Most of the chapters have been arranged in the order in which these influenced major figures appear first to have come into contact with Husserl and his *Ideen*, which is another indication of the work's historical impact.

In addition, several colleagues were invited to write on the influences of the *Ideen* on national or cultural traditions beyond those represented by the influential figures in France, Germany, and the United States, i.e., Pedro Alves for the Portuguese-speaking world, Rocco Saccagni for Italy, Tani Toru for Japan, and Antonio Zirión for the Spanish-speaking world, and on the especially important topics of the natural attitude by Dermot Moran, the human sciences by Thomas Seebohm, and the emotions by Anthony Steinbock. Several other colleagues were invited to write

³ The complicated history of the composition and publication of *Ideen II* is described in the "Einleitung des Herausgebers" by Marly Biemel in the 1952 edition of that work (Hua IV, xii–xx).

on related historical contexts (Andrea Staiti on neo-Kantianism and Saulius Geniusas and Rosemary Learner on the post-World War II reception of the *Ideen*). Remarks about his English translation by Fred Kersten were then added.

The intent of this volume goes well beyond the merely historical, however. The authors who sketched influences on subsequent figures also accepted the additional opportunity to write full-sized essays on issues that particularly interested them and might be relevant to the figure or movement they describe, so that most chapters have two parts. The substantive contributions proceed either directly through independent phenomenological analyses of phenomena or indirectly through critical discussions of the issues raised by the various major figures.

Thus, there is Michael Barber's extension of Schutz's reflection on empathy, Ronald Bruzina's reconstruction of Fink's proposed extensions and adjustments to Husserl's insights, Vernon Disney's interpretation of deconstruction, Natalie Depraz on the *praxis* of phenomenology, Matthew Eshelman on ontology, Len Lawlor's reconstruction of fundamental themes in Deleuze, Daniel Marcelle's study of marginal consciousness, Thomas Nenon's critical comparison of Husserl and Heidegger on the ultimate grounds of ethics, Theodore Toadvine's study of lifeworldly naturalism, and Nicholas de Warren's reconstruction of Levinas as an extension of Husserl on intentionality.

Then there are reflections on the relationship between the ego and appearances by Tani Toru, questions about universal human rights by Jesús Díaz, investigation of autism by Kathleen Haney, descriptions of James Dodd on built space, reflections on race by Robert Bernasconi, investigations of the transcendence of physical objects by William McKenna, reflections on types and the conscious field by Lester Embree, on life and historicity by Ulrika Björk, and on futurity by Vernon Disney.

Taken together, these essays offer an overview of the reception of Husserl's *Ideen* during the first century since the appearance of *Ideen I* and the expanding phenomenological enterprise it initiated. They show that the critical discussion of issues by phenomenologists continues to be relevant for the twenty-first century.

Part I

Initial and Continued Reception

Chapter 1

José Ortega y Gasset and Human Rights

Jesús M. Díaz Álvarez

Abstract This essay has two parts. In the first one I try to show the crucial importance of Husserl's phenomenology (*Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen I*) in Ortega's thought at least till 1929. In this period it is not an exaggeration to say that Ortega understands his philosophy as a peculiar development of Husserl's theory of intentionality. After this date, and influenced by the publication Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, he begins to consider Husserlian thought as the last and more refined form of idealism. The antidote agains it should be a philosophy of vital or historical reason, a form of non idealistic phenomenology, which is close to the existential one.

The second part of the text is a personal reading of Ortega's theory of historical reason, this non idealistic phenomenology, in order to see its possibilities in the liberal/communitarian debate about the universality of human rights and the plausibility for establishing a moral hierarchy of the different cultural practices.

The Influence of Husserl

José Ortega y Gasset's relations with Husserlian phenomenology are intense and problematical, intense because, as recent studies have shown, it is impossible to understand the very heart of Ortega's philosophy if we do not understand the profound

I thank Gema Rodríguez Trigo for her support during the preparation of this chapter. I should also like to express gratitude to Javier San Martín and, especially, to Jorge Brioso. Their suggestions and commentaries helped me to improve the essay. This text was elaborated as a part of a research project sponsored by the Spanish Department of Investigation, Science and Innovation (FI2009-11707).

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influence of the author of *Ideen I*,¹ and problematical because the Spanish philosopher never acknowledged these relations during his maturity. Indeed, he stated exactly the opposite in decisive self-interpretations. For example, in *La idea de principio en Leibniz y la evolución de la teoría deductiva* (1947), he says, “I abandoned phenomenology the moment that I received it.”² And in texts from the 1930s, such as “Preface for Germans” (1934), he said his philosophy of historical or vital reason was exactly the opposite of phenomenology, i.e., the last and most coherent idealist philosophy of the modern age.³

This incipient abandonment of Husserl’s thinking and its interpretation in an idealist code were the two hermeneutic theses that the majority of Ortega’s closest and most influential disciples accepted uncritically and perpetuated as dogma until recently. This is not easy to abandon. Had not Ortega sanctioned this position on Husserl? Who could better narrate this history? Taking into account this situation, it is not surprising that most histories of philosophy and collections of readings do not link Ortega with the author of *Ideen*.⁴

Within the Anglo-American world, Ortega is generally situated within Existentialism without almost any connection with phenomenology.⁵ To the German public, he is usually located in the neighborhood of *Lebensphilosophie*.⁶ And if this public is a Hispanic one, the situation is even worst, at least until recently. The reason is that the majority of Ortega’s disciples not only faithfully followed

¹ Cf. Philip W. Silver, *Ortega as Phenomenologist: The Genesis of Meditation on Quixote* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Pedro Cerezo, *La voluntad de aventura* (Madrid: Ariel, 1984); and, particularly, Javier San Martín, *Ensayos sobre Ortega* (Madrid: UNED, 1994); Javier San Martín, *Fenomenología y cultura en Ortega* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1998). Thanks to Ortega’s interest in phenomenology, it would be no exaggeration to say that Spain and the Spanish-speaking countries were the first to translate Husserl’s main works. One of the obligatory steps for the group of thinkers that gathered around Ortega, the so-called “School of Madrid,” was the study of phenomenology. Cf., in this respect, the sharp comments of his disciple José Gaos in his splendid *Confesiones profesionales. Obras Completas XVII-Confesiones Profesionales*. (México, D. F.: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1982), 59–85.

² José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo IX* (Madrid: Taurus, 2009), 1119 (My translation here and hereafter). English edition: José Ortega y Gasset *The Idea of Principle in Leibnitz and the Evolution of Deductive Theory* (New York: Norton & Company, 1971), 280.

³ José Ortega y Gasset, *ibid.*, 154–60; José Ortega y Gasset, “Preface for Germans,” *Phenomenology and Art* (New York: Norton & Company, 1975), 60–70.

⁴ Herbert Spiegelberg himself, in his monumental *The Phenomenological Movement*, succumbs to these self-interpretations. And although he holds that Ortega is an admirer of Husserl and his main presenter in Spanish-speaking countries, he cannot be considered a “full-fledged phenomenologist,” someone who should be included “in the mainstream of the Phenomenological Movement.” Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*. (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982), 659, 672.

⁵ Cf., among the classical readings, Walter Kaufmann, *Existentialism: From Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York: New American Library, 1975), 152–53. For a recent assessment of a similar line, cf. Charles Guignon, “History and Historicity,” *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism*, eds. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 555.

⁶ Otto F. Bollnow, *Die Lebensphilosophie* (Dordrecht: Springer, 1958).

the master's self-interpretation concerning Husserl's phenomenology, but extended it to practically all other philosophical tendencies of the time. This way of reading Ortega ends up saying that the theory of historical reason cannot be linked, strictly speaking, to phenomenology in general or to any other philosophical tendency. The result was a consolidation of what a perceptive specialist, Pedro Cerezo, has called *venerational hermeneutics*.

But this assumption of "originality" has weighed heavily. Without the links with the philosophy of his time, Ortega's work is uninteresting for anyone who is not a specialist in his work. If it is so original and peculiar, why should someone who studies phenomenology, hermeneutics, or pragmatism be interested in his thinking?

But the most recent studies have shown the untruthfulness of Ortega's self-interpretation. He did not abandon phenomenology at the very moment he received it. Nor did he always understand Husserl's thinking as the last and most sublime form of modern idealism. It is true that in 1929 Ortega began to read Husserl in this way. But before this date he accepts many of his phenomenological theses as precisely the ones that most helped idealism to collapse. In between, there is the reading of *Sein und Zeit* (1927).

Let me describe Ortega's relationship with Husserl's phenomenology. First, I will discuss Ortega's acceptance of his phenomenology up until 1929. Then I will focus on his later criticisms of *epochē* and transcendental reduction.

In 1913 Ortega gave two lectures, "On the Concept of Sensation" and "Sensation, Construction, and Intuition," which are the first two texts in phenomenology written in Spanish.⁷ These were for an audience not specialized in the new philosophy. Both reflect considerable knowledge of the *Logische Untersuchungen* and, especially in the first one, *Ideen I*. Ortega's interest in phenomenology is also evident in references to Theodor Conrad and Heinrich Hoffmann.

In 1915 and 1916, Ortega gave two university courses where Husserlian phenomenology is central. *Sistema de la Psicología*, held in Madrid, is an explanation and a personal acceptance of some key concepts: natural attitude, intentionality, intuition, psychologism, evidence, *epochē*, reduction, essence, world/horizon. *Introducción a los problemas actuales de la filosofía*, held in Buenos Aires,⁸ mainly gathers the contents of the Madrid course and in it Ortega calls his research "psychological phenomenology."⁹ But what is it about phenomenology that captivates Ortega? To answer this question, it is necessary to consider his critique of idealism.

⁷ Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo I* (Madrid: Taurus, 2004), 624–38, 642–52. English Edition: Ortega (1975), 78–115. In the "Prólogo para alemanes" ("Preface for Germans"), he says that he began to study "phenomenology seriously in 1912." Cf. José Ortega y Gasset (2009), 155. English Edition: Ortega (1975), 61.

⁸ Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo VII* (Madrid: Taurus, 2007), 429–534, 557–666. English Edition: José Ortega y Gasset, *Psychological Investigations* (New York: Norton & Company, 1987).

⁹ José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo VII*, 643.

Trained in the neo-Kantianism of Cohen and Natorp, Ortega begins to mistrust this philosophy in 1911 during his second stay in Marburg. The problem with idealism—not only in its neo-Kantian version—is its lack of radicalness. For Ortega, philosophy must be, *à la Husserl*, a “science with no presuppositions,” a peculiar kind of theory whose final mission is to reveal to us *radical reality*, the ultimate foundation upon which rests our very existence, and the existence of everything. Idealism postulates that this reality is consciousness. However, Ortega considers idealistic consciousness a *hypothesis*, an *assumption*, a failed attempt to clarify the rocky ground of what is radically real. Edmund Husserl’s new philosophy will show this. Let us look at this briefly.

According to the Spanish philosopher, there are two great conceptions of the ultimate foundation in the history of thought. In realism, the world is an independent reality that provides the reason for everything that exists. This is Ancient and Medieval philosophy. Subjectivity passively registers the reality of a world that exists completely independently of it. A proper metaphor is the wax tablet upon which the letters of the world are written. But starting in the Renaissance, the insufficiencies of this thesis begin to appear. This *real world* faithfully registered by *a subject that is also real and like a wax tablet* can be doubted. Our senses deceive us frequently. And we cannot talk about the existence of something without “thinking” about it. Saying that something *is* is equivalent to saying that I somehow have it in my “thought,” broadly speaking. The Modern Age corrects “the carelessness of ancient times, which did not acknowledge that everything that attempts to exist must be an object for me, that is, it must enter into the report of consciousness.”¹⁰ The Moderns move radical reality from the world to consciousness. As Berkeley said, “*esse id est, percipi.*” The new metaphor is that of a recipient that contains everything that there is the way a “vessel contains its contents.” Objects, in general, then, become *contents of consciousness*. Everything becomes *content* of my mind, a *representation* in my consciousness. Consciousness is what now enjoys and stipulates true reality.

According to Ortega, what Husserl’s notion of intentionality shows is that this second idea of radical reality is an *assumption* that is as lacking in veracity as the assumption of a world that provides the reason for everything. The intentionality discovered by phenomenology clearly shows that the characteristic of consciousness is that it opens itself to what is not itself, that is, to the world. This is not a representation “created” by subjectivity. This world is not made of the same “matter” as thought. Thought and the world belong to one another, they are strictly correlated, but they are different.

Husserl’s genius is precisely that he discovered this correlation, this original phenomenon that manages to go beyond both the realist thesis and the idealist thesis while holding on to both. The world does not swallow up subjectivity, nor does subjectivity swallow up the world. If we attempt to describe what is really there, radical reality is nothing other than *welterfahrendes Leben*. Consciousness

¹⁰José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo VII*, 658.

is neither a wax tablet, nor a recipient that contains the world, it is the pole of a correlation that opens itself up to what is not itself, to the world. Because of this, until 1929, Husserlian phenomenology represents for Ortega a third metaphor in the history of thought, the metaphor of the *Dii Consentes*, the famous Etruscan gods who it was said could only be born and die together. There is no consciousness without the world and no world without consciousness.¹¹

Taking into account this general interpretation of Husserl, it is no surprise that Ortega during this first period accepts the most relevant thesis of *Ideen I*, which he reads as a continuation of the *Logische Untersuchungen*.¹² Thus, we can only reach this correlation after performing *epochē*, after “extricating ourselves” from the thesis of the natural attitude. This extrication (*Enthaltung*) from the world and later reflection upon consciousness and its lived experiences allows us to clarify the original phenomenon: life, the ego related to circumstance, to the world, a world which is always understood, as is shown in his seminal *Meditaciones del Quijote* (1914), is a horizon that presents itself in an infinity of perspectives, with the philosopher’s job being to describe it truthfully.¹³ The most mature expression of these issues is in *¿Qué es filosofía?* (1929). Written clearly in Husserl’s orbit, it also marks the beginning of Heidegger’s influence, which is largely the motivation behind Ortega’s later criticism of the *Ideen*.¹⁴

To summarize, until 1929, Ortega accepts the fundamental thesis of Husserl’s phenomenology with no problem. While it is true that there is a deficient understanding of certain elements of the phenomenological architectonic,¹⁵ he captures and, more importantly, shares what is essential: the a priori of intentional correlation, the perfect and necessary correlation of ego and the world (circumstance). This is radical reality, life.

¹¹ Regarding the *Dii consentes* as a metaphor of the new philosophy, cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *ibidem*, 476, 662.

¹² This continuation between *Ideen I* and *Logische Untersuchungen* is a quite personal reading that can sometimes lead him to certain errors. Cf. footnote 15.

¹³ Note that *Meditaciones del Quijote*, a work that contains the nucleus of his philosophy, was published in 1914, right between the two essays on phenomenology from 1913 and the two courses in Madrid and Buenos Aires on this same subject (1915 and 1916). In this sense, it is very significant that the maxim with which Ortega’s philosophy is usually identified appears in this beautiful text: “I am myself and my circumstance and if I do not save my circumstance, I do not save myself.” This maxim is nothing more than the expression and personal acceptance of the a priori of intentional correlation. Nor is it by chance that, in 1916, Ortega began to write a series of essays under the general heading of *El espectador*. In these we find sharp phenomenological descriptions of human life in the most varied situations. Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Quixote* (New York: Norton & Company, 1961).

¹⁴ Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo VIII* (Madrid: Taurus, 2008), 235–374. English Edition: José Ortega y Gasset, *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Norton & Company, 1960).

¹⁵ One of the most notable misunderstandings affects the clear differentiation between eidetic reduction and transcendental reduction. Rather frequently, but not always, phenomenology is identified with the “intuition of essences,” in the fashion of realist phenomenology. Cf., for example, José Ortega y Gasset (2004), 652.

The first text in which Ortega explicitly criticizes Husserlian phenomenology is “Regarding Phenomenology” (1929).¹⁶ From this date onward, Ortega reiterates his refutation and he never retracts it. Although there are certain variations, the main axis of his refutation states that epochē and transcendental reduction turn phenomenology into an idealism at the peak of Cartesianism.¹⁷

Ortega says that consciousness is, on principle and as Husserl himself acknowledges, positing (*setzend*), i.e., an enacting consciousness (*vollziehendes*). And what it posits or performs is the world. But if before 1929 phenomenology discovered this correlative structure through extrication (*epochē*) from the world (the realist thesis) and by the reflective return (reduction) to the experiences of consciousness in which this world manifests itself, now *epochē* and reduction cease to be operations that allow us to discover intentionality and do the exact opposite: they suspend it. The *epochē* and reduction break the intentional correlation of direct positing consciousness and replace it with reflective consciousness, which is held to be *absolute*.

By suspending the performance and turning its eyes back on itself, this consciousness dissolves the very reality of the world, transforming it into pure contents of consciousness, into representation, into “thought.” Consciousness and world are once again made of the same “matter.” Phenomenology is now one more example of the metaphor of the recipient. But if phenomenology holds the reflective consciousness, not the direct positing consciousness, to be absolute and primary, it falsifies the original phenomenon, the idea that what is primary is the life that experiences the world, the consciousness that posits or enacts the world.

In other words, from 1929 onwards, Ortega understands that the reflective process that accompanies *epochē* and reduction radically distorts the primary datum, the ego-world correlation, positing a reflective consciousness as foundation. Thereafter, Ortega no longer uses the metaphor of the *Dii Consentes* which, before this date, fit phenomenology and his own philosophy, insofar as it was phenomenological; the Etruscan gods are no longer linked to Husserl.¹⁸ Ortega maintained this rejection with very few nuances to the end of his life.

A Non-idealistic Phenomenology

Above we saw that from 1929 onward, Ortega y Gasset distanced himself from Husserlian phenomenology, which he considered to be the ultimate and most perfect embodiment of idealism. *Everything that was identification with Husserl*

¹⁶ José Ortega y Gasset (2008), 177–87.

¹⁷ Some of the most notable texts containing this accusation are: *¿Qué es la vida? Lecciones del curso 1930–1931; Principios de metafísica según la razón vital. Curso de 1932–1933; Prólogo para alemanes; La idea de principio en Leibniz y la evolución de la teoría deductiva*. The first two appear in José Ortega y Gasset (2008), 417, 639. The second two appear in José Ortega y Gasset (2009), 154–60, 1119–20.

¹⁸ For the exclusion of the metaphor of the *Dii Consentes* from phenomenology, cf. José Ortega y Gasset (2009), 158.

before this date became disidentification afterwards. But what is very interesting in Ortega's new opinion is that he distanced himself from phenomenology through fidelity to its basic thesis: the a priori of intentional correlation, the strict ego-world correlation. From that date onward, he believes that Husserlian phenomenology itself betrays this discovery. Because of this, beyond the possible plausibility of the Spanish thinker's criticism of *epochē* and reduction, what is clear is that he shares this basic thesis. In effect, his philosophy of vital or historical reason is nothing other than successive developments based on the aforementioned ego-world or, to use his own vocabulary, the "ego-circumstance" correlation. He will call this correlation life, life as primary datum, as radical reality, and the Spanish thinker himself recognizes in some of the aforementioned texts concerned with the criticism of Husserl's phenomenology that his path to this concept of life is strictly linked with what he considers a *non-idealistic understanding of phenomenology*.¹⁹ Thus Ortega should rightfully be interpreted as an original phenomenologist and his philosophy a major, creative contribution within this tradition. Even considering his mature interpretation of Husserlian thinking, what he also does after 1929 is, in its own words, a type of phenomenology, one which is actually closer in some aspects to Heidegger or "existential phenomenology" than Husserl.

This is not the place to explain the main features of his non-idealistic phenomenological philosophy, but in order to understand better the second part of the article I would like to say something about it.

As I expressed before, the concept which Ortega uses to capture the primary datum, the radical reality, is the concept of life. And life, as we already know, is nothing other than the strict intentional correlation between the "I" and the world. Taking into account this point of departure, the Spanish thinker tried to give details of the essential characteristics of this structure in some of his most outstanding books and university courses, but he never achieves this goal in a satisfactory way. In any case, when Ortega tries to explain the "attributes of life" he always insists first of all is the idea that life is not a type of substance, something which has the characteristics of "things." On the contrary, life is a process, the constant activity of an "I" in its surroundings, in the world.

If we examine, now, very briefly the two components of Ortega's concept of life, we can recognize the following characteristics. Concerning the world, the Spanish philosopher will understand it as a horizon. He will also insist in its vital aspect. For Ortega, world is really *life* world, understood primarily as a cultural-historical world, as a set of pragmatic fields. The world is first of all a system of "tools," interpreting this word in a broad sense, which offers us a series of possibilities and denies others.

If we consider now the other pole of the correlation, the "I," we can say that if the world was for Ortega *life*-world, the "I" is also primary and essentially an *incarnate being-in-the-world*. The "I" only makes sense in the pragmatic and historic-cultural net which surrounds it. It is there where the "I" must make choices concerning its

¹⁹ Cf. José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo IX* (Madrid: Taurus, 2009), 160. English Edition: "Preface for Germans," 70.

own being. In other words, the “I,” whether it knows it or not, is choosing all the time in the circumstances into which it has been thrown. It is constantly dealing with the possibilities which offer the world in order to discover and carry out its own identity, its vocation. Greatly simplifying Ortega’s thesis, we could say that for him the “I” is essentially biography, the successful or unsuccessful elaboration of the worldly story which makes up each of us.

Taking into account the previous features of the world and the “I,” Ortega uses to mention the following “attributes of life”:

Life is always mine, it is personal. It is always present to me.

Life is to be in the *life-world*, to deal with it, to act in a cultural-historical circumstance in which the “I” is thrown.

Life is freedom in fatality, fatality because the “I” is thrown into the world and this limits its possibilities, and freedom because the “I” must make choices inside those limitations in order to discover and carry out its own being.

As a consequence of the necessity of making choices all the time, of its freedom, life is on the one hand perplexity and drama and on the other hand responsibility.

Life is historicity, biography, finitude, time. It is project and projection to the future precisely because of the necessity of carrying out our being.

These are the most outstanding “attributes of life” in Ortega’s non-idealistic phenomenology. A reader of *Sein und Zeit* can realize the deep influence that this book had in the Spanish thinker. It probably helped him confirm or detect some “idealistic” problems in Husserl’s *Ideen* and to systematize previous original intuitions about the correlation I-circumstance. But beyond this fact, the key point concerning Ortega’s thinking, even after 1929, is, as I mentioned at the beginning, that he always thought that he was being truthful to the decisive and most original thesis of Husserl’s phenomenology: the strict correlation between the “I” and the world. Thus, and despite the influence of *Sein und Zeit*, he never would have discovered this correlation and theorized as he did without his reading of the *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen I*. Ortega will always retain the necessity of reason in order to reach an orientation in the life we are, a reason certainly less powerful than in Husserl, but with an important role provably absent from Heidegger.

Historical Reason, Liberals and Communitarians, with an Epilogue on Human Rights and Feminism

Continuing Ortega

Taking into account the very general ideas about Ortega’s thinking above, I will try to do some phenomenological ventriloquism and, led by the author of *La rebelión de las masas*, to see how his theory of *historical or vital reason*, the new name for this non-idealistic phenomenology, performs in a philosophical dispute that has

produced many reams of writing in recent years, the dispute between liberals and communitarians. Speaking from a Husserlian point of view, this topic is much more related to aspects of *Ideen II*, which Ortega never knew, and the *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*²⁰ than to *Ideen I*. This part of the essay will essentially confront his theory with the challenges of cultural diversity.

One of the great debates of moral and political philosophy in the twentieth century is between liberals and communitarians. Simplifying a great deal, the liberals, old heirs of the Enlightenment, defend the primacy and universality of the individual, freedom, and human rights in their canonical formulation. For the majority of the liberals, the liberal individual represents something like the kernel of what is human, that which we all share or, at the deepest level, are. The communitarians, by contrast, maintain that this way of understanding men and women is, at best, just another tradition, a common understanding that is as particular as any other. Besides, they add, this liberal individual is a rationalistic abstraction, a *papier mâché* phantom with which no flesh-and-blood person can really identify. In this sense, they continue, it is not surprising that societies ruled by liberal values have problems nourishing community spirit and social responsibility. It is difficult to make sacrifices for the idea of constitutional patriotism or for abstract human rights, but it is easy to do so for one's homeland or for the ideals of one's ethnic or religious community.

I have referred to the liberalism/communitarianism debate because it raises an issue with far-reaching consequences in today's busy world: Are the human rights that appear in the 1948 United Nations *Declaration of Human Rights*, above all those regarding equality between women and men, actually non-universalizable liberal rights? In other words, is the equality declared in Article 16 of the *Declaration*, which advocates equal rights for men and women, a specific and particular product of an equally specific culture, the liberal-enlightened culture, that the West in its imperial urge, has attempted to impose on the rest of the planet? Many political and intellectual leaders of nearly all the East Asian countries, as well as the representatives of the Arab countries, believe this to be so. Because of this, both have proposed alternative Declarations to the 1948 text—the *Declaration of Human Rights in Islam*, 1990, and the *Declarations of Bangkok and Singapore*, 1993 and 1995—that affect not only gender equality, but freedom of conscience, of thought, and of religion,

²⁰ This is so much the case that, in an article from 1941 titled “Apuntes sobre el pensamiento, su teurgia y su demiurgia,” he identifies his historical reason with what is expressed in the first two parts of *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, published in the journal *Philosophia* in Belgrad in 1936. But since what Husserl says there does not fit Ortega’s interpretation of phenomenology from 1929 onward, Ortega states that this text is not really Husserl’s but is rather written by his disciple Eugen Fink, because in it phenomenology “leaps to what could never have come from it. For me, this leap of phenomenological doctrine has been tremendously satisfactory, because it consists of nothing less than resorting to ... ‘historical reason.’” José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo VI* (Madrid: Taurus, 2006), 29. English Edition: José Ortega y Gasset, “Notes on Thinking: Its Creation of the World and its Creation of God,” *Concord and Liberty*, (New York: Norton & Company, 1946), 82.

as well as freedom of opinion and expression. This is against the aforementioned Article 16, and Articles 18 and 19 as well.²¹

Based on the notions of diversity, cultural relativity, and difference, so beloved by a large part of twentieth-century philosophy, these declarations in favor of the “Asian or Islamic world view” have been backed up theoretically by the defenders of multiculturalism. In a relatively recent book, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, Bhikhu Parekh writes: “Although admirable, the UN Declaration is not free of defects. It retains a distinctly liberal bias and includes rights which, though admirable, cannot claim universal validity; for example, the rights to a more or less unlimited freedom of expression, to marriage based on the ‘free will and consent’ of the parties involved, and to relatively unlimited property.” Further on he adds: “Universal values might also come into conflict with the freely-acted central values of a cultural community. When members of some indigenous and traditional communities freely commit themselves to vows of obedience and service to men in their lives and to have nothing to do with equality.... [But we] should not assume that those who refuse to share our values are all victims of false consciousness.”²²

With these two assertions, among many others, the Indo-British philosopher and political scientist seems to assume that human diversity is so great that it is nearly impossible to create a hierarchy of cultures according to their moral values and political projects, in short, according to their ways of life. In this sense, not only would the values assumed to be liberal, enlightened, and Western by the Islamic and Asian declarations be far from embodying that which is human in general, but strict equality between men and women and freedom of thought and conscience are not morally superior to their opposites. And the same can be said, of course, about the cultures that hold one set of values and those that hold the other. But is it really impossible to create a hierarchy of cultures? Does this supposed radical human plurality destroy any attempt at some kind of universality? Does this universality mean giving up the evident human diversity and falling into the cultural and political imperialism that Western society has practiced so viciously and from which it has reaped such abundant benefits?

A good way to approach these issues, where the vindication of full human rights for women has so much at stake, is by going back to the debate between liberals and communitarians. And I will do this following the lead of an author who is not part of the canon in this dispute and who is as far from feminism as possible, but whose ideas, *malgré lui*, are very interesting for this issue. I refer to José Ortega y Gasset and his theory of historical reason which, as we shall see, attempts to accept, in the best Husserlian phenomenological tradition, the plurality of life, without failing to take into account what is shared. From this theory, it is possible to create a hierarchy of cultures and to defend the thesis that not all differences are acceptable or equally respectable when human rights are discussed.

²¹ For a penetrating analysis of these articles, cf. Pablo de Lora, *Memoria y frontera. El desafío de los derechos humanos* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2006), 94–111.

²² Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), 134, 135.

In the first part below, I will show how what I call, following Ortega, the first movement or direction of historical reason is essentially pluralistic-relativistic in nature and brings him close to the communitarian defenders of differences. In the second part, I will refer to a second movement of historical reason, this time of a universalistic nature, which clearly brings him closer to the liberals who defend a reasonable universality. Finally, in a brief epilogue, I will present some consequences that this historical reason well-tempered by diversity can have in the vindication of human rights for women.

Reconstructing Plurality: The First Movement of Historical Reason

In the excellent text, *Las Atlántidas* (1924), Ortega offers a diagnosis of European culture, soul, or identity that puts him, to begin with, on the side of communitarianism. On his view, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and accompanying the different variations of rationalism—one of whose most outstanding modalities is liberalism—the idea that European culture is the embodiment of all that is human prevails and other ways of life are only relevant insofar as they have contributed to arriving at the peak that is European culture. Those centuries are *Unitarian* centuries, with no sensitivity to difference and plurality. This is so much so that a science such as history, responsible, among other things, for registering these differences, failed completely in its task. Ortega says:

[history] has attempted to take a universal point of view [here universal means that it is sensitive to these differences], but, strictly speaking, it has only manufactured European history. Gigantic portions of human life, in the past and even in the present, were unknown to it and the non-European destinations that it was aware of were dealt with as marginal forms of that which is human, as accidents of secondary value, with no other meaning than to underline the substantive, central nature of European evolution. More or less, the idea of progress was always the axis of historical vision. All of the vicissitudes of the planet were organized according to their collaboration in this progress. When a group of people did not seem to have contributed to it, they were refused positive historical existence and were disqualified as barbarous or savage. However, this progress was simply the development of specifically European interests: physical sciences, technology, rationalist law, etc.²³

So the historian of this epoch is insensitive to plurality or cannot come to terms with it because he is imbued with an idea that Ortega will stigmatize as *false*. This idea is that humanity is conjugated in singular, that there is something like a homogeneous, *a priori* concept of what humanity is and that Europe possesses this concept. Ortega's radicalness on this point is such that he even holds that the great mistake of liberal, Marxist, and Darwinian thinkers, those who have formed the beliefs that have molded recent European culture, is that they hold that “the essential

²³ José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo III* (Madrid: Taurus, 2005), 765. Translation mine.

structure of human life has always been the same,” that “the categories of the human mind have not changed”—in short, that Africans, Hindus, and the inhabitants of ancient Rome are essentially the same as us, only at a lower stage of technical and moral development.

To think this way is a profound error and gives up any attempt to truly understand the other. Besides, factual reality repeatedly goes against this unitarian desideratum. To quote Ortega once more:

However, when it comes down to the truth, when history was really made, what always happened was that the unitarian principle, the assumption of homogeneity, failed and it was necessary to resort—covertly or clearly, but late and in a complementary way—to the peculiarity of the races, to national spirit, etc., etc. That is, the historian started out, capriciously, using a chimera, human unity, homogeneous humanity, and then ran into the brutal, irrational, alogical but undeniable fact of the plurality of human forms, of the heterogeneity of collective spirits, of the actual incommunication among them.²⁴

It seems then that Ortega, like Husserl and some of the best contemporary philosophers, does not want to save us from the awkwardness of the other. By confronting us with the perplexity that a different culture signifies, he radically impugns our deepest and most evident beliefs, above all, those that have to do with our most prized moral and political values. He does not want to tiptoe past the brute fact of human diversity, the denial of which has often been at the root of the violence done to non-Westerners. Colonialism and its disastrous consequences testify to this. This position leads him to support in *Las Atlántidas* the interesting concept of “universal policentric history,” a new way of practicing this science that would reconstruct the meaning produced by non-European cultures. That is, a way of understanding their belief systems in themselves, not as a way *to* or a step *toward* a higher kind of culture, Western culture.

We must acknowledge that this universal policentric history, this reconstruction of meaning, which he also describes as the first direction of historical reason, does in fact dignify other cultures, does treat them as equals; it is truly *policentric*. There are no hierarchies here, there are no productions of meaning judged to be better than others; they are simply different. The diverse traditions rule, constitute the identities of the individuals and of the peoples, and judgments can be made only from within them.

This movement of historical reason, as Ortega grants, is clearly relativistic. This is where Ortega converges with a substantial part of contemporary communitarianism and all the unconditional supporters of difference. In effect, according to the author of *La rebelión de las masas*, the liberal-enlightened person not only denigrates non-European cultures and treats them unfairly when they are as much manifestations of humanness as the culture that liberalism embodies. But, in addition, the nucleus of the liberal ideology itself, this supposed generic individual placed beyond any tradition, beyond the particularities of history, thus sharing a common nature, is an nonexistent phantom.

²⁴ José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas. Tomo III*, 762–63. Translation mine.

It is into this context that the famous anecdote that Ortega tells about the jubilee festival organized in honor of Victor Hugo fits perfectly. It seems that the poet was in the reception hall receiving the representatives of the different nations that wished to honor him. An usher announced their presence: “The representative from England,” to which Victor Hugo responded: “England, Shakespeare.” “The representative from Spain.” And the answer: “Spain, Cervantes.” “The representative from Germany.” “Germany, Goethe.” And then the turn of Mesopotamia’s representative came. The poet did not know how to respond, because he knew nothing about Mesopotamian culture, so the only thing it occurred to him to say was: “Mesopotamia, ah humanity!” But the way Ortega finishes this anecdote is well known and tremendously significant here: “I have told this in order to declare, without Victor Hugo’s solemnity, that I have never written or spoken for Mesopotamia.”²⁵ In other words, he has never referred to humanity in the abstract.

Nevertheless, Ortega’s great audacity and value in the context of the debate between liberals and communitarians is that, in spite of initial agreement with the communitarians, he does not stop at the first reconstructive movement of historical reason. Following the best in Husserl, Ortega’s second direction of historical reason, even while it accepts the contingent and historical nature of human beings in the way they are framed in different cultures and traditions, tries to overcome pure relativity, pure difference, the mere plurality that simply makes all cultures equal.

The Function of European Culture: The Second Movement of Historical Reason

In *Las Atlántidas*, Ortega formulates the second movement of historical reason:

But it is not enough, in order to approach its fullness, for historical meaning to perceive these profound differences that the human soul has shown throughout time. When we have keenly understood each epoch and each people in its differential personality, we will not have exhausted the possible perfection of historical sensitivity. It is necessary to draw conclusions of an estimative order from this very comprehension. ... Evaluating the different cultures, creating a ranked hierarchy of cultures, involves the previous comprehension of each of them.²⁶

That is, once the meanings of the different cultures are reconstructed on the basis of each of them and not from the West, it is necessary to contemplate the panorama and create a hierarchy, it is necessary to evaluate human plurality. With this, Ortega clearly shows that not all cultures are at the same level and, therefore, not all belief systems, even if they point to highly relevant specific portions of humanity, can be considered equal. Stopping at this step of relativity, making relativism something

²⁵ José Ortega y Gasset (2009), 129; English Edition: Ortega (1975), 23.

²⁶ José Ortega y Gasset (2005), 771. Translation mine.

more than a fact in order to turn it into a metaphysical option, into an absolute, is precisely the error committed by many philosophers and anthropologists.

So then we must evaluate, we must judge the different cultures. But how can we do this, from what standpoint can we do it? How can we evaluate from one perspective—in the end, a particular manifestation of that which is human—the other points of view? Does this not postulate something that Ortega always denied, that is, the eye of God, the absolute perspective that was, for him, impossible? At this point, he shows himself, as in many other central aspects of his philosophy, to be a good phenomenologist, and goes on to look attentively at reality, or rather the different realities that different cultures manifest. And if we follow him, what do we discover? First, we discover that each culture has some outstanding stroke of genius concerning some vital issues. Asian cultures, for example, have developed a deep sense of compassion and techniques to control and order desires that are unparalleled in the West. Their aspiration to eliminate the individual, a project completely opposite to the European one, has, however, very positive aspects which we should learn from in our society in which the individualistic paroxysm often becomes pure, irrational whim. Highlighting the genius of different cultures, Ortega predicts a “new classicism,” a true one, built from the contributions of different traditions. Each people, he holds, will become a classic by touching in a true way successive portions of what is real.

Taking this into account, now, there is one inevitable question. What is Europe’s most outstanding characteristic in this polycentric situation? What is the West’s great contribution to this list of classics? It is, precisely, the acknowledgement of plurality and what it means. Ortega says:

History [and here we must remember that history is historical reason], by recognizing the relativity of human forms, initiates a form free of relativity. The fact that this form appears within a specific culture and is a world view that has appeared in Western man does not prevent it from being absolute. The discovery of a truth is always an event with a precise date and location. But the truth discovered is ubiquitous and timeless. History is historical reason, thus, an effort and an instrument for overcoming the variability of historical material.²⁷

But why is the discovery of human plurality the beginning of a view exempt from relativity? Because it is only from this point of view, only by the other confronting me, that I can realize the limits of my own tradition, that I can begin to think that perhaps my community is inadequate and that I may be mistaken. In short, it is the only way that I can experience the philosophical annoyance that the multiple traditions have given different, non-compatible responses to a single question. In order to reach this point, it is necessary to accept plurality. This is, on the other hand, what can never be experienced from a strictly relativist and multiculturalist position.

The representative of this tradition does not seem perplexed or concerned when faced with diversity; he has no problem with it, and Ortega seems to say that this is because this kind of view is nothing more than a dogmatic unitarianism multiplied by the number of cultures that can be found. From this position, each culture

²⁷ Ibid., 772. Translation mine.

considers itself to be *the culture* that will always see all the others exclusively in comparison to itself. The West has often made this mistake, but, as far as we know, our perspective seems to be the only one that has tried to transcend this limitation in a systematic and articulated fashion and to admit the uncomfortable perspective of the other. And this is precisely what would make this viewpoint “superior” to the rest. As Ortega says, “There is a Chinese culture and a Malaysian culture and a Hottentot culture, just as there is a European culture. The only definitive superiority of European culture is that it acknowledges this essential parity before discussing which is superior. The Hottentot, on the contrary, believes that there is no other culture than Hottentot culture.”²⁸

Definitively, the thesis that Ortega supports is that we do not have to go beyond the level of reflectively observed experience in order to begin this second movement of historical reason, the movement that deals with creating a hierarchy of cultures. Without resorting, in principle, to metaphysical assumptions, we would in fact be able to perceive that the genius of the best West is, in the end, an *attitude, a perspective* that is rather more inclusive than previous ones because it includes in a very peculiar way the other points of view, as well as its own, and it makes them converse with one another, it makes them rub up against one another. In short, it considers them from a critical point of view.

The beginning of philosophy, the famous step from myth to *logos* is exactly this: an opening up to plurality, letting plurality confront us. It is not accepting inherited customs just because they come from our venerable ancestors, but rather criticizing them because we have multiple answers for a single question and they cannot all be compatible. This is why Ortega states that philosophy is the “tradition of no tradition.” From this point of view, the West identifies with philosophy and comes under the old maxim *logon didónai*, to give and receive reasons. This was the brilliant invention of the Greeks that allows a peculiar moral “superiority” of the West in comparison with other cultures. It must be clearly understood that this “superiority” is due to this being the only way of life that has *systematically* created an *attitude* and a *discourse* that serves to accept the reasons of the other on an equal footing, *generating*, from that point, critical and tolerant thinking that aspires to be universal.²⁹

Epilogue: Historical Reason and Full Human Rights for Women

So we have seen that Ortega creates a hierarchy of cultures and gives preeminence to the West, to a certain manifestation of Western culture, as opposed to all other ways of life, because Western culture has taken the other’s point of view seriously,

²⁸ Ibid., 757. Translation mine.

²⁹ I think that the similarity of this thesis with Husserl’s idea of Europe in *Die Krisis* is more than noticeable. This is why it is not surprising that, in 1941, Ortega, fully identified with the melody of the first two parts of this work, assimilating historical and phenomenological reason, as I explained above in note 20.

treating it critically, and has, thus, been able to open up a dialogue about the uncertain search for what is shared. But if this is so, if we can really reasonably defend this thesis, what we are, in the end, stating is that what makes the West “superior,” and I must insist on this, is not in principle any substantive ideal about the good life that another culture could see as foreign and invasive. In effect, this giving reasons for one’s own position in an exchange in which the other is appealed to by me and I am appealed to by the other seems like something that anyone with the faculty of reason could and should accept.

Parekh himself necessarily adopts this perspective not only when he writes his book and tries to convince us of the excesses and particularities of the liberal individual and that individual’s rights and when he defends the idea that we should take the fact that there are people, in this case women, who reasonably and freely accept their submission to their husbands instead of taking freedom seriously, no matter how strange it may seem. However, if the Western kernel is this rational, mutual appeal which, in addition, can be taken up and performed by anyone, this means that what we have called the West is categorized in this way because this discourse has been widely systematized in this area of the globe. But, in the end, it is not exclusive to it but rather responds to a feature of our shared humanity. In short, the best West, the one that encourages giving and receiving reasons, would embody not a particular culture but generic reasonableness, i.e., a universal value. And what does this universal value have to do with the 1948 *Declaration of Human Rights*?

I cannot fully develop this thesis here, which I have dealt with elsewhere, but I do not think it is difficult to see that the mutual appeal of the *lógon didonai* is, in the end, the basis for liberty, equality, and the banishment of violence as a way of dealing with our value conflicts, i.e., the basis for just some of the essential values that in some way support the *United Nations Declaration* normatively.³⁰ To summarize, and according to the Ortega-Husserl inspired thesis that I maintain, human rights in general, as they have been proposed by the UN and, above all, those that the defenders of Islamic or Asian values reject as liberal-particular rights are, contrary to their opinion, exactly the nucleus or part of the nucleus of what is shared.

To deny this is to accept that only human beings from Western cultures are capable of mutual rational appeal, something that is hard to believe and that we know for a fact is not true. Anyone who has anything to say should have the freedom and the opportunity to do so, independently of sex, race or religion. As a result, there should be no legislation against the freedom and equality of all human beings, including women, of course, due to certain cultural particularities. If we did this, we would be cutting mutual appeal off at the root and definitively abandoning the chance to reach consensuses which, however precarious they may be, move us away from violence.

³⁰ Cf. Jesús M. Díaz Álvarez, “The Foundation of Morality and Normative-Cultural Differences. A Phenomenological Approach,” *Interculturalism: Between Identity and Diversity*, eds. B. Penas Ibañez & M^a. C. López Sáenz (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 107–30.

Chapter 2

Reading and Rereading the *Ideen* in Japan

Tani Toru

Another time, [Husserl] said to us, “Have you seen the work by Dürer called ‘Knight, Death and the Devil’? He who strives for knowledge must carry a long lance, wear a helmet deep over his brow”—here, I believe Husserl placed both hands over his temple, where a helmet would be worn—“and ride straight between death and the devil like that brave knight.” ... Husserl said with quiet conviction that he had no wish to be the founder of a school. The greatest thing he had to give us was not a finished theory, he said, but “a free thinking.”

—TAKAHASHI Satomi, “Husseru no koto”
〔フッセルのこと〕 (“About Husserl”)

A Century of Japanese Readings

Introduction

In the Edo era, Japan isolated itself from the world for more than 200 years (1639–1854), but trade continued with China and the Korean peninsula and with the Dutch. In fact, the eighteenth century saw a flowering of “Dutch studies” (*Rangaku*), indicating that political isolation did not lead to complete intellectual isolation. Japan remained open to outside influences.

Nevertheless, the “opening” of Japan, followed by a radical regime change in 1868, triggered a great and sudden influx of Western ideas. Philosophy was no exception. Japan had no word for “philosophy” in the Western sense until NISHI Amane (1829–1897), an educator and official who had studied in the Netherlands,

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coined the word *tetsugaku* (哲学). 哲学 was eventually adopted as the customary term for “philosophy” in China, Korea and Taiwan, although the characters are read aloud differently from country to country. Other important terms like “reason” (理性) and “science” (科学) are also attributed to NISHI.

The Japanese study of Western thinking progressed at a remarkable pace. Early scholars pondered philosophies ranging from ancient Greece to contemporary logic, but in the late nineteenth century, the focus was on Kant and Hegel (especially the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* and the concept of “dialectic”), the Neo-Kantians, *Lebensphilosophie*, and Brentano and Meinong. Contemporary philosophy meant German philosophy until World War II, and Husserl’s phenomenology was studied as an attractive new theory from philosophy’s heartland. Despite Japan’s position in the “Far” East, and despite coming late to the scene, its early scholars of Western philosophy were surprisingly up to date.

In 1922, a Tokyo-based journal asked Husserl to write the famous *Kaizo* articles, which appeared initially in Japanese translation and only much later in the original German. This happened because Japanese scholars had been reading Husserl for a long time and were already deeply interested in his ideas. Some, in fact, actually studied in Germany under Husserl himself. Among these, TAKAHASHI Satomi (1886–1964) and YAMAUCHI Tokuryu (1890–1982) were instrumental in introducing phenomenology to the Japanese public through books like TAKAHASHI’s *Husseru no genshogaku* 『フッセルの現象学』 (*Husserl’s Phenomenology*, 1931)¹ and YAMAUCHI’s *Genshogaku josetsu* 『現象学叙説』 (*Introduction to Phenomenology*, 1929).²

Ideen I was read in Japan immediately after its publication in 1913, although the Japanese translation came much later. IKEGAMI Kenzo (1900–1956) completed one by 1929, but practical difficulties delayed its appearance until 1939 (vol. 1) and 1941 (vol. 2).

Meanwhile, as Japan modernized its industry in a frantic effort to match the West, new social problems paved the way for Marxist influences. Concurrently, the sudden move toward Western-style rationalism triggered an interest in Existentialism, which focused on aspects of human existence that elude rational thought. Needless to say, Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* (1927)³ contributed to this interest.

Yet even as Japan increasingly Westernized itself, cultural differences with the West were felt as strongly as ever. NISHIDA Kitaro (1870–1945) incorporated many Husserlian ideas into his thinking, but advanced a distinctive philosophy that was markedly Japanese (or Asian) in character. WATSUJI Tetsuro (1889–1960), initially influenced by Heidegger, elaborated an ethical system based on traditional Japanese values.

¹ Tokyo: Daiichi Shobo, 1931. Reprinted in TAKAHASHI Satomi, *Zentaisei no Genshogaku* (Kyoto: Toeisha, 2001).

² Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1929. ITO Kichinosuke, MIYAMOTO Wakichi, MUTAI Risaku and OTAKA Tomoo also visited Husserl during this period.

³ Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Defeat in the Pacific War was the next great turning point for Japan. Policies during the occupation (1945–1952) fostered Americanization on the political and institutional fronts, and the Japanese intelligentsia engaged in soul-searching regarding the totalitarian and nationalistic tendencies that had supported the war. Meanwhile the world immersed itself in a cold war and a hot one broke out on the Korean peninsula, ironically resuscitating Japanese industry. The Vietnam War then led to a heated political debate about Japan’s alliance with the U.S. and to a wider debate about where Japan was headed, politically and ideologically. Marxism and Existentialism played important roles in this debate and Jean-Paul Sartre was especially influential in turning Japanese eyes toward the “individual.”

The popularity of existentialism and Sartre’s debt to phenomenology awakened new interest in Husserl in the 1960s, while Sartre’s emphasis on the isolation of the subject led to a reconsideration of the relationship with the Other—a discussion often linked to Marxist arguments concerning alienation. The problems of human existence and society as a whole triggered a general awareness of a “crisis” of humanity.⁴ Problems brought forward by Sartre also led to interest in Merleau-Ponty, whose analysis of intercorporeality was regarded as an escape from the conundrum of isolated existence.

Against this background, phenomenology was seen as a critical philosophy, fine-tuned to deal with the crises of the modern world, and *Ideen* was often read as an introduction to *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*.⁵ Others, influenced by American scientific philosophy, read phenomenology as a theory of science, but in this case also as a prelude to the *Krisis*. A modernized translation of *Ideen I* appeared in 1979 and 1984, generating a renewed discussion about how Husserl should be read.

Translating Husserl

In response to these historical and social conditions, and also as the fruit of a long-term scholarly interest in the work of Husserl, most of his major writings have been slowly but surely translated into Japanese. A new two-volume translation of *Ideen I* by WATANABE Jiro (1931–2008) was published in 1979 and 1984. The first volume of a two-volume translation of *Ideen II* by TATEMATSU Hirotaka (1931–) and BESSHŌ Yoshimi (1956–), appeared in 2001, and the second, by TATEMATSU and SAKAKIBARA Tetsuya (1958–), in 2009. *Ideen III*, translated by WATANABE Jiro and CHIDA Yoshiteru (1943–), followed in 2010.

⁴ Discussions about “crisis” were also widespread among readers of Heidegger, who had continued to be relatively popular through the war years. After interest in Sartre declined, interest in Heidegger became stronger—particularly because of the renewed controversy regarding his complicity with Nazism. This led to interest in Levinas and Derrida, as was no doubt the case elsewhere.

⁵ Belgrade, 1936.

In the 30 years it took for the Japanese *Ideen* to appear, a translation of *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis* (1977) by YAMAGUCHI Ichiro (1947–) and TAMURA Kyoko (1954–), a new translation of the *Cartesianische Meditationen* (2001) by HAMAUZU Shinji (1952–), and two translations of Husserl’s *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article, one by TAHARA Hachiro (1947–) in 1980 and another by TANI Toru (1954–) in 2004, were published.

Translation inevitably involves problems of cultural differences, even between languages as similar as German and English. The translating of German into Japanese is much more difficult. When Husserl’s writings were first introduced to Japan, “philosophy” was still exotic and phenomenological concepts were a complete unknown, making the translation of *Ideen I* a monumental task. Cairns’ *Guide for Translating Husserl* could suggest “constitution” for *Konstitution*, but Japanese translators had to invent a term from scratch, even as they struggled to understand the concept itself. In the first translation of *Ideen I*, IKEGAMI translated *Konstitution* as *kisei* (規整) instead of *kosei* (構成) (which was introduced after the war and is used today). *Kisei* is not a normal Japanese word, but the ideograms indicate an “ordering of elements according to rules.” Today this seems a misreading, which was not uncommon in early translations. When many concepts are non-existent, the creative aspects of translation emerge and occasionally miss the mark.

In contrast to IKEGAMI’s somewhat rudimentary reading of Husserl, WATANABE’s new *Ideen I* provides many detailed footnotes, including commentary on terminology (with references to differences between the Biemel and Schuhmann editions), on translations into other languages (especially Ricœur’s French translation), and references to research by other scholars. WATANABE’s *Ideen I* is a notable example of scholarly research extending far beyond the usual scope of translation.

Today, phenomenology is a major school of thought in Japan. The Phenomenological Association of Japan has nearly 500 members, making Japan one of the world’s most active countries with regard to phenomenological study. This is the result of a century of reading Husserl—even before translations were available—and owes much to the many prewar scholars who struggled with, against, and for Husserl across the barriers of language and culture. Their reading of *Ideen I* was especially important for the development of Japanese phenomenology and is the foundation of phenomenological study today.

The Early Phenomenologists

NISHIDA Kitaro (1870–1945) is known as the founder of the Kyoto School of philosophy. Born 11 years later and outliving him by only 7 years, NISHIDA was a true contemporary of Husserl. Although he is primarily known in the West for his orientation toward Zen, the way he embedded the concepts of *noesis* and *noema* (as developed in *Ideen I*) in his philosophy—although somewhat idiosyncratically—shows how strong and deep his ties were to phenomenology.

NISHIDA's interest in Husserl had awakened by 1911 and lasted much longer, as indicated by frequent references to phenomenology in letters to TANABE Hajime.⁶ In early 1914, he refers to what is probably *Ideen I* and writes: "I think this Husserl is also quite interesting."⁷ That summer, he writes: "I hope to consider thoroughly that school of thought from Austria, which discusses the distinction between *Inhalt* and *Gegenstand*, beginning with Bolzano and Brentano and going on to Meinong and Husserl and Lipps."⁸ The next summer, he writes: "This man [Husserl] is very capable. I recommend that you study him. First consider Bolzano and Brentano, then go on to Twardowski. If you read Husserl after these, you will find him quite comprehensible. (What Bolzano says from the viewpoint of logic and Brentano says from psychology, Husserl combines and develops philosophically.) I believe Husserl to be a further development of the ideas of Bolzano and Brentano."⁹

Later, in September, 1915, Nishida mentions *Ideen* by name, observing that it is too indiscriminate to say that phenomenology is merely a science of essence intuition, since it is more a way of looking at essence from the viewpoint of "pure experience." But he also criticizes phenomenology for not being sufficiently "*rein unmittelbar*."¹⁰ By November 30, he is writing that "we should not be satisfied with what Husserl calls *Phänomenologie*. I believe that we must delve more deeply." These comments reveal how Husserl was approached and digested by Nishida and other philosophers of his generation.

In a 1916 lecture entitled "Idealist Philosophy in Modern Times," NISHIDA says: "Our experience can be divided into content and act, but these two are of course two aspects of one experience and must be correlated to one another. Phenomenology is an attempt to shed light on this relationship from the viewpoint of pure consciousness."¹¹ Regarding the structure of pure consciousness (or pure experience), NISHIDA took the investigation in a direction of his own, particularly in his analysis of "self-awareness."

Near the end of his life, NISHIDA wrote another younger colleague: "Japanese scholars have no ability of insight. Kant and Husserl are all right, but Heidegger and Jaspers are only *epigonen*. It is now a turning point not only for world history, but also for philosophy. Persevere in your research."¹² Nishida's view notwithstanding, although subsequent scholars did not lose interest in Husserl, most seemed to find the attraction to Heidegger much stronger.

TANABE Hajime (1885–1962), 18 years younger and a disciple of NISHIDA, soon advanced a distinctive theory of his own, called the "logic of species." He probably

⁶ NISHIDA Kitaro, *Collected Works*, vol. 19 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2006).

⁷ Ibid., 226 (letter dated January 1, 1914).

⁸ Ibid., 240 (letter dated August 5, 1914).

⁹ Ibid., 259–60 (letter dated July 12, 1915).

¹⁰ Ibid., 261.

¹¹ NISHIDA Kitaro, *Collected Works*, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2004), 64.

¹² NISHIDA Kitaro, *Collected Works*, vol. 23, p. 176, in a letter to SAWAGATA Hisataka, dated January 13, 1944.

discussed phenomenology with NISHIDA more than anyone else. TANABE was one of a handful of Japanese who actually studied under Husserl—in TANABE’s case, in 1922. Following his return home, he published a paper called *Genshogaku ni okeru atarashiki tenko* 『現象学に於ける新しき転向¹³ (“New Developments in Phenomenology,” 1924), which begins by categorizing contemporary German philosophy into two tendencies: the “philosophy of science (or knowledge)” and the “philosophy of life” (*Lebensphilosophie*). The Kantian “philosophy of science (knowledge)” is “too alienated from life to win hearts and minds, the two-world theory of its thorough-going Platonism being too severe and uncongenial for people who are suffering from the harshness of reality,” he comments, before turning his attention to *Lebensphilosophie*.

Finally, he describes phenomenology, which begins as a philosophy of science (knowledge) but goes on to investigate a consciousness “that we experience directly, undistorted by prejudice or theory.” TANABE explains that phenomenology does this by taking the “evidence of intuition” as its starting point.¹⁴ He no doubt has *Ideen* in mind in making this characterization and also refers directly to *Ideen* in the paper. In any case, TANABE regarded phenomenology as a way to integrate what he saw as the two major philosophical tendencies of the era. He focuses on the Neo-Kantians (particularly Rickert) as representative of the scientific philosophy of the time, citing their over-emphasis of “form,” and says that phenomenology in contrast makes it possible to grasp an object with its specific content intact. It also “sheds a ray of light on the content-form problem” by means of the concept of categorical intuition, he says. However, he adds that it is insufficient to deal with the matter merely at the level of “logic.” This is a *konstruktive Phänomenologie* (a term TANABE uses negatively), he says, and asserts that a more concrete investigation is called for.

TANABE is also critical that phenomenology regards consciousness as a fixed entity. “Consciousness develops its essence through phenomenological knowing,” he writes. “It is the self-expression of consciousness itself. Phenomenology is itself the self-awareness of consciousness, is none other than the ground phenomenon (*Grundphänomen*) of consciousness.”¹⁵ He regards phenomenology as the movement of a self-developing consciousness, as might be seen from the perspective of a *Lebensphilosophie*. TANABE approves of Heidegger for heading in this direction and indicates that he himself wanted to take the same direction.

Ninshikiron to genshogaku 『認識論と現象学』 (“Epistemology and Phenomenology,” 1925)¹⁶ is more specific: “From the second decade of this century, that is, after the end of the Great War, Europeans have been suffering from extreme anxiety and incline toward skepticism and despair. For them, a ‘philosophy of

¹³ Published in vol. 36 of the journal *Shiso* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1924); reprinted in TANABE Hajime, *Collected Works*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1963).

¹⁴ Ibid., 19 ff.

¹⁵ Ibid., 24.

¹⁶ Reprinted in TANABE Hajime, *Collected Works*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1963).

science' seems almost irrelevant. Their interest lies in the comprehension of living facts, rather than in the ordering of logic or the perfection of systems."¹⁷ In this essay, TANABE presents the development of traditional European philosophy, indicates the groundbreaking aspects of phenomenology in the *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen*, then shows how these are developed by Heidegger. He approves of what one might call a shift "from constructive phenomenology to hermeneutical phenomenology," where "constructive" is used in the negative sense of dealing only with abstract and logical objects. However, we should mention that TANABE later criticized Heidegger with great severity in a paper called *Kiki no tetsugaku ka tetsugaku no kiki ka* 「危機の哲学か哲学の危機か」 ("A Philosophy of Crisis or a Crisis of Philosophy?" 1933).¹⁸

KUKI Shuzo (1888–1941)—sometimes called "Baron Kuki"—spent 8 years in Europe in the 1920s and studied under Rickert, Bergson, and Heidegger. After his return home, he first turned his attention (and European methods) to a traditional Japanese concept called *iki* 「いき」 (a type of aesthetic consciousness distinctive of the old Tokyo culture) and published a book in 1930 called *Iki no kozo* 『いきの構造』 (*The structure of iki*).¹⁹ This was followed 5 years later by *Guzensei no mondai* 『偶然性の問題』 (*The problem of contingency*).²⁰ Both books make use of phenomenological and hermeneutical methods, although KUKI is better known in Japan for his originality than for his knowledge of European philosophy.

KUKI was more a follower of Heidegger than of Husserl, but he does mention Husserl in "Gendai tetsugaku no doko" 「現代哲学の動向」 ("Trends in Modern Philosophy" 1937),²¹ where he introduces readers to names like Husserl, Brentano, and Meinong. *Ideen* is not mentioned in this lecture, but he undoubtedly had accurate knowledge of the text. KUKI is critical of Husserl's approach to intersubjectivity: "Husserl calls his phenomenology a transcendental phenomenology and maintains that a systematic and exhaustive pursuit of the egological analysis will lead to an intersubjective phenomenology. However, inasmuch as intersubjectivity is made to depend on the pure I, we must regard Husserl's phenomenology as being forever centered in the egological reduction." But he adds: "Although Husserl's phenomenology is dry and tasteless and contains nothing to excite the reader, the attitude of attempting to build an exact science upon the principle that nothing may be admitted but that which is evident to the intuition is itself worthy of deep admiration. Phenomenology has been greatly influential in terms of this attitude and its methodology. This basic principle is phenomenology's greatest merit."²²

¹⁷ Ibid., 39.

¹⁸ TANABE Hajime, *Collected Works*, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1964).

¹⁹ Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1930. Reprinted in KUKI Shuzo, *Collected Works*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

²⁰ Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1935. Reprinted in KUKI Shuzo, *Collected Works*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011).

²¹ Reprinted in earlier edition of *Collected Works*, vol. 9 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1981).

²² Ibid., 397.

KUKI then describes further developments in phenomenology in a way indicative of his own understanding of Husserl: “Scheler developed Husserl’s phenomenology in the direction of a *Lebensphilosophie*, and from there, Heidegger transformed it into a philosophy of existence. There are three stages in the development of phenomenology: (1) Husserl and pure consciousness, (2) Scheler and life, and (3) Heidegger and existence.”²³

Also to be noted is that the customary present-day translation of Husserl’s *transzental* as *choetsuronteki* (超越論的) was proposed by KUKI. In the context of Kantian philosophy, *transzental* is translated as *senkenteiki* (先驗的) (literally, “preceding experience”). KUKI suggested that *choetsuronteki* is more suitable for phenomenology because it maintains the link with *transzendent* (*choetsuteki* (超越的) in Japanese). *Choetsu*, incidentally, corresponds to the Latin root *trans* and means “going beyond.”

Genshogaku josetsu 『現象学叙説』 (*Introduction to Phenomenology*, 1929),²⁴ by YAMAUCHI Tokuryu (1890–1982), was widely read in the prewar years. This was less an academic study than a relaxed commentary on phenomenology in YAMAUCHI’s own words. His basic strategy is to outline the characteristics of Husserlian phenomenology through a comparison with Kant, although the relationship to other philosophies is also considered. YAMAUCHI regarded phenomenology as being on a completely equal footing with Kantian philosophy: “Personally, I believe there is no mistake in asserting that these two schools of thought are representative of the scientific viewpoint that is and can be found in the attitude of all those who have philosophized throughout the history of thought,” he writes in his Preface.²⁵

YAMAUCHI’s *Introduction* also shows his preference for the *Logische Untersuchungen*: “It seems to me that his [Husserl’s] thinking has greatly progressed between the *Logische Untersuchungen* and the *Ideen*, but there is by no means any fundamental change in stance. The phenomenological viewpoint is already sufficiently formulated in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, and with regard to content, it would be appropriate to say that the earlier work is more productive in the development of its philosophy.”²⁶

YAMAUCHI may have felt that Husserl had regressed toward Kant in *Ideen*, an impression shared by many modern readers. “I myself am now more interested in Heidegger,” he writes, because Heidegger “makes an effort to reexamine all matters after reducing them to the specific being of life.”²⁷ In this respect, YAMAUCHI was among the many scholars of his day who were attracted to *Lebensphilosophie*. He placed great importance on epistemology, however, and found Heidegger’s somewhat questionable: “There remain many questions as to whether it is possible to

²³ Ibid., 400.

²⁴ Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1929.

²⁵ Ibid., vi.

²⁶ Ibid., 2–3.

²⁷ Ibid., vi.

discuss these matters without dealing with the problem of consciousness from the epistemological viewpoint.”²⁸

As with YAMAUCHI, many of his readers were often torn between an attraction to *Lebensphilosophie* on the one hand and loyalty to the Kantian (and neo-Kantian) tradition on the other, and thus tended to read *Ideen* as something that mediated between them.

TAKAHASHI Satomi (1886–1964) was a great admirer of Husserl and paid personal homage to his idol in 1926. He studied in Freiburg for a year, then returned to Japan to publish *Husseru no genshogaku* 『フッセルの現象学』 (*Husserl's Phenomenology*, 1931).²⁹ His perception of Husserl and Heidegger differs somewhat from the scholars mentioned above. He writes: “The present situation in the world of philosophy seems to indicate that people’s hearts and minds have moved on from Husserl’s constitutive phenomenology to the hermeneutic phenomenology of Heidegger, but it would be a great mistake to assume from this that the former has been made obsolete by the latter.”³⁰ TAKAHASHI’s book is a presentation of Husserl’s basic concepts, using *Ideen* as its main reference and adding material from lectures he attended in Freiburg. Of special note are his commentaries on “passivity,” “intersubjectivity,” and “corporeality.”³¹ Neither the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, *Ding und Raum*, nor *Ideen II* had been published yet, but he accurately predicted Husserl’s direction from the lectures.

TAKAHASHI also gave the Japanese public its first image of Husserl the man (with an emphasis on Husserl’s devotion to philosophy), and this is the man people still think of when they speak of Husserl.³² His book is a precise, academic, and unbiased reading of Husserl, but he himself later advanced a distinctive “phenomenology of totality” for which he is best known in Japan.

Marxist-leaning scholars of the early twentieth century read Husserl in a different way. HONDA Kenzo (1898–1938) became interested in phenomenology in the early 1920s, and after reading *Ideen*, wrote about *Formalisierung* and *Generalisierung* with a focus on *Neutralitätsmodifikation*. In a later paper, *Genshogaku to yuibutsu-benshoho* 『現象学と唯物弁証法』 (“Phenomenology and materialistic dialectic,” 1929),³³ his interpretation develops in another direction: “In the beginning, phenomenology strove to establish a universal mathematics, and as such, interested itself in a formal ontology that would encompass the various forms of pure grammar and the various rules of logic, but as the focus shifted from expressions to that which is

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Tokyo: Daiichi Shobo, 1931. Reprinted in TAKAHASHI Satomi, *Zentaisei no Genshogaku* (Kyoto: Toeisha, 2001).

³⁰ Ibid., 9.

³¹ Ibid., 47 ff.

³² This refers to the portrayal in *Husseru no koto* (“About Husserl”), cited at the head of this paper (cf. Note 1).

³³ Tokyo: Kobushi Shobo, 1997.

expressed, sense and its fulfillment came to be the problem, and consciousness was brought to the fore as the source of the bestowing of sense.”³⁴

HONDA finds temporality to be the source of consciousness and writes: “In searching for the premise of all premises, for the basis of all viewpoints, phenomenology arrived at that which flows instead of that which is fixed.” He calls this the “dialectical turn” of phenomenology. “Can phenomenology and dialectic coexist?” he asks. “Is a dialectical phenomenology or a phenomenological dialectic possible? Is there at least a margin in which such a combination can exist?”³⁵ HONDA expands his inquiry to include the hermeneutical tendency of Heidegger and then further to Kierkegaard’s existential dialectic and sees an inner connection between phenomenology and dialectic—an interpretation linked to an existentialist reading of Heidegger.

Ultimately, however, HONDA recognizes the discontinuity between phenomenology and dialectic. The former leads neither to “production” nor “practice,” he says. He turns for help to Marcuse, who also attempted to reconcile Marxism and phenomenology, but eventually concludes: “The phenomenological dialectic is not a materialistic dialectic and dialectical phenomenology is not a dialectical materialism.”³⁶

Phenomenology in Postwar Japan

In briefly following the work of these prewar scholars, we see that Husserl’s *Ideen I* was known and read in Japan almost contemporaneously with its publication in Germany. People were attracted to phenomenology for various historical and cultural reasons, and also as an object of purely scholarly interest. In postwar Japan, interest in phenomenology was linked to a consciousness of “crisis”—social and intellectual—with a focus on Husserl’s later writing. At the same time, the scholarly tradition of phenomenological research also remained strong. As work on the *Husserliana* volumes progressed in Europe and previously unpublished material and manuscripts came to light concerning subjects like genetic phenomenology and the phenomenology of intersubjectivity, new possibilities opened up. *Ideen*, for example, could now be read in a different way. The new Japanese versions, for example, translate various terms in ways that reflect Husserl’s ideas about genetic phenomenology. This in turn has opened doors to still other ways of reading Husserl.

Research trends in Japan have taken a new turn in recent years. Or rather, they have turned back to old interests. Younger scholars are showing more interest in logical theory and object theory, and interest in ethics has also made a comeback. These tendencies will no doubt influence future readings of *Ideen*.

³⁴ Ibid., 56.

³⁵ Ibid., 60.

³⁶ Ibid., 73.

When TAKAHASHI Satomi visited Germany in 1926, he expressed resentment at the prevalent belief that the only philosophy worthy of the name was European philosophy. At the same time, he was greatly impressed with the importance of what Husserl called “free thinking.” “Many things will be born of this,” he wrote. Indeed, many things have been born in Japan, as in the rest of the world. *The Phenomenology of Mediality*,³⁷ a collection published in honor of NITTA Yoshihiro (1929)—an important postwar phenomenologist—is a good example of how phenomenology has thrived in Japan. KIMURA Bin (1931–) has advanced a remarkable theory of psychiatry; UEDA Shizuteru (1926–) has formulated an original theory of the self linked to the traditions of the NISHIDA School. NOE Keiichi, WASHIDA Kiyozaku, and MURATA Junichi—postwar baby-boomers—have expanded the horizons of phenomenology by assimilating the fruits of contemporary philosophy and science. “Interculturality”—a central problem for Japanese thinkers since the opening of Japan in the mid-nineteenth century (and actually from long before)—is now a major phenomenological topic.

There is no definitive way to read or translate Husserl. New and different readings “appear” in correlation to the questions that motivate the reading. In the century since the first volume was published, *Ideen* has continued to renew its “appearance” and activate and reactivate thought in new directions and will no doubt continue to do so in the future.

Responding to the *Ideen* Today

How should the *Ideen* be read today?

Let me follow in the steps of Husserl’s “free thinking.” In the *Krisis*, Husserl says that the Cartesian *epochē* in *Ideen I* had a “great shortcoming” in that it arrived at the transcendental ego in a single leap and thus seemed to leave it empty of content (Hua VI, p.158). This can be read as an admission of failure. However, in rereading *Ideen*, it seems to me that the “logic of failure” (*logos hamartikos*) can lead us to a new way of “doing phenomenology.”

The phenomenological reduction was initially conceived as a way to circumvent the problem of the *gegenstandlose Vorstellung* (objectless representation) encountered in the thinking of Bolzano and Meinong. This entails the problem (discussed since Hume) of the “dual existence” of a representation and of the object that it represents but which exists outside it. How can the existence of this object be confirmed? By stepping outside the representation? But how can we access an object directly, unmediated by a representation?

Husserl decided to approach the problem from the opposite direction. No one can step outside the representation—that is, outside consciousness, experience, or life—he said, and proposed that we *epochē* the existence of transcendent objects

³⁷ NITTA Yoshihiro et al., *The Phenomenology of Mediation* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2002).

(i.e., whatever exists outside consciousness) and “reduce” it to the transcendental consciousness, experience and life that precede existence and make it possible. The idea of the phenomenological reduction is already indicated in a margin note of the *Logische Untersuchungen* (Hua XIX/1, 364) and the “transcendent interpretation” of existence was proscribed (or epoché) in *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins*. However, it was *Die Idee der Phänomenologie* that clearly defined the concept, and *Ideen* that developed it.

But in *Ideen*, the “pure ego” rejected in the *Logische Untersuchungen* is reaffirmed as “a transcendence in immanence” (Hua III/1, 124). What is this “transcendence”? Is it like the transcendence of an object? In the *Krisis*, Husserl corrects himself and says the ego is called the ego only by “equivocation” (Hua VI 188). What is this equivocation? It has to do with the way we speak of the ego: as a noun, as an indicator, or as a personal pronoun.

For example, the later Husserl says: “‘I’ indicates thereby a distinctive centering of my life, of my consciousness” (Hua XIV, 312). The ego is seen here as a (verbal) function that keeps life and consciousness from falling apart. This integrating function is not equivalent to the life or consciousness thus integrated and, in this sense, may be said to transcend them, but it is dangerously close to a mistake to express a verbal function with a noun—to mark it, as it were, as “something transcendent.”

In *Ideen II*, on the other hand, Husserl says the point of departure of phenomenology is the “I,” “now” and “here” (Hua IV, 349), which can be regarded as indicators. They are like the “now” and “here” of sensory certitude in Hegel’s phenomenology, where the initial “now” and “here” are unique, but appear general through linguistic expression. Essentially, they should refer back to the originally unique. It seems to me that Husserl’s “ego” is similar, in being the forced expression of something originally unique that essentially cannot be expressed by language, which generalizes. Even indicators fail in this respect.

Thirdly, this unique entity is nevertheless in a relationship with the Other. In an experience of the Other, “I” is called “thou” and “thou” calls itself “I.” This is possible by means of a transgression from my unique body to the body of the Other. The body is not a barrier to “my” transgressing. Even where a transcendent interpretation is prohibited, the body transcends itself, and furthermore, simultaneously receives meaning from other bodies into itself. Through this transgression, there appears to the unique ego another entity similar—but not entirely identical—to itself. Personal pronouns are an expression of this relationship. However, even after the unique becomes one among many, the “I”—when it “reflects”—still appears to itself as the one and only. A personal pronoun cannot express this aspect of the ego. After all, “one among many” and “the one and only” are inherently contradictory. It is only in a moving relationship, where when one appears the other is hidden, and multiplicity and singularity conceal each other, that both are compossible.

Husserl failed to explain the “I” precisely, but it is precisely this failure that points to the possibilities.

By reducing the matter to the ego, phenomenology takes us to the question: “What is a phenomenon?” In *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, Husserl writes: “The word *Phänomen* is ambiguous because of the essential correlation between *Erscheinen*

(appearing) and *Erscheinendes* (that which appears).” (Hua II, 14) That is, when “something that appears appears,” we encounter both a noun (the “that which appears”) and a verb (the “appearing”). This is no mere tautology. In fact, it implies many things.

For example, a rectangle as a “that which appears” can appear through the mediation of various “appearances”—for example, as a parallelogram or as a trapezoid. We could say the “that which appears” is intended through, or mediated by, these appearances. By understanding these appearances as “meanings,” and by considering the aggregate of these meanings, Husserl arrives at the *noema* in *Ideen I*. An object is intended through/mediated by its *noema* (the sum of its meanings). Intention presupposes the possibility of fulfillment, so we can now say: the object is intended through/mediated by its *noema* (the sum of its meanings), and this intention is sometimes fulfilled. This concept of the *noema* was one of *Ideen I*’s strongest points.

In contrast, the concept of *noesis* had a great shortcoming. *The Idea of Phenomenology* indicated the ambiguity of the “that which appears” and the “appearing”—that is, the nominal and verbal aspects of appearance. Of course, since the “that which appears” is dependent on an “appearing,” the verbal aspect takes precedence. However, a (verbal) “appearing” cannot appear in the same way that a (nominal) “that which appears” can. It appears only through “reflection.” “The *cogitatio*, that is, the ‘appearing’ itself, becomes the object in reflection, and it is this that easily leads to equivocation.” (Hua II, 14) “Equivocation” is synonymous to “ambiguity.” Reflection makes the “appearing” to appear, and therefore the concept of the phenomenon is equivocal. However, inasmuch as phenomenology is the study of phenomena, the reflection that makes the “appearing” appear (as a phenomenon) is necessarily the pillar of its methodology. The words: “the phenomenological method progresses entirely in acts of reflection” (Hua III/1, 162) should be understood in this context. And inasmuch as reflection is the self-reflection of the ego, it is also tied to the concept of the I.

The ego, however, is utterly self-forgetful. It is not that the ego forgets a self that it once knew. Rather, the transcendental ego is self-forgetful from the very start and sees itself as one of the objects of the world. In this sense, it is already out there—in the world. It is only by coming back to itself through reflection that it becomes aware of its own self-forgetfulness and appears to itself as the ego.

Now, in *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, the verb “to appear” is expressed as a noun: *cogitatio*. In the *Logische Untersuchungen*, “appearing” is referred to as an “act,” while in *Ideen*, it is called *noesis*. These noun forms necessarily fail to express something that should be expressed as a verb. *Noesis* must be taken back to its verbal state.

The verb “to appear” implies that it appears *to* or *for* something or someone. When something appears to the previously mentioned ego, this implies an ego of the dative case. The various “appearances” move *toward* the ego, as they move *toward* the objects of which they are the appearances. The dative case implies the perspective of “appearing.” While the ego of the nominative case—the ego of the “I think” (*cogito*)—implies control over the appearing, the dative ego has no such control.

The appearing has begun before the ego starts to function and is already reaching out to the ego. It is only after this that the ego becomes nominative and takes over, thus accomplishing the appearance. The ego being both dative and nominative in this manner—and although language cannot simultaneously express the dual aspect—it (the ego) is innately involved in the “appearing” in that it ultimately makes to appear what has begun to appear. In this sense, the *self*-reflection of the ego is the completion of its own “appearing.”

The “appearing” is in itself not a simple matter but has a genetic structure. Genetic phenomenology elucidates the “how” of appearing, although *Ideen* failed to do this. A genetic analysis could show how the ego spoken of in *Ideen* is born and appears. The “appearing” moves toward the ego, which is a *didonai* (gift) of that appearing. The dimension at which this takes place can be called the “primal ego.” The “appearing” begins there, and is completed by the ego that is triggered by the appearing. However, the dimension of the primal ego appears only after the ego that has been born “reflects” and objectifies the primal ego (or places it in the accusative case, so to speak). Thus, the source (the primal ego) appears—and fails to appear—only through a return from the end product.

The phenomenological reduction prevents us from saying that something *initially* exists in itself and then appears *from* there. It is the other way around. The “that which appears appears” occurs first, and when this occurrence does not end at once, does not hide itself, and “subsists” from one point in time to another, then we believe that it “exists.” In other words, “existence” is possible as a combination of “appearance” and “temporalization.” This is the mechanism behind the “positing of existence.” But once existence is posited, the perspectivity of appearance is forgotten and objectivism and substantialism take its place. Objectivism relegates “appearing” to the sphere of psychology, while substantialism regards the ego as an entity. But these are examples of putting the cart before the horse.

The *Krisis* speaks of many “special worlds” and also of multiple “life worlds.” But no matter how many worlds appear to us, they all—upon reflection—belong to the one and only world and appear within the bounds of that World. “The world does not exist as an existent or as an object but in its uniqueness, and for this uniqueness, multiplicity is meaningless,” (Hua VI, 146) writes Husserl. This uniqueness corresponds to the one-and-only-ness of the transcendental ego. It multiplies itself, but subsumes all of the multiplicities, so that “the exterior is without meaning.” (Hua I, 117) Now this statement should be understood dynamically. The expanded scope of the World remains unthematized and hidden until it appears with the next reflection. When it appears, it is as a “universe” (*Universum*) (a “tending towards the One”) and should be regarded as an “Idea” that ideally reaches beyond the movement of multiplicity or uniqueness.

This reflective analysis is deeply linked to interculturality, which is a traditional problem for Japan and also a modern problem for the world as a whole. When we encounter an alien world, we transcend our own culture and learn to see it as a separate culture. When we encounter others from an alien culture, we see how things appear differently and are experienced differently by beings we recognize as fellow humans. At the same time, we are pressed to reflect. Through reflection, we become

aware of our own culturality and how we are determined by its appearances and its modes of experience. We awake from our self-forgetfulness, but at the same time fall into a new danger of self-forgetting. This is because we set ourselves outside the two cultures and think that we are looking at them from the outside, whereas both are contained in the one and only world, which is looked upon by a one and only ego. Both that world and I are unique, and yet, at the same time, culturally hybrid. This paper is in English, but was originally written (and conceived) in Japanese, was written in a script that originated in China, and is an extension of a philosophy that began in Europe. It is intercultural from the very first word.

The shortcomings of *Ideen I* are its merit, because its emphasis on reflection and the ego can make us reflect on our hybridity. It is a work that should be read—as I have read it, or perhaps failed in my reading—for its failures.

Chapter 3

Edith Stein and Autism

Kathleen M. Haney

Influence on Stein

Interest in Edith Stein's thought is growing among phenomenologists¹ and Neo-Scholastic philosophers after an overly long hiatus,² which resulted in leaving Stein interpretation mainly in the hands of critics who largely fail to appreciate Edmund Husserl's influence on his student and assistant. Anxiety about influence

¹ In *Body, Text and Science* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 218, Marianne Sawicki writes, "... even the most astute philosophical commentaries on Stein rest content with giving a historical account of what she wrote. They do not discuss its social genesis, nor do they redirect any of Stein's investigations or amend her results. This has the unfortunate effect of sealing Stein's thought into the past, for without being bent and pruned it cannot grow into a living resource for today's and tomorrow's challenges." She acknowledges Mary Catherine Baseheart's *Person and World* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), as a noteworthy exception. Since then there is Dermot Moran's beautiful study, "Immanence, Self-Experience, and Transcendence in Edmund Husserl, Edith Stein and Karl Jaspers" in the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Spring 2008, an issue dedicated to Edith Stein. Angela Ales Bello provides a measured analysis of "Edith Stein's Contribution to Phenomenology" in *Analecta Husserliana*, Volume LXXX, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002) and in "Causality and Motivation in Edith Stein," *Causality and Motivation*, ed. Roberto Poli (Heusenstamm bei Frankfurt: Ontos Verlag 2010). Corinne M. Painter applies Stein's work in her 2007, "Phenomenology and the Non-Human Animal," in *Appropriating the Philosophies of Edmund Husserl and Edith Stein: Animal Psyche, Empathy, and Moral Subjectivity* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2007). This is a small sampling of research published on Stein recently.

² Antonio Calcagno in *The Philosophy of Edith Stein* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2007), 2, suggests that sexism may be a cause. Also, many Catholic scholars are only recently revisiting their Scholastic heritage and becoming open to Stein's recuperation of it, following Karol Wojtyla among others.

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may entail (1) reopening the question of the reliability of the text of *Ideen II*, particularly Part 2, Chapter 4; (2) suggesting a proper ordering of naturalistic and personalistic worlds; and (3) reflecting on Stein's critique of transcendental idealism which suggests how transcendental realism cashes out in a science of philosophy.³

To evaluate the influence of the *Ideen* on Stein, we must go back to her reading of *Logische Untersuchungen*. Edith Stein began at Breslau, where she was occupied principally with psychology, since her primary interest was, from the beginning, the person.⁴ After four semesters, she became dissatisfied and was increasingly drawn towards Göttingen and Husserl. Stein writes of herself in her introduction to *Endliches und Ewiges Sein*, “Her philosophic home is the school of Edmund Husserl, and her philosophic mother tongue is the language of the phenomenological thinkers.”⁵ She attended Husserl’s courses from 1913 to 1916 and he directed her dissertation, but we should not infer that she was a Husserlian phenomenologist per se.

Along with other Göttingen students, she saw a renewal of Scholasticism in *Logische Untersuchungen*,⁶ but was herself more interested in revisionary realism than Christian or even Greek philosophy. Husserl’s 1913 publication then seemed to rescind the promises of his earlier work, since he specified in *Ideen I* that intersubjectivity was the guarantor of “an objective outer world.”⁷ “Reinach and his students read *Ideen I* as a lapse into a sort of Kantianism”⁸ and Kantianism was what they were all set to avoid.⁹

³ See *Potenz und Akt*, Band XIX of *Edith Steins Werke* 18 (Freiburg: Herder, 1998), translated as *Potency and Act*. Henceforth (PA). Walter Redmond. (Washington D.C.: ICS, 2009).

⁴ Archivum Carmelitanum Edith Stein Band VII, *Ausdem Leben einer Judischen Familie, Das Leben Edith Stein: Kindheit und Jugend* (Druten: R. Bosman, 1985). OCD as *Life in a Jewish Family*, trans. Josephine Koeppl (Washington D.C.: ICS, 1986), 186. Henceforth, LJF.

⁵ Edith Stein, *Endliches und ewiges Sein: Versuch eines Aufstiegs zum Sinn des Seins*, Edith Steins Werke 2 (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, and Freiburg: Herder, 1950) and Edith Stein Gesamtausgabe 11/12 (Freiburg: Herder, 2006). Translated from the 1950 edition as *Finite and Eternal Being: An Attempt at an Ascent to the Meaning of Being*, trans. Kurt F. Reinhardt (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 2002), 12. Henceforth ES.

⁶ “The *Logische Untersuchungen* had caused a sensation primarily because it appeared to be a radical departure from critical idealism which had a Kantian and neo-Kantian stamp. It was considered a ‘new scholasticism’ because it turned attention away from the ‘subject’ and toward ‘things’ themselves. Perception again appeared as reception, deriving its laws from objects not, as criticism has it, from determination which imposes its laws on the objects. All the young Göttingen phenomenologists were confirmed realists. However, the *Ideen I* included some expressions which sounded very much as though their Master wished to return to idealism.” (LJF, 250.)

⁷ “In his course on nature and spirit, Husserl had said that an objective outer world could only be experienced intersubjectively, i.e., through a plurality of perceiving individuals who relate in a mutual exchange of information.” (LJF, 269.)

⁸ Karl Schuhmann, “Husserl’s Yearbook,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 50, Supplement (Autumn, 1990): 1–25.

⁹ Calcagno in *The Philosophy of Edith Stein*, p. 17, writes, “Other philosophers, including Ingarden, Scheler, and Conrad-Martius, chided Husserl for his transcendental turn. They, and Stein, continued to follow the phenomenological approach inspired by Husserl prior to his transcendental turn, resulting in the production of a vast corpus of work that remains in archives and libraries but that has not been fully investigated and studied.”

Stein completed her thesis, *Zum Problem der Einfühlung*, in 1916, having proposed the topic to Husserl in 1913 to fill a gap in *Ideen I*. Although empathy carries the burden of accounting for the constitution of the other within the I's own consciousness to ensure a shared world that can overcome naïve realism, Husserl only specifies *the task* that empathy is to perform. In, *Ideen I*, he neglects to ask what empathy is or how it operates.¹⁰ "Husserl had said that an objective outer world could only be experienced intersubjectively," i.e., through a plurality of perceiving individuals who relate in a mutual exchange. Accordingly, experience of other individuals is prerequisite. Husserl gave the name *Einfühlung* (empathy), an application of the work of Theodor Lipps, to experience of the inner lives of others. Stein notes, "What it consists of, however, he nowhere detailed. Here was a lacuna to be filled; therefore, I wished to examine what empathy might be."¹¹ Although Husserl was inclined towards Lipps's account of empathy,¹² Stein critiqued all of her predecessors including T. Lipps, Hugo Munsterberg, and especially Max Scheler,¹³ whom she says does not use the term "empathy" as she is using it.¹⁴ Stein wrote to Ingarden that Husserl had "confided that he was very satisfied with my thesis,"¹⁵ and that, indeed, a good bit of it coincided with essential parts of Book II of *Ideen*.¹⁶ We will reflect on this statement when we turn to some of the concerns about that text.¹⁷

¹⁰ Husserl acknowledges that empathy provides insufficient grounds for evidence of other subjects. Edmund Husserl *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, I. Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*. (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1913). *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983). "The intersubjective world is the correlate of the intersubjective experience, i.e., experience mediated by 'empathy.' We are, as a consequence, referred to the multiple unities of things pertaining to the senses which are already individually constituted by the many subjects; in further course we are referred to the corresponding perceptual multiplicities thus belonging to different Ego-subjects and streams of consciousness; above all, however, we are referred to the novel factor of empathy and to the question of how it plays a constitutive role in 'Objective' experience and bestows unity on those separated multiplicities." (363)

¹¹ Ljf, 269.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ As Waltraut Stein wrote in her "Preface to the First and Second Editions" of her translation, *On The Problem of Empathy*, trans. Waltraut Stein (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1989), xiv. Henceforth PE. "Scheler considered Stein's analysis so pertinent that he referred to it three times in the second edition of (this work (*Sympathiegefühle*) 1923.)"

¹⁴ Ibid., 27.

¹⁵ "The Master had joked: 'Your thesis pleases me more and more. I have to be careful that my satisfaction with it doesn't get too exalted.'" (Ljf, 410.)

¹⁶ Edith Stein, *Self Portrait In Letters 1916–1942*, trans. Josephine Koeppel, ed. Dr. L. Gelber and Romaeus Leuven, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1993), 1.

¹⁷ Sawicki's *Body, Text and Science* is the standard resource for the chronology of *Ideen II*. The present study has extensively relied on its research. Further scholarship into the influence that Stein had on the text of *Ideen II* and the significance of its supplements must take Sawicki's account seriously. As the reader shall see, this commentator differs with Sawicki due to my own non-pernicious interpretation of Husserl's "transcendental idealism." From mid-October 1916 to

When Husserl was 76 years old and in failing health, he lamented to Sister Adelgundis Jaegerschmid that people understood him poorly. They had not followed his “inner turn” away from the *Logische Untersuchungen*. “Even Edith Stein accompanied me only until 1917.”¹⁸ Stein reported to Ingarden in February 1917 a fruitful conversation with Husserl that, although it had not established a consensus between them, had provided her with insight into her own thought,¹⁹ which became a full-blown transcendental realism (since she required subjective consciousness acting upon the material given).

Following Stein’s move into metaphysics, we wonder if she adopted a diminished version of the phenomenological reduction or perhaps even slipped back into a naturalism that sidetracked Husserl’s foundational aspirations. If she made *her* turn in 1917, before then in the years she was writing her dissertation she was, as Husserl says, following him, at least provisionally. We should not be surprised then if strong echoes resonate between *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* and *Ideen II*, which make it possible for Husserl to locate Stein’s analysis of empathy usefully within the personalistic world of *Ideen II*. Yet we must wonder whether Stein smuggles her metaphysics into her second redaction of that work.²⁰

The influence of *Ideen I* on Edith Stein may finally have led her to abandon Husserl’s aim for a rigorous science of philosophy. And, indeed, she herself puts forth a variety of this position in an interlude she included her 1931 work, *Potenz und Akt*, her attempt at *Habilitation*. Her appraisal of transcendental idealism argues

February 1917, Edith Stein, no longer a student, but now Husserl’s first assistant, re-visited the manuscript that Husserl wrote immediately after what became *Ideen I*, 157. In the Introduction to their translation of *Ideen II*, Rojewicz and Schuwer comment, “In 1918, Stein completed her second redaction. This time her work involved much more than merely transcribing. By incorporating into the text writings of the folio and others from the war years, the main text of *Ideen II* began to take its present form” (xii). That Stein took an active role in two of the manuscripts that became *Ideen II* seems unarguable. See also Antonio Calcagno “Assistant and/or Collaborator? Edith Stein’s Relationship to Edmund Husserl’s *Ideen II*,” *Contemplating Edith Stein*, ed. Joyce Avrech Berkman (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2006), 243–270.

¹⁸ Adelgundis Jaegerschmid, O.S.B., “Conversations with Edmund Husserl, 1931–1938,” *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* (Seattle: Noesis Press, Ltd., 2001). Husserl reportedly said: “People even claim that I have retreated to Kant. That only shows the degree to which I have been misunderstood!” (338) And, “Yes, Thomas, I adore him—but he wasn’t a neo-scholastic either.” (346)

¹⁹ Stein wrote: “as a consequence [of the discussion] I have experienced a breakthrough. Now I imagine I know pretty well what ‘constitution’ is—but with a breakfrom Idealism. An absolutely existing physical nature on the one hand, a distinctly structured subjectivity on the other, seem to me to be prerequisites before an intuiting nature can constitute itself.” (SP,8)

²⁰ According to Sawicki, 153–162, Stein composed §§43–47 (chapter 4 of Part Two). If this is the case, then Husserl may not be responsible for the infamous sentence that begins §47, “Empathy and the Constitution of Nature,” namely, “Empathy then leads, as we saw earlier, to the constitution of the intersubjective Objectivity of the thing and consequently also that of man, since now the physical Body is a natural-scientific Object.” Perhaps the entire chapter includes Stein’s closeted realism, rather than Husserl’s transcendental idealism. We will see that Husserl reverses the above constitutive order in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*.

for transcendental realism on the basis that the body of the other can only be supposed to be animated.²¹ Hypotheticals make no existential truth claims, however. Once presupposition enters into phenomenological system, one is free to choose among “beliefs.”²² Her analysis of the *Cartesianische Meditationen* shows her vaguely aware of the inadequacy of empathy to perform epistemological tasks of the first order, but resigned to a systematic phenomenology that includes essential indeterminacy. “Now if we deem it reasonable, despite this possibility of being deceived, to maintain belief in the existence of other subjects independent of my own ... what then prevents me from ascribing existence independent of my own to this body as well as to all other things that fall upon my senses, as does naïve belief in regard to perception and experience?”²³ Husserl’s transcendental idealism cannot take the animate body of the other for granted, as a given. Stein is correct that belief in “things that fall upon my senses” is naïve and being naïve, such belief exceeds the limits of Husserlian phenomenology.

Can we speculate that Husserl was cognizant that Stein’s belief that the body of the other led to a *deeper lacuna*, which goes nearer to the heart of his phenomenology? Alfred Schutz recalls a conversation that suggests that the stakes may have been high for Husserl.

Mrs. Biemel points out rightly that the problem of the constitution of the object in consciousness became during the fifteen years in which Husserl worked on the manuscripts a main problem and the very task of phenomenology. In 1934 Husserl told the present author that he had left the second volume of the *Ideen* unpublished, because he had not at that time found a satisfactory solution for the problem of intersubjectivity which he believed to have achieved in the Fifth *Cartesian Meditation*.²⁴

The addition that Husserl makes is his account of a second order of appresentational pairing, which brings about a shared meaning with the other’s *Körper* thereby transforming it into *Leib*. We note two moments here: first the constitution of the object body in simple immanence and secondly the animate body that results from discovering the animate body of the other in appresentational pairing. The evidence that can only result from mutually shared intentions enlivens a *Körper* that coalesces in a single paired meaning which can only come about through reciprocal meaning-making. Husserl deems that he has thus provided a solution to the problem that enticed Stein into the position of transcendental realism, what she saw as *the necessity of presuming that the object, the body of an other, was animated, as was the I's own lived body*. Husserl’s method requires him to show how an animate body presents itself thus, or risk undermining phenomenology with a retreat into presuppositions.

²¹ “The thing that is their body becomes evidence for me of a life of a subject that is analogous to my own life; it motivates in me the belief in an existence that is just as much an absolute for others as mine is for me.”(2009, 375) Motivated belief, however, is not *Evidenz*.

²² See Stein’s introductory chapter in *Endliches und Ewiges Sein* wherein she encourages the genuine philosopher to adopt Christian teachings in order to investigate where the hypothesis leads.

²³ PA, 376.

²⁴ Alfred Schutz, “Edmund Husserl’s *Ideen*, Volume II,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 13, No 3 (Mar., 1953): 394–413. Quote from page 395.

In Husserl's more complex account, an ‘I’ appresents a pairing partner as united in one meaning with it, so that the other's animate body shares the I's own life. Appresentational pairing brings about a meaning at the “overlapping” of the intentions of both of the partners. However, only one of the partners' experience is immediately available in an I's lived consciousness. In a mutual exchange of reciprocal intentions, such pairs as nursing couples or dancing partners or team members reciprocally share the meanings that unite them.²⁵

Stein, with avowed realism, holds that we meet with others as we do with things in the world; they come to us from without. Husserl keeps his bet on methodological rigor. The stratum of immanent things specifies the pathway of the Fifth Meditation as it resumes the problematic of *Ideen I*.²⁶ The other's animate body need not, as in Stein in 1931,²⁷ *be taken to be besouled*. The fifth of the meditations shows how a real other can be nested within the I's consciousness, as another subject, as well as the first fully transcendent object and guarantor of an autonomous objective world.

An Application to Understanding Autism

No wide consensus prevails about what “Autism” is or about what causes it, although many are now coming to believe that the functional sources of autism (genetic or environmental) can be found in neuro-processing disorders. All we know with certainty is that the numbers of children and adults presenting with autism spectrum disorders continue to increase dramatically. Typical diagnostic symptoms of ASDs (Autistic Syndrome Disorder) include little or no eye contact, little or late language development, self-simulative or self-mutilative behaviors, clumsiness, lack of imaginative play, hyper- or hypo-tonic sensitivities, difficulties with the digestive system, etc. Husserl might describe these deficiencies as disorders that prevent syntheses over sensory fields so that the developing consciousness can eventually constitute stable objects across sensory fields. And, the child learns to call these objects by names given in a mother tongue. Perhaps hyper or hypo sensitivities to hyletic data in one or several sensory strata or inability or limitations in coordinating sensory fields or maybe even deficits in passive

²⁵ Here we move into “communities of higher orders” of interest to both Husserl and Stein in their later work. See the CM and K Manuscripts and *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung* 7 (1925): 1–123. Edith Stein, *An Investigation Concerning the State*, trans. Marianne Sawicki (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 2006).

²⁶ Husserl's analysis in §151 of “Strata of the Transcendental Constitution of the Thing. Supplementary Considerations,” begins in primordial empirical consciousness that develops into the personal doxic worlds, as we see in thematized in his later genetic analyses.

²⁷ Although the stratum of immanence can achieve unities such as bodies recognized as things through acts of association of sensory experience, the thing body of the other takes on the sense of substantial-causal thing before becoming independent of the nexus of consciousness.

receptivity itself (what Stein calls the “life force”) inhibit autistic consciousness from recognizing an other as autonomous and talking to him or sharing “objects” with him. What we do know is that autistic progression amounts to a history of delay, deviation, splinter skills, and quirks. Even the term, “autism,” from the Greek “auto” suggests an unnatural preoccupation with the “self,” unnatural since, as both Husserl and Stein recognize, the human *telos* is the other.²⁸ Nevertheless, since consciousness is “consciousness of,” autistic consciousness too must make meanings.

The world of autistic consciousness is notoriously opaque to natural scientists or parents who assume that its horizon is the world that presents itself within the personalistic attitude that Husserl depicts in *Ideen II*. If the degree of the severity of ASDs links to failure to grasp others empathically, then without others, there can be no experience of a single shared world of intersubjectivity. As we shall see, the autistic child or adult can experience others, but until he develops empathy he remains on the spectrum, since he only constitutes others as mundane objects, “mere things,” in the naturalistic attitude that is the topic of *Ideen I*. The personalistic and naturalistic attitudes are marked by distinguishing the world of persons and values from the world of “objects” whose values are quantifiable, though not “felt.” People on the autistic spectrum may inhabit the later world, but the former is the limit of their disability.

Leo J. Kanner first described “Early Infantile Autism” in 1943. Around the same time, but unbeknownst to each other, Hans Asperger in Vienna wrote about a similar condition. Presently “high-functioning autism” and “Asperger’s Syndrome” are often used interchangeably. It may prove useful to tease them apart on the basis of the preferred hemisphere of the brain for each type, though such speculation is well beyond the scope of this paper. Practitioners now agree that each autistic person is an overly unique individual, since (s)he is not “neurotypical.” Developing theories of types nevertheless may be useful both to the understanding and treatment. Psychologists followed as the early researchers into what are now called Autistic Spectrum Disorders. Taking off from Kanner’s description of aloof, overly intellectual mothers, Bruno Bettelheim infamously blamed “refrigerator mothers” for the inadequate nurturance that prevents autistic children from developing a sense of self.

Instead, the current understanding among practitioners amounts to a kind of awe for most of the parents of spectrum children, especially the mothers, for their dedication to their disabled, often difficult children. For instance, institutionalized adults on the spectrum are not always toilet-trained. If the dimension of self-feelings does not accompany motoric acts, we would expect training to be very difficult. Even a devoted mother may not be able to pair with her child, if he cannot constitute her, synthesizing adumbrations

²⁸ Manuscript E-III-5 transcribed by Marly Biemel in 1952. Reprinted from *Telos* 4 (Fall 1969). “Universal Teleology,” *Husserl: Shorter Works*, trans. Marly Biemel, eds. Peter McCormick and Frederick Elliston (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 335–337. Edith Stein, *Die Frau* (Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts, 1959); *Woman*, trans. Freda Mary Oben (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1996). See especially pp. 94–97.

across sensory fields.²⁹ He may not be capable of enjoying feelings of warmth, touch, familiarity, nourishment. This is to say that the most severely autistic infant cannot readily participate in the paired meaning, baby/mama. In efforts to avoid further hurt and blame to the majority of parents who sacrifice mightily for their children, practitioners have too often jettisoned the psychological dimension altogether.

Persuasive developmental disorders effect the entire soul, as with the Greeks, the principle of animation, as well as object constitutions. The task we shall take on is explaining why this is the case. From a phenomenological perspective, persons with ASDs, for whatever reasons, fail in the orderly progression of constitutions that result in consciousness of a shared world of self and others. To apply phenomenological method and discoveries to autism is long overdue. The natural scientists who theorize about autism do so on the basis of the naturalistic world attitude. We propose instead to assume the position of the transcendental phenomenological reduction. The guiding clue will be autistic consciousness, as we see it at work in the meanings that autistic persons make as they exhibit them in their behaviors. We use empathy in order to do so. What we will find is that people on the ASD spectrum, although they usually live in families, in relation to parents and siblings, do not engage in empathic acts. The affection that they show is infantile or childish rather than self-giving love.

Many naturalistic theories surmise difficulties connecting the hemispheres of the autistic brain and espouse therapies that often rely on bodily movements. Consensus about typically autistic over and under sensory sensitivities (or more commonly, both in the same child) holds that such difficulties lead to problems of sensory integration, which refers to the ordering of sensory information for practical ends. We would say that the wild life of the most severely autistic takes place against the background of the Ownness sphere of Husserl's fifth meditation. Integration of the senses (Aristotle's *sensus communis*) is the next higher stage that shows itself with syntheses of the various sensory fields across time, as self-identical objects with multiple sensory dimensions knit together. Integration is not a skill that the neuro-typical child is taught,³⁰ although the ability to associate is generally thought of as indicative of intelligence so that neuro-typical individuals seem to be disposed to higher or lower ability.

²⁹ Tito Rajarshi Mukhopadhyay graphically describes his mother's determined intrusions into his autistic mind, which enabled his development. *How Can I Talk If My Lips Don't Move?* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2008). Temple Grandin expresses similar gratitude for her mother's persistence, see especially *Emergence Labeled Autistic* (New York: Warner Books, reissued April 2005). Clara Claiborne Park's classic *The Siege* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982) conveys her efforts as the parent of an autistic child in her dedication: "To those behind walls, and to all their besiegers."

³⁰ Regardless of the initial deterrent to development, Connolly and Craig write: "Ten modalities provide sensory input that must be organized and processed by human subjects: (1) touch and pressure, (2) kinesthetic, (3) the vestibular system, (4) temperature, (5) pain, (6) smell, (7) taste, (8) vision, (9) audition, and (10) the common chemical sense. Each modality has a special type of sensory receptor (end organ) that is sensitive only to certain stimuli, and each as a separate pathway from the sensory receptor up the spinal cord to the brain. Sensory systems especially important to motor learning are: tactile and deep pressure, kinesthetic, vestibular and visual. When these systems exhibit 'delayed' or 'atypical' function, motor development and/or learning is affected." Maureen Connolly and Tom Craig, "Stressed Embodiment: Doing Phenomenology in the Wild," *Human Studies* 25, 4 (2002): 451–62.

ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) is the warhorse of therapies for autistic children in the United States. It involves an extrinsic reward for desired behaviors, including eventually praise as reward (the ubiquitous “good job”). These repetitions of behaviors, often those the neuro-typical child incorporates spontaneously or easily, may serve to make develop memorial connections. The late Dr. Stanley Greenspan’s therapies “Floortime,”³¹ the norm in Canada, emphasize circles of communication and concomitant emotional attachment.

Phenomenologically, the success of the variety of therapies suggests the many dimensions to the phenomenon of autism. It may be the case that some children require behavioral training. Some behaviors, although expressive of the autistic child’s feelings, inhibit his ability to initiate or even to respond to exchanges of meanings with the not-I. Behaviors such as bashing their heads, biting themselves, spinning, rocking, tracking dust specs (all common autistic behaviors) distract some children from turning to the pre-other with intentional regard. As Maxine Sheets-Johnstone shows,³² the roots of cognition are motoric acts which arise out of internal states. These need not link to autistic experience of a “pre-other.” On the other hand, in normal development, motoric and kinaesthetic acts coordinate with affect—the infant hears the mother’s voice and reaches his arms out to her, so that the “pre-object” is animated by the mutual pairing with the parent who picks him up.³³

Husserl’s emphasis on the constitution of the other within consciousness provides a template for child development, an analogy he himself makes in Section 61 of his Fifth Meditation, when he takes up the question of “psychic genesis.” Phenomenological methodology suggests this line of inquiry since “every child must build up his ‘idea of the world.’”³⁴ Husserl denies that sense experience automatically gives itself within the context of the shared world. And we see this in otherwise neuro-typical blind or deaf infants. These children usually come into our shared world, obviously with constituted objects that most of us can only imagine,³⁵ yet with a common horizon in the one spatial/temporal world whereas many people with ASDs never do. People with Autism Syndrome Disorder remain on the spectrum until they join into the intersubjective constitution of the personalistic world.

We will investigate acts and concomitant stages of consciousness leading to intersubjective, empathic being-with-others (not only *Mitsein*) in a shared world of worlds, including professional, personal, and spiritual dimensions in communities of higher orders. This world is the natural attitude (although not the naturalistic) of “neuro-typical” individuals. Severely autistic children do not indicate by gestures or

³¹ Stanley I. Greenspan and Serena Wider, *Engaging Autism* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, Perseus Books Group, 2006).

³² Maxime Sheets-Johnstone, *The Primacy of Movement* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999), 252.

³³ My use of the masculine pronoun throughout is indicative of the preponderance of males on the spectrum.

³⁴ CM, 141.

³⁵ Blind people often speak of being able to “feel” colors. See Oliver Sachs, *An Anthropologist on Mars* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995) for further examples of atypical consciousness.

language that they participate in this linguistic, intersubjective, and shared world. Husserlian genetic phenomenology can provide a structure for autistic development if we analyze “abnormal” on the basis of “normal” or neuro-typical learning that embodies the constitutive *a priori*.³⁶ Consciousness is “autistic” to the extent it fails to enliven the *a priori* through its acts. Neuro-typical consciousness, on the other hand, enacts its telos to open to the world and others.

Before we apply the constitutive *a priori* to an analysis of autism, we shall briefly rehearse its relevant stages:

1. When the (m)other meets the infant at birth; she obtrudes (intrudes with the intention bringing out) upon his passive receptivity. Most babies must learn to nurse. Insofar as the child is open to his “I cans” and enacts them in normal infantile autism, he becomes skilled at participating in paired meanings, although he does not immediately intend them in such a sophisticated fashion. Most infants can imitate an adult sticking out her tongue in the first hour of his life, while lacking notions of his or her or tongue. Nevertheless, he is ready to learn about his individuality and humanity in the culture of his family beginning with these pre-egoic experiences of phantom objects.
2. In the second level of consciousness, immanent objectivity, the child enjoys a symbiotic relationship with the mothering partner that gradually extends outwards to his father, his siblings, and other caregivers. His (m)other is not fully independent of him, according to the meaning that the child grants to her. Initially, she and his other “part-objects,” derive their meanings only as extensions of his own “pre-ego.” The infant engages in acts of shared attention that lead to independent objects in the one spatio/temporal world, after the fusion between the pair, mother and child sunders into their separate identities.³⁷
3. When the other becomes a real person, i.e., an alter ego who exists autonomously, with its own desires and purposes, the world becomes truly objective, i.e., intersubjective. Object constitution in the strong sense of transcendent to and independent of the particular constituting consciousness results from its different appearances in the perspectives of the originary ego and its partner. No longer his meaning only, the world becomes a nexus of shared meanings. The language-using child grasps its world in the shared names; he has learned a mother tongue. Others become more than dependent transcendent objects that derive their meanings from the child’s interest. The child learns that some objects are themselves also subjects in a shared spatio/temporal world. This world is a symbolic world that the child experiences in the iconography of his culture. His acts of empathy gradually fill in the space between persons who share a common time. This development is the normal fulfillment of the motivations that began in the reciprocally shared obtrusions on the lowest level. The recognition of a world, constituted as

³⁶ CM, 125.

³⁷ We know from experiences with adolescents that separate identities are not established easily or completely during this early period of development, but the normal overlapping of the pair mother-child begins to pull apart well before the teenage years.

independent, inhabited by others who are not me, moves the I to transcend itself into a world and others. The telic drive towards the other is on its way.

We may think of autistic development as more or less “stuck” on a foundational level “beneath” the shared world of objects, others, and self. The young infant or severely autistic child does not recognize causal objects, since he has not synthesized various fields of sense experience into self-identical objects. The naturalistic attitude gives objects as determining parts of its consciousness, unless its naturalism is based on the prior constitution of the personal world. Without others, the autistic self experiences existence, even that resistant to his will, as dependent on him as its source.

In addition to the *constitutive apriori* that leads to the natural world, the world of *Ideen I*, the second volume shows the constitution of the personal world. As early as *Ideen I*,³⁸ Husserl distinguished the above three levels of objectivity, corresponding to levels of consciousness, although he waited to sketch them out in genetic analysis. As we have seen, Husserl recognized that the intersubjective levels require working out in some specificity. In outline, however, beginning in originary consciousness, a sphere of immanence, disclosed in the so-called “second reduction,” the pre-ego dwells in polymorphous ownness, before otherness. It lacks awareness of a distinction such as self/non-self. This pre-ego functions anonymously and with only pre-cognitive regard for its own virtualities, although it embodies them. This world is primordial, a dwelling for a pre-ego and its phantom objects.

A next higher level of consciousness includes the meaning, transcendent, although not in the strong sense of independent of its constituting subject’s consciousness. A transcendent immanent object presents itself most fully as a causal object that is not yet autonomous to the intending ego. This doxic level does not necessarily include real others. Husserl is very clear: transcendent, autonomous objects are objects for others as well. Independent objects exist for a consciousness if and only if that consciousness has constituted others as independent of its own processes: the first real object is the other.

The personalistic world of *Ideen II* is an intersubjective, objective world of persons and the products of their spirits, their meanings. It arises as a shared achievement in a community or cultural world. Although this world must be grasped in the acts of a subject, since the subject grasps others who recognize and reflect him, this subjectivity is not pernicious. We recall that in Husserl’s phenomenological epistemology, grasp of an I, other than the I of the initiating ego, ensures that the world is not solipsistic—it is not mine alone. Lacking real others, the severely autistic person is alone in his own world.

The Husserl/Stein Theory of Intersubjectivity Applied to ASDs

Metaphysical differences aside, the animate body of the other that results from appresentational pairing in Husserl and the presumed animate body of the object/other in Stein share a starting point in the other as another animate organism. In *Ideen II*,

³⁸ *Ideas I*, 363–364.

we see that the psychical level is common to animal as well as to human life. At the level of consciousness of the personal world, we see that Stein's doctrine of empathy complements as well as supplements Husserl's constitutive phenomenology.

As discussed, Stein and Husserl differ concerning the immediate basis of acts of appresentational pairing, yet they both affiliate such acts with meanings shared with the other's animate body, and a subject who reflects on making meanings. But, according to Husserl, when a meaning can only result from a reciprocal overlapping (of the I's meaning-making and the other's meaning-making) of intentions, the partner reveals an unknown meaning-making subject in the other's animate body. If the pairing structure presents the I as body and soul, it presents the body of the other directly through sensation and the animated life, the soul, of the meaning-making other indirectly, as an appresentation, given empathically. Before the other is present to consciousness as bodily object, there can be no appresentations of the whom of the other; without the presentation of the other as self-identical object, the that of the other is not present to consciousness, as such. The most severely autistic persons are unable to follow the *telos* of the *constitutive apriori* so that they do not constitute their early experiences of "pre-others" into others as alter egos. The content of earliest appresentations of the pre-other (more or less empty) is a necessary condition for the possibility of the meaning of the pair as well as for the development of the faculty of empathy, as "the means of knowing the other," as Stein has it. Unlike their neuro-typical peers, children and adults on the autism spectrum pair with others minimally and often in non-reciprocal ways.

The symbiotic unions that spectrum people establish with others have to do with performing functions, although the typical sharing of egos is not evident.³⁹ The "other" is useful to the autistic child to turn on a faucet or to reach cookies on a high shelf. Unlike the attached infant whose symbiosis includes its need and desire for the person (this one person, one mama, as well as the goods she provides), autistic symbiosis expresses desire for things. Expanding on the notion that the naturalistic world, when not founded on the personalistic one, results from colonialization rather than indigenous growth we see that "persons" can exist as meaning-making beings only within the personalistic world. The high-functioning person who learns symbols before or without knowing psychic life cannot recognize reflective values. Why? Because, both Husserl and Stein find ultimate value in persons. Behavioral evidence will not allow us to maintain that autistic persons are devoid of self-feelings or of deep relationships with others. Yet, insofar as persons on the spectrum lack empathy, they remain related to the relationship, to mother, father, sibling, grandma, to the other person in one of its roles, rather than to a real other who is more than any of its roles. Although the person on the spectrum may name the partners in his twosomes, threesomes, family, they must be poorly individuated, since one on the spectrum lacks the capacity for empathy that makes the individuation of self and other possible.

³⁹ "Eventually I distinguished people from things and nature, and came to think of them as people-objects: second-rate, distant, difficult to comprehend but usable. I learned to function" (Op. cit. Williams, 70).

Parents reach out to their children to claim them as their own in the shared world. But these infants cannot spontaneously take up their side of the meaning-making necessary to pairing. Parents may share their autistic children's focus, intentionally turning towards what interests him, but what is the parent to do when the child fails to initiate? "Look" says the neuro-typical 2-year old. "Boat" replies the parent. Failure to initiate or engage in activities of joint attention is another symptom on the low end of the spectrum. "But there is also another type of autism—the most low-functioning one—where we have no proof of the continuity in the behavior, where the existence of retention/protection structure seems absent."⁴⁰ As we shall see, the difference between the naturalistic world as "mere things" and the intersubjective shared world of living beings results from communication with others.

In *Das Kind*, Husserl describes acts of empathy as indicating a gestalt revolution has taken place.⁴¹ Consciousness has entered into the personal world that includes independent, transcendent objects as well as real others. We see such meaning-making acts as neuro-typical children make their way into the shared world. And noticeably, severely autistic children may never make the meanings that acknowledge other, self, and world. According to Husserl, the normal child evidences empathetic behaviors between the ages of three and five. Thus, empathy or lack thereof can be a marker for delayed development on the autistic spectrum. In other words, empathetic acts announce consciousness's ascent to the level of the personal world, the awareness of a world of persons that autistic behaviors do not display.⁴² Stein writes about the personalistic world, when she says: "Consciousness as a correlate of the object world is not nature, but spirit."⁴³

Low-performing autistic children routinely walk into other people, although their vision may be within the typical range according to ordinary testing measures. The impaired autistic child who does not "notice" the "givenness" of other animate bodies performs within a sphere of primordiality that gives the lie to his chronological age.⁴⁴ As we would expect, Husserl's innate *a priori* must be concretized in experience that will later provide the basis for the ego's self-apperception. So, we must wonder about a child who trips over other animate bodies or bumps into them (he may even run them over if the others are little). The autistic child's intention, however fleeting and impulsive, occupies his consciousness. He has not made "room" for others in a world of self and others.

⁴⁰ Yasuhiko Murakami, "On The Future—Autism and Temporality" (paper presented at The Future of Applied Phenomenology: The Second Conference of Phenomenology as Bridge between East and West, Seoul, Korea 11–13 February 2007), 137.

⁴¹ Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie Der Intersubjektivität* Dritter Teil: 1929–1935, ed. Iso Kern (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 604–608.

⁴² Although Husserl's power in explicating an essential level of object constitution suggests that his rigorous foundationalism is necessary for grounding empathetic acts and their correlates, Stein's analysis of empathy completes the constitution of the shared world as the personalistic world.

⁴³ PE, 91.

⁴⁴ An interesting note here is that autistic children often keep babyish features well beyond what their age would dictate.

Husserl, Stein, and followers could perhaps reply that the body of the autistic child must have sensory impairments that prevent typical development. Yes, but what we are saying is that the first experiences of the primal ego and its “pre-objects” take their place along the *constitutive a priori*, which leads to openness to others and thus to its telic fulfillment. In other words, persons appropriately typed as autistic have not constituted the other as alter ego. The other is not independent of the originary I’s consciousness, but neither are its objects.

The given reality of a lived body establishes its emotional, sensory, cognitive, and evaluative powers. Since a primal level is missing from Stein’s account, her analysis of the animate body of the other as simple givenness does not consider the meanings that autistic children do make. When we incorporate Stein into a full account of intersubjectivity, we do well to consider the autistic trajectory as tending towards the next level of consciousness, the personal world, introduced by empathy with animate bodies that share paired meanings.

Empathy, according to Stein, is *the means* for knowing the other. Since our goal is a better grasp of Pervasive Developmental Disorders (ASDs), and the other is the *telos* of neuro-typical development, we must summarize Stein’s analysis. Empathy is not simply seeing the other as if the I were in his place. Such imaginative bi-location only yields the I in two locations. The other as other and “There” to the I’s “Here” stretches the visual field so that not all perspective is that of the I. What seems certain is that even in basic bodily suffering, the autistic other may not feel hunger or thirst or pain as neuro-typical persons do. Common overreactions to auditory sensation suggest that the vacuum cleaner is painful to many autistic persons, not just annoying. As we learn from Donna Williams, autistic persons suffering from sensory overload may intentionally shut down a field of sensory experience to ease stress.⁴⁵

Pairing with the neonate or the young autistic child amounts to mutual overlay of meanings; in this relationship, empathy need not be mutual or reciprocal. The infant cannot recognize the correlate of his hunger pains until the mother puts him to breast. The mother pairs with her baby as mother/child, a nursing couple. He follows her lead and behaves as a human infant. The point is that empathy, in its first instances, begins with an other further along on the constitutive *a priori*.⁴⁶ Empathy also fills in the other as this other by grasping his feelings in the I’s own feelings. The mother recognizes the baby’s cries of hunger or thirst or sleepiness and shows him where his feelings tend. Identifying his needs does not demand that she herself feel hungry or thirsty, although she probably is sleepy. Husserl is clear: acts of empathy imply relation, not a happy relation perhaps, but a preliminary pairing from within the pre-personalistic attitude. He notes that acts of mutual relation, pairing, are “especially pre-eminent in the acts of one-sided empathetic understanding of the life of the other.”⁴⁷ Corinne Painter makes a similar argument in her description of how

⁴⁵ Donna Williams, *Nobody Nowhere* (New York: Times Books, 1992), 195–198.

⁴⁶ This makes sense of early references to spectrum children as feral. The psychic life of the wolf is not up to making the intrusions appropriate to introducing a child to his humanity. See Paul Collins, *Not Even Wrong* (New York and London: Bloomsbury Press, 2005).

⁴⁷ *Ideas II*, 204.

people know their pets and recognize their feelings. Even if my dog does not understand my often complex feelings, I can know him empathically.⁴⁸

Since empathy is *the means* for knowing any other animate body, we must take care to distinguish between the subject who empathizes and the other subject, the non-I, the alien, the foreign other, the not-me. The mother presumably has fully developed the personalistic world along with the strong sense of objectivity that it entails. She is capable of reflection on her acts, while the infant only acts without reflection. The anachronistic fallacy lurks, unless we keep in mind that access to the infantile ego requires the second reduction, to primordiality, as Husserl shows in the fifth of the *Cartesianische Meditationen*. Even then, the parent's ego does not identify with that of his child. Rather, the parent recognizes his child's needs as other than his own—as an other who might enjoy being tickled or need to be burped. As anyone who has tried to quiet a screaming child knows, not just any attention from any adult will do. If an infant wants to nurse, his father with his bottle may not satisfy him. Indeed, this need to be understood never completely leaves us. We recall T.S. Eliot's lament “That's not what I meant. That's not it at all.”⁴⁹

Through non-reciprocal empathy in the one who claims the human child and the pre-ego who is becoming a baby, the infant awakens to his feelings and his movements direct themselves towards his feelings. The mother's reflection of her neuro-typical child provides him with the one-sided means for knowing himself. This self is a preliminary self since his reflection derives from his other half, his complement. In this early stage of development, the mother is a part-object according to object-relations theory, derived from projections and introjections. He initially takes on the identity he gives as given him, seeing himself in reflection.

Communities of higher orders are likewise shared meanings, based on acts of empathy so even the high-functioning person on the ASD spectrum remains the outsider, the observer who lacks social skills and cannot comprehend most non-verbal cues. When we say that the person on the ASD spectrum lacks empathy, we mean that he lacks a solid grasp of the personalistic world, even though he has language and maybe excellent skills in computers or in mathematics. We again see empathy as gatekeeper.

Phenomenological analysis requires that we examine the thesis that all autistic persons live in a world of “mere things.” What composes the transcendentally necessary conditions for the possibility of the naturalistic world? How can it come about without emotional receptivity? Corinne Painter provides a scrutiny of the personal and natural attitudes that suggests that the naturalistic and personalistic worlds result from different orders of constitutive achievement.⁵⁰ So far in this chapter, we have followed the *constitutive apriori* through its accomplishment of

⁴⁸ Corinne Painter, “Appropriating the Philosophies of Edmund Husserl and Edith Stein: Animal Psyche, Empathy, and Moral Subjectivity,” *Phenomenology and the Non-Human Animal: At the Limits of Experience*, ed. Corinne Painter and Christian Lotz (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 97–115.

⁴⁹ T. S. Eliot, “The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock,” *Collected Poems, 1909–1962* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1963), 7.

⁵⁰ Op. cit. Painter.

real objects, according to the methodological solipsism that Husserl practices in book I, muting the dimension of feelings.

Now we observe that people with “high-functioning” Autism or Asperger’s Syndrome⁵¹ develop the naturalistic attitude, although without establishing it on the basis of a personalistic one. Their constitutive efforts fail to move beyond objects for the I’s consciousness to objects of a shared intentional world. The distinction that Husserl made after the *Cartesianische Meditationen* between primordial and solipsistic worlds is clear to see in the lived worlds of the neonate and that of the high-functioning autistic teenager or adult. The neonate turns towards what affects it, opening to receive what is coming in, synchronizing his motoric “I can” with his emotional desires. Autistic affect is impoverished, maybe due to defects in sensing and associating, deficient virtualities such as hyper-sensitivity to touch in the worst cases which can lead to downstream effects on memory and time constitution.

Conclusions

We have rehearsed the stages in the development of orders of immanent objectivities that Husserl sketched in *Ideen I* only to find that cognitive development alone cannot suffice to advance to empathetic grasp of the other. Empathy makes it possible for an I to feel the other’s feelings. Painter brings our attention to this passage from *Zum Problem der Einfühlung* where Stein writes:

If I experience a feeling as that of another, I have it given twice: Once primordially and my own and once non-primordially in empathy as originally foreign. And precisely this non-primordial empathized experience causes me to reject “inner perception” for the comprehension of our own and foreign experience.⁵²

Although Stein does not emphasize the following point or may not even agree with it, her analysis of empathy builds upon the structure of what Husserl terms appresentational pairing. Two “I’s” (an “I” and a “pre-I”) come together in a meaning that requires partners. With Husserl’s appresentational pairing, the other is foreign, alien, an “empty” intention, a “not-me,” a pairing partner. Husserl’s primordial world includes others as given in the pre-I’s sensory experience that are not yet given as real others. Meanings such as my child, my friend, my colleague, or my enemy may present others naturalistically, as mundane objects in “the world,” “mere things” or as self-individuated persons. Empathy fills in the “empty” intention “other” as this unique person. In empathy, there can be a partial filling in of the intention that reaches towards the other. I’s can share good news and bad news, feeling joy at an other’s upcoming graduation or sadness at the loss of an other’s beloved

⁵¹This is not the venue for speculation on the differences in the symptom complexes. DSM IV has preferred to obviate this discussion by categorizing them both as Autism Spectrum Disorders.

⁵²PE, 34.

sister. The I need not have a sister to feel this sadness since it does not originate from the I itself.

On the primordial level, the overlapping of the pair is sundered by the Here of the I and the There of the non-present part-other. When the desire of the primal ego seeks the not-present pre-other, necessarily the sense of the unity of the pair weakens. “Otherness” builds on the experience of the embodied other, when Stein’s theory of empathy is superimposed on Husserlian constitution of things.

The neuro-typical neonate can turn towards the other in passive affectivity. These acts “awaken” the (pre-)ego, so that such experiences slip into retentions that hypothesize the “same-again.” The various sensory systems develop into embodying the other as an object, another self which reflects the primal self. Receptivity stirs the awakening of the ego. However, and Painter also notes this passage from *Ideen II*:

It should appear that there are not here two attitudes with equal rights and of the same order,...but that the naturalistic attitude is in fact subordinated to the personalistic, and that the former only acquires by means of an abstraction, or rather, by means of a kind of self-forgetfulness of the personal Ego, a certain autonomy—whereby it proceeds illegitimately.⁵³

This *illegitimate autonomy* substitutes for “the genuinely natural (i.e., originary) attitude,” “wherein intersubjective relationships characterized by various non-theoretical modes of concern and care, for example, love, hate, aversion, attraction, etc. operate as the basis for meaning.”⁵⁴ When we apply this insight to high-functioning autistic people, we see that they remain on the spectrum until or unless they develop a grasp of the personalistic world. The ability of some high-functioning persons on the spectrum to enter into the activities and sciences of the naturalistic world attitude makes concrete the distinction that Husserl and Painter make.⁵⁵ It also makes us pause before Painter’s claim that the personalistic world provides “the context and point of departure for any and all abstract, theoretically motivated reflections.”⁵⁶

High-functioning persons with Asperger’s Syndrome or Autism suggest that instead of the “self-forgetfulness of the personal Ego,” a failure to constitute a self-identical ego or a truncated sense of self may result in a constitution of the naturalistic world, albeit “illegitimate.”⁵⁷ Such individuals often process their experiences in the mathematical languages, sometimes very successfully. High-functioning autistic people live

⁵³ Op. cit. Painter, 101. Husserl, 193.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Painter.

⁵⁵ Indeed, the list of important figures in the past (Mozart, Einstein, Wittgenstein to name a few widely agreed upon) suggests that often the exceptional focus on special interests characteristic of this end of the ASD spectrum fuels exceptional abilities.

⁵⁶ Op. cit. Painter 102.

⁵⁷ Donna Williams wrote in *Somebody, Somewhere* (New York: Times Books, 1994): “Autism had been there before I’d learned how to use my own muscles, so that every facial expression or pose was a cartoon reflection of those around me. Nothing was connected to self. Without the barest foundations of self I was like a subject under hypnosis, totally susceptible to any programming and reprogramming without question or personal identification. I was in a state of total alienation. This, for me, was autism.” (5.)

in a naturalistic world that includes other persons as things, as mundane objects. They can continue developing in the naturalistic world, usually in the arts and sciences that use what were once called “the artificial languages,” those derived from the universal science of mathematics, including music. Dr. Temple Grandin provides an interesting deviation from the general rule.

When Grandin was still in high school, she constructed a “squeeze machine,” which would close in on her body with varying pressure depending on her need for an intense hug.⁵⁸ She writes:

Because of sensory dysfunction, autistic children crave added tactile stimulation. They prefer (proximal) sensory stimulation such as touching, tasting as opposed to distant (distal) sensory stimulation of hearing or seeing. In the developing nervous system the proximal senses develop first. In birds and mammals the tactile sense develops first.⁵⁹ This may explain why a child with a damaged or immature nervous system prefers the proximal senses.⁶⁰

As we see, Grandin’s reflection comes from her own experience; she herself was unable to tolerate touch except given in specific pressure. She writes poignantly about one particularly painful experience when her mother was leaving her temporarily (for therapy) in a boarding school. She remembers her mother saying:

“I’ll miss you, Temple.” She walked quickly to my side and kissed my cheek. I ached to be enfolded in her arms, but how could she know? I stood rigid as a pole trapped by the approach/avoidance syndrome of autism. I drew back from her kiss, not able to endure tactile stimulation—not even loving, tactile stimulation.⁶¹

In Temple Grandin herself we see evidence of “abnormal” symptoms that nevertheless led her to the personalistic world and a meaningful life that allows her to empathize with her mother’s inability to know the feelings that her daughter did not show. By this controversial statement I mean that Professor Grandin’s life is rich in meanings, which are products of spirit. I think her outcome inspires many parents and practitioners since she illustrates the principles she writes about.

…(M)aking a positive action out of a fixation can be rewarding. A fixation on a particular topic can lead to communication—perhaps isolated communication, but at least a break-through in communication. If properly guided, an autistic child can be motivated by a fixation.⁶²

⁵⁸ Dr. Grandin is renowned for transforming methods of slaughtering animals, her work as a professor at Colorado State University and her descriptive autobiographic works. See especially, Temple Grandin, *Thinking in Pictures* (New York: Doubleday, 1995) and *Emergence Labeled Autistic* (New York: Warner Books, 2005).

⁵⁹ For Husserl, Stein and Merleau-Ponty, among others, touch is the first sensory substrate to be synthesized into “self,” “own” and not-I since touching oneself is self-reflexive while touching objects reveals a resilience that may provide resistance. Touching a body which will come to be recognized as the body of an other is different again. The warm, soft flesh which can be experienced in touching is not the lived flesh which is touched. When the infant feels the flesh of the other, he intuits in the incomplete fulfillment of his intention that his body has boundaries. We note here that many severely autistic persons are hyper-sensitive to touch, seemingly from birth. Touch then cannot be readily synthesized or its epistemological clout cashed in.

⁶⁰ *Emergence*, 37.

⁶¹ *Emergence*, 73.

⁶² *Emergence*, 40.

A fixation may become “obsessive-compulsive,” unless the autistic child finds an outlet in an other who responds. “A compulsive talking fixation in a child can release some of the pent-up frustration and isolation that an autistic child so often feels.”⁶³ Here we see non-reciprocal empathy in action since he may or may not be able to recognize his feelings. Grandin does well to recognize her mother’s importance in her own development.

Grandin’s many books over the years reveal her increasing membership in the personalistic world. An educator, William Carlock, who evaluated her “twenty years” before he was asked to write an introduction to the new edition of her book, said that “Temple’s intense focus was on the psychology of the cattle chute. And it was there that she found her way out of autism.”⁶⁴ Emergence from autism means entering into and living in the personalistic world.

Being one of the early self-reporting autistic persons, Grandin takes her own autistic symptoms as general autistic symptoms. We cannot stress enough, however, how unique each person on the syndrome is. The fundamental source of the delay and the systems of compensation and abilities are unique to each child. Again, autistic persons are more individual than neuro-typicals who share one sensory schema and with little halting or detours follow along the path of the constitutive *apriori*. Autistic development will not follow this path so that led by and diverted or trapped by weaknesses in core associations that lead to constant objects, the severely afflicted person lives in a primordial world, although high-functioning people on the spectrum can constitute cognitively.

Probably Grandin’s way of “thinking in pictures” is the way many high-functioning individuals enact the emphasis on the part over the whole that holds back many people on the spectrum. Let us now return to *Ideen II* in order to see what is involved in the constitutions of the personalistic and naturalistic worlds so that we can apply this constitutive *apriori* to persons on the ASD spectrum.

...the actual surrounding world of any person whatsoever is not physical reality pure and simple and without qualifications, but instead it is the surrounding world only to the extent he “knows” of it, insofar as he grasps it by apperception and positing or is conscious of it in the horizon of his existence as co-given and offered to his grasp—clearly or unclearly, determinately or indeterminately—precisely in accordance with the way it happens to be posited by consciousness.⁶⁵

Neuro-typical development leads to subjects in a surrounding world with communal aspects which develop through “acts of personal mutual determination.” In the personalistic attitude, “it never occurs to him to ‘insert’ the spirit into the Body,”⁶⁶ i.e., to consider the spirit as something belonging with the body to a natural reality. “If it were carried out, then humans would themselves be posited as things.”⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid., 41.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁶⁵ *Ideas II*, 195.

⁶⁶ *Ideas II*, 200.

⁶⁷ *Ideas II*, 200.

We recall that empathy was a touchstone for consciousness since it brings with it the surrounding world of shared spirit, as well as this world's independence from any particular consciousness. Husserl described high functioning autistic persons when he wrote,

He who sees everywhere only nature, nature in the sense of, and, as it were, through the eyes of natural science, is precisely blind to the spiritual sphere, the special domain of the human sciences. Such a one does not see persons and does not see the Objects which depend for their sense on personal accomplishments, i.e., Objects of "culture." Properly speaking, he sees no person at all....⁶⁸

Yet, "the surrounding world constituted in experiencing others, in mutual understanding and mutual agreement, is designated as the communicative one."⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Ideas II*, 201.

⁶⁹ *Ideas II*, 203.

Chapter 4

Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss and Racialization

Robert Bernasconi

Clauss and Husserl's *Ideen I*

During the 1920s Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss (1892–1974) wrote three books which, among other things, sought to show that Husserlian phenomenology had made possible for the first time a clear, rigorous, and differentiated concept of race of a kind which had been lacking to previous investigators.¹ He meant by that a concept of race which had left behind the natural sciences to take its rightful place in research on the soul.² Phenomenology could play this role on his account because it provided a way of gaining insight into the laws of the soul. Clauss had studied with Husserl. We know that Clauss, along with Roman Ingarden, had already participated in Husserl's seminar on the theory of judgment in the Winter semester 1917–1918, and he was examined for *das Höhere Lehramt* by Husserl in November 1919.³ In 1923 in the first edition of *Die Nordische Seele* Clauss described the phenomenological method as in essentials a turning toward the soul (*Umwendung zur Seele*) and invited those who wanted to know more about phenomenology to read Husserl's *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*.⁴ And in 1926 in the first edition of *Rasse und Seele*

¹ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Die nordische Seele. Rettung, Prägung, Ausdruck* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1923); *Rasse und Seele* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1926); and *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1929). The first two titles went through numerous editions and sold many thousands of copies. Sometimes the revisions were so thorough that one wonders they were not published under different titles. This was in fact the case with *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker* which was, Clauss tells us, begun as a revision of *Rasse und Seele*, x. I have consulted the 1923, 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1939 editions of *Die Nordische Seele* and the 1926, 1933, 1936, 1938 (?), 1939 and 1943 editions of *Rasse und Seele*.

² Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 27.

³ Karl Schuhmann, *Husserl-Chronik* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), 217 and 237.

⁴ Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1923), 9 and note.

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Clauss included the following remarks in the foreword: “In terms of my research my deepest gratitude belongs to Professor Edmund Husserl in Freiburg; I learned from him in former times the methodology for my research and in addition much valuable explanation (*Aufschluss*), for example, concerning the relation of the soul to the body.”⁵ Clauss reprinted these sentences in the foreword to *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker* in 1929.⁶ A review in 1927 of *Rasse und Seele* by Karl Löwith recognized Clauss’s phenomenological credentials sufficiently to support the contention that his was a phenomenological approach to race.⁷ And one of Clauss’s contemporaries referred to Clauss’s writings specifically as a “phenomenology of races,” referencing the fact that he was a student of “Eduard (sic) Husserl.”⁸

In the 1930s Clauss became heavily involved with the Nazis, but as late as 1933 Eric Voegelin paid him the singular compliment of describing him as the only person to have raised race theory “to a level in which no one need be ashamed to operate.”⁹ However, by that time Clauss had already dropped all reference to phenomenology, probably because Husserl as a Jew was considered suspect, although he did about that time introduce the thought that his racial science was “presuppositionless,” which could be understood as a discreet reference to phenomenology.¹⁰ In any event, it is no surprise that phenomenologists forgot Clauss as he forgot them.¹¹ Today he is remembered only by a few historians.¹² Herbert Spiegelberg devoted just one

⁵ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), vi.

⁶ Clauss, *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker*, xii.

⁷ Karl Löwith, “Rezension: Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Seele*,” *Zeitschrift für Menschenkunde, Blätter für Charakterologie und angewandte Psychologie* 2 (1926–1927): 18–26. Reprinted in Löwith’s *Mensch und Menschenwelt. Sämtliche Schriften* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1981), 198–208.

⁸ Wilhelm Schmidt, *Rasse und Volk* (Salzburg-Leipzig: Anton Pustet, 1935), 51–52.

⁹ Eric Voegelin, *Rasse und Staat* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1933), 12; *Race and State*, trans. Ruth Hein (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 12.

¹⁰ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (Berlin: Buechergilde Gutenberg, 1933), 180, this is, in fact probably a 1938 revision. The comment is found in some additions which were added to the 1933 edition some time after 1933 but without the copyright date being changed. The fact that this is the 13th edition suggests that the edition I consulted dates from 1938 or early 1939.

¹¹ However, in his main book published after the war, Clauss did refer to Max Scheler’s book on sympathy. Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Die Seele des Andern. Wege zum Verstehen in Abend- und Morgenland* (Baden-Baden: Bruno, 1958). Clauss understood that the problem of understanding was particularly acute in the case of an alien people (*ibid.*, 228). He also understood that mere observation, which was the route adopted by Western science, but not only it, was inadequate for understanding (*ibid.*, 233). It is in this context that he recalled Scheler’s distinctions between *Nachfühlen* and pity (*Mitleid*), but looked beyond it toward what Clauss called *Mitschwinger*, a co-vibrating (*ibid.*, 240). Quoting Max Scheler, *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie*, Gesammelte Werke 7 (Bern: Francke), 19; *The Nature of Sympathy*, trans. Peter Heath (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), 8.

¹² The most extensive recent exploration of Clauss’s ideas including his relation to Husserl can be found in Richard T. Gray’s *About Face. German Physiognomic Thought from Lavater to Auschwitz* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2004), 273–332. Other recent discussions of Clauss include Édouard Conte and Cornelia Essner, *La quête de la race* (Paris: Hachette, 1995), 76–79 and Christopher M. Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 56–60. An older study that contains personal reminiscences of Clauss is Reinhard Walz, “Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss zum 70. Geburtstag. Die Entstehung einer Psychologie der Psyche,” *Jahrbuch für Psychologie, Psychotherapie und Medizinische Anthropologie* 9 (1962): 149–65.

sentence to Clauss in his monumental history of the phenomenological movement where he is described as having been for some time an unofficial assistant to Edmund Husserl who later became interested in questions of racial psychology.¹³ Spiegelberg also wrote that Clauss did not join the Nazis, but this is contradicted by Peter Weingart, who records that Clauss joined the party in 1933 with the membership number 2,909,460.¹⁴ Some aspects of Clauss's relation to Husserl are unclear. It is sometimes said that Clauss wanted his manuscript *Die Nordische Seele* to be his *Habilitation* thesis and that Husserl rejected it because it included anti-Semitic remarks. If the story is true, it is surprising that the copy Clauss sent to Husserl contained the dedication "Seinem hochverehrten Lehrer Prof. Dr. Edmund Husserl als kleines Zeichen seiner grossen Dankbarkeit überreicht vom Verfasser."¹⁵ It would also make it rather surprising that relations between the two men were sufficiently cordial that Clauss visited Husserl in St. Märgen in July 1931 and that Clauss was among only 12 authors selected to contribute to Husserl's *Festschrift* in 1929.¹⁶ It is possible that the story had its origins in Clauss's defense when he and his work were being investigated by Walter Gross, Director of the Race Policy Department of the Nazi Party.¹⁷

Clauss's approach to race appears to have been guided by Husserl's insistence in the second—and at the time unpublished—book of the *Ideen* that the human being is not the unification of two realities but constitutes a comprehensive unity.¹⁸ This means that body and soul are not realities externally linked, but are "most intimately

¹³ Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement. An Historical Introduction*, third edition (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 249.

¹⁴ Peter Weingart, *Doppel-Leben. Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss: Zwischen Rassenforschung und Widerstand* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1995), 36.

¹⁵ It was signed and dated 20 December 1923. Clauss also sent Husserl copies of the first editions of *Rasse und Seele* (1926) and *Fremde Schönheit* (1927). I am grateful to Dr. Thomas Vongehr of the Husserl Archives for this information. There is also no indication of a falling out between the two men when Husserl refers to Clauss's work in Germanistics in his letter to Roman Ingarden of 30 December 1920. See Edmund Husserl, *Briefwechsel*, vol. 3, ed. Karl Schuhmann (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), 208.

¹⁶ L.F. Clauss, "Das Verstehen des sprachlichen Kunstwerks" *Edmund Husserl zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet, Ergänzungsband zum Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1929), 56n. The other authors were Hermann Ammann, Oskar Becker, Martin Heidegger, Gerhart Husserl, Roman Ingarden, Fritz Kaufmann, Alexandre Koyré, Hans Lipps, Friedrich Neumann, Edith Stein and Hedwig Conrad-Martius. For his contribution Clauss reverted to his earlier interest in philology with an essay entitled "Das Verstehen des sprachlichen Kunstwerks. Ein Streifzug durch Grundfragen der verstehenden Wissenschaften." In it Clauss made a brief passing reference to the phenomenological notion of originally given experiences (*Erlebnisse*). He also included an endnote relating philology as research on expression to the discussion of comparative research on expression as found in the section on "die mimetische Methode" in Clauss's heavily illustrated study of racial types from the same year, *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker*. For Clauss's visit to Husserl, see Schuhmann, *Husserl-Chronik*, 383.

¹⁷ See Weingart, *Doppel-Leben*, 133.

¹⁸ Edmund Husserl. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch*, Husserliana 4 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), 240; *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 251.

interwoven and in a certain way mutually penetrating,” albeit the psychic has a priority.¹⁹ Husserl rejected the idea that I am my body, arguing instead that I have a body.²⁰ He wrote: “The Body is not only in general a thing, but is indeed expression of the spirit and *is at once the organ of the spirit.*”²¹ Clauss made a similar claim: “I am not this body, rather I possess it; it is my field of expression.”²²

Husserl described how his account of the “soulful body” accorded with one’s apprehension (*Auffassung*) of a human being, which is neither aimed at the body, nor at a spirit joined or fastened to the body. It is aimed at the human being.²³ This emerges in a certain way of walking, a certain way of dancing, and a certain way of speaking, and is true of every human performance as a psycho-physical unity.²⁴ Husserl appealed to the notion of style in his account of the comprehensive unity of spirit and body by drawing a parallel between that relation and the reading of a book where I live in the sense.²⁵

Clauss adapted Husserl’s account of the apprehension of the human being to the apprehension of the human being as racialized by developing Husserl’s brief mention of style as well as his discussion of expression in the second book of the *Ideen* in the section “Soul and Body. Expression” in the first edition of *Rasse und Seele*, Clauss described the body as “something for the soul (*Etwas-für-Seele*).” The soul cannot be perceived by our five senses but “the body (*der Leib*) belongs to the soul as the scene or setting (*Schauplatz*) of its expression.”²⁶ Instead, “we grasp the style in the lived experience of the soul of the other only through the style of its expression.”²⁷ Style rules the characteristics of the soul—its talents, its experiences—and the body—its arena or theatre—in which these experiences express themselves.²⁸ Nordics, Negroes, and Mongols all have different styles. To investigate these differences Clauss proposed a new form of study which he called “style-research.”²⁹

Phenomenology’s Rejection of the Biologization of Race

Most biologists today would say there is no such thing as race. There is nothing to see, whereas most regular people are convinced that they can usually tell someone’s race at a glance. They might occasionally get it wrong because they have been misled

¹⁹ Husserl, *Ideen. Zweites Buch*, 94; trans. *Ideas. Second Book*, 110.

²⁰ Husserl, *Ideen. Zweites Buch*, 94; trans. *Ideas. Second Book*, 110.

²¹ Husserl, *Ideen. Zweites Buch*, 96; trans. *Ideas. Second Book*, 102.

²² Clauss, *Die nordische Seele* (1923), 34.

²³ Husserl, *Ideen. Zweites Buch*, 240; trans. *Ideas. Second Book*, 252. Trans. modified.

²⁴ Husserl, *Ideen II*, 321; trans. *Ideas II*, 333.

²⁵ Husserl, *Ideen II*, 236; trans. *Ideas II*, 248.

²⁶ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele*, (1926), 19.

²⁷ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele*, (1926), 19.

²⁸ Clauss, *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker*, 93–96. Bruno Petermann praised Clauss for his introduction of the notion of style in the context of the study of races: *Wesensfragen seelischen Seins* (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1938), 96.

²⁹ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 9

by the context. Or they might be uncertain because levels of race mixing, sometimes deeply embedded in previous generations, have created zones of ambiguity. But so far as they are concerned, they see race. The seeing of race is governed by convention. When we assign someone to a race, we do so in the terms that society supplies. These shift from place to place and from time to time.

The idea that one does not see a human being in general but a racialized human being was at one time commonplace. In 1797 Joseph de Maistre observed that “In my lifetime I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc.; thanks to Montesquieu, I even know that *one can be Persian*. But as for *man*, I declare that I have never in my life met him.”³⁰ The same conviction was expressed in 1914 by Albrecht Wirth: “Everyone knows without further ado, who is a Mongol, who a Black, an Indian, or a White. And nobody would confuse a Chinese, even a naked one, with a Papuan.”³¹ However, Wirth quickly introduced a qualification on the grounds that race mixing had complicated the issue: “It is likewise ‘known to the court’ that one can on the contrary very readily confuse an individual belonging to the Mongolian race with an individual White person, that one can no less confuse a South Italian with a Berber, and even with a Creole and sometimes even with a Japanese.”³² Hans F. K. Günther, an even more popular writer on race in Nazi Germany than Clauss, was well aware of the difficulty of identifying a person’s race, especially in the case of people of mixed race: “the outward appearance (*Erscheinungsbild*) of a man (his phenotype) gives a certain clue, by no means to be despised, to his racial membership, but not a complete proof.” He explained: “men who are phenotypically the same can be idiotypically different and *vice versa*.”³³ Legal and sometimes scientific definitions of race had placed genotype and phenotype in conflict: someone who appeared to be of one race was decreed to belong to another. In Nazi Germany people were to scrutinize certain characteristics that might reveal a person’s “true” identity and if necessary pass the question over to experts.

A widespread history of race mixing combined with the idea, reinforced by Mendelian theories of inheritance, that one cannot altogether eradicate racial traits transmitted from past generations led to the suspicion of appearances. It was not only that someone’s appearance at any given time might be interpreted might not coincide with the legal definition of race at that time, which happened with great frequency in nineteenth century United States. Racial features that were invisible in one generation might reappear in the next, leading to the drama frequently described in novels of the Harlem Renaissance.³⁴ The distinction between phenotype and

³⁰ Joseph de Maistre, *Considérations sur la France*, eds. R. de Johannet and F. Vermale (Paris: Vrin, 1936), 81; *Considerations on France*, trans. Richard A. Lebrun (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1974), 97.

³¹ Albrecht Wirth, *Rasse und Volk* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1914), 37.

³² Idem.

³³ Hans F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde Europas* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1926), 76; *The Racial Elements of European History*, trans. G. C. Wheeler (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1927), 83. Translation modified.

³⁴ For example, Nella Larsen, *Passing* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1929).

genotype, introduced by Wilhelm Johannsen at the beginning of the twentieth century, can be used, or rather misused, to suggest that the genotype is the truth and phenotype merely the appearance that can be misleading about this truth.³⁵ But the phenotype does not simply refer to appearances: it includes those aspects of an organism that are discovered only through technical examination. The phenotype as such—insofar as it includes the shape of the skull, the angle of the forehead, and so on—is only what appears to the scientist, that is to say, to a very artificial form of sight. The phenotype is no more the starting point of the phenomenology of racialization than the genotype.

Clauss thought that in his own time too much weight was being given to biology. He came to this conclusion in part from his reading of Husserl's *Ideen* insofar as he applied Husserl's critique of naturalism to the racial science of his day which had mistakenly given to biology the first and last word on race. This is perhaps where Clauss's work, however problematic in its development, still has something to contribute. Eugen Fischer, who together with Erwin Baur and Fritz Lenz contributed to the seminal volume *Human Heredity*, suggested that Clauss was at his best as a natural scientist and not in his efforts to take his starting point from Husserl.³⁶ But Fischer should have been able to see that Clauss relied on Husserl's critique of naturalism in his attempt to develop an alternative to the biologizing tendencies of Fischer and his colleagues. Clauss himself would make this clearer later. In 1934, in *Rassenseelenforschung im täglichen Leben*, which was one of his more political statements, Clauss made it clear that he wanted his use of the notion of *Rasse* and the related term *Art* to be understood in its natural sense and not its natural scientific sense.³⁷

One can see the implications of Clauss's resistance to the biological concept of race and his reliance on lived experience and intuition in the phenomenological sense by observing his critique of Fritz Lenz. In a footnote in the first edition of *Rasse und Seele* Clauss cited as an illustration of the illegitimacy of Lenz's inferences in his commentary on the Negro: "The Negro also seems to have a very limited sympathy (*Mitgefühl*) with animals. Their actions often appear cruel, but this obviously arises less from a conscious than from a naïve cruelty, that arises from a lack of sympathy."³⁸ Clauss's comment was that in the case of something as foreign as this,

³⁵ For the proper usage of these terms, see Wilhelm Johannsen, "The Genotype Conception of Heredity," *The American Naturalist* 45, March (1911): 129–59.

³⁶ Eugen Fischer, "Review of L. F. Clauss, *Rasse und Seele*," *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie*, 26/1 (1926): 187.

³⁷ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rassenseelenforschung* (Erfurt: Kurt Stenger, 1934), 14.

³⁸ Fritz Lenz, "Die Erblichkeit der geistigen Begabung" *Menschliche Erblichkeitslehre* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1923), 413; "The Inheritance of Intellectual Gifts," *Human Heredity*, trans. Eden and Cedar Paul (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), 633–34. (The translation is from the heavily modified 1927 edition, but there are no significant differences introduced in the passages cited.) In fact Lenz's next sentence is more objectionable than the one Clauss highlights: "the notorious lack of sexual control among Negroes" is attributed by Lenz not to a strong sexual impulse but a childish lack of inhibition. Clauss's critique seems to reflect his reading of Supplement XIV of the second book of Husserl's *Ideen*.

there is no possibility of gaining access to the inward side of alien lived experience.³⁹ In another example of Clauss's rejection of the racial science of his contemporaries, he dismissed the amassing of data in an effort to prove statistically that one race is more gifted than another. In response to Lenz's claim that "in respect of mental gifts the Nordic race marches in the van of mankind,"⁴⁰ he conceded that races should be judged as gifted according to their capacity for culture, but he insisted that it was a mistake to think of culture in the singular. There is more than one culture and no race can lay claim to culture as such. "That the Nordic race is gifted in relating to its own cultures is as obvious as the truth that everybody speaks their own language best."⁴¹ In these ways, Clauss's phenomenological approach led him to separate his views from those of the majority of his contemporaries in racial science.

Clauss considered the biological approach to race to be somewhat primitive and he likened what the biologist saw of race to someone who looks at a painting and sees only colors: red, green, yellow, and so on.⁴² Race was not for Clauss a collection of traits or properties artificially isolated in the manner of physical anthropology. When one sees someone in the normal course of things, one does not isolate skin color, facial features, body shape, or hair texture. One sees the living person such that race pervades the whole essence of a living creature and different races constitute different forms of human existence.⁴³

He was helped here by Husserl's distinction in *Ideen II* between the personalistic attitude and the naturalistic attitude. We live in the personalistic attitude and adopt the naturalistic attitude only when pursuing theoretical and thus artificial interests. "In the natural life of the Ego we do not always—indeed not even predominately—consider the world in a naturalistic way, as if we were doing physics and zoology, ... To live as a person is to posit oneself as a person, to find oneself in, and to bring oneself into, conscious relations with a surrounding world (*Umwelt*)."⁴⁴ It is race, not as the scientist sees it, but as it infuses one's attitude to the world that is Clauss's object of inquiry.

Increasingly Clauss became drawn, like many of those working under Husserl's influence, to the notion of *Gestalt* in his effort to theorize this sense of the whole person. For Clauss, race was "a style of lived experiencing which permeates the entirety (*Ganzheit*) of a living configuration (*Gestalt*)."⁴⁵ Indeed in 1937 Clauss published a pamphlet under the title *Rasse ist Gestalt* which in its reliance on the

³⁹ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 28n.

⁴⁰ Fritz Lenz, "Die Erblichkeit der geistigen Begabung," 419; trans. "The Inheritance of Intellectual Gifts," 655.

⁴¹ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Von Seele und Antlitz der Rassen und Völker*, 96.

⁴² Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse ist Gestalt* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1937), 9. It should be noted that it is the third pamphlet in the series *Schriften der Bewegung* and the cover bears the insignia of an eagle carrying a swastika,

⁴³ Clauss, *Rasse ist Gestalt*, x.

⁴⁴ Husserl. *Ideen II*, 183; trans. *Ideas II*, 192–93.

⁴⁵ Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1932), 17.

notion of expression exhibited the continuing impact of Husserl's *Ideen* on his account. Body and soul are only separable conceptually. As different sides of the same, they together both constitute a single being (*Wesen*). The soul itself is not visible. It cannot be heard, but it appears in or through the body as expression (*Ausdruck*).⁴⁶ They are in harmony most of the time, although Clauss recognized that this is not always the case and that it is in the disturbance or anomaly (*Störung*) that arises when they are not in harmony, as when someone is of mixed race, that race as a *Gestalt* becomes visible as such.⁴⁷

The Question of Race in Clauss

At his best Clauss recognized that it is not the task of phenomenology to identify races as style-types. The different classes he discussed were taken from anthropological studies and, contrary to what he said about his own research being presuppositionless, presupposed by his own investigations.⁴⁸ The question which truly preoccupied Clauss from start to finish was not classification or identification, as it was for many physical anthropologists at that time, but understanding, and in particular understanding across difference. It was this which led him to theorize race as a source of misunderstanding. One can find, particularly in *Rasse und Seele*, extensive discussions of some of the races he recognized, but Clauss's initial focus was on understanding, or, more accurately, the misunderstandings that arise between races. For him this was true not only across the four or five main races, but also among the different races that constituted the Germanic people and indeed within the same family. *Die Nordische Seele* began, under the chapter heading "Understanding and Not-Understanding," with an account of a brother and sister in the Schwarzwald who not only looked different, but had different personalities and who would often misunderstand each other.⁴⁹ Clauss's explanation was that there was no such thing as human experience as such and that members of different races experienced the world differently.⁵⁰ It was in misunderstanding that one allegedly saw the impact of race on daily life.

Once one has recognized that Clauss's focus was less on identifying race for the purpose of classification, whether either for pseudo-scientific or legal reasons, than on understanding those unlike ourselves to the extent that that is possible, the strengths and weaknesses of Clauss's position fall into perspective. He acknowledged that

⁴⁶ Clauss, *Rasse ist Gestalt*, 9.

⁴⁷ Clauss, *Rasse ist Gestalt*, 11.

⁴⁸ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (Munich: J. F. Lehmann, 1939), 43 and 60.

⁴⁹ Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1923), 1–2. These paragraphs were repeated with only minor modifications in the subsequent editions consulted.

⁵⁰ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1933), 38.

phenomenology might at first seem inappropriate for the task of avoiding projecting one's own values onto other cultures because it proceeds by self-examination (*Selbsterforschung*) in the sense that it draws on the phenomena of one's own consciousness.⁵¹ Husserl's approach to race was expansive, so that one moves beyond race to "encounter all European and then all cultures in general, the whole world, all animality, and all humanity, and finally also our science, as a cultural formation of European culture, German culture."⁵² Husserl recounted how explorers and anthropologists also move intuitively and indeed also expansively from the familiar to the unfamiliar, but Clauss, who actually engaged in extensive anthropological field work among the Bedouins, insisted on the difficulty of bridging differences.⁵³ He developed what he called the "mimetic method" in which he tried to adopt the style of those he sought to understand better.⁵⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty expressed a parallel insight to that underlying Clauss's method when he wrote in a manner faithful to Husserl: "I do not understand the gestures of others by some act of intellectual interpretation."⁵⁵ In this context he wrote about a "gestural meaning" such that "The meaning of a gesture thus understood is not behind it, it is intermingled with the structure of the world outlined by the gesture, and which I take up on my own account."⁵⁶

However, Clauss did not always remain faithful to his phenomenological origins. Taking his starting point in Husserl's insight that to live as a person is to bring oneself into conscious relation to the *Umwelt*. Clauss wrote, "The landscape forms the soul, but the soul also forms the landscape."⁵⁷ Indeed, they form an essential unity.⁵⁸ However, his error was to import the idea of racial purity and interpret it as a unity of style.⁵⁹ The consequence was that race mixing, not at first perhaps, but after successive generations, was understood by him to disturb the unity of a style.⁶⁰ And this in turn, following a widespread prejudice against race mixing, was supposed to lead to psychological disturbance: "The style of the expression is inhibited, if the

⁵¹ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele*, (1926), 27–28.

⁵² Husserl, *Ideen II*, 183; trans. *Ideas II*, 192–93.

⁵³ Clauss's approach is particularly in evidence in his work on the people of the Middle East, which saw fruit in *Als Beduine unter Beduinen* (Freiburg: Herder, 1933). It was republished in a revised form as *Semiten der Wüste unter sich. Miterlebnisse eines Rassenforschers* (Berlin: Buechergilde Gutenberg, 1937), but reappeared, further revised, after the Second World War under the old title. See also the remarkable pamphlet made up of letters to his son: *Araber* (Berlin: Luken and Luken, 1943).

⁵⁴ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Rasse und Charakter* (Freiburg: Diesterweg, 1942), 103–13.

⁵⁵ Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), 216; trans. *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962), 186.

⁵⁶ Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, 216–17; trans. *Phenomenology of Perception*, 187.

⁵⁷ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (Munich: F. F. Lehmann, 1939), 25.

⁵⁸ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 33.

⁵⁹ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 24.

⁶⁰ Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1939), 30.

style of its body does not purely correspond to it.”⁶¹ It can even lead to a person whose soul and body are out of alignment: “We often find in black hair and thin stature at the same time a blonde and slim soul, that is, a soul to which—if we may put it so, belongs according to its style a blonde and slim body.”⁶² Clauss had already in 1926 considered a case where the soul occupies a body that does not correspond to its style.⁶³ In such cases we must talk of a broken expression rather than a pure expression.⁶⁴ In this context Clauss even raised the possibility of a two-souled man.⁶⁵

If this was not bad enough, Clauss drew social policy implications from his perspective that undid any good that might have arisen from the insight that each race has its own style that cannot be located on a hierarchy. It set Germans against aliens. The argument was as follows “The world of the Germans is created in the Nordic attitude and is on that account formed in the Nordic style. Every alien lineage thereby disturbs our world formation. We can take note of the alien and praise it as something else. Because god created it, it is as good as we are. But it can never become us: it is alien and should remain alien.”⁶⁶ The language of “the alien,” who must kept at a distance, all too easily could be used to justify measures against them. In this way Clauss translated a dominant trend within Nazi ideology into his phenomenological language, as he also did when he adopted the language of “pure blood,” although he insisted that he meant the pure unity of the soul with its body.⁶⁷

The error from the phenomenological point of view lay in the way Clauss had increasingly come to substantialize the various style types he had identified. The body receives its meaning from the soul. The soul-body total content (*Gesamtgehalt*) which in this sense is “whole” and pure in its style served for him as representative of a single type.⁶⁸ The error was brilliantly exposed by Merleau-Ponty when, in an objection addressed originally against existential psychoanalysis, he warned against possible misunderstandings that might arise from the claim that corporeal and psychic life are involved in a relationship of reciprocal expression or the claim that the bodily event always has a psychic meaning. The body is not the transparent envelope of the mind. “The return to existence, as to the setting in which the communication between body and mind can be understood, is not a return to Consciousness or Spirit.”⁶⁹ Nor is it a return to the soul, which seemed to become increasingly reified under Clauss’s gaze as his thought lost contact with its phenomenological origins.

⁶¹ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 21.

⁶² Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1933), 9.

⁶³ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 22.

⁶⁴ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 22.

⁶⁵ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1926), 23.

⁶⁶ Clauss, *Rasse ist Gestalt*, 28.

⁶⁷ Clauss, *Die Nordische Seele* (1923), 121.

⁶⁸ Clauss, *Rasse und Seele* (1933), 28.

⁶⁹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), 187; *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 1962), 161.

The Phenomenological Concept of Race After Clauss

What do we see when we see race? Ralph Ellison shows how one can see someone's race in such a way that they become invisible: "When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me."⁷⁰ As he explains, the invisibility occurs "because of a peculiar disposition of the eyes of those with whom I come in contact." To ask what we see when we see race is also to direct attention to the fact that there is a way of seeing race that stops us from seeing the whole human being. But is it always an obstacle? Is it wrong to racialize?

For many people the question of what they see when they see race is an uncomfortable question. We are all aware of the trouble that we can find ourselves in if we do not say what we are supposed to say. Even now Reverend Jesse Jackson is not allowed to forget that in 1994 he said that he felt fear when while walking late at night in Washington, DC, he heard footsteps behind him, but was relieved when he discovered it was a White man and not a Black man. Fear, followed by relief, quickly followed by shame.⁷¹ Even this account of how he immediately corrected his first response is held against him. The anecdote records the difference between what we feel and what we believe that we are supposed to feel, between our first response and our reflective response to that first response. This reflects the distinction between the immediate affective response to a situation which is felt in our bodies and the secondary judgments that we pass on someone when we determine their race by taking note of their features and the tertiary judgments we pass on ourselves for doing so.

The nervousness that usually surrounds the question of what one sees when one sees race perhaps helps to explain why phenomenologists, who have the tools to address the question, have chosen with a few notable exceptions to ignore it in favor of the question of what it feels like to be the target or object of racism in the tradition of Frantz Fanon's famous 1951 essay "L'expérience vécue du Noir."⁷² Such studies show how the experience of the racist gaze can serve to create strong bonds between people targeted in this way. But how does one see race? One phenomenologist who did address this question was Jean-Paul Sartre who, with some hesitation, talked not of a Jewish race, but of "Jewish races" in *Reflexions sur la question juive* on the basis of "certain inherited physical conformations that one encounters more frequently among Jews than among non-Jews."⁷³ In a phrase which brings to mind Clauss's

⁷⁰ Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 3.

⁷¹ Lynn Duke, "Confronting Violence: African American Conferees Look Inward," *Washington Post*, January 8, 1996.

⁷² Frantz Fanon, "L'expérience vécue du Noir," *Esprit* 19/179 (May, 1951): 657–79; "The Lived Experience of the Black," *Race*, trans. Valentine Moulard, ed. Robert Bernasconi (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 184–201. The essay was reprinted the following year in *Black Skin, White Masks: Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952), 113–41.

⁷³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive* (Paris: Morihien, 1946), 73; *Anti-Semite and Jew*, trans. George J. Becker (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 60–61.

adoption of the term *Gestalt*, Sartre explained that what enables one to identify someone as a Jew is an “inseparable ensemble in which the psychical and the physical, the social, the religious, and the individual are closely mingled.”⁷⁴ It is a living synthesis which cannot be “transmitted by heredity and which, at bottom, is identical with his complete personality.”⁷⁵ The Jew is not therefore determined by his or her race, at least as that is normally understood. “We must therefore envisage the hereditary and somatic characteristics of the Jew as one factor among others in his situation, not as a condition determining his nature.”⁷⁶

More recently, Linda Martin Alcoff in two major essays in *Visible Identities* focused on how our perceptions of race are sedimented contextual knowledges carried in the body.⁷⁷ Today most of us live in societies where identifying another’s race is—compared with the experiences of previous generations—relatively unimportant and we can readily live with a certain amount of ambiguity about someone’s race. We can say with Alcoff: “If race is a structure of contemporary perception, then it... is the field rather than that which stands out.”⁷⁸ But it is not always the case that race does not stand out and in some societies it has been especially prominent. In Germany under the Nazis there was an obsession with race and people were trained to see it more precisely. In the United States there is still such a high degree of segregation that someone’s race can readily stand out. For example, someone’s race can be striking if they enter a room where everyone is assigned to another race. In such cases race tends to be abstracted from their other characteristics and they are not seen in their unity as a living human being. And if one is used to being in contexts where the races come together but is suddenly faced with racial homogeneity, one sees the lack of diversity. On occasion one even racializes people over the telephone or listening to the radio on the basis of the sound of their voice.

We see race because from childhood our friends, neighbors, the government, and the social media insist that it is pertinent. Growing up we are trained not just to see race but to see races in specific ways, and if we move from one country to another as an adult we are retrained. Not just what we see and how we see it but the meanings attached to it are culturally formed. In different times and spaces different races are labeled differently. There is both a question of possibility—the categories that are available—and the criteria of relevance: the difference that it makes. The question of how we racialize cannot be separated from why we do so and whether that motivation calls for decision in ambiguous cases. The seeing of race for more than a century was dominated by anxiety about mistaking someone’s true race, particularly in contexts where someone of mixed race was assigned by science or by the law as belonging to one of the races in the mix, for the purpose of enforcing segregation laws, including anti-miscegenation laws.

⁷⁴ Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive*, 82; trans. *Anti-Semite and Jew*, 64.

⁷⁵ Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive*, 82; trans. *Anti-Semite and Jew*, 64.

⁷⁶ Sartre, *Réflexions sur la question juive*, 82; trans. *Anti-Semite and Jew*, 64.

⁷⁷ Linda Martin Alcoff, *Visible Identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 184–85.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 188.

Today a Hutu can recognize a Tutsi at a glance and vice versa even in State College, Pennsylvania, because there was a time in Rwanda when their lives depended on being able to do so. An Israeli Jew can differentiate in a hotel lobby the Lebanese, Syrians, and Palestinians with an ease that surprises visitors. A White person from the North American suburbs who rarely visits downtown can, when they eventually do so, be overwhelmed by the sight of African Americans downtown and seem unable to see anything else. By contrast, Korean Americans, Chinese Americans, and Vietnamese Americans are shocked that some Anglo Americans cannot always distinguish them and, not surprisingly, they see this incapacity as a sign of their indifference. This is a form of racial blindness that is understood as insensitivity by those seen and not as social progress.

The creation of racial divisions and the insistence that rigorous maintenance of these divisions is vital to the health and even survival of societies has shaped modern history. Given that these divisions have long structured global society, they are not easily dismantled. They have been given a social and economic reality that cannot be dissolved simply because biologists no longer have a use for the concept of race. But the problem is that the process of typification carries the danger that, when one sees race as one walks down the street, one looks past the individual and sees only the caricature that the media feeds us about a type.

Toward a Phenomenology of Racialization

Certain features of the racialization process come into clarity on the basis of a phenomenological approach. First and foremost, what one sees is in large measure a function of the categories available to us. What one sees are the categories one is taught to use. There is sometimes a tendency to underemphasize the degree to which the terms that are employed to classify the races shifts. Since 1950, under the influence of Ashley Montagu and other members of the second generation of the Boasian school, there has been a tendency to restrict race to the four or five main races, but throughout most of the last 200 years specialists listed many more races, not just within Europe, but also throughout the colonies and in the United States where administrators were eager to divide people along racial lines.⁷⁹ Because of the history of chattel slavery, colonialism, segregation, and genocide, what people see

⁷⁹The UNESCO Statement on Race of 1950 that was produced under the chairmanship of Ashley Montagu identified three major divisions of mankind: the Mongloid, Negroid, and Caucasoid. For the text and Montagu's own commentary on it, see his *Statement on Race* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 72–75. In his commentary on the following paragraph Montagu listed some 36 “ethnic groups” (*ibid.*, 76–80). They would have been considered “races” by many earlier authorities and these could easily have been further multiplied. In the United States the division (or rather multiplication) was largely for immigration purposes. See Report of the Immigration Commission, *Dictionary of Races or Peoples* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911).

when they see race tends to be overdetermined, reflecting not only immediate conditions, but layers of history that have been sedimented into perception. People have had to negotiate dramatic changes in the way the races are named and divided as they moved from country to country, and within the United States from state to state. Changes might also come as a change in the law. This has been especially true for people who are understood to be of mixed race, but this is a particularly problematic concept not least because most people are of mixed race but only a few are regarded as such, in part because of shifts in the view about the point—the proportion of mixed heritage—at which someone of mixed race becomes assigned to one racial identity.

Secondly, when we see race it is always someone's race, and we see it along with many features which make a difference as to how race is seen. White men are likely to see Black men and Black women very differently, and a great deal would also depend on their apparent age and body type, as well as the age and life experiences of the man doing the seeing. They are not racialized in the same way. The same would be true of the way White men see other races. Although there are sometimes good reasons to isolate race, for example, in an analysis of social conditions, we tend not to see people simply in racial terms. There is a world of difference between seeing race, where identifying that person's race is precisely at issue—as in the case of a census taker, a victim of a crime being asked to describe to the police the person who violated them—and seeing race without thinking about it, because in the encounter with a person under those terms—as a bartender, a bank teller, a shop assistant or just a passerby—it usually does not seem important. We may not have reflected on the race, sex, or other bodily characteristics of the person to whom we gave our order at the restaurant, but it might nevertheless come to mind when we start looking for them to ask why our food has not arrived. For the phenomenologist it is because we can see race without noticing it that we can notice it: but what we see in each case is not the same thing.

Thirdly, to see someone as raced is not primarily about seeing them in this way or in that way but about ways of sharing space with them. Someone's race can determine how we behave toward them. The same is true of someone's gender. Race and sex tend to be very prominent in this respect, but are almost always impacted also by body type, age, accent, dress, and class. All these features impact how each of the others is perceived. In the language of Schutzian phenomenology, “typifications are not in themselves secluded, isolated schemata of meaning but are rather bound to and build upon one another.”⁸⁰ How these determinations impact the way in which we behave toward others says a great deal about one's personal history, one's background and the society from which one comes. More precisely, it gives us an insight into who we are, which must take into account how we ourselves are seen and how people behave toward us.

⁸⁰ See Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 81.

Fourthly, to see someone's race is to relate to them at an affective level. This aspect has recently been subjected to scientific scrutiny. Susan Fiske, a Professor of Psychology at Princeton University, described an experiment she and others have conducted in their laboratories using a functional magnetic resonance imaging scanner to observe brain activity when research participants are shown photographs. When White men are briefly shown photographs of the face of a Black man, the area of the brain known as the amygdala is stimulated. It is the area that, we are told, "lights up when we encounter people or events we judge threatening."⁸¹ The amygdalae of White subjects are not stimulated when shown the photo of a famous black face or when exposed to the same face more frequently. And the same is true if White subjects are given two seconds to look at a photo when asked if a gray dot has been superimposed on the photograph or whether the person shown in the photo would like a certain vegetable. However, in the same experiment, if the question they had to decide was whether the Black face shown belonged to a person over 21, then the area of the brain associated with fear was activated.⁸² Further experiments designed to show that Whites are not hard-wired to fear Black men were also conducted, but, strangely enough, the investigators do not appear to have asked why anybody should be frightened by a photograph when seen under laboratory conditions.

That racism can be located in the body as an affective response should be understood as the sedimentation not just of one's personal history but of the history to which one belongs and to which one is introduced through socialization. This accounts for how a certain racism can be located in one's body—for example, in the form of fear and disgust—over and beyond anything that reference to one's personal history can readily explain. One thinks, for example, of the naturalist Louis Agassiz who in 1846 on his arrival in Philadelphia from Europe, was so repulsed by the first Black men he saw up close that he did not want to eat the food they served him.⁸³ Just a few years later W. W. Wright was trying to convince his White audience that disgust at the thought of interracial sex was natural and it seems that that affect still survives among those people repelled at the sight of mixed race couples. But one should also not forget the exoticizing racism which seems to lead some people to seek out alien beauty of the kind that fascinated Clauss himself.⁸⁴ In fact, a more detailed study of Clauss would help considerably in understanding various aspects of German racism in the first half of the twentieth century because he is such a good observer of people's attitudes and in the course of promoting *Rassenseelenkunde* he tries to represent them faithfully as part of his case.

To see the whole human being is not to see someone divorced or abstracted from their context, like de Maistre's "man," but rather in their interactions with others,

⁸¹ Susan T. Fiske, "Are We Born Racist?" *Are We Born Racist?*, eds. Jason Marsh, Rodolfo Mendoza-Denton, and Jeremy Adam-Smith (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010), 9.

⁸² Fiske, "Are We Born Racist?" 12–13.

⁸³ See Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 105.

⁸⁴ Ludwig Ferdinand Clauss, *Fremde Schönheit* (Heidelberg: Kampmann, 1928). According to the Preface, Clauss intended the book as a complement to the German emphasis on German beauty (5).

especially those who help to define them. To be sure, some people consider their race important to them, but not everyone does. For that reason it makes no sense to take race out of the equation, any more than one could exclude, as one gets to know someone, their religion, their loves, their hopes, and the personal tragedies that mark them.

Implications for the Fight Against Racism

The focus in fighting racism has tended to fall on the judgments that are expressed about a race and the epithets often employed in the process. This has led to an emphasis on policing speech and correcting false ideas drawn from an outdated biology. However, the generation of phenomenologists who flourished in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and who lived through the struggle against colonialism focused on systemic racism, the racism that resides globally within institutions including the distribution of economic goods and the obstacles that stand in the way of people breaking out of the place assigned to them at birth.⁸⁵ It is a society's level of success or failure at addressing those issues that tells us most about its values, and all its members are implicated in one way or another in this success or failure.

It is frequently said that individual acts of racism of the old-fashioned kind, involving racial epithets and clear cases of discrimination and hatred, are on the decline and that the new challenge is to direct people to less dramatic questions of racial inequalities that are sustained by institutions.⁸⁶ This is true. But we also need to have a better understanding of why people are so reluctant to acknowledge these inequalities once they have been pointed out to them and prefer to stick with the stereotypes that were sedimented in the public consciousness in an earlier era. The reinforcement of stereotypes by the cultural media is rightly scrutinized, but the stereotypes are so deeply rooted in our cultural history that more will be needed than simply a modification of the images that are employed in place of a deeper examination of the root causes of hurdles that face racial minorities. In short, it is not by changing our beliefs through a better understanding of biology that we combat racism effectively, but by revising our habitualities and dissolving the sedimentations that underlie them. But this cannot be accomplished by an act of will or of thought. Worse still, what is most likely necessary to transform positively the sedimentations in culture, language, and the affective body is a change in the structures of society that those very sedimentations render less likely.

⁸⁵ See Robert Bernasconi, "Racism is a System," *The Cambridge Companion to Existentialism*, ed. Steven Crowell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

⁸⁶ For example. Ellis Cose, *The End of Anger. A New Generation's Take on Race and Rage* (New York: Ecco, 2011).

Chapter 5

The *Ideen* and Neo-Kantianism

Andrea Staiti

In making its first appearance phenomenology must ... reckon with a fundamental mood of skepticism. (Ideen I, 148)

Introduction

It is well known that the publication of the first volume of Husserl's *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch* (1913), provoked a wave of criticism among Husserl's Göttingen students due to the book's unambiguous commitment to transcendental idealism. Indeed, for those readers committed to realism, and who praised Husserl's *Logical Investigations* first and foremost for its appeal to return to the things themselves, the announcement that there are no things themselves without the operations of a constituting consciousness or, in Husserl's words, that "an absolute reality is just as valid as a round square"¹ must have felt like a regrettable and utterly incomprehensible retreat.

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¹ E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* (Hua III/1), (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 106; Trans. F. Kersten, *Ideen Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy: First Book* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998), 129. (Hereafter I will quote exclusively from the English translation in the following way: *Ideen I*, page number.)

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Less well known is that the book was also vehemently criticized by those thinkers who represented the “official” academic version of transcendental idealism in early twentieth century Germany, namely, the Neo-Kantians. Interestingly, the sharp criticism of Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology as presented in *Ideen* is a point of common agreement for the two most prominent schools of Neo-Kantianism, Marburg and Heidelberg, which otherwise embodied two significantly different ways of understanding and recasting Kant’s transcendental philosophy.² This double attack from opposite sides of Neo-Kantianism against *Ideen I* can be considered a clue about the originality of Husserl’s work, which could not be aligned with other philosophies that were available at the time. On the other hand, it is no mystery that *Ideen I* was written in a rush³ and is shot through with unfortunate phrasing, which has given rise to all sorts of misinterpretations, especially from uncharitable readers.

In this chapter, I intend to present Heinrich Rickert’s (Heidelberg) and Paul Natorp’s (Marburg) critiques of *Ideen I* and offer a response to them from a Husserlian point of view. I will do so by addressing two fundamental issues in phenomenology: the eidetic and the phenomenological notion of subjectivity. In a certain sense, Husserl’s formulations in *Ideen I* are vulnerable to the critiques raised by the two leading philosophers of the Neo-Kantian movement. However, if we try to spell out more accurately Husserl’s position beyond the letter of the *Ideen*, this vulnerability tends to disappear. On my account, Husserl’s concept of eidetic knowledge turns out to be less in contrast with Rickert’s epistemology than the two thinkers would have it. The much more fundamental disagreement is on the notion of subjectivity and Husserl’s related claim that phenomenology is the fundamental science for philosophy. While the Neo-Kantians and Natorp in particular are skeptical about the possibility of direct descriptions of subjectivity, Husserl makes the concept of an eidetic science of transcendental subjectivity the hinge of his phenomenology.

The two positions, however, do not amount to just two incomparable visions. Neo-Kantian skepticism towards phenomenology forces the Husserlian phenomenologist to clarify the meaning of fundamental concepts such as essence and intuition and conversely, Husserlian phenomenology can help rectify some misunderstandings and strictures that characterize Neo-Kantian philosophy while nonetheless preserving its most valuable epistemological insights. The resulting clarification of Husserl’s theoretical intentions can hopefully pave the way for a renewed dialogue between Kantianism and phenomenology, which seems to me an undeniable desideratum in today’s philosophical context.

² For a short but illuminating characterization of the two schools and their differences see M. Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways: Carnap, Cassirer, and Heidegger* (Chicago: Open Court, 2000), 25–37.

³ See K. Schuhmann, *Die Dialektik der Phänomenologie II: Reine Phänomenologie und phänomenologische Philosophie. Historisch-analytische Monographie über Husserls ‘Ideen I’* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 3.

Eidetics, Intuition, and Conceptual Knowledge

In 1911, after reading Husserl's article, "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft," in the first issue of *Logos*—the newborn official organ of Southwestern Neo-Kantianism—Heinrich Rickert (1863–1936) wrote an enthusiastic letter to the founder of phenomenology saying, "I believe that overall our paths will get closer and closer to one another."⁴ It was Rickert himself who urged Husserl to participate in the *Logos* project, both as a member of the scientific board and as a contributor. In Rickert's eyes, "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft" represented a significant step forward vis-à-vis the *Logische Untersuchungen*: Husserl was now able to locate his project explicitly within the philosophical debate of his time in terms of a "scientific philosophy" which is hostile to both naturalism and historicism. In so doing, phenomenology placed itself within the same theoretical space as Neo-Kantianism and articulated its standpoint in contrast to the same rivals.

Considering this thoroughly concordant point of departure, it is all the more puzzling at first to read a strong attack against phenomenology in Rickert's polemical essay *Die Philosophie des Lebens* (1920). *Die Philosophie des Lebens* targets what Rickert considers a trend in early twentieth Century philosophy frivolous but dangerously widespread: the emphasis on "life" as more fundamental than rationality and on immediate 'intuition' as opposed to conceptual knowledge. Unexpectedly, Husserl's phenomenology is listed together with Dilthey's historicism, Bergson's and Simmel's *Lebensphilosophie* and various forms of biological vitalism as a philosophy "devoid of principles [*prinzipienlos*]!" that even "elevate[s] the lack of principles to a philosophical principle"(!).⁵ What led Rickert to change his opinion of phenomenology so radically? He explains his position with great clarity in the following passage:

What matters here is obviously not the articulation of the logical vis-à-vis the psychological: this, in fact, can only lead to a refusal of a philosophy of mere life. Rather, what matters is the doctrine of the "vision of essence [*Wesensschau*]" which Husserl intends to appoint as fundamental science for all philosophy and which granted him followers. Albeit with a conscious one-sidedness and to this extent unfairly, we try to interpret this doctrine too as a contemporary trend connected to the inclinations towards *Erlebnis*, considering that phenomenology means the doctrine of a newly discovered kind of intuitive and immediate "phenomena [*Erscheinungen*]."⁶

In the footnote at the end of this passage Rickert quotes explicitly Husserl's *Ideen I* as the source for his critical understanding of *Wesensschau*.

It is important to underscore that Rickert's critique is not directed against the concept of essence as such; the idea that a scientific philosophy must yield essential, non-empirical knowledge was already prominent in Husserl's "Philosophie als

⁴ K. Schuhmann, ed., *Edmund Husserl: Briefwechsel* (Springer, 1994), V 171.

⁵ H. Rickert, *Die Philosophie des Lebens: Darstellung und Kritik der philosophischen Modeströmungen unserer Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1920), 50.

⁶ H. Rickert, *Die Philosophie des Lebens*, 28 f.

strenge Wissenschaft,” the paper about which Rickert was quite enthusiastic.⁷ The controversial element, which was not as prominent in Husserl’s previous work but is strongly emphasized in the *Ideen*, is the claim about essential knowledge being a form of *intuitive* knowledge, legitimately comparable to sensory vision. Husserl’s statements on this point are famous: “*The essence (Eidos) is a new sort of object. Just as the datum of individual or experiencing intuition is an individual object, so the datum of eidetic intuition is pure essence.* Not a merely external analogy, but a radical community is present here. *Seeing an essence is also precisely an intuition, just as an eidetic object is precisely an object.*”⁸ A few pages later Husserl even reinforces his view by seemingly suggesting not only that essences are objects given intuitively just like perceptual objects, but also that everyone is good at intuiting essences: “The truth is that all human beings see ‘*Ideen*,’ ‘essences,’ and see them, so to speak, continuously.”⁹ In fact, there is something utterly plain and non-emphatic to Husserl’s presentation of *Wesensschau*: “Thus, for example, any tone in and of itself has an essence and, highest of all, the universal essence tone as such, or rather sound as such—taken purely as the moment that can be singled out intuitively in the individual tone (alone, or else by comparing one tone with others as ‘something common’).”¹⁰

On Husserl’s account, every time we hear a tone we also co-intuit the essence “tone as such,” which is why I can wonder, e.g., whether the whistle I heard was the whistle of the train or the whistle of someone calling her dog but not whether what I sensed was a tone or a smell. In other words, every tone I hear can at any time be taken as an example of a ‘tone in general.’ For Husserl, this basic fact has little to do with intellectual concept-formation and it would be wrong to understand a situation like the one just mentioned in terms of the intellect or some hidden faculty being at work, enhancing raw sensations with non-sensible categories.

Rickert, on his part, contends that such a fact cannot be produced as an example of genuine *knowledge*. Genuine knowledge, for him, is always the result of conceptual mediation and thus implies a departure from a merely receptive intuitive dimension. Knowledge is always necessarily discursive and thus the claim of some sort of non- or pre-discursive *knowledge* is for Rickert a *contradictio in adjecto*. We attain scientific knowledge *only* to the extent that we “re-model [*Umformen*]” our immediate intuitions by means of concepts and in so doing we bestow upon them order and articulation. For Rickert, Husserl’s emphasis on essential knowledge being a form of intuition can be viewed as a particularly clear instance of what he calls *intuitionism*, a widespread theoretical “shortcut” that demeans the toil of conceptualization in philosophy by overemphasizing and misinterpreting the role of intuition.¹¹

⁷ See E. Husserl, *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*, in E. Husserl, *Shorter Works* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 173.

⁸ *Ideen I*, 9.

⁹ *Ideen I*, 41.

¹⁰ *Ideen I*, 8.

¹¹ In a recent paper, Helmut Holzey offers a convincing sketch of the Neo-Kantian critique of the concept of intuition: H. Holzey, “*Neo-Kantianism and Phenomenology: The Problem of Intuition*,” *Neokantianism in Contemporary Philosophy*, eds. R. A. Makkreel and S. Luft (Bloomington:

Virulent critiques against every form of intuitionism are present in several essays and book chapters and represent the backbone of Rickert's philosophical work from the 1920s onwards. In his last essay, "Kennen und Erkennen" (published in 1934, more than 20 years after the publication of Husserl's *Ideen*),¹² he launches a further attack against phenomenology by analyzing the very same example given by Husserl at the outset of the *Ideen* and offering a different account of the way we grasp the "essence" of a tone. That the addressee of Rickert's polemic is still Husserl, and in particular the Husserl of the *Ideen* is quite unmistakable considering the example and the language Rickert uses. As the title of his paper suggests, there is a sharp difference between sheer *acquaintance* [*Kenntnis*] with the intuitively given individual tone and scientific *knowledge* [*Erkenntnis*] of the essence of a tone as such. The intuited tone is given to us "at one fell swoop [*mit einem Schlage*]."¹³ A process of knowledge begins when we start to analyze the intuited tone and differentiate between several elements pertaining to it: "The sheer intuition of the tone gives 'everything at one fell swoop.' Knowledge does not and cannot do so. Rather, knowledge dissects through a number of assertions the single tone—which we perceive intuitively 'as a whole'—into a series of 'moments.' Such moments are fused together immediately and intuitively only in perception. Within knowledge, these moments must be separated from each other and become the objects of predication each one for itself."¹⁴ It is only *after* the intuitively given tone undergoes such a dissection into a variety of moments (intensity, duration, pitch, etc.) that we can discern the essentiality of some of these moments for *any tone whatever*.

The following passage is crucial to interpret correctly Rickert's most mature critique of Husserl's *Wesensschau*: "Therein and *only* therein [in the process of cognitive dissection] do we find the general 'essence' of the tone that we previously intuited in perception. In other words, only in this way we attain knowledge of the tone as tone; of that tone which beforehand we only made acquaintance of intuitively. But then with our knowledge we went way beyond intuitive acquaintance. Such a process, which discloses for us the essence of something, can by no means be understood as a form of ...intuition. Rather, through our act of knowledge we necessarily restructure [*umbilden*] the cognitional material given to us in intuition ... Such a restructuring is unavoidable for every knowledge which endeavors to delve into the general 'essence' of something."¹⁵

From a phenomenological point of view it would be quite simple, perhaps all too simple, to dismiss these critiques by rejecting the notion of intuition Rickert operates with as too narrow. Indeed, Husserl works with a broad concept of *Anschauung*

Indiana University Press, 2010), 25–40. However, in spite of the rather broad formulation in the title, he considers exclusively Natorp's thought and ignores Rickert's contribution on this issue. It seems to me, however, that Rickert's critique of phenomenological intuition is actually much more reflected and sophisticated than Natorp's.

¹² H. Rickert, "Kennen und Erkennen. Kritische Bemerkungen zum theoretischen Intuitionismus," *Kant Studien* 39 (1934): 139–55.

¹³ Ibid., 149.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 150.

which shares little with Kant's. Whereas for Kant intuition amounts to the blind intake of sense-data (at least as far as a finite intellect is concerned),¹⁶ for Husserl intuitions come to fulfill previously "empty intentions." This fulfilling function is exerted by sensuous intuitions when the previously empty intention is a partial perceptual intention and by a combination of sensuous and non-sensuous intuitions when the previously empty intention is a higher-order intention presenting a whole state of affairs, e.g., a judgment or an aesthetic evaluation.

However, it should be emphasized that Rickert's point in his critique of intuitionism does not follow the Kantian orthodoxy, according to which intuition would provide exclusively *sensuous* material and therefore all non-sensuous components of experience must derive from the intellect. In another essay, written a few years earlier, Rickert was adamant that not only sensuous material but also "*non-sensuous [material] is immediately given in intuition*"¹⁷ and that "*the non-sensuous [material] lies in our immediate lived-experiences or intuitions beside the sensuous [material] as a wholly autonomous 'Quality.'*"¹⁸ To speak the language of phenomenology, not only perceptual things but also meanings, general and formal objects, are in a robust sense *given* and not imposed on or applied to sensuous content. In the example of a tone, not only sensuous acoustic data is given in intuition but also elements of generality that we subsequently express with concepts such as pitch and intensity. Rickert would be of one mind with Husserl in emphasizing the necessity to broaden the concept of intuition and extend it to elements of generality and meaning within experience.

However, Rickert wants to underscore that the intuitive *givenness* of elements of generality cannot yet be considered *knowledge*, let alone essential, scientific knowledge. Essential knowledge is for Rickert a process of *transformation* of the given according to demands and criteria that are not extracted from the given but rather flow from the cognizing agent. Of course, we do not have intuition only of the sensible but also, in Rickert's language, of the "intelligible."¹⁹ *But intuition only provides the material, be it sensible or intelligible.* It is our task as rational agents thereupon to carve our concepts so that we can make a systematic theoretical *kosmos* out of the scattered fragments of intelligibility given to us in sheer intuition and thereby bring about essential knowledge. We need to reorganize conceptually also the non-sensuous elements of intelligibility given in intuition in order to transform a fragmented "chaos of manifestations [*Gewühl von Erscheinungen*]" into a proper *mundus intelligibilis*.²⁰ Husserl's emphasis on intuition is for Rickert only a rhetorical expedient

¹⁶ I am obviously referring to empirical intuition and not to the pure intuition of space and time in Kant's transcendental aesthetics, a doctrine that both Husserl and the Neo-Kantians rejected as utterly untenable for reasons that need not occupy us here.

¹⁷ H. Rickert, "Die Methode der Philosophie und das Unmittelbare," *Philosophische Aufsätze* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 128.

¹⁸ Ibid., 136.

¹⁹ Ibid., 140.

²⁰ See ibid., 139.

to downplay the role of conceptual constructions in *his own* thought and in so doing create a result which is appealing to younger generations. This is why he charges Husserl of practicing an “... ostrich philosophy. Due to fear of constructions he sticks his head in the sand of intuitions, in order not to have to see the constructions he cannot do without.”²¹

The same line of criticism is expressed in Paul Natorp’s review of Husserl’s *Ideen*, published in the 1917/1918 issue of *Logos*. After declaring his interest in Husserl’s project of a pure phenomenology, that he perceives as close to his own project of a critical psychology, Natorp focuses of Husserl’s concept of intuition and essence. He expresses his concerns by questioning Husserl’s talk of an “originarily giving act or consciousness” that presents us intuitively with essences.²² The word *Anschauung*, intuition, suggests a “passive receiving”²³ of the corresponding object. However, Husserl’s insistence on *Wesensschau* being a *giving act* [*ein gebender Akt*] seems to suggest that in this connection we cannot understand intuition in terms of sheer receptivity. Natorp suggests, paraphrasing Kant, that with a priori knowledge “there is an *originairy appropriation* of something that was by no means already there beforehand.”²⁴ In other words, we still can use metaphors such as grasping, seeing, and intuiting to underscore how we do not arbitrarily create a priori knowledge but rather follow a necessity that belongs to the ‘things themselves.’ On the other hand, we have to be aware of the fact that a priori knowledge pertains to a more fundamental “continuity of thought”²⁵ that connects, disconnects, distinguishes, and articulates. Every isolated positing of an essence conceals the underlying “process of thought, which is the authentic ‘giver’ of essences.”²⁶ The emphasis on the processual nature of eidetic knowledge is thus manifestly a point on which Rickert and Natorp are in agreement against Husserl.

However, Natorp reinforces this idea by taking Plato’s thought explicitly into the account, considering how Husserl always hinted at Plato as his major source of inspiration concerning eidetics.²⁷ Natorp, who was on his part a reputable interpreter of Plato’s thought, decrees that while Husserl “did reach Plato’s *eidos*, however, he stood still at the *first level* of Platonism, i.e., the level of rigid *eidē* ‘standing there in

²¹ Ibid., 117. The one just offered is but a sketch of Rickert’s epistemology. For a thoughtful presentation of the latter see A. Zijderveld, *Rickert’s Relevance: The Ontological Nature and Epistemological Function of Values* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 85–137.

²² P. Natorp, “Husserls ‘Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie,’” *Husserl*, ed. H. Noack (Darmstadt: WBG, 1973), 40.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 41.

²⁵ Ibid., 42.

²⁶ Ibid., 43.

²⁷ Karl-Heinz Lembeck points out correctly that Natorp’s intention in his review can be viewed as the attempt to give a new interpretation to Husserl’s concept of intuition based on a ‘dynamic’ understanding of Plato’s theory of Ideen (Karl-Heinz Lembeck, “Begründungsphilosophische Perspektiven: Husserl und Natorp über Anschauung,” *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (2003): 97–108.)

being' motionlessly. He did not follow Plato's last step, which was actually Plato's greatest and most characteristic step: bringing the *eidē* into *motion* and fluidifying them into the ultimate continuity of the process of thought.”²⁸ Natorp refers here to Plato's dialectical method as the way to grasp the essence of things.²⁹

To summarize, we can identify two closely related critiques of Husserl's account of eidetic knowledge in *Ideen I* from the Neo-Kantian camp: (1) Eidetic knowledge cannot be intuitive because intuition only grants the material of knowledge, be it sensible or intelligible. Knowledge is necessarily conceptual/discursive, and conceptualization involves a departure from the immediacy of intuition. (2) Eidetic knowledge is *processual*. It is the result of a thought-process that needs to be taken into account if we want to be able to justify the validity of our eidetic insights.

Both critiques are compelling and force us to go beyond the letter of *Ideen I* to provide a satisfying answer to them. In answering the first critique, we have to concede to Rickert that intuition cannot *per se* already qualify as knowledge. This, however, is by no means Husserl's claim. In *Ideen I*, Husserl wants to emphasize the fact that the scope of intuition is not restricted to sensibility but also includes ideal objects and, among them, essences to which all the a priori valid predication pertaining to a certain sector of reality (in Husserl's terms: ontological regions) can be referred. He does not dwell as much on how the intuitive givenness of essences can function as the basis for a *science of essences*, although he makes clear that precisely this is the project he envisions under the heading “phenomenology.” Accordingly, and in order to do justice to Husserl's project, we have to draw a distinction between intuitive *vision of essence* and conceptual *knowledge of essence*, i.e., between *Wesensschau* and *Wesenserkenntnis*.³⁰ Having an intuitive vision of essence does not yet amount to having a fully articulated knowledge of that essence.

Husserl's awareness of this distinction can be exemplified by reference to his studies on nature and spirit, developed in the second book of the *Ideen*, where he endeavors to articulate an ontology of nature and an ontology of spirit and in so doing to clarify the distinction between the natural and human sciences. On the one hand, he points out that we have to interrogate our pre-predicative experience

²⁸ Ibid., 44.

²⁹ This is not the place to expand further on Natorp's idiosyncratic reading of Plato. See P. Natorp, *Plato's Theory of Ideen: An Introduction to Idealism* (Sankt Augustin: Academia, 2004).

³⁰ The distinction between *Wesensschau* and *Wesenserkenntnis* has been recently addressed and framed in terms of an intuition of essence “before” and “after” an eidetic judgment has been issued in C. Majolino, “La Partition du réel: Remarques sur l'eidos, la phantasia, l'effondrement du monde et l'être absolu de la conscience,” *Philosophy, Phenomenology, Sciences—Essays in Commemoration of Edmund Husserl*, eds. C. Ierna, H. Jacobs, and F. Mattens (Dordrecht: Springer 2010), 573–660. Here, 593. Whereas the intuition of essence before an eidetic judgment simply consists in the possibility of viewing an individual as an example of its class (*this* tone is also *a* tone) through a corresponding shift of attitude, the transition to a pure *eidos* and thereby the intuitive vision of an essence as fulfilling intuitively an eidetic judgment requires a specific method of disengagement of reality and phantasy-variation. I cannot expand further on this point here but I wish to refer to Majolino's excellent work for an extended and convincing treatment.

and gain an insight into the intuitively given essence of each domain. On the other hand, he underscores the necessity to select the correct conceptuality to build up an eidetic *science* of nature and an eidetic *science* of spirit. There is a kind of conceptuality that faithfully brings to expression what has been *seen* through *Wesensschau* and a kind of conceptuality that is at odds with the corresponding *Wesensschau*.

The conceptuality of mechanistic causality, for instance, is at odds with the kind of eidetic insight that characterizes our experience of mentality. To bring this eidetic insight to expression, we need to replace mechanistic conceptuality with the conceptuality of motivation if we are to grant truly phenomenological scientificity to our ontology of mentality. This is why Husserl characterizes natural causality as “extra-essential [*außerwesentlich*]”³¹ when we consider the unfolding of psychic life. We can of course employ the conceptuality of mechanistic causality to explain the connection between two mental events, say, (A) “reading in the newspaper about the economic crisis” and (B) “deciding to run to the bank to withdraw all my money.” We could for instance observe the configurations of neuronal activity in the brain in A and B and, by way of repeatedly observing and hypothesizing, finally discover the causal law regulating the transition from A-like states to B-like states.³² The kind of knowledge attained in this case is by no means false or trivial for a phenomenologist.

Rather, as far as mentality is concerned, it is extra-essential knowledge because the conceptuality at work does not match with the eidetic intuition of the purely motivational connection linking A and B, the essential features of which should be brought to conceptual expression in a significantly different way. *Essential knowledge is concept-formation in accord with an underlying vision of essence. Extra-essential knowledge is concept-formation following theoretical demands other than those suggested by an underlying vision of essence.*³³ In this sense and in keeping

³¹ Edmund Husserl, Ms. A VI 16/ 25a, edited by U. Melle, published in *Issues in Husserl's Ideen II*, eds. T. Nenon and L. Embree (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer, 1996), 2.

³² Whether or not there really are such things—i.e., a causal laws formulable in mathematical terms that regulate the transition from a state belonging to a certain psychic class and to a state of a different class—is a complex question with no obvious answer, in spite of all recent enthusiasm for so-called reductive theories of mentality.

³³ Interestingly, this position comes close to that of another Neo-Kantian philosopher: Rickert's student Emil Lask. In his insightful reflections on Lask's philosophy, Steven Galt Crowell writes: “Thus the problems of knowledge appears as the problem of choosing (or discovering) the proper category for given material . . . Error, on this view, consists in predicating of some material a category in which it does not stand,” *Husserl, Heidegger and the Space of Meaning: Paths toward Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 63–64. However, Husserl is less exclusive than Lask. Extra-essential knowledge, although not in accord with an underlying vision of essence (in Lask's language: category), is not to be deemed erroneous outright. It is regrettable that Lask passed away before having the opportunity to read Husserl's *Ideen* which, I believe, would have offered precious insights to carry forward his own philosophical project had he been able to develop it further.

with the spirit of Rickert's critique, essential knowledge is not some sort of mystical intensification of vision of essence, but an essentially different kind of accomplishment. The first is concept-formation *on the basis* of the latter. Troubles and crises arise when extra-essential knowledge supplants essential knowledge and thereby blurs the underlying vision of essence, as is the case with empirical psychology and mentality.

Once the distinction between *Wesensschau* and *Wesenserkenntnis* has been established, we can also argue for a certain superiority of Husserl's position over Rickert's: Rickert has no robust account of the boundaries imposed to concept-formation from experience.³⁴ We cannot form concepts of any sort if we intend to produce essential knowledge about a given sector of reality. We have to hold fast to an underlying eidetic intuition and orient our conceptualization to a faithful articulation of the essence as it is given intuitively. In a certain sense it holds true that intuitions are reorganized in cognition, as Rickert would have it. This is true for both empirical and eidetic intuitions. But not every form of conceptual reorganization is equally legitimate for every kind of intuition. If we want to attain *essential knowledge* we rather have to mold our concepts according to an underlying essential intuition, which expressed in Husserlian language means, we have to verify that the connections of concepts that we use to describe an essence can be really intuitively fulfilled.

With the above considerations we also have the resources to answer the second critical remark, according to which eidetic knowledge is necessarily processual and not a momentary insight. Natorp is right to quote Plato and highlight the difference between Husserl's and Plato's conceptions of essence. Famously, Plato maintains that we can never "see" essences directly in our earthly life. The act of 'seeing an essence' (on earth) is for Plato a metaphor for a *dialectical* and thus mediated act of discovering true relations in the intelligible realm. We only "see" an essence, albeit imperfectly, to the extent that we are able to produce a definition and justify it within a system of logically connected definitions by means of dialectical reasoning. This is why "seeing an essence" and "producing a definition" are synonymous in Plato's thought. By recasting Plato's conception, Natorp thus fails to distinguish between *Wesensschau* and *Wesenserkenntnis* and seems to suggest that on closer inspection *Wesensschau* is actually nothing but *Wesenserkenntnis* and, to be precise, *Wesenserkenntnis* before the task of logical and conceptual justification is undertaken.³⁵ Natorp here represents a longstanding tradition in philosophy according to which essences "manifest themselves" only in cognition. On this account, 'seeing an essence' amounts by necessity to 'having a successful intellective grasp of a general truth.' The kind of subjective act in which essences manifest themselves in the first place would be, accordingly, true definition. But definitions are always

³⁴ On the contrary, I think, that the idea of *experiential* boundaries imposed on concept-formation if this latter is to attain essential knowledge represents the really crucial novelty that stems from Husserl's eidetics.

³⁵ For a brief but illuminating characterization of the Neo-Kantian idea of justification in transcendental philosophy and its difference from Husserl's phenomenology, see Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger and the Space of Meaning*, 173–74.

necessarily relational and involve a thought-process of comparison and distinction in order to be articulated. Therefore no essence can be posited in isolation from the continuity of thought that makes definition possible.

Husserl does not follow Plato and the tradition stemming from his philosophy on this point. By simply seeing an essence we do not necessarily acquire knowledge of some sort. For Husserl a “vision of essence” is *not* the culmination of a cognitive process of abstraction from the objects in the visible world. Essences are not entities whose vision coincides with or is a metaphor of successful cognitive achievement. Rather, essences are for Husserl objects in a robust formal-logical sense, i.e., substrates for true or *false* predication. Such substrates tacitly accompany the givenness of every individual in experience although remaining in most cases unthematised. The idea of an unthematised, unclear or unaware vision of essence is absolutely alien to a Platonic framework, within which seeing an essence is a metaphor for a successful intellection. Husserl’s following remarks, on the contrary, are eloquent enough: “[An essence is] something that can be thought of vaguely or distinctly, which can be made the subject of true and false predication”³⁶; “essences can be an intuitive consciousness of essences, in a certain manner they can also be seized upon, without becoming ‘objects about which’”³⁷; “like other objects [essences] can at times be intended to correctly, at times falsely, as, e.g., in false geometrical thinking”³⁸; “the consciousness of the givenness of an essence [is] mostly not adequate ideation in which the essence comes to a full and authentic givenness.”³⁹

Considering these quotations, in particular the last one, we can see why Husserl does not see a contradiction in the intuitive *and at the same time* actively “giving” trait of *Wesensschau*, viz., ideation: The process of eidetic cognition starts off with the mostly vague and unthematic givenness of a certain essence. The first step forward consists in a thematization and clarification of this givenness by means of a methodological procedure later called by Husserl eidetic variation.⁴⁰ When we perform an eidetic variation we actively move from the awareness of a certain feature as belonging to a given instance, through a generalization of that feature for all instances of a certain class, and finally to the redirection of the look from the

³⁶ *Ideen I*, 10.

³⁷ Ibid., 33.

³⁸ Ibid., 44. Neither Plato nor Natorp would be willing to accept false geometrical thinking as a case in which a vision of essence is nonetheless operative. For Husserl, on the contrary, this would be a case of vision of essence followed by an unsuccessful attempt to gain knowledge of the corresponding geometrical essence.

³⁹ E. Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Bedeutungslehre: Sommersemester 1908* (Hua XXVI) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1986), 108.

⁴⁰ It should be remarked that the procedure of eidetic variation is not explicitly present in the *Ideen* and is introduced by Husserl only later, especially in his lectures of transcendental logic in the 1920s. However it has been convincingly shown that the method of eidetic variation is nothing but a refinement of the procedure employed by Husserl from the start in his phenomenological analyses (See D. Lohmar, “Die phänomenologische Methode der Wesensschau und ihre Präzisierung als eidetische Variation,” *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (2005): 65–91.)

infinite variety of possible instances to an object of new kind: the essence of the class at issue, to which the feature is attributed.

To stay with the example of a tone, we start by hearing a tone and being aware of it *as a tone*. Subsequently, after focusing on some of its underlying moments while holding the whole given tone firmly in grasp, we see with evidence that certain features of the given tone must be present a priori in “any tone whatever.” Varying the given tone and producing in imagination further examples is the best way to let the invariant elements of a tone in general stand out more clearly. At this point we can shift our attention from the infinite variety of possible examples to an ideal object that is intuited as the *ideal carrier* of all those features that pertain to any tone whatever. The “originarily giving act” of *Wesensschau* is thus not, as Natorp would have it, a hidden construction or, as Plato would have it, the result of dialectical reasoning but a move from the unthematic to the thematic the function of which is to increase the clarity of the given essence. At this point, and only at this point, we are ready to articulate conceptual knowledge of essence and, for instance, write down the sentence “to the essence of a tone in general belong pitch and intensity.” In this sense, the essence is given to us in three guises: at first *per speculum*, as it were, i.e., through the lens of the individual that we choose to view as an example of its class. Second, through the process of phantasy-variation, as separate but not independent object that carries its own determinations and can at any time be referred back to an infinite variety of possible individuals. Third, as the fulfilling factor of a potentially infinite number of eidetic judgments, i.e., as the correlate of an indefinitely articulable *Wesenserkenntnis*. However, a synthesis of coincidence runs through all these forms of consciousness of an essence: it is one and the same essence that is vaguely, unthematically co-given at first, then rendered the object of explicit consideration and finally cognized via connections of concepts of which it furnishes the intuitive fulfillment.

To sum up and conclude this section: I argue that the problems signalized by Rickert and Natorp about Husserl’s theory of essence can be overcome if we hold fast to (1) a robust distinction between *Wesensschau* and *Wesenserkenntnis* and (2) an understanding of the *giving act of Wesensschau* as a movement from the unthematic to the thematic and not as a hidden, unexplicated process of conceptual thought.⁴¹

Difficulties with an Eidetic Science of Consciousness

After the distinction between unthematic, vague givenness of an essence, vision of essence and knowledge of essence has been established, we are equipped with the appropriate theoretical tools to face the next challenge posed to *Ideen I* by the

⁴¹In this sense, as Nicolas De Warren aptly emphasizes, “an ‘intuition of essence’ requires a complex form of activity and passivity.” Nicolas De Warren, “On Husserl’s Essentialism,” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 14/2 (2006): 262.

Neo-Kantians. This second challenge hits upon another crucial point of Husserlian phenomenology: its self-understanding as “a *descriptive* eidetic doctrine of transcendentally pure lived experiences [*Erlebnisse*]”⁴² and the connected claim to be, as such, the most fundamental of all sciences. The underlying issue is manifestly one and the same, since the fundamentality Husserl claims for phenomenology rests on its investigating the domain of the “reality” presupposed by all further domains of reality: lived-experience. However, for the sake of clarity, it can be fruitfully articulated in two sub-points, addressed respectively by Natorp and by Rickert. The first sub-point is whether the eidetic method presented above is really adequate for a philosophical study of subjectivity and experience. The second sub-point is whether the concept of *phenomenon*, on which phenomenology rests, is really as fundamental as Husserl would have it, and therefore whether a phenomenology *per se* is fit to carry the burden of being the most fundamental of all sciences. Let us start with the first sub-point and turn once more to Natorp’s review, in order to then conclude with a consideration of the second sub-point.

After a paraphrase of those chapters of *Ideen I* devoted to the phenomenological reduction and the disclosure of pure consciousness, Natorp focuses on Husserl’s claim that every positing of being and value must refer back to a positing consciousness which is not in turn posited on the basis of something else, but rather is immediately given. This positing consciousness is pure consciousness conceived of as “*phenomenological residuum*”⁴³ after all further positions of being have been suspended via *epochē*. Its purity consists in its independency from empirical being and, in particular, from an empirical body. Its ‘conscious’ trait depends on the fact that after the performance of the phenomenological *epochē* we are still dwelling in the realm of full-blown experiences, which we can thematize and study in a direct, intuition-based fashion.

According to Husserl, the kind of task connected to this discovery of pure consciousness is a description of its general structure (intentionality) and of the different classes of experience (perception, recollection, fantasy) from an eidetic point of view. But, Natorp asks, is the kind of knowledge that we thus acquire really *essential knowledge* of pure consciousness?⁴⁴ In other passages of his work, Husserl characterizes the nexus of *Erlebnisse* as a whole, not just as a patchwork of juxtaposed experiences but an infinite and continuous *stream*. But then, Natorp argues, on closer inspection “the stream in its streaming is something other than what can be grasped and fixed in reflection.”⁴⁵ Certainly, to a reflective gaze pure consciousness *appears* as an enclosed nexus of lived experiences of different kinds. However—Natorp stands here very close Rickert’s remarks we discussed

⁴² *Ideen I*, 167. Translation modified.

⁴³ *Ideen I*, 65.

⁴⁴ See Paul Natorp, “Husserls ‘Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie,’” *Husserl*, ed. H. Noack (WBG: Darmstadt 1973), 49.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

above—"the 'immediate' of pure consciousness [i.e., pure consciousness as it appears to a reflective gaze] is not already as such also immediately known [*erkannt*] or knowable."⁴⁶

One could rephrase Natorp's concern employing the Husserlian conceptuality worked out at the end of the previous paragraph: Pure consciousness manifests itself in a certain way under our reflective regard. However, the sheer thematization of pure consciousness in reflection is not yet knowledge of pure consciousness. We should ask ourselves, according to the above distinctions, whether the eidetic knowledge of consciousness envisioned by Husserl really catches ...what is essential to consciousness! If our eidetic insight tells us that consciousness is essentially a *stream*, then we will have to work out concepts and methods of investigation that do justice to its stream-like essential trait, provided we want to achieve essential and not extra-essential knowledge. But if we then set out with Husserl to analyze *Erlebnisse* (lived experiences), treating them as isolated object-like unities, and furthermore, try to 'extract' from them static essential structures such as "the *eidos* of perception," "the *eidos* of recollection," "the *eidos* of imagination," etc. are we not missing precisely what Husserl himself acknowledged as the essential trait of consciousness, namely, its being a stream? In Natorp's words: "But in this way [i.e. via an eidetic analysis] is the *overflowing stream* of consciousness not brought to a halt against its own nature and is its *concreteness* not resolved into a sum of *abstractions*, in particular if thereby (following Husserl) the singular experience is immediately grasped in 'eidetic generality'?"⁴⁷

Natorp's counterproposal, presented in his *Allgemeine Psychologie*, for dealing philosophically with the stream-like nature of consciousness can be left aside here.⁴⁸ Rather, we should try to answer Natorp's challenge using Husserlian resources. A first, somewhat obvious but in no way trivial remark is that Natorp's statement that "consciousness is essentially a stream" is not itself a stream but rather a piece of eidetic knowledge, based on eidetic intuition and conceptually expressed. Accordingly, we cannot escape eidetic knowledge or at least eidetic claims about consciousness if what we want is a *science* (be it Husserl's phenomenology or Natorp's transcendental psychology) and not extemporaneous allusions. Furthermore, an accurate *Wesensschau* carried out on consciousness reveals that consciousness is not just a stream but rather a stream that assumes very specific forms. I do not know *what* perceptions, recollections, expectations, fantasies, etc. I will have in the future but I know *that* I will have all of them, or in other words, *that* the forms my conscious life will take on will be necessarily and exclusively perceptions, recollections,

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁸ This is what he called "reconstructive method." For a full-fledged account of Natorp's reconstructive method, see Sebastian Luft, "Reconstruction and Reduction: Natorp and Husserl on Method and the Question of Subjectivity," *Neokantianism in Contemporary Philosophy*, eds. R. A. Makkreel and S. Luft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 59–91.

expectations, fantasies and the like. Again, this insight is just as essential as the one referring to consciousness being a stream. There is a lot of difference between a formless torrential stream and a stream that flows obediently between well-formed banks. Consciousness in this metaphor resembles much more the second kind of stream than the first. In this sense, the different classes of lived-experience and their eidetic investigation are not an abstract falsification of consciousness's stream-like nature but rather go hand in hand with it.

Phenomenologically speaking, we need both an eidetic study of *Erlebnisse* and their basic intentional structure *as well as* an eidetic study of the stream in which all these *Erlebnisse* are embedded. Corresponding respectively to these two tasks are what Husserl calls static phenomenology and genetic phenomenology. Static phenomenology studies and classifies different classes of experiences, whereas genetic phenomenology studies how experiences come about on the basis of more rudimentary elements, such as sensations or instincts, and how they are connected together through temporality and association. The influence of Natorp's thought on Husserl's development of a "genetic method" has been rightly emphasized by several scholars.⁴⁹ However, in a way that some scholarly work does not seem to adequately appreciate, Husserl's move *towards* genetic phenomenology does not mean a move *away from* static phenomenology or a change of mind about fundamental phenomenological concepts such as essence and intuition.

Husserl was well aware of the dynamic nature of consciousness much earlier than his publication of *Ideen*.⁵⁰ As his famous 1904/1905 lectures on time-consciousness prove.⁵¹ While it is true that the investigations carried out in these lectures are not yet termed genetic phenomenology, they already display a feature that will remain unvaried in the subsequent articulation of genetic phenomenology: Even when it comes to an investigation of the dynamic structures of consciousness, the phenomenologist is not concerned with facts but with essences. In this connection, such

⁴⁹ The first to underscore this influence was Iso Kern in his monumental work, *Husserl und Kant: Eine Untersuchung über Husserls Verhältnis zu Kant und zum Neukantianismus* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 366 f. Recently Natorp's influence on Husserl has been the object of renewed attention: Donn Welton, *The Systematicity of Husserl's Transcendental Philosophy, The New Husserl: A Critical Reader*, ed. D. Welton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2003), 255–88; Sebastian Luft, "Natorp, Husserl und das Problem der Kontinuität von Leben, Wissenschaft und Philosophie," *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (2006): 99–134.

⁵⁰ This is the substance of Husserl's response to Natorp's critical review of *Ideen* and in a letter to the Neo-Kantian philosopher he writes: "I overcame the stage of static Platonism already more than one decade ago" (letter to Natorp, 29/06/1918, *Briefwechsel* V, 135 f. Quoted in Sebastian Luft, "Natorp, Husserl und das Problem der Kontinuität von Leben, Wissenschaft und Philosophie," 106, n.18.)

⁵¹ Interestingly, in spite of all emphasis on the dynamic nature of consciousness, Natorp does not have a theory of time-consciousness. I cannot expand here on Husserl's investigations of time-consciousness and its import in genetic phenomenology. An illuminating study of these issues is offered by Nicolas De Warren, *Husserl and the Promise of Time: Subjectivity in Transcendental Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

essences are the underpinning structures of a dynamic process. However, they are not themselves dynamic but rather, as Husserl puts it in a later manuscript, “*rigid lawfullnesses*”⁵² [*starre Gesetzlichkeiten*], rigid meaning invariable, selfsame validities.⁵³ For these, too, the ultimate source of legitimacy must be intuitiveness and not mere logical consistency or speculative construction. Husserl’s preoccupation with intuition and intuitive legitimatizing even in the difficult field of genetic phenomena is witnessed, for instance, by his untiring work on the so-called time-diagrams, which are meant to contribute precisely an intuitive legitimatizing for the complicated genetic structure that characterizes time-consciousness.⁵⁴

Natorp’s critical remarks on Husserl’s alleged static Platonism are thus only acceptable insofar as they gesture towards the necessity of a genetic phenomenology of pure consciousness, a chapter missing in *Ideen I*. However, Natorp notwithstanding, both static and genetic phenomenology are and must be eidetic sciences of consciousness the aim of which is to achieve universal, rigid, and unchangeable validities and not just to defend the allegedly unobjectifiable fluency of the stream of consciousness. If the talk of genesis is to be justified, one has to include in this very notion that ‘something’ of which genesis is supposed to be the genesis. Husserl’s most important discovery is not simply that there is a genetic and dynamic trait to consciousness, but that this dynamic trait moves *teleologically* towards its self-realization in lived-experiences, the structure of which can be grasped in eidetic universality and does not depend on merely physiological underpinnings. Thus, out of raw hylē, full-blown *Erlebnisse* are generated on the basis of which objects of all kinds and, ultimately, an existing world are posited. This entire dynamic, phrased by Husserl constitution, is describable through and through in eidetic terms.

⁵² E. Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt. Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution. Texte aus dem Nachlass (1916–1937)*, ed. Rochus Sowa (Hua, 39) (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 11. My italics.

⁵³ Sebastian Luft seems to downplay this important point when he writes: “Obviously, with a modification of phenomenology’s *theme*, the characterizing trait of eidetic science undergoes a transformation too. Accordingly, an eidetic science of transcendental subjectivity deals with ‘laws of genesis,’ such as the laws of motivation and association.” (Sebastian Luft, “Natorp, Husserl und das Problem der Kontinuität von Leben, Wissenschaft und Philosophie,” 124–125.) The allegation that static phenomenology deals with essences, whereas genetic phenomenology deals with eidetic laws is misleading for two interconnected reasons: (1) the concept of eidetic law is not peculiar to genetic phenomenology. Rather *every* essence—also ‘static’ essences such as the essence of a tone or the essence of perception—can be converted into eidetic laws of the form “for every conceivable x: if x is an F then x is a G” (Rochus Sowa, “Husserls Idee einer nicht-empirischen Wissenschaft von der Lebenswelt,” *Husserl Studies* 26 (2010): 59), for example, “if x is a tone then x is an entity with an intensity and a pitch.” (2) The “laws of genesis” too *qua* eidetic laws can be in turn converted into “static essences,” or better, re-articulated in terms of a vision of essence, such as “to the essence of time-consciousness belongs the threefold structure retention/primary impression/protection.” (The law-like formulation would be: “if x is a time-consciousness then x is an entity the structure of which is retention/primary impression/protection.”)

⁵⁴ To learn about Husserl’s work on the diagrams see the instructive paper: James Dodd, “Reading Husserl’s Time-Diagrams from 1917/18,” *Husserl Studies* 21 (2005): 111–37.

Conclusion: Phenomenology's Foundational Claim

In light of these last remarks, which are meant to both reinforce phenomenology's eidetic project and to highlight the necessity to extend it beyond the scope of static analyses, we can turn to the above-mentioned second aspect of this wave of criticism concerning phenomenology's claim "to be the science fundamental to philosophy."⁵⁵ Although Natorp also expresses some serious doubts about this claim in his review,⁵⁶ it is Rickert who voices the Neo-Kantian concerns vis-à-vis phenomenology's self-understanding in the sharpest fashion. In *Ideen I* Husserl famously insists on the fact that while all empirical being depends on phenomena of consciousness for its manifestation (and its cognition is thus mediated) phenomena of consciousness do not depend on further phenomena and are thus immediately and absolutely given.⁵⁷ However, Rickert points out that on closer inspection the very notion of 'phenomenon' is construed in a threefold way. A phenomenon is necessarily a phenomenon *of* something *for* a subject. Even if we carry out a phenomenological reduction, as Husserl intends to do, and consider the object of the phenomenon purely as intended, "if the word phenomenon—on this condition—is not to become entirely meaningless, is a subject to whom the phenomenal [*das Erscheinende*] appears or who intends via the phenomena the unknown object that appears therein not even more necessary? How can one claim, however, to bring such an ego into the 'phenomenological' sphere just like the phenomena that appear to it? Does one not thereby have to leave the realm of the immediate in the first place?"⁵⁸ In other words Rickert's line of argument could run thus: Phenomenology is a science of phenomena that claims to be the fundamental science for philosophy. Fundamentality must go hand in hand with immediacy of the investigated object. Should phenomena turn out to refer necessarily to something other than phenomena, and thus not immediately cognized, then it will be knowledge of this further element that deserves to be deemed fundamental. However, on closer inspection, the concept of phenomenon refers *per definitionem* to something other than itself. Therefore phenomenology cannot be the fundamental science.

Rickert decrees with remarkable clarity that, "In a 'phenomenology' deserving this name one has to call immediate either the phenomena or the subject and, accordingly, denominate mediate [*vermittelt*] either the phenomena or that subject for whom they are phenomena. In this respect already the concept of phenomenon—should this word maintain its significant meaning—introduces an element in the observation, through which the permanence within the immediate of unbroken

⁵⁵ *Ideen I*, XVII.

⁵⁶ See Paul Natorp, "Husserls 'Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie,'" *Husserl*, ed. H. Noack (WBG: Darmstadt 1973), 50.

⁵⁷ See *Ideen I*, 95–96. It is appropriate to recall that 'phenomenon' for Husserl amounts to 'lived-experience,' i.e., perception, recollection, expectation and so forth.

⁵⁸ H. Rickert, *Die Methode der Philosophie und das Unmittelbare*, 115.

experience [*Erlebnis*] and its intuition is rendered a priori impossible.”⁵⁹ Leaving aside the vaguely Hegelian reminiscence of these remarks, the line of thought of which is *prima facie* very distant from Husserlian preoccupations, Rickert’s position could be pinned down to one rather blunt question: Does phenomenology merely *qua* science of phenomena have the resources to defend the claim of being the fundamental science for philosophy? And furthermore: Is the concept of phenomenon self-sufficient when it comes to a genuinely philosophical assessment of the import of phenomenology?

With these sharp questions, Rickert touches undoubtedly on a crucial point and he is right to emphasize that phenomenology’s foundational claims cannot rest on an all too simple appeal to the immediacy of *cogitationes* vis-à-vis the being manifested therein. However, Rickert notwithstanding, this does not cause any trouble to Husserl’s project but rather stimulates a practicing phenomenologist to take seriously the distinction articulated in the title of Husserl’s seminal work: the one between a pure phenomenology and a phenomenological philosophy. Just because phenomenology *begins* with a direct investigation of phenomena of consciousness does not mean that phenomenology’s destiny is to *limit itself* to a direct investigation of conscious phenomena. The articulation of a *pure phenomenology* serves the purpose of establishing a solid ground to carry out an experience-based critique of knowledge. In this way, the project of phenomenology is not exhausted but only initiated. It is not simply *qua* phenomenology (i.e., *qua* science of immediately given conscious phenomena) that phenomenology can live up to its claim to be the fundamental science for philosophy. Pure phenomenology displays its vocation to be phenomenological philosophy, i.e., to disclose fundamental philosophical truths that undergird any further form of knowledge, by taking its departure in the ‘sphere of phenomena’ in order to then move beyond phenomenality and in so doing reveal those truths that find therein their intuitive fulfillment but necessarily transcend, in terms of validity, the sphere of direct descriptions of consciousness. It is always “*qua*” something more than just *pure phenomenology* that phenomenology attends to its vocation of being the fundamental science for philosophy.

Thus, we have Husserl talking of his phenomenology *qua* “eidetics of consciousness,” *qua* “transcendental egology,” *qua* “intersubjective monadology” or *qua* “ontology of the life-world.” These *qua*-relations have been often wrongly interpreted as transformations of or shifts in phenomenology. On the contrary, they are a set of attempts of what at first and necessarily must present itself as just pure phenomenology to articulate fundamental philosophical truths, thereby moving beyond a direct description of the immanent data of consciousness while not giving up the possibility to trace these truths back to experiential intuitions in which they are nonetheless grounded. To give an example, when pure phenomenology presents itself as a transcendental egology, Husserl clearly indicates that at stake is indeed a primacy of the *ego* vis-à-vis the phenomena that appear to this *ego*. This is not because the *ego* is ‘more immediate’ but because, as Rickert rightly acknowledges,

⁵⁹ Ibid., 116.

phenomena are construed in an oriented fashion. They require an ego around which to be centered. The *ego* of transcendental egology is thereby disclosed as the underlying factor that holds together the whole sphere of phenomenological givenness, although this insight may not be as immediate as, say, a simple reflection on the perception I am having in this moment. The *prima facie* immediacy attaching to single lived-experiences, such as my current perception, is the systematically first stage we have to work our way through in order to reveal the true fundamentality of the perceiving ego, a truth that necessarily transcends just pure phenomenology and thus belongs to phenomenological philosophy.

Does this mean that when we talk about a pure ego we abandon *entirely* the sphere of intuition, as Rickert would have it? The answer to this question has to be negative. We would have to abandon intuition, if by intuition we mean exclusively ‘direct vision in reflection’ or something along these lines. But this has never been Husserl’s only concept of intuition. Although the pure ego of transcendental egology cannot be located among its own phenomena in a direct fashion, there is plenty of ways to make the pure ego intuitive and its corresponding concept clear. For instance, we can describe the phenomena of attention, a kind of experience that remains inexplicable if we refuse to see an ego at work that gives its “assent” to what otherwise would remain merely in the perceptual “background.”⁶⁰ Furthermore, we can describe voluntary acts, characterize them as acts springing from an inner ego-center, and finally contrast them to acts the source of which lies in the external world.⁶¹ The list could go on. In all these cases we clarify the concept of ego, we make it intuitive by reference to directly describable experiences without for this reason pretending to “see” the ego in the same way in which we see a desk or the perception of a desk in reflection. Similar clarifications could be given about all fundamental truths pertaining to phenomenological philosophy, a task that would require much work and more space than this paper can offer.

To summarize and conclude, the Neo-Kantian critiques are precious because they compel the phenomenologist to shed clarifying light on crucial elements of his or her endeavor. When Rickert and Natorp cast doubt on the notion of *Wesensschau* they offer the opportunity to distinguish between vision of essence and knowledge of essence and thereby clarify the kind of cognition phenomenology yields. When Natorp suggests that consciousness is dynamic and therefore the eidetic method might be intrinsically inadequate to capture what is essential to it, he necessitates a more accurate understanding of the relationship between static and genetic phenomenology like the one sketched above. Finally, Rickert’s remarks on the concept of phenomenon help appreciate the distinction between pure phenomenology

⁶⁰ See *Ideen I*, §37.

⁶¹ On this point and on Husserl’s indebtedness to Pfänder, see M. Ubiali, “Die Willensakte und der Umfang der Motivation: Eine Gegenüberstellung von Pfänder und Husserl,” *Geist-Person-Gemeinschaft: Freiburger Beiträge zur Aktualität Husserls*, eds. P. Merz, A. Staiti, and F. Steffen (Würzburg: Ergon, 2010), 241–67.

and phenomenological philosophy; it is not merely *qua* phenomenology that phenomenology is able to live up to its original claim of being the fundamental science for philosophy. Rather, by interpreting itself *qua* egology, *qua* eidetics, *qua* monadology and so forth it attempts to transcend the sphere of mere reflective description of consciousness and to articulate basic philosophical truths on which all further philosophical as well as empirical knowledge can be developed on a solid foundation.

Chapter 6

The Distinctive Structure of the Emotions

Anthony J. Steinbock

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate whether acts peculiar to the emotional sphere of experience (1) are *founded in* epistemic objectivating acts or (2) have a *unique structure* that is independent of such acts. Do acts peculiar to the emotional sphere simply follow the coordinates of the noesis:noema structure of intentionality? Does the emotional sphere, which concerns the person (and not simply the epistemically engaged subject), have an essentially different structure?

We find an initial discussion of such a problematic in Husserlian phenomenology, first in Edmund Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, and then later in his *Ideen*. Let me first explain what Husserl means by these kinds of acts and their relation of foundation. I then limit myself to one example of an emotional experience—trust—examining it with attention to three structural characteristics, namely, otherness, temporality, and the modality of possibility. In this way, I can adduce the extent to which acts of the emotional sphere have a unique structure such that they are not merely modifications of objectivating acts.

Emotions as Non-objectivating and Founded Acts

While Edmund Husserl is often credited for realizing that consciousness is always consciousness of something, this insight was already well prepared by Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, among others. Husserl's groundbreaking insights did not simply involve the discovery of the intentional structure of consciousness, but concerned his unique phenomenological approach that allowed him to describe the how of

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giving (sense, meaning) of what something is (the being of the object) in relation to the power and limits of subjectivity. In the *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl described this relationship under the heading of “objectivating acts.” An objectivating act is that intentional act which “refers” to an object in and through a certain sense. Thus, an objectivating act is that kind of act which allows there to be an intending and intended object. This is known generally as the intentional structure, and is what Husserl also calls a process of *Gegenständlichung*, that is, the process by which something acquires the status of a *constituted* “object”; in this way the process is a kind of object-giving or “objectivating.”

An objectivating act is not only that intentional act in which, phenomenologically, an object is given as sense, but it is also such that it needs no additional, adjuncting act in order for an object to be given. A non-objectivating act is said to be an act that is “founded” on an objectivating act, requiring the latter’s structure.¹ The objectivating act is what allows the non-objectivating act to have this intentional structure, to have an act:sense correlation through which something is given beyond “myself” as the one who executes acts. Examples of non-objectivating acts are acts of valuing, willing, and emotional acts.

Husserl’s initial portrayal of the structure of objectivating acts is carried over into his discussion of the intentional relational in the *Ideen*. In brief, the intentional structure that was characterized by means of the “quality” and the “material” of the act in the *Logische Untersuchungen* is now described in the *Ideen* (with certain qualifications) in terms of the “noesis” or intending side of the relation and the “noema” or the intended side.² Furthermore, the characterization of the relationship between objectivating acts and non-objectivating acts is also carried over into Husserl’s discussion of intentionality.³ After describing the “higher spheres” of consciousness in the noesis and noema of judgment, Husserl writes: “Analogous statements hold, then, as one can easily see, for the emotional and volitional spheres, for mental processes of liking or disliking, of valuing in any sense, of wishing, deciding, acting. All these are mental processes which contain many and often heterogeneous intentive strata, the noetic and, correspondingly, also the noematic ones.”⁴ Thus,

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen. Band II: Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*, I. Teil (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1968), 493–94: “Wir dürfen nämlich sagen: Jedes intentionale Erlebnis ist entweder ein objektivierender Akt oder hat einen solchen Akt zur ‘Grundlage’, d.h. er hat in diesem letzteren Falle einen objektivierenden Akt notwendig als Bestandstück in sich, dessen Gesamtmautie zugleich, und zwar individuell identisch seine Gesamtmautie ist.” See Robert Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964) and Donn Welton, *The Origins of Meaning: A Critical Study of the Thresholds of Husserlian Phenomenology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983).

² Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950). Husserliana Vol. 3. Hereafter, Hua 3. See especially, Part 3, Chapter 3. English translation by F. Kersten, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983).

³ Husserl, Hua 3, §§ 94–95.

⁴ Husserl, Hua 3, § 95.

emotional acts are founded in more basic essential intentional epistemic acts. Accordingly, “... a perceiving, fantasizing, judging, or the like, founds a stratum of valuing which overlays it completely”

To say that emotional acts are founded in more basic intentional acts means for Husserl that the emotions are dependent upon “objectivating” ones because they require those characteristics of the latter in order for the “non-objectivating” act to mean something beyond itself as presented under a certain sense. Thus, either acts have an epistemic structure (basically a “rational” structure) or they are—in this case—the province of mere instinct and have no cognitive value. The founded acts are called “higher” because the noeses and noemata (acts and senses) are “built” upon the founding levels, though they, too, form a distinctive, new unity of epistemic processes such that the new object-structure will have its own modes of givenness, its “characters,” its manifold modes of being intended.⁵

Even though the founding and founded dimensions constitute a new “object,” the founding relation is such that these “upper” levels and strata of the total phenomenon can be “abolished” without the remainder ceasing to be a concretely complete intentional experience.⁶ As noted, when describing the founding-founded structure of acts and senses in the *Ideen*, Husserl initially considered examples of lived-experiences such as liking or disliking, valuing, wishing, deciding, or doing. Deciding, for example, belongs to the province of volition, but in order to will something and to decide as a willing, I still have to intend or “mean” the object in some way, where the meaning given is the meaning of the object. The “analogous” point Husserl wishes to draw here is that such experiences contain manifold intentional noetic and noematic strata.⁷ As intimated above, a new sense is constituted when it is founded upon, yet encompassing the founding structure. “The new sense brings a totally new dimension of sense,” for example, when we see not just the painting, but experience it as a beautiful painting, the machine as a useful machine, etc.⁸

A valuing that is founded upon a “perceiving, imagining, judging, and the like,” by virtue of its adjunct status, qualifies the founding-founded whole as, e.g., a “wishing” (for the hot coffee over there) even though the valuing dimension can be removed, leaving intact, *mutatis mutandis*, the perceiving founding stratum; or again it could be removed and leave a judgemental dimension, e.g., “that the coffee is certainly hot.” Here, the founding-whole can also be teased apart from the founded without damaging the underlying basic structure.

Where valuing is concerned, then, Husserl suggests that the perceptual sense of the object, the perceived as such, belongs to the perception, but in higher order valuing, it is also integrated into the “valued” as such as a correlate to the concrete valuing,

⁵ Husserl, Hua 3, § 93.

⁶ Husserl, Hua 3, § 95: “Dabei sind die Schichtungen, allgemein gesprochen, so, dass oberste Schichten des Gesamtphänomens ‘fortfallen’ können, ohne dass das Übrige aufhörte, ein konkrete vollständiges intentionales Erlebnis zu sein”

⁷ Husserl, Hua 3, § 95.

⁸ Husserl, Hua 3, § 116.

whose sense it (the perceptual sense) founds.⁹ Accordingly, we must distinguish the objects, things, characteristics, and affair-complexes that are given as valued in the valuing, and the presentings, judgings, imaginings, etc., which found the valuing, even though the whole new intending may give the object in a unique doxic modality, say, as “certainly ugly work of art,” or “probably useful machine.”

The relations of founding are multifarious, and can describe the relation of parts to wholes,¹⁰ or the way in which the judgment (as the noematic correlate) is founded upon the perceptual sense, as the judging act is founded upon the perceiving as a being-positing process: Doubting-being, possible-being, deeming-being-likely, rejecting- or negating-being are all modifications of a basic “simple” givenness and positing of being that is given in a straightforward attitude. This is also the sense in which Husserl conceived of passive syntheses (in a “transcendental aesthetic”) to be founding for meaning constituted in active synthesis (peculiar to a “transcendental logic”).¹¹

Now, Husserl’s notion of foundation [*Fundierung*] is not the problematic issue here. In fact, it is one of those concepts that Eugen Fink termed “operative” in the sense it can be taken up in a variety of contexts, and depending upon the context, shift in nuance.¹² Husserl wants to stress by such a founding structure that the relation is not a causal one between, say, perceptual and emotional acts; nor even is it a “reciprocal” relation, which would presuppose an exchange of causes. Rather, the founded has to be understood as an “elaboration of” the founding beyond what could have been anticipated in advance, but to which the founding dimension gives a radically new meaning, and which it “needs” in order to be in this unique way.¹³ At issue for us is not the founding relation, then, but the fact that the emotional sphere is said to be founded in a more basic “epistemic” intentionality, meaning that the emotions are to be understood as having the same kind of intentional structure, the same kind of rational import, the same kind of givenness, evidence, etc.

⁹ Husserl, Hua 3, § 95.

¹⁰ Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, II/1, Part III. § 14.

¹¹ Husserl, Hua 3, § 94. See also Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis: Lectures on Transcendental Logic*, trans. Anthony J. Steinbock (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001), Division I on “Modalization” of Part 2.

¹² See Eugen Fink, “Operative Begriffe in Husserls Phänomenologie” (1957), *Nähe und Distanz: Phänomenologische Vortäge und Aufsätze* (Freiburg: Alber Verlag, 1976), 180–204.

¹³ Merleau-Ponty writes: “Thus, every truth of fact is a truth of reason, and every truth of reason is a truth of fact. The relation between reason and fact, or between eternity and time, just like the relations between reflection and the unreflected, between thought and language, or between thought and perception, is the two-way relation that phenomenology has called “*Fundierung*” [foundation]. The founding term (time, the unreflected, fact, language, perception) is primary in the sense that the founded is presented as a determination or a making-explicit of the founding term, which prevents it from ever fully absorbing the founding term; and yet the founding term is not primary in the empirical sense and the founded is not merely derived from it, since it is only through the founded that the founding appears. This is how one can say indifferently that the present is a sketch of eternity and that the eternity of the truth is only a sublimation of the present.” See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 451. English translation by Donald Landes, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (Routledge, forthcoming).

We can ask: Is Husserl correct when he contends that there are analogous distinctions in the emotional and volitional spheres of experience where this founding is concerned? Are the volitional and the emotional spheres of the same mettle such that we can make such a comparison in the first place? Is the emotional sphere really analogous to the judgemental, and in this way only to be actualized by being “founded” on the perceptual, objectivating, positing act, or even itself on a judging or an imagining act? If this is the case, then—to give just one example—trust would itself have to be either a kind of judgment, something founded in a decision to trust, or a blind belief.

To be sure, Husserl realizes it would be ridiculous to place the “valued” or the “likeable” in the same series as the “possible,” the “presumable,” or the “indeed.”¹⁴ But we must pursue this line of inquiry and ask whether emotional experiences are dependent upon such epistemic founding experiences so that only in this way do they have a cognitive dimension, and only in this way do they constitute a meaningful experience. Are they such that so-called strata could be stripped-off, leaving us with an integral, self-subsistent founding objectivating layer? Or are they to be understood as self-subsistent, as another kind of act that has its own style of givenness, cognition, and evidence, irreducible to epistemic acts or to instinct?

Let me now advance to one case example of the emotions, trust , and examine three structural features of temporality, modalization of possibility, and otherness that can be found in these experiences.¹⁵

A Phenomenological Case of the Emotions: Trust

In this section, I consider the experience of trust because it is an emotional act that could be construed as demanding what we have called “objectivating acts” at its foundation. As we will see, both phenomenologically inspired and non-phenomenological literature on these topics does in fact treat it in this way. For example, trust is regarded as a kind of judgment, as a rational decision, or as an epistemic assessment of risk. I want to show—though what can only be a limited phenomenological analysis here—that the structures of trust in terms of its temporality, modalization of possibility, and relation to otherness suggest the order of a unique emotional sphere that is “non-founded” in the sense described above.

In order to see the distinctiveness of trust, let me contrast it from the start with the experience of reliability. Reliability is something that unfolds over time. For example, if I count my pen as reliable, it is because it has given itself as something I can count on again and again; it has a temporal density that extends from the past.

¹⁴ Husserl, Hua 3, § 116.

¹⁵ This example is drawn from previous work on the phenomenology of the emotions: Anthony J. Steinbock, “Temporality, Transcendence, and Being Bound to Others in Trust,” *Trust, Sociality, Selfhood* in the Religion in Philosophy and Theology Series, 52, eds. Arne Grøn and Claudia Welz, 83–102.

If I test drive a car for the first time, I do not experience it immediately as reliable. It is true that I may like Hondas, and that I experience this particular car as reliable *because* it is a Honda, but then the experience of reliability has shifted from this particular car to the general make of the car with which I have had good (past) experiences. When I experience something in an originary manner, however, I do not experience it as reliable, or as unreliable for that matter. Accordingly, we can say that the past is essential for the general sphere of reliability. What I experience “now” calls back into the past and retrieves the experience, as it were, requalifying the same thing now *as* reliable.

Moreover, something is experienced as reliable when it corresponds to my *expectation*. On the basis of the present and the past, a futural horizon is sketched out that prepares us for the experience of reliability. I *anticipate* the thing according to the style in which it has been given. If the thing gives itself in the way in which it was sketched out futurally, I can count the thing as reliable. Reliability, then, is a *straightforward* mode of experience that is *motivated*. When everything runs its course as it should, something can be experienced as reliable. There are no major disappointments, no major ruptures in my everyday belief posture; my orientation toward the thing remains unbroken; I live in the basic mode of certainty and its possible modifications.

Notice that reliability is more than the fulfillment of the anticipation. As I descend the staircase, even though I “pretend” or implicitly expect the regularity of the steps in certainty (or modalized as probability), I do not *necessarily* experience them as reliable. Reliability includes something more; it is not mere certainty, but a *practical* mode of straightforward belief. Accordingly, reliability is not a probability, which is itself a modalization of expectation. For example, when I go to start the car on a cold day, my intention toward the car is that it will work, it will turn over: It is reliable. I do not approach it in the belief posture of probability. Or again, if I put the key in the ignition with the attitude that “it will *probably* start,” I am no longer living the car as reliable. Probability is a mode of expectation. Reliability, however, is not a mode of expectation, even though expectation figures in the experience of reliability. It is a practical mode of straightforward belief.

This practical modality of reliability gives us a main leading clue to the experience of reliability in its distinction to trust. In reliability, there is the experience of the *functional* character of the thing, which may include its instrumental character and its general use value, but in any case, all of this in the context of *practicality*. Moreover, the experience of reliability presupposes that something may change in the regularity of givenness; its functional character can be disrupted, most often in terms of a mal- or dysfunction. For example, the Swiss or German rail system is experienced, by most of us anyway, as reliable, whereas Amtrak tends to be experienced as unreliable. Let us turn now to the experience of trust.

While reliability is experienced only by virtue of a full temporal expanse that includes the past essentially, this need not be the case with trust. To be sure, we often speak of our “building up” trust in someone. But phenomenologically speaking, we do not need to be involved in a build-up of experiences stemming from the past in order to trust another, whereas this is essential for reliability. For example, I can

trust someone I have never met to watch my computer in a café while I get a refill. While reliability is a relation of familiarity, trust is not necessarily so. It belongs to the essence of trust to be able to live through a trust act with a perfect stranger. Indeed, at times our lives may depend upon the trust of such a stranger. So, even though trust is not caused, it is not arbitrary, either. In a deeper sense then, the trust of a stranger means the trust of a person who is given not only as unknown but as unknowable, as “mystery.”

Trust does not depend upon the past, but on the givenness of the person through an insighting (that may be accurate or not) of the person from an originary encounter. Even if one has been betrayed in the past by the same person, it is *possible* to trust this person anew, without any “proof” from the past. I do not trust someone who is compelled to do what I want or who is enslaved for any reason. In fact, enslaving someone—materially, emotionally, monetarily, physically—is the evidence of a lack of trust on some level. On the contrary, trust is a relaxing in or giving oneself over to the other precisely in light of the transcendence of the other. This goes not only to the creative, improvisational dimension of the one trusting, but of the trusted. It is likewise phenomenologically improper to speak of “earning trust.”¹⁶ The sense of this earning would amount to what we mean by reliability. Trust, however, is an orientation to deeper possibilities (like loving), exposing oneself to unforeseen dimensions of the person. Hence, there is a decisive orientation toward the future. Otherwise, it would not be possible to trust again. One can trust (again) on the basis of a new experience—perhaps in this instance by virtue of an insight into the internal coherence and directedness of the person—whereby trust is re-executed, freely, whereas reliability, as we saw, is rooted in the past. In fact, a new trust might run contrary to the past. Not trusting because there is no “proof” would be tantamount to wanting testimony and security in advance in order to trust. Perhaps such proof might be important at some level and in some circumstances; that is, perhaps there is a moment in which we have to have this kind of security, either politically or personally. Nevertheless, it would not (yet) be trust, and only limited to a search for reliability. Therefore the expression of “earning trust” is not really a matter of trust at all and is, phenomenologically speaking, contradictory. Al Lingis correctly notes, for example, that there can never be a demonstration of trustworthiness, since in trust we are oriented, in openness, toward transcendence, which is not known. All there can be is evidence of untrustworthiness.¹⁷

Trust is intersubjectively temporalizing and one of the foundational elements in intersubjective life. It enables us to move into an open future with others. Trust is oriented temporally toward the future in the sense of intersubjective becoming.

¹⁶ Holmes and Rempel, for example, assert that one must “earn trust” by being “perceived as motivated to moderate their own self-interest.” They mistakenly presuppose, first, that trust is a matter of earning trust, and second that it is played out on the level of self-interest (i.e., a perceived sacrifice of self-interest). See John G. Holmes and John K. Rempel, “Trust in Close Relationships,” *Review of Personality and Social Psychology* 10 (1989): 187–220. See esp. 188.

¹⁷ Alphonso Lingis, *The First Person Singular* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007). See also, Alphonso Lingis, *Trust* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

I trust the person, now, whether or not that trust will be fulfilled, and it is still a trust act whether or not it is fulfilled. But while trusting entails the possible fulfillment of that trust, *it is not however a mere expectation*; nor is it founded in an expectation. It does not get modalized, for example, into a probability or improbability. *It is a unique act that has its own bearing on the future*. This is not to say that trusting does not influence our expectations and anticipations.¹⁸ It does. It is easy to find examples of expectation where no trust is involved (the expectation of sunny weather, the anticipation of the outcome of a basketball game, and so forth). Intersubjectively speaking, there can be a coincidence of trust and expectation where the latter is guided by the former. For example, if I trust my children to act well at a family gathering, I will *ipso facto* expect them to act well. Unlike reliability, however, trust does not completely coincide with an expectation. (Expectation does not exhaust the meaning of the interpersonal futural orientation.)

Trust has a unique temporal structure that I call a “proffering.” In trust, I proffer myself to another in an open future and toward that which the trust is directed, as being bound to this other person. I understand proffer here in its literal sense as pro-offer. Trusting is the temporalizing movement of “offering-ahead,” allowing the trust to go before us or pointing the way forward, as in a *prolepsis*. This temporalizing movement is, as well, a pro-offering in the sense of a “great offering”; I give myself over to another in trust toward an open future. In this respect, proffering is a “bearing forth,” a “gifting”—expressive of its probable etymological sense as a “*pour-offrir*,” as they say in French when presenting a gift. Proffering is distinct from the expectation we might find in reliability or in a perceptual act, and is even distinct from the “patient awaiting” we find in hope, which is itself distinct from the active waiting-for that we find in anticipation.

Does being a “trusting person” presuppose a build-up of experience? The issue for me in this investigation is to inquire into the basis of those presuppositions, how those experiences get built-up, how a person can become trusting in the first place, which requires an inquiry into the how of the trusting movement, an investigation into how trusting proffers “in an originary fashion.” Nevertheless it is true that a more full investigation into trusting has to consider the phenomenon of the trusting person, and this would entail an investigation into the “genetic” accomplishment of trusting, how it is acquired, how trusting gets sedimented into the very life of trusting acts and how it becomes a stable basis for trusting a person. But, the dimension of the past comes into play when we are considering mistrust, not trust.

When I trust, I do more than merely live in a straightforward belief attitude; I invest myself “personally” in the other person, and therefore in what the other person says or in how the other person acts; I give myself over to him or over to her “word.” *Trust binds me to another.*¹⁹ In trust, I am bound to the other as transcendent

¹⁸ See for example Isaacs, et al., “Faith, Trust and Gullibility,” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 44 (1963): 461–69.

¹⁹ Accordingly, even if trust pertains to the acceptance of scientific truths, trusting itself still resides in the moral sphere because in this case it is that through which one scientist is bound to another. See for example, Markovits and Deutsch, *Fear of Science*. And see, T. Porter, *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Pr., 1995). See also, R. Crease, “The Paradox of Trust in Science,” *Physics World*, March (2004): 18.

or mystery directly, without requiring the mediation of a third person or something like a contract; I live in and through the trust with another immediately. The relation of trust, in fact, may remain completely invisible to a third party. To force trust putatively to be accessible to all by making it “objective” would only mitigate the very relational intimacy of this bond, even in its transitive mode. Thus, trusting and the trusted are not constituted like objects to which everyone can in principle take a perspective and contribute in this way to an intersubjective verification. What this attempt could yield, however, is something like a “social contract” or a contract between individuals. However, not only would the latter presuppose trust, and the bond animated by it, but it could have the adverse effect of alienating individuals from one another in the very attempt to unite them because the contract (in distinction to trust) tends to set individuals off from each other in suspicious, controllable, and predictable manner.

Trust, as an interpersonal act (among others such as loving, witnessing, etc.) that is revelatory of the moral sphere, is qualitatively distinct from an epistemic act. Trusting cannot be equated with a mere presupposition, presumption, or assumption. By the latter experiences, we understand taking the being of the thing or event for granted in a straightforward “belief” attitude that is operative on all dimensions of existence. For example, I can presuppose the meaning of the educational system, and live in this system without question; I can make implicit epistemic assumptions about the correctness of a theoretical problem or a life situation; I can presume that the advice someone gives me is correct.

It is therefore not entirely correct to say that we are “naïve” in trust. It is true that in trust we bind ourselves to what is beyond that which is actually given in the present. However, while naïveté may be motivated by something actually given in experience (a perception, an idea, etc.) it may also arise without any such motivation. It can, for example, arise through an uncritical belief without any prior experiential basis.

Something different is going on in trust. Trust always occurs on the basis of some givenness, some insight into the other person (which may of course be “right on” or “off”). What is given is the whole person in light of this or that modality, fully, but not exhaustively. When we are bound to this person in trust on the basis of this givenness, we expose ourselves to more than what is given. This means two things. First, exposing ourselves by being bound to another in trust reveals us as *vulnerable*. Vulnerability is essential to the trust-experience.²⁰ Second, we cannot conflate the moral dimension of trust and the essential element of vulnerability with the epistemic dimension of judgment or assumption, which allows for the possibility of naïveté. So, while it is more apt to say that we are naïve in a judgment or an assumption, properly speaking, we are vulnerable in an act of trust. We only believe what someone says because we trust her. In a similar way, *even our systems of knowledge are based on trust*.

²⁰ It is not, as Deutsch mistakenly assumes, a “confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared.” See Morton Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict: Constructive and Destructive Processes* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), esp. 149 ff.

When we hear third person remarks like “You trust *that* person? That’s just stupid” or “You’re really naïve!” the presumption is that we could have prevented the trust by being more critical. The attempt not to be gullible is the spurious attempt to mitigate the vulnerable aspect of trust and to make another merely reliable. Yet, if I try not to be vulnerable (or gullible, under the guise of not being naïve, say, by trying to figure out all angles in advance, the other’s self-interests, and so forth), I will never trust. Contrary to Hardin, it is impossible to start trusting by being “skeptical.”²¹ To be more precise, we have to distinguish between the epistemic character of gullibility as a readiness to believe (and skepticism as an unreadiness to believe²²), and the moral character of vulnerability in trusting through which I dispose myself and am bound to another.

To look only for what will in advance stop me from being vulnerable is to try to discern what is not loving in others, ultimately, to discern what is evil in others—for trusting is most deeply an openness to the person as loving—that which reveals “person” as such. Trusting by its nature cannot seek the “negative.”²³ When I trust, I do not essentially experience the possibility of betrayal. To do so would already be to hedge my trust and hence not to trust at all. When I trust, I dispose myself to another “completely” or “fully,” even though he might betray me or mislead me, intentionally or unintentionally. If I am worried that I might be betrayed, I will not trust.²⁴ Although we might find ourselves saying such things, it violates the sense of trust to say something like: “Ok, I trust you, but don’t let me down!” or “I will give you a second chance, but don’t blow it.” This might be an understandable defensive reaction, but it would not be trust.

The reason so much of the contemporary literature on trust points to the dialectical interplay of trust and “anti-trust,” as Annette Baier has put it,²⁵ is because there is an implicit conflation between trust and the ruling out of mistrust. When there is a conflation of the two, one argues that the only way one can trust another is to rule out mistrust, namely, to secure oneself against mistrust. Logically, it may be the case that two negatives are a positive, but experientially, we cannot make the same claim. Empirically speaking, we could never make such a leap to a trust, because there would always be more concern, more probable deceptions, suspicions, etc., around the corner. One cannot trust via a negation of mistrust because these are a priori phenomenologically distinct movements, occurring on different levels of personal existence. Trust is an integral dimension of comportment. Accordingly,

²¹ Russell Hardin, “Trustworthiness,” *Ethics* 107, No. 1 (1996): 26–42.

²² Hence, skepticism unfolds on a different level of experience than does mistrust.

²³ Accordingly, I disagree with Hamrick’s contention that “trust must be conjugated with suspicion.” William S. Hamrick, *Kindness and the Good Society: Connections of the Heart* (New York: SUNY Press, 2002), esp. 240.

²⁴ We can think here of the related phenomenon of forgiveness: “If you do this again, I will not be your friend … I will leave you, etc.” This is essentially contradictory and vitiates the experience of forgiveness.

²⁵ Annette Baier, “Trust and Anti-Trust,” *Ethics*, 96, No. 2 (1986): 231–60.

one cannot trust through a concern about being betrayed. One cannot remove the component of vulnerability, essential to trust, in order then to trust.

The trusting person inhabits a different “world” than the mistrustful person, the distrustful person, and the suspicious person.²⁶ When the dancer is launching herself into the arms of another, she is not simultaneously anticipating a betrayal. It is all the more evident here how trusting is a resting in, a relaxing into, and even an intimacy and a being supported by another. Certainly, we might greet another with suspicion, we might be cautious, tentative, etc., but then we are simply not describing the trust experience.

Rather than the possibility of betrayal being essential to trust, it is *vulnerability* that is essential to trust, first because we dispose ourselves or give ourselves over to another and are bound to the open destiny of another in trust as proffering, and second, because the other person is never within our grasp, is not “knowable” in Levinas’s sense, is not “objectifiable” in Scheler’s sense. This goes to the self-revelatory character of persons which is fundamentally “improvisational.” But my task here is not to decide when someone should or should not trust from a third-person, objective perspective, but to discern the meaning-orientation of trusting in the sphere of the emotional life of the person.

In being bound to another in this act, we become precisely vulnerable. In so doing, we prepare the field of social existence. I mentioned above that trust is revelatory of intersubjectivity and the moral sphere, opening up a social space. One can see this perhaps even more clearly in the opposite example of someone who is constantly suspicious of others, who tries not to be susceptible to betrayal, or seeks negative possibilities in others as a way of forestalling vulnerability. Rather than being expansive, this movement contracts, isolates, and in general retracts from the social sphere.

It is equally mistaken to believe that we “decide” to trust.²⁷ We do not trust on the basis of a judgment; we do not test reality for the presence or absence of trustworthiness.²⁸ True, we do make poor judgments, take unnecessary risks, and make risk assessments. But all this already comes too late where trust is concerned. In this respect, I concur with Lahno that trusting is qualitatively different from rational belief and calculation, and that our experience of trusting is not met in terms of minimizing risk.²⁹

Certainly, this is not to say that one should not be critical. My point is only that being critical is not a moral act and does not occur on the same level as trusting. After the fact, I could reflect on a situation and say I was naïve, but this would be something added on to the trust experience. To trust is to be vulnerable; to make a

²⁶ See also Isaacs, et al., “Faith, Trust and Gullibility,” esp. 462.

²⁷ R. Holton, “Deciding to Trust, Coming to Believe,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 72, No. 1 March (1994), 63–76.

²⁸ As Isaac, et al., contend, “Faith, Trust and Gullibility,” 465.

²⁹ See Bernd Lahno, “On the Emotional Character of Trust,” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 4 (2001): 171–89.

decision is to open oneself to wrongness or naïveté. Making a so-called decision to trust really means deciding no longer to decide; and this ultimately entails allowing myself to coincide with the social movement of existence by being bound to another. Put differently, making a decision to trust would already presuppose a trust which nullified the necessity of making a decision about it in the first place. Although I become vulnerable in a trust act, the fact that I am vulnerable is not the overriding issue. If it were, I would never arrive at trusting; I would be concerned with being vulnerable. Instead, I trust. The vulnerable aspect, which is always already present in the trusting, becomes especially pronounced or exposed in a betrayal.

Critical Assessment

Drawing on this example of an act peculiar to the emotional sphere, it is possible to make the following evaluations regarding its status as a founded act. Let's begin with some differences between trust and its relation to epistemic acts, broadly construed.

First, unlike a straightforward perception and judicative acts, as well as reliability as a matter of practical functionality, trust is not essentially motivated by a past. While reliability could easily be viewed as “built-up” from lower level intentional formations, trust exhibits a different temporal structure already with respect to its dependence upon the past. This is not to say that the past cannot play a role (e.g., when the “familiar” is considered in genetic and generative contexts), but essentially the past is not a constitutive moment since trust in a complete and unknown stranger is still a possibility.

Second, and on a related note, the “trusted” does not share the structure of an object, nor is the trusted “intended” like an object. Trust operates on a wholly different order of givenness because here the trusted is given in its otherness as “free,” as “mystery,” and as non-objectifiable in principle. Most deeply, trust concerns the level of the person, and as such it has its own kind of evidence, “modalization,” disappointment, etc. Moreover, I cannot make the “trusted” as such available to intersubjective/objective adjudication like I could an object, and I cannot make my trusting open to scrutiny like I might my intentions in a contract.

This is why, third, it is vulnerability that is essential to trust, and that makes us susceptible not to a mistake, but to betrayal. We experience a betrayal, personally, as worse than a mistaken assumption because—unless we are speaking loosely—to be wrong vis-à-vis an assumption is not the same as being betrayed vis-à-vis a trust. To trust a person as a good human being and to assume a person to be a good human being are two qualitatively different experiences. When we expose ourselves to “more” than what can be given in and through being-bound to another in trust, we become vulnerable and susceptible to betrayal. This has an entirely different structure from a disappointed judgment or being naïve or gullible, and is not a higher order variation of the latter. Accordingly, there is nothing to strip away from vulnerability to disclose a more putatively basic “naïveté.” This is why, finally, I do not originally

“decide” to trust. Trust is not founded in a volitional act. To decide putatively to trust would be to regard the person pragmatically as merely reliable, and mistakenly take this for a (qualitatively different) trust experience.

Fourth, being bound to another in trusting another is an intersubjective structure that is qualitatively different from intending another person, either as an object, or apperceptively as in “empathy” (*Einfühlung*). I am already ahead of myself in this being-bound to. So even though I can expect without a trust, but not trust without an expectation, being-bound to another in “proffering” is itself a unique structure of intersubjective temporalization and is qualitatively distinct from the temporal structure in which the time constitution of objects unfolds.

Let me be clear. Even though we might claim that our systems of knowledge are based on trust, since we only believe what someone says because we trust him or her, this is not the same thing as saying (*inversely* from what we have been investigating) that belief is founded in trust. The question for me is not if genetically speaking attraction or repulsion—or the affective tonality of an experience—precedes the givenness of an object as, say, round, red, or black. Husserl’s analyses of passive synthesis, the affective givenness of the object, etc., already point in this direction.³⁰ Furthermore, Max Scheler’s analyses of an affective milieu (for instance, the fact that we can notice the change in the room without even being able to identify explicitly that e.g., a painting is missing), also demonstrates this. Also unproblematic is the contention that the “order of the heart,” expressed as who and what we love, guides what might be perceived or become prominent for us.³¹ At issue here is whether the acts of the emotional life are original ways of giving, and if the emotional act in every instance must be founded upon the epistemic act:sense correlation in order for there to be a “presence” (let’s not say “object”) in the mode of a “giving.”

Concluding Remarks

I would like to draw the following conclusion from the preceding description of trust, and the analysis of it in terms of its possible founded structure. Certain emotional experiences, like the one that was treated here, but by extension, those that pertain to the interpersonal sphere and to the givenness of the person, should not be understood as founded in objectivating acts. While this does not go against the basic structure of “founding” in Husserl, it does run against the bias of Husserl’s early assessment of the emotions.

It was considerations like these, though certainly in a more rich and systematic manner, that lead phenomenologists like Max Scheler to regard the emotional sphere as having an integrity all its own, with its own cognitive style, without

³⁰ Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*.

³¹ Anthony J. Steinbock, “Interpersonal Attention through Exemplarity,” *Journal of Consciousness Studies: Beyond Ourselves*, ed. Evan Thompson (2001), 179–196.

reducing it either to a kind of rationalism or to mere “subjective feeling” or instinct.³² In a similar vein, Emmanuel Levinas could describe the mystery of the “enigma” in a way that was not the revamping of the plus ultra of the “noema.”³³ In sum, these and other phenomenological considerations should lead phenomenology to distinguish and to describe unique modes of givenness where the emotional sphere is concerned.

³² See for example, Max Scheler, “Ordo Amoris,” *Schriften aus dem Nachlaß*. Vol. 1. Gesammelte Werke, Vol. 10, ed. Maria Scheler (Bern: Francke, 1957), 345–376. See also Anthony J. Steinbock, *Phenomenology and Mysticism: The Verticality of Religious Experience* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007).

³³ See Emmanuel Levinas’s earlier contributions for example, in *En découvrant l’existence avec Husserl et Heidegger* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1988).

Chapter 7

From the Natural Attitude to the Life-World

Dermot Moran

Here I explore the deeper meaning of Edmund Husserl's breakthrough discussion of the "natural attitude" (*die natürliche Einstellung*) in *Ideen I* (1913)¹ in relation to his evolving conception of the surrounding world or "life-world" (*Lebenswelt*),² a term that emerges in his writings around 1917 (e.g., in Supplements XII and XIII to *Ideen II*³) and becomes perhaps the most prominent theme of the *Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften* (1936 and 1954).⁴ I contend that the parallels between the "natural surrounding world" (*natürliche Umwelt*) of *Ideen I* and the "life-world" of the *Krisis* have not been sufficiently explored by commentators.

¹ E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Erstes Buch: *Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie* 1, ed. K. Schuhmann, Hua III/1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977); trans. F. Kersten, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1983). Hereafter "*Ideas I*" followed by the page number of the English translation and the Husserliana (abbreviated to "Hua") volume and page number. Schuhmann's edition includes comments and corrections added by Husserl in his four different personal copies of the text.

² See Rudiger Welter, *Der Begriff der Lebenswelt: Theorien vortheoretischer Erfahrungswelt* (Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1986).

³ See E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Zweites Buch: *Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, ed. Marly Biemel, Hua IV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1952); trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer as *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book*, Husserl Collected Works III (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989). Hereafter "*Ideas II*" followed by the page number of the English translation and the Husserliana volume and page number.

⁴ The German edition is E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transszendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel, Husserliana (hereafter "Hua") Volume VI (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954). This edition includes the published parts of the *Krisis* as well as a selection of associated documents.

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I also want to mention the philosophical context that conditioned Husserl's contrast between the natural surrounding world and the world of science. Husserl's exploration of the experience of the natural world in the 1920s more or less coincides with the advocacy by the Logical Positivists of the Vienna School⁵ of a "scientific conception of the world" (*eine wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung*), articulated in their Manifesto of 1929.⁶ The Positivists advocated a scientific conception of the world to correct—or even replace—the naïve, natural, pre-scientific approach to the world and thereby to set philosophy and the other human sciences on the road to rigorous science.⁷ Husserl's alternative, already in *Ideen I*, wants, on the other hand, to *re-situate* the scientific conception of the world *within* the life-world and show how the idealizing scientific attitude requires and cannot replace the natural attitude.

Husserl offers a devastating analysis of the problems imposed by a narrow promotion of the natural scientific outlook in all areas of life. From "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft" (1910/1911)⁸ to the *Krisis*, he builds a critique of *naturalism* and *objectivism* and defends the need for a rigorous transcendental science to replace the failed objective science of subjectivity that modern psychology purported to be.

In his later years, Husserl often reflected on and offered interpretations of his earlier efforts. Thus, in a very late text from summer 1937 entitled "Zur Kritik an den *Ideen I*" (Towards a Critique of the *Ideen*)⁹—perhaps the last text he ever wrote before

It is substantially translated by David Carr as *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern U. P., 1970), although some supplements have been left out of the Carr edition. Hereafter the *Crisis of European Sciences* will be cited as "Krisis" followed by the page number of the English translation (where available) and the Husserliana volume and page number.

⁵ On the complex history of the Vienna Circle, logical positivism and logical empiricism, see Thomas Uebel, "On the Austrian Roots of Logical Empiricism: The Case of the First Vienna Circle," *Logical Empiricism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, eds. Paulo Parrini *et al.* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003) and Alan Richardson and Thomas Uebel, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Logical Empiricism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). See also Friedrich Stadler, ed., *The Vienna Circle and Logical Empiricism: Re-evaluation and Future Perspectives* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004) and idem, *The Vienna Circle—Studies in the Origins, Development, and Influence of Logical Empiricism* (Vienna: Springer, 2001). For Husserl's relationship with positivism, see Manfred Summer, *Husserl und der frühe Positivismus* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1985).

⁶ See *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung. Der Wiener Kreis* (1929); trans. "The Scientific Conception of the World. The Vienna Circle," *The Emergence of Logical Empiricism: from 1900 to the Vienna Circle*, ed. Sahotra Sarkar (New York: Garland Publishing, 1996), 321–40.

⁷ Between 1928 and 1937, the very period in which Husserl was developing his views on the *Lebenswelt*, the Vienna Circle published ten books in a collection named *Schriften zur wissenschaftlichen Weltauffassung (Monographs on the Scientific World-Conception)*, eds. Moritz Schlick and Philipp Frank. These works have now been translated in the series *Unified Science: The Vienna Circle Monograph Series Originally Edited by Otto Neurath* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1987).

⁸ E. Husserl, "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft," *Aufsätze und Vorträge* (1911–1921), Hua XXV 3–62, trans. Marcus Brainard, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* Vol. II (2002): 249–95.

⁹ E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Ergänzungsband. Texte aus dem Nachlaß 1934–1937*, ed. Reinhold N. Smid, Husserliana Vol. XXIX (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1992).

he fell ill—Husserl writes of devising various ways into transcendental phenomenology and characterizes the way in *Ideen I* as leading in “a single leap” (*in einem Sprunge*, Hua XXIX, 425) to a new form of experiencing. He also says that *Ideen I* provided a way from “the natural concept of the world” (*natürlicher Weltbegriff*, Hua XXIX, 425) which he characterizes as “the ‘concept’ of the world of the ‘natural attitude’” and parses as “the pre- and extra-scientific life-world or the world that, correspondingly, has always been and always will be, in all of our natural practical life-interests, the standing field (*das ständige Feld*) of our interests, our goals, our actions” (Hua XXIX, 425). He acknowledges further that this natural conception of the world was sketched “only in the roughest outlines” (*nur in rohesten Zügen*) in *Ideen I*. The systematic analysis and description of this “Heraclitean-moving world” presents a great and difficult problem. Finally, he writes that the reduction to the life-world restores the sense of history missing from the Cartesian way:

We shall see that the life-world (considered omnitemporally) is nothing other than the historical world. From this, we can see that a complete systematic introduction to phenomenology is initiated and carried through by a universal historical problem. If one introduces the *epoch* without the thematic of history, then the problem of the life-world, that is to say, the problem of universal history, will be entirely left out. The way introduced in *Ideen I* has its legitimacy, but now I maintain that the historical way (*den historischen Weg*) is more primary (*prinzipieller*) and more systematic. (Hua XXIX, 425–26, my translation)

This is an extraordinary admission. Husserl effectively admits that what he had uncovered in *Ideen I*, i.e., the natural concept of the world, would become clarified in his later analysis of the life-world as a *historical* concept. This “historical” way into phenomenology, moreover, is actually more primordial and all inclusive than the “Cartesian way”!¹⁰ Husserl’s various ways to the reduction are well known, although there is dispute about their nature, number and interrelatedness,¹¹ but it is unusual to speak of a “historical reduction.” Husserl’s own students (Ludwig Landgrebe,¹² Alfred Schutz, and Aron Gurwitsch) read the *Krisis* as representing a novel point of departure with its interest in history and the life-world as an attempt to rebalance the Cartesian presentation of transcendental phenomenology, explicated

¹⁰ I am grateful to LAU Kwok-Ying for his article “History and the Phenomenological Reduction in the Last Husserl,” presented at the Fourth OPO meeting, *Razón y vida*, Segovia, Spain, 19–23 Sept 2011.

¹¹ See for instance Iso Kern, “Die drei Wege zur transzendenten-phänomenologischen Reduktion in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls,” *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, XXV (1962): 303–49; trans. as “The Three Ways to the Transcendental Phenomenological Reduction in the Philosophy of Edmund Husserl,” *Husserl. Expositions and Appraisals*, eds. F. Elliston and P. McCormick (South Bend, IN: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 126–49; and Iso Kern, “The Phenomenological or Transcendental *epoch* and Reduction,” *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology*, eds. R. Bernet, R. Kern, and E. Marbach (Evanston, IL: Northwestern U. P., 1993), 58–77. See also John Drummond, “Husserl on the Ways to the Phenomenological Reduction,” *Man and World* 8 No. 1 (February 1975): 47–69. Both Kern and Drummond agree in seeing *Ideas I* as primarily promoting the Cartesian way.

¹² See, for instance, L. Landgrebe, “The World as a Phenomenological Problem,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1/1 (Sept. 1940): 38–58; and Ludwig Landgrebe, “Husserls Phänomenologie und die Motive zu ihrer Umbildung,” *Revue internationale de Philosophie* II/2, (Brussels, 1939).

in *Ideen I, Cartesianische Meditationen*¹³ and reaffirmed in the “Nachwort zu meinen ‘Ideen’” (published in 1930 in the *Jahrbuch* and in English in Boyce Gibson’s 1931 translation of the *Ideen*).¹⁴

Thus Landgrebe connects Husserl’s interest in the life-world with the manner in which space and time are experienced by the embodied person. In this connection Husserl had written in 1934 a fragment “*Umsturz der kopernikanischen Lehre* in der gewöhnlichen weltanschaulichen Interpretation. Die Ur-Arche Erde bewegt sich nicht” that connected the life-world with the world as experienced prior to science.¹⁵ Landgrebe writes: “Thus, in explicating immediate experience, the experience of our world as a ‘life-world,’ Husserl effects a reversal of the ‘Copernican Revolution,’ by the insight that every experience necessarily presupposes an ultimate unmoved basis, which is not itself objectivated. For ‘us men,’ this basis is ‘our earth’—as an actual exemplification of an essential necessity.”¹⁶

Commentators are not wrong to see as new in the *Krisis* the themes of life-world and history. Husserl himself, however, believed he had been moving in this broadly historical direction since *Ideen I*; indeed, there are undoubtedly tentative discussions in that work that anticipate the later explicit discussion (e.g., in the portrayal of phenomenology as a “science of origins” in *Ideen I*, §56).

In many later texts, Husserl regarded the Cartesian way into phenomenology as “one-sided” and deficient and saw the way into transcendental phenomenology through the life-world (sometimes called “the ontological way”) as more “basic” or

¹³ E. Husserl, *Méditations cartésiennes: Introduction à la phénoménologie*, trans. G. Peiffer and E. Levinas (Paris: Almand Colin, 1931). The German text was not published until 1950 as *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, ed. Stephan Strasser, Husserliana I (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1950); trans. D. Cairns as *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960). Hereafter “CM” followed by page number of English translation, and Husserliana volume and page number.

¹⁴ Husserl’s “Author’s Preface” was written in 1930 and was published in English translation in Boyce-Gibson’s translation of *Ideas I* published in 1931, see E. Husserl, “Author’s Preface to the English Edition,” *Ideas. General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 5–22. Husserl’s German text is somewhat different, and was originally published in the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, vol. XI (1930). It is reprinted as “Nachwort,” Hua V 138–62, and translated as “Epilogue” in *Ideas II*, 405–30. Husserl had originally planned both a Foreword and an Afterword to the volume to explain the significance of *Ideen I*.

¹⁵ Edmund Husserl, “*Umsturz der kopernikanischen Lehre* in der gewöhnlichen weltanschaulichen Interpretation. Die Ur-Arche Erde bewegt sich nicht. Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum phänomenologischen Ursprung der Körperlichkeit der Räumlichkeit der Natur im ersten naturwissenschaftlichen Sinne. Alles notwendige Anfangsuntersuchungen,” *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, ed. Marvin Farber (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940), 307–25; trans. as “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature,” *Husserl. Shorter Works*, trans. and eds. Frederick Elliston and Peter McCormick (Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 222–33; revised by Len Lawlor in M. Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*, eds. L. Lawlor and B. Bergo (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 117–31.

¹⁶ L. Landgrebe, “The World as a Phenomenological Problem,” trans. D. Cairns, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1/1 (Sept. 1940): 46.

“primary” (*prinzipiell*) and more complete. Thus he contrasted the manner in which the phenomenological reduction is introduced, as mentioned, in “one leap” (a phrase repeated in the *Krisis*, §43—in *Ideen I* with the various ways to the reduction in later works including the *Krisis*. According to *Ideen I*, §56, it is precisely the natural world—including the physical, psychophysical, and cultural worlds—that must undergo “switching off” or “exclusion” (*Ausschaltung*, *Ideen I*, §56, 131; Hua III/1, 122) in the reduction. In *Ideen I*, as 2 years earlier in the *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (1910/1911)¹⁷—and indeed as in the 1907 *Idee der Phänomenologie*¹⁸—Husserl presents Descartes as the great originator of transcendental philosophy. Thus in the *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* he writes: “The first philosopher who achieved a phenomenological reduction was Descartes. However, he achieved it only to relinquish it immediately. It is a most noteworthy fact that the fundamental consideration that inaugurates the entire course of the development of modern philosophy was nothing other than the staging of the phenomenological reduction” (BPP, 41; Hua XIII, 150).

Husserl gradually became aware that the “Cartesian way” uncovered pure subjectivity but seemed to leave it without content, without connections to other subjects or to the world. The greatest danger of the Cartesian way is that it can invite a new consideration of consciousness precisely in the natural attitude and thus distorting its true essence. Hence, Husserl proposes a more “universal and radical epoch” in *Erste Philosophie* 1923/1924 (Hua VIII, 129),¹⁹ for instance, which he thinks might uncover directly the transcendental spectator with its transcendental life (Hua VIII, 127). Only gradually, does Husserl come to realize that what one could call the “being-in-the-world-with-others” of the transcendental subject cannot be left to one side in the reduction. Husserl’s thinking about Kant, especially in his 1924 Kant lecture,²⁰ led him to reconsider the problem of the givenness of the world.

Husserl’s students and followers (from Landgrebe, Schutz, Gurwitsch, Patočka, Fink and Merleau-Ponty to Gadamer and Habermas) all recognised that one of the novel features of the *Krisis* is its account of the phenomenological reduction based

¹⁷ E. Husserl, “Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie,” *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass Erster Teil: 1905–1920*, Husserliana XIII, ed. Iso Kern (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973); trans. Ingo Farin and James G. Hart, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Husserl Collected Works XII (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006). Hereafter “BPP” followed by English pagination and Husserliana volume and page number.

¹⁸ See E. Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen*. Nachdruck der 2. ed. Auflage. Hrsg. W. Biemel, Husserliana II (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), trans. Lee Hardy as *The Idea of Phenomenology*. Husserl Collected Works VIII (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999). Hereafter “IP” followed by page number of the English translation and the Husserliana volume and page number.

¹⁹ E. Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24)*. Erster Teil: *Kritische Ideengeschichte*, ed. R. Boehm, Hua VII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965) and Zweiter Teil: *Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, ed. R. Boehm, Hua VIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965). An English translation is currently in preparation for the Husserl Collected Works series (Springer).

²⁰ See E. Husserl, “Kant and the Idea of Transcendental Philosophy,” trans. Ted E. Klein and William E. Pohl, *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 5 (Fall 1974): 9–56; original collected in *Erste Philosophie*, Hua VII, 230–87.

on the life-world (as Husserl makes clear in *Krisis*, §43, where he explicitly invokes *Ideen I*) which is contrasted with the scientific world constructed on it. He writes:

I note in passing that the much shorter way to the transcendental *epochē* in my *Ideen toward a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*, which I call the “Cartesian way” (since it is thought of as being attained merely by reflectively engrossing oneself in the Cartesian *epochē* of the *Meditations* while critically purifying it of Descartes’s prejudices and confusions), has a great shortcoming: while it leads to the transcendental ego in one leap (*in einem Sprunge*), as it were, it brings this ego into view as apparently empty of content, since there can be no preparatory explication; so one is at a loss, at first, to know what has been gained by it, much less how, starting with this, a completely new sort of fundamental science, decisive for philosophy, has been attained. Hence also, as the reception of my *Ideen* showed, it is all too easy right at the very beginning to fall back into the naive-natural attitude—something that is very tempting in any case (*Krisis*, 155; Hua VI, 157–58)

Indeed, the long discussion of the “primordial foundation” (*Urstiftung*) of modern mathematical science with Galileo in *Krisis*, §9 is similarly seen by most commentators as a novel development of Husserl’s late years. A re-reading of *Ideen I*, however, reveals that in 1913 he already recognizes the importance of the notion of the naturally-lived, naively-experienced, pre-given world (see especially *Ideen I*, §§39, 40) and also presents a brief sketch of the Galilean picture of objectivity in the natural sciences. Husserl is already preoccupied with the relation between what he calls the “world of experience” (*die Erfahrungswelt*²¹) and the scientific world, as his 1937 reflection confirms. Indeed, his view that *Ideen I* has its own “justification” (*Recht*, Hua XXIX, 426) must now be situated within the exploration of the genesis of the historical world which is “more primary” (*prinzipieller*).

Ideen I is—like the *Logische Untersuchungen*—“a patch-work” (*Stückwerk*), an Aladdin’s cave of phenomenological insights, supposedly presented in systematic form, although the progression of thought is not always obvious. I do not believe the greatness of the work lies in its introduction of the phenomenological *epochē*, the reductions, the noetic-noematic correlation, and so on. Rather I maintain the extraordinary breakthrough is to be found in Husserl’s discovery of the *natural attitude* (albeit already mentioned in print in “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft”²²) and its correlate the natural world (*Ideen I*, §47), themes which lead him to conceive of a new way of uncovering the presuppositions of the natural attitude and of mundane life in general. We shall concentrate hereafter only on the notion of the natural attitude.

²¹ The term “world of experience” (*Erfahrungswelt*) is frequently used by Husserl, see, for instance, *Ideen I*, §46, Hua III/1, 96 and §48; III/1, 102.

²² Edmund Husserl, “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft,” *Logos. Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Kultur* 1 (1910–1911), 289–341; reprinted in Edmund Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1911–1921), mit ergänzenden Texten*, eds. Thomas Nenon and Hans Reiner Sepp, Husserliana XXV (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987); trans. M. Brainard, “Philosophy as Rigorous Science,” *New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* II (2002): 249–95. Hereafter “PR” followed by page number of English translation and Husserliana volume and page number.

Ideen I, §27 introduces very abruptly, and in a sketchy but evocative outline, the notion of the “natural attitude” and of normal sciences as carried out in this attitude and in its theoretical complement (“the natural theoretical attitude,” *Ideen I*, §1).²³ In this work, Husserl emphasizes the “worldly” (*weltlich*, later he often uses the word *mundane*)²⁴ nature of the sciences of the natural attitude and their dogmatic nature, which must now be confronted by a critical turn, activated by an *epochē* or “suspension,” which puts out of play all worldly “positings” (*Setzungen*) of consciousness (“the general thesis”) in order to grasp its very essence. The natural attitude is characterized as possessing a positing or thesis, something Paul Ricoeur questions, given the “profound” manner objects are present in our experience.²⁵

Husserl’s concept of the “natural attitude” (*die natürliche Einstellung*) is a major discovery. Furthermore, its correlate—“the natural surrounding world” (*die natürliche Umwelt*), which eventually evolved into the notion of the “life-world” (*Lebenswelt*) in Husserl’s Freiburg era—is equally significant.²⁶ The term “natural attitude” emerges more or less alongside the *epochē* in Husserl’s thinking, probably around 1906/1907 in Göttingen (it is mentioned, for instance, in the *Idee der Phänomenologie*, 1907, §1, where it is characterized as a direct orientation towards things and not at all occupied with the critique of knowledge or the questions raised by scepticism, Hua II, 17).²⁷ The concept of the immediate subjective and intersubjective “surrounding world” (*Umwelt*) is given its first published characterization in *Ideen I*, §§27–31.

In *Ideen I*, a central characteristic of the natural attitude is its “general thesis” (*Generalthesis*), or overall intentional presumption or belief that the world exists, is actual, is really there. All attitudes built on or related to the natural attitude are also permeated with this general conviction. In *Ideen I* Husserl stresses that the particular sciences are involved in and supported by the natural attitude. The “exclusions” performed by the *epochē* are designed not just to exclude our assumptions about the

²³ Husserl’s concept of the *natural attitude* (*die natürliche Einstellung*) includes the “pre-scientific” (*Krisis*, Hua VI 121, 152, 156) or “extra-scientific attitude,” the “natural theoretical attitude” (*Ideen I*, §50, 113; Hua III/1 94), the “natural-naïve attitude” (“Nachwort,” Hua V 148), the attitude in which I live my “natural worldly life” (*natürliches Weltleben*, *Krisis*, Hua VI 121, 152, 156), the “pregiven world of experience” (*die vorgebogene Erfahrungswelt*, *Krisis* Hua VI 120).

²⁴ In *Krisis* Husserl employs both the adjectives “*weltlich*” (Hua VI 178, VI 180) and “*mundane*” (VI 208) to characterize life in the natural attitude.

²⁵ A *Key to Edmund Husserl’s Ideas I*, trans. Bond Harris and J. Bouchard Spurlock, ed. Pol Vandervelde (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1996).

²⁶ Rudolf Bernet has denied that the life-world is to be understood as the correlate of the natural attitude but acknowledges that Husserl must have given rise to this impression since it is so widely believed. I can, however, document many places where Husserl identifies the natural world of naïve experience with the life-world. See also Sebastian Luft, “Husserl’s Phenomenological Discovery of the Natural Attitude,” *Continental Philosophy Review* (formerly *Man and World*) 31 (1998): 153–70.

²⁷ The term “natural attitude” does not occur in Husserl’s 1906/07 lectures, see Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Logik und Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesungen 1906/07*, ed. Ullrich Melle, Hua XXIV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1985).

real world, or “nature” but also Husserl wants explicitly to exclude the natural sciences, both formal (mathematical physics) and experiential (biology), as well as cultural sciences (*Ideen I*, §§56–60). According to the “Cartesian way” of *Ideen I*, what remains after the exclusion and suspension of this general thesis is the immanent domain of “pure consciousness” with its *cogitationes* and *cogitata*. Already in *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* Husserl makes clear that “[T]he correlate of the phenomenological perception is the *cogitatio* in the Cartesian sense, for which we can say instead: the pure, in contradistinction to the empirical consciousness” (BPP, 41; Hua XIII, 150). By the *Krisis* Husserl had come to see the distortion introduced by this move. The performance of the reduction does not so much uncover “pure consciousness,” in this narrow sense, as reveal an intentionally constituted life-world of significances, actions, and social intercourse in which the ego is at once embedded and contemplating. The problem is to articulate this movement from the natural world to the disclosing of the life-world without engaging in circular reasoning.

By contrast with the early emergence of the concept of the “natural attitude” and its correlated “surrounding world,” the concept of “life-world” did not take its precise form until after the publication of *Ideen I*, probably around 1917. In *Ideen I*, the concept of “world” is expressed largely through the concept of the “surrounding world” (*Umwelt*), e.g., in §§27 and 28, or “surrounding worlds” (*Umwelten*) in the plural: there is the “natural surrounding world” and there are “ideal worlds.” Husserl also invokes the “environment” (*Umgebung*) several times, meaning usually my immediate “surroundings” (*Ideen I*, §27), or, later, the “surroundings” of a perception (*Ideen I*, III/1, 257).²⁸ Much of the later discussion of *Umwelt* focuses on its role as the background of thing-perception (*Dingwahrnehmung*, see *Ideen I* III/1, 101). *Ideen I*, §53 deals with the nature of the world of real animals and other living things, but how does this relate to the material world and also to the world of absolute subjectivity? Later, Husserl will call the familiar surrounding world the “home world” (*Heimwelt*) or “familiar world” (*Nahwelt*, see *Krisis*, 324; Hua VI, 303) and will broaden this concept of “world” until it becomes the central theme of his late reflections.

An important discussion concerns the appropriate kind of *transcendence* that can be said to belong to the natural world. In *Ideen I*, §47, “The Natural World as a Correlate of Consciousness,” Husserl explicates the notion of *Umwelten* more specifically to be the correlates of possible consciousness. The actual *Umwelt* is one of many possible *Umwelten*. He elaborates:

²⁸ Surprisingly only *Umgebung* and not *Umwelt* is listed in the index made by Gerda Walther to accompany *Ideen I*. *Umgebung* appears in *Ideas I*, §27 with the sense of immediate surroundings. But it is invoked relative to the “intersubjective” world we share with other “I-subjects” (*Ichsubjekte*) in *Ideen I*, §29 (*die intersubjektive natürliche Umwelt*, III/1 60). Avenarius speaks of humans belonging to an *Umgebung* that includes other humans. Husserl often uses the word “*Umgebung*” to refer to the habitats of humans and animals (cf. *Krisis*, Hua VI, 354).

But if the kinds of mental processes included under experience, and especially the fundamental mental process of perceiving physical things, can be submitted by us to an *eidetic* consideration, and if we can discern essential possibilities and necessities in them (as we obviously can) and can therefore eidetically trace the essentially possible variants of motivated experiential concatenations: then the result is the correlate of our factual experience, called “*the actual world*,” as *one special case among a multitude of possible worlds and surrounding worlds* which, for their part, are nothing else but the *correlates of essentially possible variants of the idea*, “*an experiencing consciousness*,” with more or less orderly concatenations of experience. As a consequence, one must not let oneself be deceived by speaking of the physical thing as transcending consciousness or as “existing in itself.” The genuine concept of the transcendence of something physical which is the measure of the rationality of any statements about transcendence can itself be derived only from the proper essential contents of perception or from those concatenations of definite kinds which we call demonstrative experience. The idea of such transcendence is therefore the eidetic correlate of the pure idea of this demonstrative experience. (*Ideen I*, §47, 106; III/1, 100–101)

This might be said to articulate the absolutely central tenet of Husserl’s transcendental idealism. Indeed, the exclusion of every transcendence regarding consciousness is precisely what Husserl calls “transcendental phenomenology” in *Ideen I*, §86.

In the *Krisis* Husserl continues to use more or less the same language as in *Ideen I*. In his 1931 *Nachwort* he indeed affirms that *Ideen I* is an essential if incomplete articulation of his transcendental idealism. What is interesting is that the notion of life-world does not just replace the notion of the natural world (as correlate of the natural attitude) but is also revealed as a transcendental-phenomenological conception. In other words, the transcendental-phenomenological *epochē* and reduction themselves reveal the life-world as the inescapable and unsurpassable ground of all experience. Husserl has shifted from a natural to a transcendental conception of “worldhood” or “worldliness” (*Weltlichkeit*, *Krisis*, 188; Hua VI, 192—the term does not appear in *Ideen I*) involves—a term he uses although it is more usually associated with Heidegger, and which appears in the third draft of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article, Hua IX, 274.²⁹ Generally speaking, Husserl continues to use *Umwelt* broadly to mean my overall surrounding world in contrast with *Umgebung* which he used for my immediate surroundings, my immediate context. But in the *Cartesianische Meditationen* (where it appears four times, including *Lebensumwelt*) and in the *Krisis* he makes deliberate use of a new term *Lebenswelt*.

Although Husserl is closely associated with the term *Lebenswelt*, the term did not originate with him, but can be found in a number of contemporary writers such as Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Georg Simmel,³⁰ Rudolf Eucken, among others, all of whom used the term in the first decade of the twentieth century. The term is already

²⁹ It would be interesting to compare Husserl’s and Heidegger’s conception of “worldliness” or “worldhood” (*Weltlichkeit*). See Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993); trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson, *Being and Time* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), §14.

³⁰ Georg Simmel, *Die Religion* (Frankfurt, 1912), 13. See Andreas Brenner, “Gibt es eine Ethik der *Lebenswelt*,” *Phenomenology of Life from the Animal Soul to the Human Mind, Analecta Husserliana XCIII*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (2007), 253–67. See also Christian Bermes, *Welt als Thema der Philosophie: vom metaphysischen zum natürlichen Weltbegriff* (Meiner Verlag, 2004).

listed in Grimme's *German Dictionary* of 1885 (according to Hua XXXIX, xlvi). Ernst Wolfgang Orth writes: "The earliest known occurrence is found, as far as I know, in Hugo von Hofmannsthal in 1907/1908 in his introduction to his Island Edition of 'One Thousand and One Nights' ... Hofmannsthal speaks of poems that speak to us because they emerge from out of a life world that is 'incomparable.'"³¹ As we have noted, the term "*Lebenswelt*" does not appear in *Ideen I*. Husserl does employ another similar term, "*Lebewelt*" —"the world of living creatures," or "biosphere"—in the three published editions of *Ideen I* (Hua III/1 115) in discussion concerning paleontology, but, the editor of the Husserliana edition, Karl Schuhmann corrected this as *Lebewesen* in his Husserliana edition, based on the occurrence of the word *Lebewesen* in Husserl's *Krisis* in a similar context. I believe however that *Lebewelt* is intentional and indeed the term "*Lebewelt*" (along with "*Landlebewelt*") was in use among German-speaking natural scientists (e.g., the Austrian geologist, paleontologist and mountaineer Karl Diener 1862–1928),³² at times to refer to the whole biological world of flora and fauna (both past and present)—the biosphere or ecosystem.³³ One should also mention a possible influencer of the biologist and semiotician Jakob von Uexküll (1864–1944), an Estonian who became professor at Hamburg and established there an Institut für Umweltforschung and who published already in 1909 his *Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere*, followed by *Streifzüge durch die Umwelten von Tieren und Menschen* (1934).³⁴

The term *Lebenswelt* first shows up in the draft manuscripts associated with *Ideen II* and Martin Heidegger was already employing the term in his early Freiburg lecture series of 1919. Possibly the first occurrence of the term in Husserl is in

³¹ Gerhard Preyer, Georg Peter, and Alexander Ulfig, eds., *Protosoziologie im Kontext »Lebenswelt« und »System« in Philosophie und Soziologie* (Frankfurt: Humanities, 2000), 29: Der früheste bekannte Beleg findet sich meines Wissens 1907/08 bei Hugo von Hofmannsthal in seiner Einleitung zur Insel-Ausgabe von "Tausendundeine Nacht." Fellmann (1983, 120) zitiert die Stelle (vgl. Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke, Prosa II 1959, 276). Hofmannsthal spricht von Gedichten, die uns ansprechen, weil sie aus einer "Lebenswelt hervorstiegen," die "unvergleichlich" ist. Georg Simmel (Goethe, Leipzig 1913, 152) charakterisiert Goethes Menschengestaltung im Meister mit der Fähigkeit, "durch ihre [der Menschen] Wechselwirkung eine Lebenswelt erwachsen zu lassen" (vgl. Fellmann 1983, 120). In fact earlier references can be found. The theologian Ernest Troesch uses it to describe the "Christian *Lebenswelt*."

³² See, for instance, Theodor Arldt, *Die Entwicklung Der Kontinente und ihrer Lebewelt: Ein Beitrag zur vergleichenden Erdgeschichte*, Volume 1 (Leipzig, 1907).

³³ Gerhard Preyer, Georg Peter, and Alexander Ulfig, eds., *Protosoziologie im Kontext »Lebenswelt« und »System« in Philosophie und Soziologie*, 29; 1910 wird der Terminus "*Lebewelt*" von Karl Diener (Paläontologie und Abstammungslehre, Leipzig 1910, S. 70) für vergangene und rezente Systeme von Floren und Faunen verwendet; er findet in diesem Sinne – auch als "*Landlebewelt*" – Eingang in Hörbigers, "Glacial-Kosmogonie" mit der berühmten Welteiszeitlehre (bearbeitet von Ph. Fauth, Kaiserslautern 1913, 382, 508).

³⁴ Jakob von Uexküll, *Umwelt und Innenwelt der Tiere* (Berlin: Springer, 1909) and *Streifzüge durch die Umwelten von Tieren und Menschen. Ein Bilderbuch unsichtbarer Welten.* (Berlin: J. Springer, 1934); trans. Joseph D. O'Neil, *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans. with A Theory of Meaning* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011). I am grateful to Jean-Claude Gens for bringing von Uexküll to my attention.

Beilage XIII of *Ideen II* (Hua IV, 372–77), written c. 1918–1920. Here Husserl writes:

The lifeworld is the natural world—in the attitude of natural life (*Einstellung des natürlichen Dahinlebens*) we are living functioning subjects together in an open circle of other functioning subjects. Everything objective about the lifeworld is subjective givenness, our possession (*Habe*), mine, the other's, and everyone's together. Subjects and possessions are not equal. The subjects *are*, without qualification, what is not personal is surrounding world (*Umwelt*), what is lived is lived experience of the surrounding world, and that holds also for what is seen and thought, etc. (*Ideen II*, p. 385; Hua IV, 375)³⁵

Husserl writes in the same supplement that the worlds of the natural and the human sciences are correlative (*Ideen II*, 384; IV, 374) rather than incompatible. There is no straightforward clash between these approaches towards the world. Rather two different “attitudes” (*Einstellungen*) are involved.

Interestingly, Husserl—and later Heidegger—regularly use the verbs (or verbal nouns) *dahinleben*, *hineinleben* and *hineinhandeln* to refer to life in the natural attitude.³⁶ The primary meaning of the life-world is, for Husserl, the “world of everyday experience” (*Alltagswelt*), the “intuitive” world (*die anschauliche Welt*), or the “pregiven” surrounding world (*Krisis*, 47; VI, 47). In *Ideen I*, §30, Husserl speaks of arriving at the “entrance gate of phenomenology” when one grasps the “quite universal characteristics of the natural attitude” (*Ideen I*, 56; III/1, 520). The way of natural living in the world, follows the stream of one's interests, capacities, habitualities, and so on. Husserl even speaks in *Krisis* §72 of the “subscientific everydayness of natural life” (*Krisis*, 260; VI, 264), utilizing the term “everydayness” (*Alltäglichkeit*) more usually associated with Heidegger (see *Sein und Zeit*, §52).

Both Husserl and Heidegger speaks about absorption in everyday life, spontaneous absorbed “living along” (*Dahinleben*, see SZ, 396; 345). Life in the natural attitude is life driven by interests. Depending on what one is interested in, the world manifests or displays itself in a particular manner. Natural living is spontaneous “living along” (*im natürlichen Dahinleben*, *Ideen I*, 54; III/1, 50), just getting into it, throwing oneself into it, immersing oneself, literally “living into it” (*hineinleben*) as it were. To live in the natural attitude is to live, as Husserl puts it, “naïvely,” “spontaneously,” unquestioningly, with “blinders” (*Scheuklappen*) on. Indeed, to break out of the natural attitude is like someone blind who has suddenly been enabled to see (Hua VIII, 122).

³⁵ The German reads: “Die Lebenswelt ist die natürliche Welt—in der Einstellung des natürlichen Dahinlebens sind wir lebendig fungierende Subjekte in eins mit dem offenen Kreis anderer fungierender Subjekte. Alles Objektive der Lebenswelt ist subjektive Gegebenheit, unsere Habe...” (*Ideen II*, Hua IV, 375).

³⁶ The German verb “*hineinleben*” means literally “to live into,” “to immerse oneself into,” but it is used in colloquial German expressions to mean “to take each day as it comes” (*in der Tag hineinleben*). Similarly “*dahinleben*” has the colloquial sense of “to vegetate” or “to waste one's life,” to while away one's time in a less than fully committed manner. I am grateful to Julia Jansen for pointing out this somewhat negative inflection to the term “*dahinleben*.” The verb “*hineinhandeln*” (literally “acting into”) is used by Husserl with regard to natural acting in the world at Hua VIII, 122.

It is a somewhat difficult question to chart the exact relationship between the natural attitude, the “naturalistic attitude” (discussed already in “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft” and *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*) and the outlook of *naturalism*. All three are associated in Husserl’s account. In this regard Sebastian Luft has commented: “The natural attitude consists in viewing the world as ‘nature,’ hence as existing independent of an experiencing agent.”³⁷ But to see the physical, material world as really there, as present—which Husserl often characterizes as the main thrust of the natural attitude—is not enough. In *Ideen II*, §11 (and elsewhere), Husserl speaks of the “natural-scientific attitude,” and of the correlate of the modern natural scientific attitude as “the idea of nature” (*Ideen II*, §11). In this regard, he speaks of the *scientific* idea of nature as that of a closed domain of physical objects in the one space-time connected by laws of causation, whereas this “experienced world” also includes living things, animals, persons, social and cultural products, and so on.

Husserl becomes more focused on this issue in his later writings and on the connection between the natural, the naturalistic, and the personalistic attitudes. In *Ideen I*, §54, Husserl speaks of the reduction as removing everything that is “personal” (interestingly in his D copy of *Ideen I* Husserl had crossed out “personal” and substituted “human,” see *Ideen I*, 127 n. 95) from consciousness so we are left with a pure stream of experiences. According to this exercise, one can strip a lived-experience of everything personal, everything psychological, egoic, and reflect on it as a pure possibility of experiencing, as what he calls “the absolute mental process” (*das absolute Erlebnis*, *Ideen I*, 128; Hua III/1, 119). One cannot accept anything “personal” as anything but relative. Similarly, in *Ideen I*, §60, Husserl speaks in the plural of “transcendencies” (*Transzendenzen*) such as physical thing, psychic thing, and person as having to be excluded. Yet, in *Ideen II*, the personal world plays a major role.

In *Ideen II* (perhaps, in part, under the editorial influence of Edith Stein, and indeed the challenge of Max Scheler), the personalistic attitude emerges very strongly and originally. In *Ideen II*, in Supplement XIII (connected with Supplement XII and written sometime between the teens and the early 1920s, see the Editor’s comments at Hua IV, 423), Husserl emphasises that the life-world of *persons* escapes natural science and has to be understood in its own “spiritual terms”: “The life-world of persons escapes (*entschlüpft*) natural science, even though the latter investigates the totality of realities” (*Ideen II*, 384; Hua IV, 374).

In *Ideen II*, Supplement XII, Husserl had stated that persons as psychophysical organisms are indeed part of nature and are encountered in nature in the natural attitude. The “investigator of the world” or natural scientist (*Weltforscher*) sees persons as physical entities in this sense. Embodied subjects are simply encountered as part of the pre-given world (*Ideen II*, 363; IV, 352). Now, paradoxically, and going

³⁷ See Sebastian Luft, “A New Look at Husserl’s Theory of the Phenomenological Reduction,” in *Anuario Filosófico* (Madrid), No. 36/1 (2004), *Intencionalidad y Juicio en Husserl y en Heidegger*, 65–104, see 75.

against the thought experiment in *Ideen I*, persons are perceived—like physical objects—to be more than their “appearances” and to have an “in itself” which is absolute over and against appearances. Husserl is explicit:

Things have a causal essence, absolutely, whether I experience it or not. They are, together with their determinations, without need of me. Subjects, too, have their mundane in-itself, and to a certain degree they have a “causal” essence, whether they know about it or not and whether I know about it or not. There exist, accordingly, psychophysical connections, whether or not they enter into the compass of actual intentionality. (*Ideen II*, Supplement XII, 364; Hua VI, 353)

Husserl then considers the psychophysical understanding of human beings as natural beings embedded in a physical world as an entirely appropriate way of considering them. Human beings are *conditioned* by physical, causal processes (what Husserl calls “psycho-physical conditionalities”) whether they know it or not. They belong to nature understood as the causally closed domain of space-time. Husserl is clear that, at one level, even the human sciences investigate humans as part of nature and that this nature has been discovered or revealed through the process of mathematization as in inaugurated by Galileo and modern natural science (see *Ideen II*, 364; IV, 353, where he speaks of “mathematical naturalization”). But there are limits to that perfectly legitimate form of human science. There is another form of human science—operating in transcendental register—which sees human beings as self-conscious normative personal agents recognizing, cooperating and in conflict with other self-conscious personal agents: “The human sciences are, essentially, personal sciences. They deal with persons in personal associations and with the personal surrounding world, which arises out of personal acts in personal motivations” (*Ideen II*, 365; IV, 354). It is this latter sense of the person as free autonomous agent motivated by rational and irrational motives that escapes natural science.

Husserl contrasts the personalistic attitude with the naturalistic attitude in *Ideen II*. Already in “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft,” all forms of *naturalism* (*Naturalismus*) or “naturalistic objectivism” are said to harbor an inbuilt “absurdity” or “countersense” (*Widersinn*), which he defines as an “evident inconsistency” (PRS, 254; Hua XXV, 9). This absurdity consists in the attempt to *naturalize* consciousness: “What characterizes all forms of extreme and consistent naturalism, from popular materialism on down to the most recent sensation-monism and energeticism, is, on the one hand, the *naturalization of consciousness*, including all intentionally immanent givens of consciousness, and, on the other hand, the *naturalization of Ideen*, and thus of all absolute ideals and norms” (PRS, 254; XXV, 9). Already in this 1910/1911 essay, Husserl acknowledges the hold of naturalism on our intuitions: “It is not easy for us to overcome the primeval habit (*die urwüchsige Gewohnheit*) of living and thinking in the naturalistic attitude and thus of naturalistically falsifying the psychical” (PRS, 271; Hua XXV, 31). The “spell of the naturalistic attitude” and “primeval naturalism” prevents us from grasping the psychical as such and indeed, in general, from seeing essences. Naturalism misconstrues the essential nature of consciousness and indeed the nature of the eidetic in general.

In “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft” Husserl shifts from talking about the *natural attitude* to the *naturalistic attitude*. In *Ideen II*, §49 he elaborates on the

distinction between the naturalistic attitude with the personalistic attitude. There has been considerable debate about the manner in which these attitudes coordinate or overlap. Possibly, then, these are two sub-divisions within the overarching natural attitude. While Husserl characterizes naturalism as at bottom countersensical, he does acknowledge one area where he thinks naturalism gets it right, namely, that it recognizes the necessary *embodiment* of consciousness: “The legitimate ‘naturalization’ of consciousness consists in the fact that [animate] body (*Leib*) and soul form a genuine experiential unity and that, in virtue of this unity, the psychic obtains its position in space and time” (*Ideen II*, §46, 176; Hua IV, 168). Husserl understands that the natural attitude approaches living things as psychophysical unities.

As the mature Husserl often insists, the natural attitude is, of course, an attitude that is, in its very naiveté, unknown to itself. The natural attitude is a kind of “primordial” (*urtümlich*) attitude (as Husserl puts it in his 1924 Kant lecture) that runs through every aspect of “worldly life” (*Weltleben*—a term that becomes prominent for natural living in the *Krisis*). Husserl speaks of our natural living in the world from childhood on in *Erste Philosophie* (Hua VIII § 45).

We know from *Ideen I*, §31 that it takes a radical change or alteration of attention or interest to bring the natural attitude to light. To illuminate the natural attitude as such is itself to effect the *philosophical attitude* (Hua II, 18). Thus, Husserl states that phenomenology is a science, but it is also “at the same time and above all a method and an attitude, the specifically *philosophical attitude of thought*, the specifically *philosophical method*” (IP, 19; Hua II, 23). More precisely, the attitude that illuminates the natural attitude is the transcendental-phenomenological attitude. In fact, in historical terms, it is the “breakthrough” of the “ancient Greek philosophers” (“a few Greek eccentrics” as he says in the Vienna Lecture, *Krisis*, 276; Hua VI, 321).

In his mature work, Husserl has a particular interest in the description of the natural attitude itself; indeed in the *Krisis* writings he speaks of a “science of the life-world” and an “ontology of the life-world” (see *Krisis*, §51). Rochus Sowa dates this project of a science of the life-world (understood as a rethinking of Kant’s transcendental aesthetic, i.e., the analysis of the a priori framework of sensible experience) to the early twenties and sees it as Husserl’s response to the twin challenges of Avenarius and Dilthey (Hua XXXIX, xxvi). Sowa correctly locates Husserl’s thinking here in the *Ding und Raum* lecture series (1907) where Husserl is discussing the constitution of the physical thing in perception. In *Ideen I*, however, he is far more interested in the manner in which this attitude can be bracketed, suspended, interrupted, put under erasure to gain access to what he will call the “transcendental” attitude.

As is well known, from the beginning of his career, Husserl’s overall concern is with science and how science is possible. To make the question more precise, his question is: how is scientific objectivity or the objectivity of knowledge possible? His overall aim was to develop a well-grounded *Wissenschaftslehre*, a theory of scientific knowledge. In order to make more precise the meaning of scientific objectivity, quite early on, probably in his early years at Göttingen, Husserl introduces a crucial and permanent distinction between experiential objectivity in naïve

experiencing in the natural attitude and the specific kind of scientific objectivity that comes about through the adoption of the special “theoretical attitude” (*die theoretische Einstellung*, mentioned right at the beginning of *Ideen I*, §1, and described as the “natural theoretical attitude” at *Ideen I*, §50, and discussed in more detail at *Ideen II*, §3). The point is well made (and crucially important for the planned *Ideen III*)³⁸ that Husserl wanted to ground not just the natural sciences but also the *human* sciences, but he is more interested in the relations between the natural and the theoretical attitudes. Husserl defines theoretical acts very broadly as *self-conscious* acts of perceiving, judging, valuing, etc. “Again it is one thing to be conscious at all that the sky is blue, and it is another thing to live in the performance of the judgement (that the sky is now blue) in an attentive, explicitly grasping, specifically intentional (*meinend*) way. Doxic lived experiences in this attitude, in this manner of explicit performance (*in dieser Weise des Vollzugs*) ... we term theoretical acts” (*Ideen II*, §3, 5; Hua IV, 3–4).

In the theoretical attitude (as described in *Ideen I* and *II*) the ego is explicitly *attentive*, engaged; it is in a genuine way “objectifying.” In this attitude, objects that will be explicitly thematized are also in a certain way laid out in advance. In *Ideen I*, the natural attitude is introduced precisely as a theoretical attitude (see §1). Certainly, the theoretical attitude belongs with the natural attitude as something that can be adopted prior to and independent of the reduction. In *Ideen II*, Husserl explicitly distinguishes between straightforward acts of, for example, perception and affection, and theoretical acts:

But we are no longer performing the seeing in this eminent sense when we see the radiant blue sky, live in the rapture of it. If we do that, then we are not in the theoretical or cognitive attitude but in the affective (*Gemütseinstellung*). On the other hand, though we have adopted the theoretical attitude, the pleasure may very well be present still, as, for example, in the observing physicist who is directing himself to the radiant blue sky, but then we are not living in the pleasure. There is an essential phenomenological modification of the pleasure, and of the seeing and judging, according as we pass over from one attitude to another. This characteristic change of attitude (*Einstellungsänderung*) belongs, as an ideal possibility, to all acts ... that is all acts which are not already theoretical at the outset allow of being converted into such acts by a change of attitude. (*Ideen II*, §4, 10; IV, 8)

Theoretical acts achieve or constitute a new and higher level of objectivity, one divorced from practical involvements. What is objective becomes a theoretical object (*Ideen II*, §4, 13; IV, 11). Furthermore, and this is crucial, Husserl distinguishes carefully between this transition from the practical attitude to the theoretical and the transition from straightforward experience to reflection (*Ideen II*, §6).

³⁸E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Drittes Buch: *Die Phänomenologie und die Fundamente der Wissenschaften*, ed. Marly Biemel, Hua V (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952); trans. Ted E. Klein and W.E. Pohl, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Third Book*. Husserl Collected Works I (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1980). Hereafter “*Ideen III*” followed by the page number of the English and the Husserliana volume and page number.

In the purified theoretical attitude (the attitude that is predominant in modern natural science), feelings are dropped, one no longer experiences “houses, tables, streets or works of art” (*Ideen II*, §11), but “merely material things” with their stratum of “spatio-temporal materiality.” The theoretical attitude is indifferent to the values of these things, but is not indifferent to the *value of knowledge* of them. In *Ideen II* Husserl sharply contrasts nature objects with everyday natural-attitude objects: “In ordinary life (*im gewöhnlichen Leben*) we have nothing whatever to do with nature-objects (*Naturobjekten*). What we take as things are pictures, statues, gardens, houses, tables, clothes, tools, etc. They are value-objects (*Wertobjekte*) of various kinds, use-objects (*Gebrauchsobjekte*), practical objects. They are not objects which can be found in natural science.” (*Es sind keine naturwissenschaftlichen Objekte*, *Ideen II*, §11, 29; Hua IV, 27.)

The theoretical attitude as a specific mode of *natural reflection* is inexorably moving towards becoming the scientific attitude. Husserl speaks of a certain *epochē* of interests and practical purposes already taking place in the theoretical attitude (and this even more so when the natural attitude is itself put in question, see *Krisis*, 138n; VI, 141). But Husserl is always insistent that natural reflection does not have the resources on its own to take the transcendental turn. An *epochē* is needed to effect an “unnatural” turn to transcendental reflection (see *Erste Philosophie*, Hua VIII, 121–22). Indeed, the phenomenologist must learn to adjust to the new world of constituting subjectivity, just as the “beginner in physics” has to learn to understand the spatiotemporal realm in a manner that lets go of the child’s naïve attitude to the natural world (see Husserl’s analogy at Hua VIII, 123). Phenomenology has its own “world of experience” (*Erfahrungswelt*, Hua VIII, 123) different from the natural world of experience of everyday life. The phenomenologist must leave behind his own *Weltkindschaft* (VIII, 123). Husserl writes: “In this manner the natural child, the child of the world, is transformed into the phenomenological child, the child in the realm of pure spirit” (*Erste Philosophie*, VIII, 123).³⁹

Husserl is attempting to articulate a new insight, but is somewhat inhibited due to his retention of the metaphysically loaded terms “immanence” and “transcendence.”⁴⁰ In this part of *Ideen I* there are several different threads of argumentation conducted at the same time. On the one hand, Husserl is continuing his earlier critique (from the *Logische Untersuchungen*—especially the Second Investigation) of all forms of *representationalism*. He is specifically seeking the “clarification of a fundamental error” (§43); the “fundamental error” of modern philosophy being the assumption that perception does not reach the true thing in itself. The perceived thing, on this view, is just a place-holder for the thing in physics.

³⁹ Husserl in this period speaks of the phenomenological reduction in religious terms as turning us into children in a new sense. He sometimes quotes Christian scripture—“unless we become as little children we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven,” cf. Hua VIII, 413–18.

⁴⁰ In *Cartesianische Meditationen*, §11, Husserl says that the concept of the “transcendent” has to be explored exclusively on its own terms.

Husserl has always been an opponent of the “sign” theory of perception. The thing is not a sign or cipher for something that lies hidden behind our experiences. As he writes: “Between perception, on the one hand, and depictive-symbolic objectivation, on the other hand, there is an unbridgeable essential difference” (*Ideen I* § 43, 93; Hua III/1, 79).

In contrasting the experienced thing with the thing as a scientific construct, Husserl adverts to the “well known distinction between primary and secondary qualities” (*Ideen I*, §40, 84; Hua III/1, 71), which claims the true physical thing is the one determined by physics. Husserl writes:

When physics determines the physical thing given exclusively by such concepts as atoms, ions, energies, and so forth, and as, in any case, space-filling processes for which only characterizations are mathematical expressions, it means them as something transcendent to the whole physical thing-content standing there “in person.” As a consequence, it cannot mean the physical thing as something located in the natural space pertaining to the senses. In other words, the space of physics cannot be the space belonging to the world given “in person” in perception: if it were, then the Berkeleyan objection would also apply to it. (*Ideen I*, §40, 84–85; Hua III/1, 72)

What is the Berkeleyan objection that Husserl is invoking here? It is the claim that the so called “primary” properties are as subjective-relative and perspectival as the secondary qualities. Primary qualities are relative to a perceiver; there are no “properties-in-themselves.” The space of physics cannot be the space of lived experience. This is surely the lesson of the *Krisis* and associated works, but here it is already explicitly stated in *Ideen I*. Indeed, rather than being an innovation in *Krisis*, §9, Husserl is interested in Galileo’s revolution in physics already in “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft,” where he writes: “For the knowledge of external nature the decisive step from naive to scientific experience, from vague everyday concepts to scientific concepts with full clarity, was first made, as is well known, by Galileo” (PRS, 266; Hua XXV, 24).

What I want to stress here is the direct continuity, despite the gap of a quarter century, between *Ideen I* and *Krisis* in the analysis of the relation between natural and scientific experience of the world. In both *Krisis* and in *Ideen I* Husserl is struggling with the contrast between the naturally lived, naively experienced world (the world of “perception” in Husserl’s broadened sense that became Merleau-Ponty’s) and the world as projected in the theories of the modern mathematical sciences. Husserl is constantly questioning how the formally constructed world of science has come to be substituted for the ordinary world of experience. In *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, §96,⁴¹ for instance, Husserl speaks of “higher questions concerning the constitution of what we may call a theoretical world” (FTL, 243; Hua XVII,

⁴¹ Edmund Husserl, *Formale und transzendentale Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft. Mit ergänzenden Texten*, hrsg. Paul Janssen, Husserliana XVII (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974); trans. Dorion Cairns, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969). Hereafter “FTL” followed by English page number and Husserliana volume and page number.

250), i.e., the world as formalized by the sciences. According to this “idealization,” there is a “world in itself” and “the idea of exact nature” (*Idee der exakten Natur*, XVII, 250). This world in itself is precisely that which can never be experienced.

In *Krisis*, Beilage XVII, written around 1936–1937, Husserl insists all sciences are founded on the life-world and remain within the life-world:

Here is again something confusing: every practical world, every science, presupposes the life-world; as purposeful structures (*Zweckgebilde*) they are contrasted with the life-world, which was always and continues to be “of its own accord (*von selbst*).” Yet, on the other hand, everything developing and developed by mankind (individually and in community) is itself a piece of the life-world (*ein Stück der Lebenswelt*): thus the contrast is suspended. (*Krisis*, 382–83; VI, 462)

Husserl says this is only confusing for scientists because the life-world is not their subject matter no matter how it remains the “foundation” of their research. Scientific worlds are literally “pieces” (*Stücke*) of the life-world which provides a “fundament” or “ground” (*Grund, Boden*), and indeed “sub-soil” (*Untergrund*). I note here in passing that part of Heidegger’s implicit critique of Husserl is that he did not have an adequate conception of grounding (in *Vom Wesen des Grundes*—submitted to Husserl’s seventieth-birthday *Festschrift*).⁴²

At the end of *Ideen I*, §151 Husserl returns to discuss the many levels or “strata” (*Schichten*) involved in the transcendental constitution of the thing (a topic he had also explored in *Ding und Raum*) from the lower level of the “sensuous schema” to the highest stratum of the “substantial-causal physical thing” (*Ideen I*, §151, 363; III/1, 316), a theme on which he will elaborate in *Ideen II*. Interestingly Husserl speaks of the “intersubjectively identical physical thing” as being on one level down from the highest level. This intersubjective world is the correlate of the world understood in *empathy* (*Ideen I*, §151, 363; III/1, 317). This identifies a particular problematic—why is the physical-causal thing in nature the highest level—surely the intersubjectively agreed thing should be on the highest level? Husserl states “very difficult problems are attached to the *interwovenness* of different regions” (*Sehr schwierige Probleme haften an der Verflochtenheit der verschiedenen Regionen* (*Ideen I*, §152; Hua III/1, 354)). He struggles to unite these different strata. At times—especially in his later work—he talks as if the physical thing gains its objective status precisely from the intersubjective agreement (or “triangulation” as Donald Davidson calls it), but here he makes intersubjective agreement to be a level below that of the highest stratum of the “substantial-causal physical thing”! It is the perceptual encounter with the physical thing that forms our dominant conception of it.

Husserl spends a long time discussing the constitution of the idea of *nature* and of the *natural thing* (*Naturding*) as well as the idea of exact *causality* in *Ideen II*—although the bare bones of the discussion can also be found in *Ideen I*, §47 (just before the notorious discussion of the annihilation of the world). In *Ideen II* he thinks that the scientific idea of a thing as not changing without a cause is not in fact in line with intuitive experience (*Ideen II*, §16, 53; Hua IV, 49). Naïve experience

⁴² M. Heidegger, *Vom Wesen des Grundes*; trans. Terrence Malick, *The Essence of Reasons* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969).

believes a thing *can* change on its own and finds nothing incoherent in that idea. Husserl writes:

It was the new science of nature which first grasped this idea of a strict identity in the absolutely determined and unequivocal dependencies of causality (an idea that has to be set off from any empirical apprehension) and which developed the demands implicit in this idea, demands which determine essentially the course of the scientific investigation into nature. (*Ideen II*, §16, 52; 49)

This statement could have been taken directly from the *Krisis* where Husserl writes: “One can truly say that the idea of nature as a self-enclosed world of bodies (*Körperwelt*) first emerges with Galileo” (*Krisis*, §10, 60; VI, 61).

In *Ideen II*, §16 Husserl states that modern mathematical natural science has prescribed the idea of nature as that which is governed by exact laws (especially causality) and that determines from then on what is even to be called a “natural thing.” In *Ideen III* Husserl distinguishes between “the world of actually present experience, the actual, subjectively and intersubjectively intuitive world” and the “objective, non-intuitive world of determinate mathematical-physical predicates” (*Ideen III*, 56; Hua V, 65, translation modified).

In one sense, the scientific apprehension of things builds seamlessly on the intuited experience. Certain apprehensions of science (e.g., that a thing is made of molecules and atoms) can also be justified on the basis of everyday experience because the thing is grasped as a complex composed of parts. So, in a certain sense, the scientific conception of body or aspects of it, are founded on sensory perceptual experience of bodies (for which *rigid*, *impenetrable*, *extended bodies* provide the criterion or the optimal case), but in another sense the scientific grid manifests and explores bodies in a way which is quite independent of and never supported by sensory experience. Husserl’s position, therefore, is not simply to contrast the naïve common-sense object with the scientific object. Modern philosophy since Descartes and Galileo had been attempting to explain natural phenomena, e.g., the rainbow, the rising and setting of the sun, in terms which challenged our natural conception of these things but were built on the observed phenomena. But there are other cases—and Kant of course also stresses this in opposition to Hume’s sceptical account of causation—where science applied a certain grid of lawfulness to nature and expects nature to respond to what is demanded by this grid (e.g. Hua XXIV, 348, where Husserl speaks of the “lawful nexus” (*gesetzliche Zusammenhang*) of nature).

Husserl returns again and again to meditate on this complex relation between things as they are encountered in the natural attitude and the formalized and idealized structurization of those same things (confusingly called by the same *names*) as mediated by the scientific attitude. The key to the later Husserl is that he shifts to talking about the *attitude* rather than the *object* in his later works. His essays on the nature of lived space versus geometrical space (including the “Genesis of the Copernican world” paper from 1923/1924 *Erste Philosophie*, Hua VII) treat this topic over and over again.

The challenge is to state how precisely the life-world is *interwoven* with the scientific world, how lived space with its intuitive causal style experienced by embodied subjects provides support for scientifically described space, time and

causality (see *Ideen I*, §150). This issue appears in Husserl's correspondence with the physicist Herman Weyl (1885–1955).⁴³ In a 1918 letter Husserl expresses his appreciation that a mathematician—Weyl—could recognise the importance of a phenomenological treatment of fundamental scientific concepts. Following Husserl, Weyl thinks the a priori concept of space in mathematical physics (with its notions of congruence, etc.) needs to be aligned with the phenomenological conception of lived space.⁴⁴ Indeed, already in *Ideen I*, Husserl talks about the profound phenomenological problem of the “origin of the idea of space” (*Ideen I*, 362; III/1, 315) in relation to the experience of things as near or far, oriented in a certain way with regard to us. He returns to this problem in “Die Ur-Arche Erde bewegt sich nicht” (c. 1934), and most famously in “Ursprung der Geometrie” (1936), where Husserl talks about the manner in which, for example, surfaces experienced in daily life become selected for various practical purposes (e.g., smoothness) and then become idealized into the concept of a two-dimensional surface without a third dimension of depth. Then this concept of two-dimensional surface is—through an idealizing abstraction—constituted as an object in itself with essential properties to be determined by its own science.

In the end Husserl's *Ideen* offered breakthrough analyses of the natural attitude and the surrounding world that eventually would be reworked in the discussions of the life-world in his late philosophy. Husserl saw *Ideen I* as the first step on the path to the *Krisis*. But the problems opened up by the manner in which the natural attitude and natural surrounding world are introduced in *Ideen I* continue through to the *Krisis*. In Husserl's mature work, the real question is how to inhibit the manner in which the natural world of experience acts on me so that I can uncover my transcendental life and its world of experience. As he writes in his Author's Preface to Boyce Gibson's translation of *Ideen I*:

On the other hand by means of this epochē the regard is freed for the universal phenomenon, “the world of consciousness purely as such,” the world purely *as* given in the manifold flux of unconscious life: that is, *as* appearing “originaliter” in a manifold of “concordant” experiences. In these concordances it is characterized, for consciousness as “actually existing.” In itsdetails, however, but only in details, it can happen that this character of “actual being” is overturned and becomes “hollow semblance.” This universal *phenomenon*, “world existing for me”(and then also “existing for us”) is made the phenomenologist's new field of theoretical interest, the field of a new sort of theoretical experience and experiential research. (*Ideen II*, 412–13; Hua V, 145)

Husserl has shifted the emphasis from phenomenology as an a priori exploration of pure consciousness to phenomenology as the a priori exploration of the life-world. To set phenomenology on this transcendental path is, for Husserl, the true achievement of *Ideas I*.

⁴³ Hermann Weyl, *Raum Zeit Materie Vorlesungen über allgemeinere Relativitätstheorie*, 1. Auflage (Berlin, 1918); trans. H. L. Brose, *Space Time Matter* (London: Methuen, 1922).

⁴⁴ See Weyl's letter to Husserl of 26/27 March 1921 in Dirk van Dalen, “Four Letters from Edmund Husserl to Hermann Weyl,” *Husserl Studies* 1 (1984): 1–12.

Chapter 8

Husserl on the Human Sciences in *Ideen II*

Thomas M. Seeböhm

Introduction

To translate *Geisteswissenschaften* with “human sciences” was a good choice of the editors of *Wilhelm Dilthey: Selected Works*¹ because this term refers implicitly to the tradition of the “humanities” in the Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition. The same translation has been used in the more recent literature on Husserl’s writings though some prefer the originally Neo-Kantian term “cultural sciences” (*Kulturwissenschaften*), which has been used also occasionally by Husserl himself.

The problem with the term *Geisteswissenschaften* is that *Geist* has two connotations in the German tradition. The first tradition has its roots in Hegel’s *Phänomenologie des Geistes* and this phenomenology is not a phenomenology of the human mind but a historical topology of the appearances of the absolute spirit. The other tradition starts with the translation of John Stuart Mill’s *System of Logic*. The usual translation for Mill’s term “moral sciences” in German is *Geisteswissenschaften*.² Psychology, called by James Mill the analysis of the phenomena of the human mind,³ is in John Stuart Mill’s *System* the foundation of the moral sciences. This is also the case for the relation between psychology and the other *Geisteswissenschaften* in Wilhelm Dilthey’s writings. The difference between Mill and Dilthey is that Mill’s method in

¹ Wilhelm Dilthey, *Selected Works*, (SW) ed. R.A. Makkreel and F. Rodi (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1989).

² J. St. Mill, *System of Logic: Ratiocinative and Inductive* (London: Harrison and Co., 1843); first German translation by J. Schiel, 1849.

³ James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, ed. J. St. Mill (London: Baldwin and Cradock, 1829).

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the moral sciences is inductive, experimental, and interested in causal explanations. Dilthey, on the contrary, characterized his psychology as a descriptive and analyzing (*beschreibende und zergliedernde*) science and distinguished in general between the methods of understanding (*Verstehen*) in the *Geisteswissenschaften* and of explanation in the natural sciences.⁴

Boyce Gibson's early translation of *Geisteswissenschaften* in *Ideen I* with "mental sciences" follows the second connotation.⁵ The first connotation is, on the contrary, clearly predominant in *Ideen II*.⁶ Especially the terminology of the third part and related passages in the appendices indicate that transcendental phenomenology has to be understood as the *absolute Geisteswissenschaft*, the "absolute science of the spirit," and that the human sciences are the spiritual sciences of the *geistige Welt*, the spiritual world. The terminology of *Ideen II* thus prepares Husserl's later use of the terms *Geist* and even *absoluter Geist*, "absolute spirit," as synonyms for the transcendental ego.⁷ It is hence advisable to translate *Geisteswissenschaften* in *Ideen II* with "spiritual sciences."

A text ought to be interpreted in its original context following the original intention of the author. The spiritual sciences—explicitly mentioned are only psychology and sociology—are according to *Ideen I* together with the natural sciences as empirical sciences in brackets after the phenomenological reduction.⁸ The task of *Ideen II* is, according to the outline of the whole project in the introduction of *Ideen I*, the phenomenological analysis of the relation between phenomenology and the natural sciences, psychology and the spiritual sciences, and the a priori sciences. The task of Book III is to develop the idea of a true philosophy as absolute knowledge that can only be realized in pure phenomenology.⁹

The original project of the second volume has been published as *Ideen II* and *Ideen III* in the Husseriana.¹⁰ According to the preface by the editor,¹¹ the original

⁴ W. Dilthey's method presupposes inner experience and is in this sense positivistic, positivism understood as nineteenth century positivism but not in the sense of the analytic positivism of the twentieth century.

⁵ Cf. the translation of *Ideen I*, §60 in: *Ideas. General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (London: Allen and Unwin, 1931). Cf. also *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to Phenomenological Philosophy*, Book I, General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982).

⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book, Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989).

⁷ Cf. e.g., *Die Krisis des europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie* Husserliana VI. Edmund Husserl Gesammelte Werke (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), 347, on *absoluter Geist* and *absolute Historizität*; henceforth, Hua VI.

⁸ Hua III, 144.

⁹ Hua III, 7–8

¹⁰ Hua IV and V. The original textual basis of the editions of *Ideen II* and of *Ideen III* is the collection of manuscripts of Edith Stein 1913f. in the typescript of Landgrebe 1923–1924. Landgrebe's version of *Ideen II* together with later additions and notes of Husserl is the material that has been used in the edition of *Ideen II* in the Husserliana. Cf. Hua IV, Introduction of the Editor, XVIII.

¹¹ Hua IV, XIV.

project of the *Ideen II* had two parts: (A) analyses of the constitution of the material, the animal, and the mental world, and (B) epistemological (*wissenschaftstheoretische*) considerations. (A) Was published following the Landgrebe typescript of 1923–1924 as *Ideen II* in the Husserliana. The “epistemological part” (8) was published in the Husserliana as *Ideen III*¹² with the subtitle “Die Phänomenologie und die Fundamente der Wissenschaften.” There are no manuscripts for the third volume of the original project but there are the lectures on first philosophy of 1923–1924 published as *Erste Philosophie I, II* in the Husserliana.¹³

Considering the history of the development from the original project to the selection of the material that has been published as *Ideen II* and *III* both volumes should be read together as parts belonging to the second book of the original project. *Ideen II* can be understood as representing (A) the constitution of material nature, animal nature, and the spiritual world. Reading *Ideen III* as (B) epistemological considerations causes difficulties. To characterize the *Ideen III* as fundaments (*Fundamente*) of the sciences invites this interpretation but the terms that are used in the texts of *Ideen II* and *Ideen III* are “foundation” (*Fundierung*) and “founding” (*fundieren*).¹⁴ Foundations and founding are, however, terms belonging to formal ontology. If so, then investigations on *ontological* foundations of the sciences cannot be understood as *epistemological* reflections in the narrower sense. The published version of *Ideen III* adds reflections on the ontological regions of reality¹⁵ in which first real things and then objects of the sciences are given¹⁶ and on the relation between phenomenology and ontology in general.¹⁷ Material nature and natural sciences are mentioned.¹⁸ Much is said about psychology but virtually nothing about the other spiritual sciences. What *Ideen III* say about the foundations of psychology as rational, i.e., eidetic psychology as a spiritual science can also be understood as first step towards the investigations in the lectures on *Phänomenologische Psychologie*.¹⁹ *Ideen III* is, however, not of significance for the analysis of the constitution of the spiritual world as the foundation of the spiritual sciences in Parts III and the appendices of *Ideen II*.²⁰

The remarks about Dilthey in Part III and the appendices are of crucial significance for the understanding of *Ideen II* in the context of the discussion of the

¹² Hua IV, XIV f.

¹³ Hua VII and VIII.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g., Hua V, 17. The real things are the foundations of the objects of the sciences.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ideen I*, Hua III, §72, §153.

¹⁶ Hua V, Chapter I.

¹⁷ Hua V, Chapter 3.

¹⁸ Hua V. Of significance is the remark on p. 9 that biology dealing with animals and plants and organic life is a part of material nature. Nothing more is said about the life sciences in *Ideen III*.

¹⁹ Hua IX.

²⁰ There are early manuscripts about the cognitive attitude of the spiritual sciences (*geisteswissenschaftliche Einstellung*) written in connection with the original project between 1913 and 1917 that have been dropped from the draft of the main text in Landgrebe version of 1923/1924 and added as appendices by Landgrebe together with further remarks from Husserl himself. Cf. Hua IV, esp. Appendices IV, V, X, XL XII part II, XIV and the remarks to the appendices of the editor, 417f.

Geisteswissenschaften in Germany in the beginning of the twentieth century. The remarks have a pre-history. Following Stumpf, Husserl characterized his method in the first edition of the *Logische Untersuchungen* as *descriptive-psychologisch*, i.e., as the method of a descriptive psychology. Dilthey called his psychology a descriptive and analyzing psychology. He praised Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* as a partial realization of his own projects²¹ and used occasionally the term "phenomenological" to characterize his method.²² He was therefore deeply offended by Husserl's critique of historical relativism in the third section of "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft" because he assumed that he was the target of this criticism and defended himself in a letter to Husserl 1911. Husserl's answer emphasized that Dilthey was by no means the target but also that he and Dilthey would be able to agree in all questions of the interpretation of the human mind and the analysis of the problems of understanding of cultural objects.²³ Husserl's repeated references to Dilthey can be understood as an extension of his answer and an indication of Dilthey's significance for the development of Husserl's reflections on the spiritual sciences in general.²⁴

Husserl praised Dilthey for his radical critique of the claim of the naturalistic, i.e., psycho-physical, physiological, and experimental psychology of the nineteenth century and his ability to explain the facts of mental life in his *Leben zu einer beschreibenden und zergliedernden Psychologie* of 1894 as a work of a genius. The theory of understanding (*Verstehen*) as the basic category of Dilthey's psychology is not only able to analyze the laws of psychic life but together with them also the laws of interpersonal mental life, of culture and regions of mental culture, i.e., religion, the law, literature, and fine art. Understanding psychology is, hence, the basic science and foundation for all other mental sciences. What is missing in Dilthey is, however, precision in elementary analyses of experience and a distinction between the constitution of the psychic reality in the constitution of the animated living body and the constitution of the mental world.

The main shortcoming is Dilthey's assumption that the empirical generalizations of a morphological typology based on inner experience and the inner reliving of foreign mental life is able to discover the universal laws of psychology and cultural

²¹ Wilhelm Dilthey, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vols 1–12 (Teubner, 1914ff.); Vol. VI, *Die geistige Welt. Zweite Häfte* (1924), 13f., 39f., 322.

²² GS VII, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (1927), 296, "phenomenology of knowledge."

²³ Central passages of the letters can be found in *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Hua IX, Preface of the editor, XVII–XXI. English trans., Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenological Psychology*, trans. John Scanlon (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977).

²⁴ It is not possible to discuss the remarks about Dilthey point by point in this essay. The main references to Dilthey can be found in Hua IV, §48: Introduction to section III; appendix XII, §11, 365 ff. and XIII, 393; and Hua IX, *Phänomenologische Psychologie* §1, 5–6, 10; §2, esp. 13–14, and Appendices II, 357 and III, 361. On Husserl and Dilthey, cf. *Dilthey und die Philosophie der Gegenwart*, ed. E.W. Orth (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1985), the essays of Ströker, Seeböhm, Pfafferott, Makkreel, and Carr and *Dilthey and Phenomenology*, eds. R. A. Makkreel and J. Scanlon, *Current Continental Research* 006 (Washington, D.C.: CARP & University Press of America, 1987), Part I: Dilthey, Husserl, and the Foundations of Science.

spiritual life. Only the method of eidetic intuition is able to discover the essential structures of psychical and spiritual life and its cultural manifestations. Dilthey is not able to give a precise analysis of interpersonal spiritual life and, therefore, also not able to give a satisfying account of the specific objectivity of the manifestations, the works of spiritual life.

What is missing in Husserl's critical appraisal are references to Dilthey's epistemological investigations of the methods of the historical spiritual sciences and their background in the methodological reflections in the nineteenth century.²⁵ More will be said about this problem in some critical remarks in the end of this chapter.²⁶

Part III of *Ideen II* on the constitution and ontological priority of the spiritual world presupposes Part II, the constitution of the animal world and Part II presupposes section I, the constitution of the material world. The considerations of *Ideen II* on the spiritual sciences have, therefore, to begin with a short summary of section I and a survey of the basic theses of section II.²⁷

The real things of real nature are given in the natural attitude as material real things, animal things, and as things that are of value for practical life, valuable things.²⁸ The objects of the natural sciences are theoretical objects. The givenness of theoretical objects has its foundation the givenness of real things in aesthetic synthesis (§18 a–c). Already the constitution of real things given in the natural attitude and, therefore, also the constitution of theoretical objects presuppose the subject not as a solipsistic subject but the subject as a member of an intersubjective community (§18 e, f, and h). The givenness of the theoretical objects of the natural sciences presupposes

²⁵ The main source for Dilthey's epistemological reflections on the spiritual sciences is *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* first published 1910 and then in GS VII; English trans., *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences*, SW /11, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002). The question is whether Husserl ever read the *Aufbau*. There is no trace of such a reading in the material in *Ideen II* or *Phänomenologische Psychologie*. Husserl read and mentioned (Hua IX, 6) Dilthey's *Ideen zu einer beschreibenden und zergliederten Psychologie* of 1884 (now in GS V 1924) and his remarks to Dilthey indicate that he also knew the *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* of 1883 (now GS I 1922 and SW I, *Introduction to the Human Sciences*.)

²⁶ On the methodology and epistemology of the human sciences from Schleiermacher and Boeckh to Dilthey and Droysen, see R. A. Makkreel, *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), esp. Part Three; T. M. Seebohm, "Boeckh and Dilthey: The Development of Methodical Hermeneutics," *Man and World* 17 (1984): 325–46, and Thomas M. Seebohm, *Hermeneutics. Method and Methodology*. Contributions to Phenomenology 50 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Press, 2004), Chapter 3.

²⁷ Two comprehensive essays on *Ideen II* have to be mentioned: Alfred Schutz, "Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*, Volume II," *Collected Papers III, Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, ed. I. Schutz (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966) and Paul Ricoeur, "Husserl's *Ideas II*: Analyses and Problems," *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology*, trans. E.G. Ballard and L. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967).

²⁸ (8/9; 25) The references to paragraphs, numbers of appendices, and/or page numbers of *Ideen II*, Hua IV will be given in parentheses on the following pages.

an abstractive reduction that brackets all aspects of real things as things that are relevant for practical life (25f.). What is left are objects as facts (*Sachen*). The theoretical objects of physics, the pure material objects require in addition an abstraction from all secondary qualities of real things and theoretical objects. What is left are the primary qualities, i.e., measurable and in this sense mathematically quantifiable qualities.²⁹ This second abstraction excludes in addition all essential properties of animal nature.

Part II begins in the introduction with a description of the givenness of the souls of humans and animals in the natural attitude. What “animal nature” means is, hence, “animated nature.” The soul is originally given together with and in the material living body but it has its own unity as an endless stream of lived experiences without beginning and end. The I is a unity within the unity of a real soul as an I with a certain character and certain abilities. It is this I that *has* a body and *has* a soul (§21, 93/94). This structure, including its foundation in the givenness of the material living body, is the foundation for the givenness of others as other living bodies, empathy and the constitution of intersubjectivity (95).

The analysis of the constitution of this structure presupposes in a first step the “abstraction” from the givenness of the living body in the natural attitude that is implied in the phenomenological reduction. What remains is the pure spiritual ego as cogito and its cogitations. The detailed analyses of the constitution of animated nature therefore starts in Chapter I with an extension of the analyses of *Ideen I* that can also be read as a first sketch of the *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis* and their application in the “V. Cartesianische Meditation.”³⁰ The task of the following investigations is the analysis of the foundations of the understanding of human beings as persons with their personal environment as self-subsisting individuals in the spiritual world of customs, laws, religion etc. (§34, esp. 141).

The first step is the analysis of the constitution of the reality of the living body as an organ of the solipsistic soul. The living body is given in bodily localized sensitivity, *Empfindnis*, and as an organ of will in the kinaesthetic movements of the living body (§§36–38). The living material body is furthermore a center of orientation, a “Here” opposed other material things in a manifold “There.” This localization of the givenness of the living body is not the givenness of the living body in objective real space. It is a solipsistic system of localization as one material thing among others given in “causal connections,” the sensitive experience of the spontaneity of bodily actions and the passivity in the experience of feeling conditioned by the presence of real material bodies in the There outside. The constitution of the solipsistic living

²⁹ §18 d and g. What is said there can be read as a first sketch of what will be said later in the *Crisis* about the abstraction that is a necessary presupposition for the theoretical attitude of the natural sciences in general, cf. e.g., Hua VI, §2, esp. 3 and 4, §66, 230 and §§8–10 about the mathematical abstraction presupposed in the theoretical attitude of physics.

³⁰ Cf. Hua IV, pp. 99/I 00, 104 and Hua III p. 136/7, the *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, Hua IX, Parts III and IV, and the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, Hua I, §§44–46. Edmund Husserl, *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, trans. Anthony J. Steinbock (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001).

body is, hence, given in the inner perspective of the sensitivity of the living body in the flow of psychic life. It is also given simultaneously in the outer perspective as a center that is a correlate of a world in the There outside the living body that conditions the inner experience and can be conditioned by the activities of the living body as an organ of the will (§§39–42).

What is originally present in the sensory experience of the inseparable unity of solipsistic body and soul are (a) the material things given in the There outside and the partial givenness of the own solipsistic living body from the outside as a material thing and (b) the individual and unique flow of inner experience in which the solipsistic subject is given for itself. What is not yet given in solipsistic experience are the material thing given as an independent real thing in real space and other living bodies as animated bodies in the natural attitude. Animals, i.e., animated material bodies of humans and non-human animals, are given beyond solipsistic experience as bodies in original presence (*Urpräsenz*) as an appresented psychic inner life. Empathy (*Einfühlung*) is beyond simple appresentation an intentional attitude of an ongoing steady appresentation—but not presentation—of their foreign inner life given with the experience of the presence of their living bodies (§§43–45).

Empathy founded in appresentation is constitutive for the givenness of intersubjectivity and with it for the constitution of the human ego (*Ich-Mensch*) given in the natural attitude. Intersubjectivity is, as already mentioned in Part I, the foundation for the experience of real material things and real material nature in the natural attitude. The aesthesiological constitution of real things in the natural attitude is the foundation for the theoretical objects of the natural sciences that can be given after the reductive abstraction that brackets all the characters of real things given in intersubjective practical life. The attitude of the natural sciences presupposes, hence, a field of an intersubjective experience in which real things, material as well as animated real things, are given (§§46, 47, esp. 171–72).

The field of intersubjective experience in which nature and the subject itself is given in the spiritual world is the realm of objects in the theoretical attitude of the spiritual sciences. The reference to Dilthey in the introduction to Part III (§48, 172–73) indicates that the following analysis of the personalistic attitude can be understood as the phenomenological explication of Dilthey's intentions. Dilthey's understanding, descriptive and analyzing psychology based on inner experience is for him the foundation for all other disciplines of the spiritual sciences. *Ideen II* replaces Dilthey's basic category of understanding³¹ and its foundation with the descriptive analysis of the difference between introjection and empathy. The foundations of empathy in the constitution of the solipsistic animate body (§§43–45) are the foundations of the personalistic attitude and the distinction between the naturalistic and the personalistic attitude. The personalistic attitude is the foundation for the analysis of the spiritual attitude, the spiritual world, and the spiritual sciences.

³¹ See, however, the critical remark in fn. 40 about a misinterpretation of Dilthey's distinction in Appendix XIII, 393.

The analysis of the constitution of the spiritual world starts with a summary of the analysis of the constitution of animated living bodies in the naturalistic attitude. The living body is in this attitude given as physical real object. The soul is given as a layer of real events that can be localized on a living body, i.e., as the aesthesiological layer of sensations and sensitive experience on living bodies. The inner temporality of lived experience is understood as a phase of the objective space-time. This givenness of the other soul can be characterized as “introjection,” but this introjection is not directed to something behind the physical givenness of the living body (§49 a–c). The naturalistic attitude is, however, only a possible attitude because it presupposes an abstractive reduction and has its foundation in the natural world given in the natural attitude (§49 d and e). The other possible attitude is the personalistic attitude and with it the attitude of the spiritual sciences.

The subject is given in the personalistic attitude as a person in the center of its personal environment. The world is given as the world of the consciousness of the individual personal I. The I as person, the egoic person, is given in this world in its relations to the real things as a representing, feeling, evaluating, striving, and acting person. The world is given as experienced world in sensory appearances. The real things in the world are given in the appearances as valuable things, i.e., as pleasant, painful, beautiful and ugly things in immediate experience. The person is related to the real things in practical acts. Practical needs and desires are the motivations for practical acts. What is desired are useful objects that can be used in practical acts to produce valuable artifacts (*Erzeugnisse*). The relations between things and persons are in the personal attitude not given as causal relations. They are given as motivations, enticements of more or less powerful tendencies for evaluations, practical activities, and finally theoretical judgments about the pleasant or painful, beautiful or ugly, and useful character of objects. The relations of the person to real things are, seen from the viewpoint of pure phenomenology, intentional acts (§50).

The person considers itself, its relations to real things, and its motivations in the personal attitude as a member of a personal community. Other persons are given in a personal community (*Personenverband*). They are not given as introjected in a material living body: They are given immediately in empathy as persons together with the real things in the common environment of a personal community. Persons are given in the personal community as independent subjects with their own rights in a system of moral and legal relations in which each person is a person only because it is recognized as a person by other persons as a subject-object. The egoical person is motivated in the personal community to reach agreements with other persons and is, therefore, influenced by other persons. This system of reciprocal influences, agreements and disagreements, is constitutive for the givenness of the common environment including not only a real environment of physical things and animals but also an environment of recognized ideal entities.

The egoic person has to pursue its own goals in the environment of the personal community. The social community is in turn open for actual and potential communication with external environments of other personal communities, other spiritual contexts in its environment. This openness is constitutive for the idea of the world as spiritual world, the totality of different types of real and ideal objects (195 f).

Real things are given in the different perspectives of different personal communities in the spiritual world. The spiritual world, though not apprehended as objective physical nature in the naturalistic attitude, has as its medium a common intersubjective, i.e., objective space-time in which the different personal communities and finally the individual persons are located in the spiritual world.

Real things and real nature can be determined as the true objects and true nature in itself³² behind their appearances for different personal subjects and personal communities in a theoretical attitude. They are constituted in this attitude as theoretical objects that cannot be given in sensory perspective variations. This theoretical attitude is the naturalistic attitude of the natural sciences. The investigation ends at this point in a vicious circle (210). The starting point was the apprehension of humans in their physically given living bodies in the naturalistic attitude and ended with the analysis of the givenness of the soul. The analysis of the flow of lived experience ended with the turn to the personalistic attitude and the constitution of the spiritual world. The outcome of this analysis was, however, in the end the recognition that the world given for universal intersubjectivity as the spiritual world can also be given as the correlate of universal intersubjectivity as the world as correlate of the naturalistic attitude.

A solution for the problem of the circle requires (§49) a detailed recapitulation of the analysis of the structures of the personal I given in the *inspection sui* in self-awareness and self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the reflective awareness of the not reflected consciousness of that what is pre-given as the Not-I for the personal self (211–12; cf. 248). The I is in its self-awareness not given to itself as an I in the living body. It is aware of itself as *having* a body and this body is, on the one hand, an organ of the bodily activities of the I, reacting to pre-given real things in acts of attention, judging, evaluating, and willing, and as the decision to realize change in the pre-given environment of the I. The I as having the body is, on the other hand, also given as the passive I, the I of receptivity, of being attracted or repulsed by stimuli (*Reize*) from presence or absence of real things, the feelings accompanying such stimuli, and finally by the self-awareness of the bodily activities of the I.

The active and passive relations between I and Not-I are real relations and real relations must be distinguished from intentional relations between the personal I and things as intentional objects. Intentional relations can be given together with the real relations between the I and real things but they and their intentional objects can also be given after or even without real relations. Something can be my intentional object as a noema without being really present in a real relation.

Relations between real things in real nature, of objects (*Sachen*) given in the naturalistic attitude, including the mathematically interpreted theoretical objects of physics, are *causal* relations (216, cf. 230–31). Considering the relations between the personal subject and its environment including real things but also ideal objects and noematic objects in general because referring to these relations is understood as the

³² They are intersubjectively given not for a relative community but as intersubjective in principle; cf. *Ideen I*, Hua III, 113.

because of *motivations*. Stimuli of sensory impressions motivate the subjective-objective effects in the passive awareness of objects. They motivate furthermore feelings of pleasure and pain of the I and active goal-directed reactions of the body as an organ of the I. What can be distinguished are the motivations following the norms of reason, i.e., of logical thinking and evaluations and secondly motivations determined by associations belonging to the sphere of passivity and habits. Lived experience is thus a web of motivations that are partially active and conscious and partially passive and often not immediately accessible for explicit reflections. Even the determination of every temporal phase by the preceding phase in the structure of immanent time consciousness can be characterized as a type of passive motivation (225, cf. 227).

The experience of others is in the naturalistic attitude a theoretical *introduction* of the soul as a dependent appendix of a material living body. The experience of other persons in the personal attitude is the immediate experience of the other person as the subject of its motivations in its environment of real things and other persons (228–29). The living body of the other person is understood as an organ of the bodily actions of the other person, as expressions of its motivations and actions (234–35). Persons in communities of persons are understood as subjects of motivated actions that are determined in reciprocal motivations and not as causal relations. The “because” of *motivations* of others is like my own motivations immediately understood and this *understanding* is not in need of further causal explanations, much less causal explanations defined in terms of mathematical theories (230–31; 235–36).

The spiritual world includes other persons, the own personal community and external personal communities, but it includes also (239, 243–44, cf. 182, 195 f) cultural objects: artifacts produced for daily use (*Gebrauchsgegenstände*), written texts (*Schriftwerke*), works of art, musical works, scientific and legal literature, symbols, etc. (239, 243–44, cf. 182, 195f.). The “body” of such works of the spirit is physical but it is a body of a spiritual meaning. The physically given signs, e.g., letters, sentences are animated (*haben Besetzung*). They intend an ideal object.³³ The spiritual meaning of the signs and their sensory sign matter are not separable (238). They are partially real but they are signs only because they mean ideal objects. They are objective spirit as manifestations of the spirit (239; 243). The mental world is, hence, (1) the world in which the person finds itself in introspection and in the representations of the other person(s) in empathy. It is (2) then world of communities of higher order, the spiritual world, including other communities that have on different levels different common spirits, the spirit of a nation, of a culture, a religion etc. (3). This universe is accessible in the manifestations of spirit.

³³ It is, according to *Ideen II*, 243, not difficult to give a detailed analysis. However, such an analysis would be the epistemological analysis of the “methodology and encyclopaedia,” e.g., of the science of classical antiquity according to August Böckh and this is by no means a simple enterprise, cf. below fn. 49.

The task of chapter 3 of Part III on the ontological priority of the spiritual world to the naturalistic world (281f.) is to resolve the circle mentioned above (210). The first step is to show that the circle is implied in the assumption of the parallelism of the spiritual and the naturalistic world. The second step is the refutation of the parallelism.

The spirit presupposes the soul given in the flow of lived experience and the soul is dependent on the living body for the personalistic attitude, i.e., the attitude of the spiritual sciences. The activities of the spirit are, hence, dependent on the living body as physical body and the works of the spirit are likewise as objects given as physical objects in the world of the naturalistic attitude. They are, however, works of the spirit only because they have a spiritual meaning. The spirit acts on nature but these actions (*Wirkungen*) have not the character of causal relations between natural objects. They are of significance only for personal communities and their environment.

The transition from the attitude of the spiritual sciences to the naturalistic attitude presupposes an abstraction. The abstraction excludes the spiritual attitude and the spiritual world. The animated body and the soul are not given for a person who has a soul and a body. The body is given in the naturalistic attitude as a physical body and the soul is given as introjected in the body.

Seen from the viewpoint of the spiritual attitude, the natural sciences appear as a work of the spirit. However, seen from the viewpoint of the theoretical I, the I in the theoretical attitude,³⁴ the transition to the naturalistic attitude and the implied abstraction is an act of the theoretical I, but the attitude of the spiritual sciences implies *also* an abstraction, the abstraction from the correlate of the naturalistic attitude the physical world. There are, hence, two parallel worlds, the world of the spiritual sciences and the world of the natural sciences for the theoretical I (289).

The presupposition of this parallelism implies (a) the assumption that every event in the world of nature has its correlate in the spiritual world and vice versa and happen at the same time and (b) the additional assumption³⁵ that both events are determined by reciprocal causal connections. The usual assumption is that the “place” in which that happens is the central organ, the brain (290–294). A phenomenological analysis of temporality is able to reject assumption (a). Events in the central organ follow each other in the structure of objective time. Events in the lived experience happen, in the structures of inner time consciousness. The hyletic contents emerge in the actual now in its protentional horizon and flow down in the continuum of retentions. Given this distinction it is also impossible to understand the reciprocal conditioning, the acting (*das Wirken*) of the soul and the spirit on the living body and vice versa as a causal relation. Causal laws are the conditions of the course of events in the

³⁴ The theoretical I ought not to be understood as the transcendental ego. The theoretical I is the I of the theoretical attitude of the natural as well as the spiritual sciences.

³⁵ It is an assumption because there are other assumptions, e.g., the metaphysical assumptions of the occasionalists following Geulincx and Malebranche rejecting a possible Cartesian *influxus physicus* in the brain and assuming “occasional” interventions of God.

naturalistic world. What conditions events in the soul and the spiritual world are motivations and motivations can be immediately understood. Causal relations are discovered as causal laws in the naturalistic attitude with the aid of experimental research (295–96).

The spirit depends partially on nature but this nature is the nature of the natural attitude and not the physical nature of the naturalistic attitude. If we strike out the spirit, no nature is left. But the spirit as isolated individual spirit and its motivations without a personal community is left if we strike out nature (207). Individuality in the spiritual sense is absolute individuality and has its motivation in itself. It is the *heacceitas* in which concrete essence and existence cannot be separated (300). The individuality of real things in the natural attitude is a relative individuality and determined by external causality. It is an open individuality that emerges and can vanish in the course of events. Objective nature is a correlate of the naturalistic attitude and not a pre-given transfinite whole in the actual Now of lived experience. It is only given in the progress of the research of the natural sciences that is open for revisions and corrections (299).

The appendices offer in most cases other versions of the analyses in the main text. There are, however, also (a) additions considering a possible transition from the spiritual attitude to the transcendental phenomenological attitude and (b) one addition in which the spiritual and historical world is characterized as lifeworld. There are finally (c) additions that are relevant for the methods and the system of the spiritual sciences.

(a) Psychology is the basic discipline of the spiritual sciences first as empirical descriptive psychology and then as eidetic psychology. Reflections on the presuppositions of psychology prepared the path to the idea of a pure phenomenology, the eidetic and then the transcendental reduction in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. This first approach has epistemological and philosophical shortcomings. Reflections on the presuppositions of the empirical spiritual sciences in general and the structures of the spiritual world in eidetic intuition include all regional ontologies and all a priori disciplines. They offer a new and comprehensive path to pure phenomenology (IV, 313–14).

As understanding sciences, the spiritual sciences presuppose empathy. They are empirical positive sciences of persons, social communities, and the formation and genetic transformation of persons and social communities. Real things and real nature are reduced to constitutive unities given in intersubjective regularities (XII, II, 348, 363–64, 369–70).

The naturalistic attitude presupposes an abstractive reduction. No abstractive reduction is required for the transition to the spiritual attitude. The world of the spirit world is the world of the natural attitude, the world of the original experience of persons and their social and natural environment. Transcendental phenomenology is the absolute spiritual science. Only one step is required for the transition from the spiritual attitude to transcendental phenomenology, the phenomenological reduction (XII, 354, cf. 366, 369).

A person has a history and this history implies in its horizon the historical world of past and present cultures. Historiography is the description of true history

as a consistent experience from the viewpoint of the actual historical presence of the historian. History is (a) originally accessible in empirical descriptions of the environment of persons and social communities. It is (b) explicable in a universal empirical morphology on the level of objective science and it is finally (c) explicable in a priori descriptions of the essential structures (*Wesensformen*) of persons, their environment, and their historical horizon (XII, 11, 353–55, 371–72).

The history of the natural sciences is as history a special discipline of the spiritual sciences but that does *not* imply that real nature is an object of the spiritual sciences. Nature is an object of the natural sciences and persons as living bodies as well as all other spiritual objects are accessible for the natural sciences as physical objects. There is thus not only an opposition but a remarkable parallelism between the natural and the spiritual sciences.³⁶

- (b) Of significance for the further development of phenomenology is that the term “natural world” in appendix is replaced by the term “lifeworld” in appendix XIII and what is said about history in appendix XII is said about the lifeworld in appendix XIII.³⁷ The spiritual world was characterized in XII as the world of the natural attitude. Lifeworld is, hence, a new term for the world given in the natural attitude.
- (c) Setting aside the passages about psychology and history and their methods and a remark about linguistics, *Sprachforschung* (XII, 367), no other disciplines of the human sciences are mentioned in *Ideen I*. An outline of a system of the objects of the spiritual sciences can be found only in Appendix V. Mentioned are (V, 315 f) (1) the general structures of the natural environment of humans and human communities, (2) Humans and animals in the environment, (3) Commodities (*Güter*), works of art like artifacts, tools etc., and (4) Customs and moral principles, laws, language etc. i.e., in general the systems of norms and conventions that determine social personal communities. Communities that are communities without a will and goal directed actions are called social personalities, e.g., linguistic or ethnic communities.

Objects given in spiritual life have a genesis. There are (1)³⁸ biographies interested in the genetic developments of individual persons and (2) different types of histories, (2.a) the histories of concrete social communities, towns, nations etc.; (2.b) histories of the arts and the sciences and other irreal (ideal) objects; (2.c.) histories of social change and the development of mankind in general and including the pre-historical origin of humanity and its animal-like ancestors.

³⁶ XIV pp. 390 ff, esp. 392–93. What is said in appendix XIV, probably from 1917, is at least *prima facie* not compatible with the refutation of this parallelism in chapter 3 of Part III. Cf. the notes to the text of the editor, pp. 423–24.

³⁷ 373–75. Both texts were written in 1917. Cf. editorial remarks, pp. 418, 423.

³⁸ The enumeration in the following list is added.

Concluding Remarks

Ontological foundations of the sciences are regional ontologies. The ontological apriori of empirical sciences can be discovered in morphological reflections on the empirical material and beyond that in eidetic intuition. The transcendental phenomenological justification of this a priori requires the analysis of the constitution of eidetic intuition and of the regional ontologies.³⁹

The task of *Ideen II* was the analysis of the constitution of the ontological foundations of the sciences. The task of *Ideen III* was the analysis of these foundations.⁴⁰ What *Ideen II* offers is the analysis of the constitution of the different foundations of the natural and the spiritual sciences. The phenomenological analysis was able to justify Dilthey's intuitions and to eliminate its shortcomings.⁴¹ What can be found in *Ideen III* is an explication of the ontological foundations of psychology.⁴² An analysis of the constitution of personal communities and the social lifeworld can be found in *Ideen II*. Nothing is said in about the foundations of the other social sciences in the *Ideen III*. Apart from the analysis of the constitution of intersubjectivity, especially as presented in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*,⁴³ not very much beyond that can be found in Husserl's later works, but it can be assumed that Husserl thought that the work of Alfred Schutz would fill this gap.⁴⁴

³⁹ *Ideen III*, Hua V, Chapters 1, 2 §§5–7, Chapters 3 and 4, cf. Appendix I, §6.

⁴⁰ Some remarks about the ontological foundations of physics can be found in Chapter 2, §11.

⁴¹ Cf. above fn. 30, and about the references to Dilthey, §48 of *Ideen II* in the main text. The critique of Dilthey's distinction in Appendix XIV, 393 is incompatible with what is said in §48 and with Dilthey's distinction between the natural sciences as sciences of causal explanations and the spiritual sciences of understanding. XIV claims that Dilthey characterized the spiritual sciences as descriptive sciences and also points out that the natural sciences presuppose descriptions. Dilthey characterizes his psychology as descriptive, but this description presupposes, like all other spiritual sciences, understanding, i.e., precisely that what is analyzed as empathy in *Ideen II*.

⁴² What is said in *Ideen III* is a first sketch of the detailed analyses in the *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Hua IX and the *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, Hua XI.

⁴³ Hua I, §§42–47.

⁴⁴ Alfred Schutz was dissatisfied with the analysis of the constitution of social groups, cf. pp. 38–39, fn. 26. In his review of Husserl's *Méditations Cartésiennes* (1931) in the *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, December 18, 1932, Schutz writes "To Husserl's list I would like to a social science which, while limited to the social sphere, is of an eidetic character. The task <of such a social science> would be the intentional analysis of those manifold forms of higher-level social acts and social formations that are founded on the—already executed—constitution of the alter ego. This can be achieved in static and genetic analyses, and such an interpretation would accordingly have to demonstrate the aprioristic structures of the social sciences." Trans. Helmut Wagner in Alfred Schutz, *Collected Papers*, Vol. IV, ed. Helmut Wagner, George Psathas, and Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996), 164.

The eidetic structures of history or historiography⁴⁵ presuppose genetic constitution.⁴⁶ The genetic aspect of history together with the analysis of the animal nature and its significance for the spiritual world admits the recognition of the animal origin of the historical development of mankind in the context of the spiritual sciences.⁴⁷ Nothing beyond that is said about the constitution and the foundations, set aside the epistemology, of the historical spiritual sciences. There is no evidence in *Ideen II* that Husserl ever read Dilthey's *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*.⁴⁸ Dilthey's distinctions between the historical and the systematic or social spiritual sciences, between elementary and higher understanding, between pre-methodical and methodical understanding, and between immediate and fixed life expressions are not mentioned. There is also no evidence that Husserl was familiar with the background of Dilthey's epistemology of the spiritual sciences in the development of the reflections on the methodology of the philological historical method, hermeneutics, and histories in the literature about hermeneutics of the nineteenth century.⁴⁹ There is no word about Schleiermacher's first and second canon of hermeneutics or about Boeckh's reflections on the methodology of philology and his distinction of grammatical, individual, historical, and generic interpretation and critique.⁵⁰

The task of *Ideen II* is the analysis of the constitution of the ontological foundations of the empirical sciences. This analysis is the presupposition for but it does not yet include a phenomenological epistemology of the empirical sciences. It is, hence, not a shortcoming of *Ideen II* that nothing is said about the problems belonging to the epistemology of the spiritual sciences and especially the historical spiritual sciences.⁵¹ The theoretical cognitive attitude of empirical sciences in general brackets the practical interests of the lived experience in the present lifeworld.

⁴⁵ Both terms are used as synonyms. The methodologies of hermeneutics and histories of the nineteenth century distinguished historical research and historiography as representations of the results of historical research. See *Hermeneutics Method and Methodology* I.c., fn. 25, §10 on Droysen.

⁴⁶ Husserl distinguished later between genesis as subjective genesis and generation as the genesis of intersubjective communities in manuscripts 1929–1936 published as *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität III*, Hua XV.

⁴⁷ Appendix V, 316.

⁴⁸ Cf. above, fn. 24 and 25.

⁴⁹ Cf. §§8, 9, n. 44.

⁵⁰ Philology, and its methodology, hermeneutics, the basic discipline of the philological historical method and histories is not mentioned in *Ideen II*. What is mentioned is linguistics (*Sprachforschung*), but this covers only the lowest level of Boeckh's methodology, grammatical interpretation and critique.

⁵¹ A phenomenological epistemology of the empirical sciences requires more than the phenomenological givenness of the ideal objects of mathematics. The distinction of adequate and inadequate evidence is not sufficient because there is no flawless adequacy of evidence, e.g. of presently recognized “laws of nature.” Knowledge in the empirical sciences remains fallible. This must be added to the investigation of LI Zhongwei, “Towards a Husserlian Conception of Epistemology” in: *Advancing Phenomenology. Essays in Honor of Lester Embree*, eds. T. Nenon & P. Blosser, (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), sect. 4 and 5, pp. 124f.

It has, however, roots in basic needs of the lifeworld.⁵² This root is in case of the spiritual sciences the practical need to avoid misunderstanding and not-understanding in the process of understanding in communications. The first step of a phenomenological analysis of the epistemological problems of the spiritual sciences is the descriptive analysis of the difference between the temporal structures of the understanding of bodily expressions of other persons in the present and the physically fixed “works of the spirit” of authors in the past. This step determines the epistemological distinction of the historical and the social spiritual sciences. The historical sciences are restricted to the interpretation of the physically fixed “works of the spirit” of authors of the past. Misunderstandings and failures of understanding in present communications can be eliminated in dialogues.⁵³ The interpretation of fixed life expressions of authors in the past need methodologically guided interpretations. The first methodological canon for such interpretations requires that a text has to be interpreted in its own and not the context of the interpreter, i.e., the canon implies a methodological abstraction.⁵⁴ Historical research presupposes such interpretations in the reconstruction of “what really happened” in a past phase of a foreign historical development.⁵⁵

⁵² Practical life is vitally interested in successful predictions of events following certain actions. This is the pre-scientific root of the theoretical interest of the natural sciences in causal connections and of the development of a scientific technology.

⁵³ Cf. §§33–35, l.c.: 44.

⁵⁴ Cf. §§27 and 36, l.c. 44.

⁵⁵ The first canon implies a methodological abstraction. The philologist and the historian has to “bracket” the prejudices of the own historical context. The “uninterested observation” of research in the social sciences requires also an abstraction. It is, hence, a mistake to assume that the methodology of the human sciences as sciences does not imply methodological abstractions.

Part II

After World War I

Chapter 9

The Spanish-Speaking World and José Vasconcelos

Antonio Zirión Quijano

***Ideen I* in Spain and Hispano-America**

The reception of *Ideen I* in Spain and Hispano-America has had two broad periods (with variations in the different countries): the first one characterized by enthusiasm and rapid expansion, with some original work employing the “phenomenological method” (or applying some phenomenological thesis), but with a limited and sometimes insufficient knowledge of Husserl’s work; the second, started roughly along with the beginnings of *Husserliana* in 1950 (in some countries much later, or very gradually), characterized by a better knowledge of Husserl’s works, a dedication to analysis and exegesis, but with a somewhat less creative spirit. It will be impossible to substantiate this broad outlook in the story that follows. Also, the fact of an independent chapter in this volume devoted to Ortega y Gasset obliges us to consider it an indispensable supplement of the present one.

The so-called School of Madrid formed around Ortega was to a certain extent responsible for the view of *Ideen I* as an extreme sort of “idealist” (and “intellectualist”) definition of phenomenology and of other peculiar distortions. In his doctorate dissertation of 1921,¹ Xavier Zubiri (1898–1983) reads the phenomenological reduction in *Ideen I* as a methodological tool that gives way to the study of essences (thus effectively merging the phenomenological and the eidetic reductions).

¹ *Ensayo de una teoría fenomenológica del juicio* (Madrid: Tipografía de la Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, 1923).

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The same understanding is found 40 years later in the lesson on Husserl in his *Cinco lecciones de filosofía*.² This set a standard that determined much of the reception of phenomenology in Spain and Hispano-America.³

Zubiri (like Ortega) was also influential in the dedication to phenomenology by José Gaos (1900–1969), who conducted his doctorate research on Husserl’s critique of psychologism and, still in Spain, prepared an “Introduction to Phenomenology” to submit in an examination for a chair.⁴ Here, Husserl’s phenomenology “is expounded in the definite way in which Husserl himself expounds it in his *Ideas*,” as “the descriptive eidetic science of the pure phenomena that integrate pure consciousness.” But as this last motif was viewed as an “idealist feature in Husserl’s phenomenology,” Gaos abandoned it in his own phenomenological work, where the phenomenological method is vaguely understood as descriptive and eidetic.⁵

Even though several other Spanish philosophers interested in Husserl had to flee from Spain (among these, Joaquín Xirau, Juan David García Bacca, and Eduardo Nicol went, like Gaos, to Mexico), Husserlian phenomenology did not lose all momentum in Spain in the post-war period. Serious interest in Husserl’s teachings was maintained through Sergio Rábade Romeo (1925–), devoted mainly to gnoseological themes,⁶ and Antonio Millán Puelles (1921–2005), whose main concerns were ontological.⁷ A student of Rábade, Javier San Martín (1946–),⁸ has been a fervent promoter of Husserlian phenomenology in Spain, and has paid special attention to *Ideen I* in several works.⁹ Miguel García-Baró (1953–), disciple of Millán Puelles and a leading figure in phenomenology today, has given in *Vida y mundo*.

² Madrid: Sociedad de estudios y publicaciones, 1963.

³ The precise role of phenomenology in Zubiri’s later and most influential thought (mainly in his metaphysics and his noology) is a matter of interpretation, but it can be said at least that this thought was developed always in a tense dialogue and discussion with main motives of Husserlian phenomenology, which are also those present in *Ideen I* (consciousness, intentionality, reality, actuality, noesis and noema, etc.).

⁴This text, together with the doctoral dissertation, was published as *Introducción a la fenomenología, seguida de La crítica del psicologismo en Husserl* (Xalapa: Universidad Veracruzana, 1960).

⁵ See *En torno a la filosofía mexicana* (México: Porrúa y Obregón, 1953), and later, *De la filosofía* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1962) and *Del hombre* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1970). I refer later to Gaos’s translation of *Ideen I* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1949).

⁶ Of interest to our story are his publications “El sujeto trascendental en Husserl,” *Anales del Seminario de Metafísica I* (1966): 7–27, and *Estructura del conocer humano* (Madrid: Gregorio del Toro, 1966).

⁷ We must refer, in our context, to *El problema del ente ideal* (Madrid: Instituto Luis Vives de Filosofía C.S.I.C., 1948), and *La estructura de la subjetividad* (Madrid-México-Buenos Aires-Pamplona: Rialp, 1967).

⁸ Raúl Velozo, from Chile, and Alcira Bonilla, from Argentina, studied also with Rábade.

⁹ Cf. above all *La estructura del método fenomenológico* (1986), *La fenomenología de Husserl como utopía de la razón* (1987), *La fenomenología como teoría de una racionalidad fuerte. Estructura y función de la fenomenología de Husserl y otros ensayos* (1994). San Martín has played also an important role in awakening awareness about the misunderstandings of the translation of *Ideen I* made by Gaos.

*La práctica de la fenomenología*¹⁰ an original exposition of the vital meaning of the phenomenological reduction with a thorough assimilation of *Ideen I*. Two disciples of García-Baró deserve mention: Agustín Serrano de Haro submits¹¹ Husserlian phenomenology to a systematic mereological analysis that vindicates its transcendental idealism (although not necessarily with this name). Pilar Fernández Beites¹² recognizes the methodological importance of the phenomenological reduction, but, based on a critique of the Husserlian separation of apodictic and adequate evidence, rejects the transcendental idealism in favor of a “transcendental realism.”

Other important works including serious considerations of *Ideen I* are *Husserl y la crisis de la razón*¹³ by Isidro Gómez Romero (also a disciple of Millán Puelles), *Retorno a la fenomenología* (1987) and *Mundo y vida en la fenomenología de Husserl* (1994), by Fernando Montero Moliner, and *La intención comunicativa. Ontología e intersubjetividad en la fenomenología de Husserl* (1989) by César Moreno Márquez.

In Argentina, the reception of *Ideen I* initiated with *Teoría del hombre* (1952) by Francisco Romero (1891–1962), where the notion of intentionality is used to define human consciousness—but there is not much of assimilation of Husserl. The thesis of the ego as an “empty pole” worked out in *Ideen I* is rejected in favor of the treatment of *Cartesianische Meditationen*.¹⁴

The most original contribution from the period is the exploitation by Carlos Cossío (1903–1987) of Husserlian phenomenology, including substantially *Ideen I*, in his influential *Teoría egológica del Derecho y el concepto jurídico de la libertad* (1944). Following Ortega’s interpretation of Husserlian eidetics as a realization of Kant’s transcendental Aesthetics,¹⁵ Cossío embarks in “phenomenological analysis” to develop “principles”—in the sense of §153 of *Ideen I*—of juridical experience. *Ideen I* is also helpful to determine the central “egological thesis” of the book: juridical intuition is seen as a *sui generis* empirical intuition of the axiological sense of a conduct, not as a “rational” insight.

Carlos Astrada, in *Idealismo fenomenológico y metafísica existencial* (1936), and *Fenomenología y praxis* (1967), interprets Husserl’s philosophical position as a “transcendental idealism” that accepts the Cartesian ontological postulates. Jacobo

¹⁰ Madrid: Trotta, 1999.

¹¹ In his doctoral dissertation, *Fenomenología trascendental y ontología* (1990), which, unfortunately, has only been published internally by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

¹² Mainly in his *Fenomenología del ser espacial* (Salamanca: Publicaciones de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1999).

¹³ Madrid: Editorial Cincel, 1986.

¹⁴ Known first in the French translation by E. Lévinas and G. Peiffer: *Méditations cartésiennes. Introduction à la phénoménologie* (Paris: A. Colin, 1931). In the essay “Pérdida y recuperación del sujeto en Husserl,” *Sur* 26 (1936): 117–121, Romero deals with some epistemological ideas of *Ideen I* and adopts the thesis of the universality of logic.

¹⁵ “Husserl wants to make the transcendental aesthetics of every thing; that is his eidetics,” (7) said Ortega in 1928 during his stay in Argentina, according to Cossío, who also finds support for this in §149 of *Ideen I*.

Kogan published (1967) a small divulgation book, *Husserl*, in which he makes a clear exposition of central themes of *Ideen I* (epochē, reduction, noema, hylē, transcendental ego, etc.), and includes some paragraphs of the book in Gaos's translation (§§1, 2, and 3; 27–32; 49).

Not being a treatise on *Ideen I*, *Genetische Phänomenologie und Reduktion. Zur Letztabegründung der Wissenschaft aus der radikalen Skepsis im Denken E. Husserls* (Phaenomenologica, 1970), by Antonio Aguirre (1927–), nevertheless makes constant use of it at each step of the investigation, mainly in the discussion of the motivation of transcendental reduction and the distinction between natural and transcendental attitudes.¹⁶

Although not exclusively centered in *Ideen I*, some works of recent scholars deserve mention. Roberto J. Walton (1942–), today the undisputed leader of Husserl scholarship in Argentina and Latin-America as a whole, has studied in “Conciencia de horizonte y legitimación racional”¹⁷ the way in which a deepening in horizon-consciousness in genetic phenomenology has influenced the formulation of the problem of the jurisdiction of reason in the fourth section of *Ideen I*, and in “El noema como entidad abstracta”¹⁸ has critically commented on the interpretation of the noema by Dagfinn Føllesdal. Julia V. Iribarne makes an analysis of phenomenological method, intentionality, and the static approach to consciousness, with intensive references to *Ideen I* in Chapter I (“Egological Phenomenology”) of *Edmund Husserl: La fenomenología comomonadología*.¹⁹ Alcira B. Bonilla, in *Mundo de la vida: mundo de la historia*,²⁰ expounds with some detail the “natural concept of the world as described in *Ideen I*.” Finally, in his outstanding studies on the notion of noema, Luis Rabanaque has frequently referred to *Ideen I*.²¹

In Colombia, Danilo Cruz Vélez (1920–2008), in his *Filosofía sin supuestos. De Husserl a Heidegger*,²² tries to show how Husserl was locked in the metaphysics of subjectivity particularly because of the Cartesian way to the reduction followed in *Ideen I*. Guillermo Hoyos Vásquez (1935–) stresses in *Intentionalität als Verantwortung. Geschichtsteleologie und Teleologie der Intentionalität bei Husserl*²³ the need to supplement the static stance on the I in *Ideen I* with the genetic approach which brings about the teleology of subjectivity. In “El pensamiento husserliano anterior a las *Ideas*,” Daniel Herrera Restrepo (1930–) points out the continuity of

¹⁶ See also his discussion of the “ways to reduction” as a phenomenological critique of experience. See in particular § 8 of Chapter II, devoted entirely to “some aspects of the Cartesian way in *Ideas I*.”

¹⁷ *Revista Venezolana de Filosofía* 20 (1985): 87–110.

¹⁸ *Analisis filosófico* IX/2 (1989): 119–137.

¹⁹ Buenos Aires: Estudios de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Buenos Aires, 2002.

²⁰ Buenos Aires: Biblos, 1987.

²¹ See in particular “X vacía, unidad e identidad,” *Escritos de filosofía* 15–16 (Fenomenología II, 1992); “Hylē, Genesis, and Noema,” *Husserl Studies* 19 (2003), and “Why The Noema?” *Phenomenology 2005*, Volume III: Selected Essays from Latin America (Zeta Books, 2007).

²² Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1970.

²³ Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976.

Husserl's thought since the discovery of the *a priori* of correlation in 1898.²⁴ Germán Vargas Guillén (1959–) has brought some methodological issues of the Third Section of *Ideen I* to the study of language.²⁵

In Venezuela, an early Ernesto Mayz Vallenilla (1925–) wrote an exemplary book on the problem of constitution as a central issue of Husserlian epistemology, as developed mainly in *Ideen I (Fenomenología del conocimiento. El problema de la constitución del objeto en la filosofía de Husserl)*.²⁶ A slighter consideration of *Ideen I* was made by Federico Riu (1925–1985) in *Ontología del siglo XX: Husserl, Hartmann, Heidegger y Sartre*.²⁷

In Chile, Félix Martínez Bonati (1929–) published a small but very valuable exposition of Husserl's view of language, considering substantially *Ideen I: La concepción del lenguaje en la filosofía de Husserl*.²⁸ The doctoral dissertation of Raúl Velozo, *El problema de la reducción fenomenológico-trascendental en Edmund Husserl*,²⁹ undertakes in its first part a critical exposition of the problem of the reduction in *Ideen I*, concluding in its intrinsic problematic character.³⁰

In Peru, besides the translations of Carlos Cueto Fernandini³¹ and some early texts on Husserl by Alberto Wagner de Reyna (1915–),³² attention must first be paid to *Sentido del movimiento fenomenológico*³³ by a rather young Francisco Miró Quesada (1918–), which examines phenomenology from the point of view of absolute knowledge, and in whose two first parts expounds and interprets many passages of *Ideen I*—a work that he quotes, as does the Argentinian Cossío, by the way, from the English translation of 1931.³⁴

²⁴This essay (*Revista Franciscanum VI/18(1964): 207–235*) was also influential for the overcoming in Colombia of the interpretation of Husserl's thought by Th. Celms.

²⁵See the Second Study (“Hacia una ontología del lenguaje”) of his *Fenomenología del ser y del lenguaje* (2003).

²⁶Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1956.

²⁷Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1966.

²⁸Santiago de Chile: Anales de la Universidad de Chile, 1960.

²⁹Published only internally by Universidad Complutense de Madrid in 1982.

³⁰Velozo uses many motives of *Ideen I* (mainly the notion of synthesis) in his detailed study “Kant y Husserl” (1985), and gathers other aspects of the same work in “Ética e intersubjetividad en Husserl” (*Revista Venezolana de Filosofía*, 39/40 (1999)).

³¹He translated Husserl's “Introducción a la Lógica formal y transcendental,” *Letras* 8 (1937): 424–36, and Levinas's “Sobre las Ideen de Husserl,” *Letras* 6 (1937): 142–69. This last article was also published in another translation in Mexico years later: “Sobre Ideas de Edmund Husserl,” trans. Tania Checchi González, *Revista de Filosofía* 36/111 (2004): 7–41.

³²“La egología fundamental de Husserl, base para una fundamentación de las ciencias,” *Revista de la Universidad Católica del Perú* 5–6 (1938): 151–65, “La refutación del psicologismo por Husserl,” *Revista de la Universidad Católica del Perú* 12 (1944): 1–17.

³³Lima: Sociedad Peruana de Filosofía, 1941.

³⁴Rosemary Rizo-Patrón has made a detailed critical comment of Miró Quesada's book in her essay “La filosofía de Husserl en el Perú,” *Encuentros y desencuentros. Estudios sobre la recepción de la cultura alemana en América Latina*, eds. Miguel Giusti and Horst Nitschak (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 1993), 101–172.

Augusto Salazar Bondy (1925–1974) labors in his doctoral dissertation from 1953 (published as *Irrealidad e idealidad*)³⁵ to construct a critique of Husserl's eidetic doctrine (mostly in *Ideen I*), but he does so based on serious misunderstandings.³⁶

Apart from her meticulous study of *Ideen I*,³⁷ Rosemary Rizo-Patrón (1948–) merits a special mention for her pedagogical dedication to this book since 2004, a dedication that is having fruits in the construction of a very useful interactive Reading Guide of *Ideen I* in “wiki” platform.³⁸

In Mexico, the rejection of José Vasconcelos (1882–1959), for whom Husserlian phenomenology was a mere “entertainment for ideologists,”³⁹ was only an extreme case of a rather common representation of Husserlian phenomenology as a more or less distorted intellectualism. Adalberto García de Mendoza (1900–1962) considers *Ideen I* intensively in his *Lógica*,⁴⁰ but serious confusions spoil his pedagogical intentions. Curiously, *Ideen I* is not considered in *La filosofía de Husserl*,⁴¹ by Antonio Caso (1883–1946).⁴² In *El perfil del hombre y la cultura en México*,⁴³ Samuel Ramos (1897–1959) applied to Mexico Ortega’s prescription contained in the dictum “I am I and my circumstance, and I cannot be saved if I cannot save this circumstance.” So, if it be proved that Ortega was inspired by §27 of *Ideen I*, “I and my surrounding World,”⁴⁴ we would have a clear repercussion of Husserl’s book in this first attempt at a Mexican self-knowledge, a trend that later developed into the current called “Philosophy of the Mexican.”

Several Spanish philosophers in Mexican exile actively promoted phenomenology. Joaquín Xirau (1895–1946) published in 1941 *La filosofía de Husserl*,⁴⁵ one of the first global expositions in Spanish of Husserl’s philosophy, where *Ideen I* is given an

³⁵ Lima: Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1958.

³⁶ This has been shown by Rizo-Patrón in the essay quoted in note 34. Salazar Bondy includes extracts of *Logische Untersuchungen* and §§ 2 and 3 of *Ideen I* in his anthology *Lecturas filosóficas* (Lima: Ediciones Educación Renovada, 1965).

³⁷ Patent in “La actualidad de *Ideas I*. Reconsideración de sus interpretaciones críticas,” *Acta fenomenológica latinoamericana* III (2009): 79–104, and in many of her other essays.

³⁸ <http://wiki.pucp.edu.pe/ideas1/> (April, 2011). The Interactive Guide includes, besides a solid introduction to Husserl’s thought, a complete paraphrasis, paragraph after paragraph, of *Ideen I*, with explanatory and elucidatory comments, links (substantial and hypertextual) among the different parts of the book and with other works by Husserl, and a glossary.

³⁹ See his *Lógica orgánica* (México: Ediciones de El Colegio Nacional, 1945). For Vasconcelos phenomenology is an anachronistic essentialism and Platonism, and abstractionism far away from concrete life. He proposed an “inverted epochē” (about which we will deal in the main part of this chapter).

⁴⁰ México: Ediciones Cultura, 2 vols., 1932.

⁴¹ México: Imprenta Mundial, 1934.

⁴² The Spanish translation by Gaos appeared in 1949, three years after Caso’s death.

⁴³ México: Espasa-Calpe Mexicana, 1934.

⁴⁴ See Mario A. Presas, “Ortega, el abandono de la fenomenología” (*Escritos de filosofía* 15–16 (1985): 83–105), who refers to Diego Gracia’s book, *Voluntad de verdad. Para leer a Zubiri* (Barcelona: Labor, 1986), where one can read that “without a doubt here [in §27 of *Ideen I*] we have the close root of the Orteguian apothegm.”

⁴⁵ Buenos Aires: Losada.

important share. José Gaos became a great promoter of phenomenology in Mexico, and, due to his translation work,⁴⁶ also in Hispano-America as a whole. His peculiar understanding of the phenomenological method, applied intensively within his *Philosophy of Philosophy*, included the “rule” of the conceptual clarification stipulated by Husserl in §§65 and 66 of *Ideen I*. Juan David García Bacca (1901–1992) expounded and criticized Husserlian phenomenology in several works: Phenomenology resumes for him in the disconnection of the natural attitude as formulated in *Ideen I*, but it also embraces also the eidetic attitude: a most characteristic text of phenomenology is therefore the one in which Husserl affirms that “‘fiction’ constitutes the vital element of phenomenology, as well as of all eidetic sciences.”⁴⁷

In “Los antecedentes de la reducción fenomenológica” and “La ‘reducción a la inmanencia,’”⁴⁸ Luis Villoro (1925–) brings to light the continuity of *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen I* as developments of the same project that attempts to sustain two seemingly opposing motives: objectivity of logical truth and the intentional character of knowledge.

Gaos’s Spanish version of *Ideen I*⁴⁹ has been a pillar of Husserl studies in Spanish. Together with his other translations of Husserl, it established a canonical vocabulary for the study of Husserl until this very day. Although usually considered an excellent translation, the serious mistakes and misunderstandings of all kinds that it contains⁵⁰ convinced me that it required a complete recasting. A new translation, under

⁴⁶ Together with Manuel G. Morente, Gaos translated, still in Spain, *Logische Untersuchungen* in 1929, and started his translation of *Cartesianische Meditationen*, published in Mexico in 1942 without the Fifth Meditation: *Meditaciones cartesianas*, trad. de José Gaos, México: Fondo de Cultura Económica y El Colegio de Mexico. His translation of *Ideen I* was published in 1949.

⁴⁷ The text is in § 70 of *Ideen I*. García Bacca’s text is “E. Husserl y J. Joyce o Teoría y práctica de la actitud fenomenológica” (*Revista Filosofía y Letras*, XV, 1948). See, by García Bacca, *Filosofía en metáforas y palabras* (1945) and *Nueve grandes filósofos contemporáneos y sus temas: Bergson, Husserl, Unamuno, Heidegger, Scheler, Hartmann, W. James, Ortega y Gasset, Whitehead* (1947).

⁴⁸ Both essays were published, with other pieces on Husserl, in *Estudios sobre Husserl* (México: UNAM, 1975). The first one was published here for the first time; the second one was first published in *Diánoia* XII (1966): 215–35.

⁴⁹ *Ideas relativas a una fenomenología pura y una filosofía fenomenológica. Libro primero: Introducción general a la fenomenología pura*, trad. José Gaos, México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1949. It was made most probably on a copy of the 1928 edition of Max Niemeyer. In 1962 a second edition appeared, considering all the novelties (appendices, index, etc.) of the first *Husserliana* edition (Hua III, ed. W. Biemel, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1950). This new edition has had several printings until 1997. Gaos made a series of annotations in his copy of the 1928 edition of *Ideen I*. The present writer brought them to light in “The marginal notes of José Gaos in *Ideas I*,” *Husserl Studies* 12/1 (1995): 19–53. Curiously, Gaos’s version received upon appearing only one review, by Eli de Gortari, “Sobre *Ideas relativas a una fenomenología pura y una filosofía fenomenológica*,” *Revista Filosofía y Letras* XVIII/36 (1949): 370–74, who presented the work critically from the point of view of a radical scientism.

⁵⁰ As already said, I was first alerted about the errors in Gaos’s translation by Javier San Martín in personal communications. Later I compiled them in “*Ideas I* en español, o de cómo armaba rompecabezas José Gaos,” *Investigaciones Fenomenológicas* 3 (2001): 325–71. A new compilation with many additions (but without commentary) can be found now in <http://www.paginasprodigy.com/azqm/Err-II.html>.

my name, that deems *Ideen I* not as a “classic” work (as Gaos’s translation did), but as a book that provides tools for a working philosophy, is now in the process of being printed.⁵¹

On José Vasconcelos’s Inverted *Epochē* and the Limits of Language

Of the several milestones in the history of the reception of *Ideas I* (or even of the whole of Husserl’s philosophy) in the Spanish-speaking countries, none is more interesting—at least to my phenomenological taste—than a certain blatantly hyperbolic criticism proffered by José Vasconcelos in a short passage of his last philosophical work. In this book, entitled *Todología*,⁵² Vasconcelos—one of the most renowned Mexican philosophers of the first half of the last century, who was 70 years old when this book was published in 1952—intended to register the “final conclusions” of his experience; so we will not deal here with some fleeting ideas or juvenile witticisms, but with results of a long effort to reach a wisdom that only could be integrated “at dusk.”⁵³ This is an important warning of the seriousness of his critical proposal, even if he presents it as a “trick” or as an “astuteness”; but my concern here is not Vasconcelos’s philosophy or wisdom, nor even the dubious soundness of his critique of Husserlian phenomenology, but only the way in which his proposal contrasts with the idea and the program of this phenomenology, and, above all, the way in which, paradoxically, it might incite and encourage an investigation of a kind (a phenomenological kind, of course) that he believed to be utterly misguided. From a historical point of view, it is interesting to observe that the accusation of logicism and intellectualism that the Vasconcelian criticism implies is just an extreme case of one of the most common tendencies in the reception of Husserl’s works in Mexico and most of the Spanish-speaking countries.

The criticism in question is embedded in the proposal of an “inverted *epochē*” and a “paradisiac thinking.” Vasconcelos presents it early in his book as a tricky way to put the reader in one stroke within the world-view that can be deduced, so he says, from the combined knowledge of physical experience, reason, aesthetic experience, and mystic experience or revelation. Although Husserl is mentioned in the

⁵¹ It has been made on the second *Husserliana* edition of *Ideen I* (Hua III/1 and III/2) by Karl Schuhmann, and therefore it includes many texts that were lacking in Gaos’s version. The new translation will appear in a coedition of UNAM and Fondo de Cultura Económica, the editorial house that has been publishing the first version. The terminology of *Ideen I* is extensively included in the multilingual *Glosario-Guía para Traducir a Husserl* (<http://www.ggthusserl.org>) and the work has been also considered in the project of a bilingual Husserl Dictionary (<http://www.diccionariohusserl.org>).

⁵² México: Ediciones Botas.

⁵³ See the Prologue to *Todología*, in *Obras completas*, Vol. IV (México: Libreros Mexicanos Unidos, 1961), 817.

exposition, Vasconcelos does not refer to any one of his works. A translation of *Cartesianische Meditationen* was published in Spanish in 1942, and the first book of the *Ideen* in 1949,⁵⁴ just 3 years before *Todología* (both in José Gaos's translation). It is safe to assume that with his reading of *Ideen I*, cursory as it should have been, Vasconcelos confirmed his long-standing view on Husserlian phenomenology as an “entertainment of ideologists,”⁵⁵ and decided to take, with the proposal of an “inverted epochē,” a vigorous measure against it.

His proposal consists in “invert, in our benefit—Vasconcelos’ words—the fundamental hypothesis of Husserl,” that is, the “phenomenological reduction,” which consists in a “mental effort that disregards the physical reality, puts it in brackets, to occupy itself at once with concepts and only concepts. This odd method leads to the curious aberration of replacing the living world of nature with a mediocre conceptual imagery devoid of life....”⁵⁶

It is worthwhile to quote it in full:

We will use a philosophical license ... that will allow us to bracket all the ideological structure of ideas and dialectics, to attempt a thought without ideas, made only of images. We will reach reality in direct intuition, disregarding the universals which are of current use; we will contemplate the concrete tree, without any reference to its genera. I do not analyze whether it is a pine or a palm; I elude all classifications: I look at a robust tree at the center of a meadow; I don't think in other meadows, I impress in my mind the particular tree surrounded by grass, the only grass that I am looking at, and in a similar particularization, I go over the walls that limit the garden and ascend with the gaze to the firmament ...

If I stop and think of the tree, the meadow, the houses, I leave the living reality and enter into the world of ideas; I imitate then the photographic camera that is incapable of following the living miracle of being, a being that dies when it becomes an abstraction, and lives again only when it shines, singular and concrete.

Living within the concrete ..., I take part in a life that, lacking another name, I have entitled paradisiac, figuring that this is the way the world was seen by Adam and Eve, before the sin. Because the sin, while limiting the faculties of consciousness, obliged us to build those apparatuses of reduction, glasses for myopia which are the abstract voices that I am obliged to use when I say tree, a name that embraces a multiplicity of diverse vegetables, and what I would like to express and remember is this tree, specific and unique, which is the object of my complacency.⁵⁷

We can convince ourselves, I guess, that there is no need to recover the lost paradise in order to live life in, so to speak, individual and concrete terms, and that the idea that it was a sin that obliged us to use concepts, or conceptual meanings, to communicate to each other our experiences, is, to say the least, very risky. On the other hand, it is certainly revealing of Vasconcelos's understanding of phenomenology that what seems to be no more than a verification of a limitation essential to language, turns into a criticism of a phenomenology based on reduction, charging it with something that lies already at the heart of linguistic communication. But there is more.

⁵⁴ See notes 46 and 49.

⁵⁵ Vasconcelos, *Lógica orgánica*, in *Obras completas*, Vol. IV, p. 496.

⁵⁶ *Todología*, ed. cit., p. 856.

⁵⁷ *Todología*, ed. cit., 856–58.

Along with this criticism, he longs for “a language that would have a name for everything (which is what is fair, because there are not two things equal in the creation); and an infinity of names in correspondence with the infinity of beings.”⁵⁸ As long as I do not possess this language, I see myself obliged to abbreviate, to simplify, and come up with signs that sacrifice singularity, specificity and individuality of millions of beings, and do not come to “designate the precise tree of that day and that hour.”⁵⁹ “And I say man with pain, because it is not fair to reduce to an abstraction not even the most humble of these beings ...”⁶⁰ This discomfort of Vasconcelos with the “idealism” that language involves, and his craving for “something like a telepathy to reveal with loyalty the most humble of our perceptions,”⁶¹ along with the “paradisiac thought,” which consists in the “possibility of distinguishing the multitude of the creations, associating them with the multitude of words that probably God employed to engender them,”⁶² might undoubtedly bring a very acute consciousness of the essential limitations of language, and give impulse to develop what Fritz Mauthner called a “critique of language.” Of course, for Vasconcelos would have been a real setback to discover that such a demarcation of the limits of language could be made with the help of phenomenology, and to a certain extent with the phenomenology whose program is established in *Ideen I*.

It is unnecessary to emphasize what the proposal of Vasconcelos to have “an infinity of names in correspondence to the infinity of beings”⁶³ really implies. Given the differences on the tree from a moment to the next, considering “its relationships, its proportions, its lights, and what my emotion and my memory add to the view,”⁶⁴ we would need in fact, only for this one tree (which is “one,” and “tree,” only for our old language), as many names as the number of possible adumbrations under which we can have an intuition of it. But these adumbrations would not be only perceptual, but also emotional, associative, relational, and so forth... Now, the same would be for the meadow, for the walls, the sky or each patch of sky, the grass or each leaf of grass, etcetera, etcetera. In sum, because there are no two identical intuitions, or two identical moments of intuition, we would need a name for each object under each one of the momentary intuitions or lived experiences that we would have of it. The result is the idea of a vocabulary of a totally unruly vastness. And there are still some restrictions to avoid and some dimensions of variability to integrate in the proposal. But I will let things rest at this point.

It is rather clear that this idea of an inverted *epochē*, with its paradisiac thought, is not very fruitful as a real possibility of a new kind of language, and of a thought made with that language. A language that cannot make use of common names

⁵⁸ Ibid., 858.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., 859.

⁶³ Ibid., 858.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 857.

cannot function as a language. But perhaps Vasconcelos is pointing in an opposite direction. Perhaps his elimination of all generalization does not try to substitute one language with another, but to show us the way that reality looks if we look at it with no language at all. Or in other words, perhaps he is trying to avoid linguistic generalizations just to expound what must remain, as inexpressible, outside of language. I will explore this conjecture, but not from within the thought and works of Vasconcelos, but with the help of Husserlian phenomenology. A complete study would require much more than *Ideen I*, but I will stick here to *Ideen I*.

Husserl introduces formally the theme of expression and signification in §124. This is, as is well-known, a new stratum over the basic stratum of the acts that, as such, possess, before or independently of their possible expression, a sense, a more or less explicated sense. The new stratum of expression is in fact a bilateral stratum, given the need to distinguish its corporeal or sensuous side (the verbal sound) from its non-sensuous or non-corporeal side (the side of signification proper). Like Husserl, I will not consider here the relation between these two sides, the form of their union, etc. I refer all my comments only to the non-sensuous side of the signification proper, because for them it is indifferent if a verbal sound (or a written or gestural sign) is present or given or not.

What is proper to expressing, that is, to signifying, resides in giving “conceptual imprint,” or the peculiar form of “conceptuality” to the noematic sense of an act and to its reference to an objectivity. I will suppose that this is well understood. I perceive a blackbird that starts flying and say, or I only think, meaningfully, “There flies a blackbird!” as in the well-known example of the Sixth Logical Investigation. As long as here, in the exposition of the example, I had to imprint conceptually the perceptual noema to express it when I referred to it in its pre-expressed condition (saying precisely “I perceive a blackbird that starts flying...”), every possible disagreement or discrepancy between this perceptual noema, as yet not expressed, or the perception as such, and its expression, remains hidden. This expression, as Husserl remembers, may even take the name of *expressed* (or “*expressive*,” as Kersten translates) *perception*, due to the fact that there is a coincidence in essence between the expressive stratum and the stratum subject to the expression. This notwithstanding, Husserl remarks with a certain emphasis how little justice has been rendered by the literature (in his time, of course) to the great problems concerning the relationship between the “expressive mental processes” and the “non-expressive ones,” and “what the latter undergo in supervening expressings.”⁶⁵ Among such problems, Husserl mentions above all the distinction between this sense and the essential moments which lie in the pre-expressed, and the signification of the expressive phenomenon itself and its own moments. We are all aware of the distance, so to say, that lies between the senses of the singular perception of the blackbird that

⁶⁵ Hua III/1, 287; *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1982), 296. (I abbreviate this edition as “*Ideas*.” In some quotes I modify the translation slightly.)

starts its flight, and the signification confined in its expression, or the signification of this expression as such. It can be said that all problems or issues discussed or programmatically introduced in the remaining paragraphs on expression or *logos*, touch in one way or another this vast and important issue of the relationship between the stratum of the pre-expressed sense and the stratum of the expression or, more precisely, of the signification of the expression. This is also the space where my contribution will be situated.

§126⁶⁶ is devoted in its entirety to the issues of the generality and the completeness of the expression. Husserl mentions in the first place the lack of completeness that consists in the fact that the expression *stamps* in a conceptual-significational way only a part of the synthetical forms and materials of the substratum (of the sense to be expressed). In the Husserlian example of the shouting to the house “The carriage! The guests!”⁶⁷ the “whole substratum” of lived senses that are searching expression is much more complex than the mere perceptual sense of the perception of the carriage plus the non-intuitive sense of the representation of the guests (which are inside the carriage and not yet visible). We let aside this kind of incompleteness, which Husserl treats as accidental, because we cannot find in it any threat to the capabilities of language, that is, any sample of its limits. We can always feign the complete expression that corresponds with the incomplete one; for instance: “The carriage that I am quite sure is carrying the guests for whom we have been waiting is finally approaching the house,” or something like that. So we will deal in what follows only with complete expressions (either real or simulated), that is, in Husserl’s words, with expressions where the expressive superstratum is expressively extended over the whole substratum.

The main incompleteness of expression, because it is essential, is the one brought about by its *generality* or *universality* (*Allgemeinheit*), whereas all lived experiences, even the ones that refer to a generality, are singular, individual, unique, even though they can be classified by a more or less general kind or type. This classification, of which Husserl gives some examples, is not of interest for us now. Much more interesting for us is the following apparently obvious corollary of the essential incompleteness of the expression: “Everything determined more precisely in the unity of expression is itself again expressed universally.”⁶⁸ This means that if I would like to complete the expression (say, “There flies a blackbird!”) of my perception, with the expression of some particularities of the perception, this expression would be in its turn also universal: “There flies with sudden impetus a beautiful white-collared blackbird.” The beauty, the collar and its whiteness, the impetus and its suddenness, do not pertain only to this individual blackbird. Even the expression “This blackbird” has not an individual range of application or use. This, which

⁶⁶ I am leaving aside §125, about the modalities of the effectuation and the method of clarification, even though these issues might prove in the long run very important for our research.

⁶⁷ Hua III/1, 291; *Ideas*, 299.

⁶⁸ Ibid.; *Ideas*, 300.

of course is not a theoretical novelty, is phenomenologically expressed in this way: “It is inherent in the sense of the universality belonging to the essence of expressing that all the particulars of the expressed can never be reflected in the expression. The stratum of signifying is not, and of essential necessity cannot be, a kind of reduplication of the substratum.”⁶⁹

Now, here we have a real limit of language. And it is precisely this limit that the proposal of Vasconcelos tried to break with the inverted *epochē*. But let us explore in little more detail the alternative to the Vasconcelos’s proposal for dealing with the universality of language if for some reason one dislikes it. What happens with that attempt, apparently rational and allowed by Husserl, of working in the more detailed determination of the expressed substratum, in new expressions, which, although still general, would individualize or particularize the expression further and further? “There in the corn-field, at about 50 yards from this place, and against a deep blue sky devoid of clouds, flies with sudden impetus a quite rare for these lands but also quite beautiful white-collared blackbird!” Proceeding in this way, we would be covering with signification and expressivity more of the elements of sense (or elements of the noema) of the lived-experience which is here the substratum at each step. Our route would be in fact very similar, or even essentially the same, to the one we followed when we were looking—within Vasconcelos’s proposal—for every bit of reality experienced to which we could assign a name in order to forge a language without general terms; only that this time we are not building an infinite vocabulary for an infinite reality, but just using our real language for describing in its general terms that very reality in an each time more precise and particular way. Even if the Vasconcelian plan of naming with a proper name, individually, all things that we can find in our experience, as minutely and variously determined as possible, goes against the general essence of language, and the other plan of an each time more detailed description and expression of the experience avows at every step the very nature of language, there is indeed a common core in both tasks, and it would be very interesting to explore this core and also to bring to light their differences.

Both enterprises are *in the end* absolutely unfeasible in the sense that they can perhaps start, but they cannot be carried out until the end—if there is some end. To follow the stream of experience, swimming along with it, to use a Husserlian expression, in order either to express all its particularities in general terms (in the “rational” option) or to give them individual names (in the Vasconcelian proposal), is an impossible task, if not for other reasons, simply because it takes more time to express or to name than to live the experiences themselves. Perhaps there is even an infinite regress involved in the task, since during the time of the expression or the naming we would be also experiencing, and we would need to express or name all particulars which this experiencing brings with it, and so on *in infinitum*. But what if we remain with just one experience, or with an instant of an experience? This would be a harsh limitation for Vasconcelos, but there is no other way to absorb in our language the whole of the living experience than effecting in it an artificial limitation to an

⁶⁹ Ibid.; ibid.

instantaneous or to a very short affair: my perception of this tree here in this meadow right now and just now, my perception of the blackbird that starts to fly right now and right there in front of me.

We have arrived to our point of departure. The question is if there is not also some intrinsic impossibility in the complete and exhaustive expression of a single lived experience artificially limited to one living present—or in the exhaustive naming of all its parts and moments. When Husserl states the dictum of the expressibility of all acts, he refers explicitly to acts, not to all intentional lived-experiences. But even in acts, not all is expressible, but only the noematic nucleus...⁷⁰ This is a serious limitation, because outside of the noematic nucleus there remain a lot of things. All horizons, for instance (a very important instance), lie outside the noematic nucleus. But this limitation perhaps is not as drastic as it may seem, because, as is recognized also by Husserl, all living experience which is not an act may be converted into an act, and in this way becomes also expressible. Therefore, if we can allow the time sufficient for this conversion of potential lived-experiences and its correlates into acts, then there still do not seem to be some intrinsic impossibility in the expression of any lived-experience.

Husserl himself points in an interesting direction. Right after stating that the stratum of signifying cannot be a reduplication of the substratum, he adds: “Whole dimensions of variability in the substratum do not enter at all into the expressive signifying; they, or their correlates, do not indeed ‘express themselves’ at all: thus the modifications of relative clarity and distinctness, the attentional modifications, and so forth.”⁷¹ It seems clear to me that these factors of the sense of an experience cannot reach expression when I am giving expression to the noematic nucleus as such. “There flies a blackbird!” does not tell at the same time the relative clarity with which it is given, or the degree of attention put in it. But I cannot see any objection to the possibility that these factors can indeed be made objects of new reflective acts, and in this way be expressed, even though always with a certain degree of indeterminacy. I will say, for instance, that I saw the flight of the blackbird (in that past experience previously expressed) in full clarity, or in a somewhat blurry view, or very attentively, or almost distracted, out of the corner of the eye, etc. Many other features in an experience cannot reach a more precise and determinate expression, just as the clarity or the attentiveness of the experience. The color, for instance, its exact shading or nuance, for which Husserl once recognized that we usually lacked the names. I said “a white-collared blackbird”, but was it a pure white, or a somewhat grayish white, or it had some yellowish tone? Et cetera. In short, all these factors or elements seem to be particularities or peculiarities of the experience that could be expressed (with the normal indeterminacy of practically all expressions) when we advance in the process of a more determined and precise expression. They are only relative ineffabilities.

⁷⁰ See Hua III/1, 271 and 286.

⁷¹ Hua III/1, 291; *Ideas*, 300.

I will discuss, very briefly, some recent theses advanced by Husserlian scholars concerning some peculiar experiences that they call “private.” Rochus Sowa⁷² has proposed that the species of sensible sentiments, like pain, in contradistinction with the species from the sphere of the optical, the acoustical, etc., are essentially private in spite of its ideality as species. I can discuss (agree or disagree) with others about the difference between two colors that I see, but not about the difference of two pains that I feel. Now, I would reply that, even though both experiences are subjective and individual, both of them have also their ways to render their contents, or their correlates (the species of pain or of color, etc.), intersubjective. The external or public identification of colors hides the essential fact that I cannot see the color from the other’s perception, so the identification of the color cannot come from the fact that I can really compare my color with the color of the other. I cannot enter into the ways to overcome this impossibility or the parallel impossibility in the case of pain. But these ways exist. Otherwise, we could not explain the fact of everyday life that we can talk about having or not exactly the same pain (meaning of course the same species of pain). Also, a scientist or a doctor can, on the basis of his scientific, medical knowledge, contest the intensity or the nature of a pain that a patient claims to have. Certainly he can be wrong. But disagreement and agreement in this regard are possible.

Pains, then, are not as such ineffable. Lanei Rodemeyer presents a similar (but somewhat disappointing) case.⁷³ Even if she asks, very pertinently: “how does phenomenology answer the issue of *meanings for which there are no words*,”⁷⁴ her treatment makes it clear that she refers to meanings, or senses, *for which there are still no words*. This is still interesting, but it is not our question about a possible insurmountable obstacle to take some sense or combination of senses to the level of expression. This is our question, and the existence in consciousness of some still anonymous “embodied meanings” (new or strange corporeal sensations and the like) that after some intersubjective and linguistic process find their place in language, has not yet given us an answer.

If we cannot find some particular sense, some particular determination of experience, that must remain as a matter of principle exempted of language, then it seems that the more precise and detailed determination of an experience (of *any* experience), of which Husserl thought, could proceed in principle forever without finding anything refractory to expression. And I want to submit here the hypothesis that in fact we could not find it. To clarify this in a detailed manner

⁷² Rochus Sowa, “Deiktische Ideationen. Über die mit den Wörter ‘dies’ und ‘so’ vollziehbaren okkasionellen Bezugnahmen auf ideale Gegenständlichkeiten,” *Meaning and Language: Phenomenological Perspectives*, Phaenomenologica, 187, ed. Philip Mattens (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 105–23.

⁷³ Lanei M. Rodemeyer, “‘I Don’t Have the Words.’ Considering Language (and the Lack Thereof) Through the Phenomenological Paradigms of Temporality and Corporeality,” *Meaning and Language: Phenomenological Perspectives*, 195–212.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 195–96.

would require of course some more phenomenology than the bit that I have displayed here. We still have not shown, for instance, why feelings or emotions, or moods, which are usually credited with a solid ineffability, are not really ineffable. But the question of their expressibility, as well as the expressibility of any other feature or item in experience, either a noetic or a noematic sense or a part thereof, is, broadly said, the same as the one concerning pain, which is already a sensible feeling. That is, it can also be reduced to the question of whether the feeling or emotion, or its noematic correlate, can be lived, or “had” in a lived-experience, by another and not only by myself, that is, if it can be considered as intersubjective or not.

This question in turn implies this other question: if it can be apprehended ideally as a species. We include here not only the easily identifiable (and already baptized) sentiments such as joy, sadness, enthusiasm, etc., but also all sorts of subjective moods or states, for instance those caused by the ingestion of alcohol or drugs. No doubt, names can be lacking in many cases, as in Rodemeyer’s example, but the question is if the feeling, the mood, or the state about which we are talking about can in principle be identified by more than one person, no matter how long or difficult the process of detection and identification would be. The fact that the expression of any non-doxic lived-experience cannot be itself non-doxic and involves a doxic detour is a peculiarity that does not contravenes its expressibility.

Are we then to conclude that there are no real or *absolute ineffability*, that we can only encounter *relative ineffabilities* like all those features of an act neglected, and even necessary neglected, in a particular expression? We just linked the question of expressibility to the question of the possibility of “sharing” an experience or a sense with another. An absolute ineffability would be something absolutely individual, something absolutely incapable of being shared. Along with the above hypothesis, I submit here the thesis that there is such something, and it is life itself. Life itself, just as we live it at every moment, is absolutely individual and *einmalig*, and therefore absolutely ineffable. Every single *Erlebnis*, however passing or poor, however humble or modest, of every single subject of consciousness, is, in the way it is concretely lived, and as long as we leave its integrity intact, inexpressible.

I assume that the invitation of Vasconcelos to see reality, or our experience of it, with other eyes than the eyes of conceptual language, is an invitation to see all things in their pristine, non-conceptual relation to this our own life, that is, the life that is always lived in full *Erlebnisse*, not in the nuclear sense alone with its noematic core alone. And I cannot find better eyes to look at it than the eyes of phenomenology. It is phenomenology that describes expression as expression of the noematic core of an *Erlebnis*, the discipline that can also approach and describe a full *Erlebnis* as such and uncover its absolute ineffability.

The ineffability of life as lived, and of its correlates, is the only absolute ineffability that I can find, or at least, and this is an important qualification, the only

absolute ineffability that I am sure that phenomenology can describe. I will not myself make any statements about some other possible ineffabilities found in some experiences of an extraordinary and exceptional character, like those suggested in mystic writings or other kind of religiously or metaphysically inspired literature. About the authenticity of these suggestions or intimations, I will not say a word, and I will also not say anything about the possibility that phenomenology can approach those experiences.

I must still escape from a pair of misunderstandings. First: if I say that all parts or moments in the full noema or the full *Erlebnis* are only relative inefficiencies, why is it that their sum is not only relatively ineffable, but absolutely so? Can I not, at least in idea, express one after the other the complete repertory of a complete *Erlebnis*, and in this way express it, not perhaps in a single and completely integral expression, but in a series of continuous steps? The answer is that the elements of an *Erlebnis* form a combination, a composite whole which is absolutely unique and *einmalig*. It is this uniqueness and *Einmaligkeit*, the absolute singularity of this composition in the *Erlebnis*, what makes it impossible that it be lived by other, or even that it might be lived again by one self. Furthermore, this resulting composition, that is, each *Erlebnis* as such, as lived, impresses passively the ego that lives it, and leaves in it a trace, and this impression or trace has also a noematic correlate which is also absolutely unique (something that I have called in other texts the “coloring of life”).⁷⁵

And second: every single thing, object, state of affairs, of whatsoever category or dimension, and in spite of being experienced as an instance of a kind or type in whatever level of generality, is always for me a correlate of a full *Erlebnis*, of my integral life, and as such it has a character or a quality stamped in it (passively, of course) that makes it also ineffable. So, not only my life, but also each and every “thing” within my life, and the world as a whole and in every one of its parts, is, so considered, also ineffable, just because it cannot have in or for any other life the same character it has in and for mine. We can make expressions about all of them in the exact measure in which we can detach them from our individuality, from our personality. Expression and conceptualization mean de-individualization, de-personalization. Some things resist quite well: other persons, above all their faces, their gestures and postures..., only in extreme situations can all that lose its own individuality in our dealings with it.

All this, I am afraid, is nothing new. And this is perhaps one of those phenomenological insights that at first sight have the air of something rather trivial or

⁷⁵ See on this “Sobre el colorido de la vida. Ensayo de caracterización preliminary,” *Acta Fenomenológica Latinoamericana*, Vol. I (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Perú, Fondo Editorial, 2003), 209–21; and “El resplandor de la afectividad,” *Acta Fenomenológica Latinoamericana*, Vol. III (Lima, Perú / Morelia, México, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú / Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, 2009), 139–53.

superficial. But I still have not seen—of course this can be due to my scarce phenomenological culture—the phenomenological detailed exposition of this phenomenological insight. So, even though there is still much work to do just to clarify the idea and the goals of this very research,⁷⁶ I think that there is here the opening of a legitimate avenue of research for phenomenology. Let this essay be a suggestive start.

⁷⁶Besides the careful exposition of what was here said briefly, what is also needed is, first of all, a complete classification of all relative ineffabilities, with an exposition of the reasons of their being so, and also the study of the ways in which their ineffability may be and is effectively surmounted. But mostly needed is the description of concrete life as an ineffable stream of experiences, as the land where language grows and gets cultivated, so a phenomenology of language can be adequately rooted. It is also needed, for obvious reasons, to link this research with the research on intersubjectivity.

Chapter 10

***Ideen I* in Italy and Enzo Paci**

Rocco Sacconaghi

Abstract The first part of this chapter provides a brief sketch of the publishing history of *Ideen I* in Italy. The most influential philosopher in the publishing history of Husserl's work in Italy was Enzo Paci, professor at the State University of Milan. Like his teacher Antonio Banfi (who first brought Husserl's work to Italy), he is considered one of the founders of the so-called Milan School. The second part of the chapter considers Paci's transcendental philosophy, and in particular his original interpretation of the Husserlian epochē. Paci gives an existential interpretation of the epochē, conceived as an act "required by life itself." It recognizes four elements in Paci's version of the epochē: first, the epochē is a denial of abstract mundane data; second, it allows a poetic intuition of the cosmic form of experience; third, it determines the assumption of responsibility toward the world; and fourth, it is the first and essential political action.

A Historical Introduction

In 2002, a new edition of Husserl's *Ideen I*, edited by Elio Franzini and translated by Vincenzo Costa,¹ was published. In that same year, together with Paolo Spinicci, they published *La fenomenologia*,² an important and complete introduction to the work of Edmund Husserl. These two events mark a turning point in Husserlian studies in Italy. A new translation was needed because, as is explained

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Idee per una fenomenologia pura e per una filosofia fenomenologica, vol. I, Libro Primo, Introduzione generale alla fenomenologia pura*, ed. E. Franzini, trans. V. Costa (Turin: Einaudi, 2002).

² V. Costa, E. Franzini, and P. Spinicci, *La fenomenologia* (Turin: Einaudi, 2002).

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in the translator's preface, old text was "outdated and unfulfilling from a philological point of view."³

In fact, the same year that the first Italian translation was made by Giulio Alliney (1950) on the basis of the first two German editions (1922 and 1928), a new German version of *Ideen I* was published. Edited by Walter Biemel, the original text had Husserl's own comments inserted later, which expands and sometimes replaces some of his original wording. A new Italian translation based on Biemel's edition was then made by Enrico Filippini in 1965. But a few years later (1976), the Husserl Archive decided to publish yet another version of *Ideen I*, in which the original text was restored and Husserl's annotations and additions were included in another volume. Then, Costa writes, "first of all, it was necessary to once again present to Italian public the original text of *Ideen I*".⁴

Nevertheless, Filippini's translation played an important role in the Italian renaissance of Husserlian studies in the early 1960s, both as a "symptom" and as an "active agent." A book came out in 1960 which was symbolic of this Husserlian renaissance: *Omaggio a Husserl*,⁵ edited by Enzo Paci,⁶ then professor at the State University of Milan. This book collected essays written by major protagonists of this renaissance (S. Vanni-Rovighi, G.D. Neri, E. Melandri, L. Lugarini, G. Semerari, etc.) and an essay by the one who first brought Husserl to Italy, Antonio Banfi,⁷ Paci's professor, who had died in 1957 (he was one of the most important figures of the so-called

³ V. Costa, "Sulla storia editoriale di *Idee I* e sui criteri di questa edizione," Editor's Preface, E. Husserl, *Idee per una fenomenologia pura e per una filosofia fenomenologica*, vol. I, *Libro Primo, Introduzione generale alla fenomenologia pura*, LV. See also V. Costa, "La posizione di *Idee I* nel pensiero di Husserl," *ibid.*, 435–64. Costa is one of the most lively protagonists of the Italian phenomenological milieu. He wrote several essays and books about phenomenology and in particular on Husserl. Among others: *L'estetica trascendentale fenomenologica. Sensibilità e razionalità nella filosofia di Edmund Husserl* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1999); *Il cerchio e l'ellisse. Husserl e il darsi delle cose* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2007); and *Husserl* (Rome: Carocci, 2009).

⁴ V. Costa, "Sulla storia editoriale di *Idee I* e sui criteri di questa edizione," *ibid.*

⁵ Enzo Paci, ed., *Omaggio a Husserl* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1960).

⁶ His most important works on Husserl are: E. Paci, *Tempo e verità nella fenomenologia di Husserl*, (Laterza: Bari, 1961); and *Funzione delle scienze e significato dell'uomo* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1963; *The Function of the Sciences and Meaning of Man*, trans. J.E. Hanse and P. Piccolone (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1972). On his philosophy, see A. Vigorelli, *L'esistenzialismo positivo di Enzo Paci. Una biografia intellettuale (1929–1950)* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1987); A. Vigorelli, "La fenomenologia husseriana nell'opera di Enzo Paci," *Magazzino di filosofia* II/5 (2001): 169–95; S. Zecchi, ed., *Vita e verità. Interpretazione del pensiero di Enzo Paci* (Milan: Bompiani, 1991). For a complete bibliography of Paci's work, see A. Civita, *Bibliografia degli scritti di Enzo Paci* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1983); A. Vigorelli, "Rassegna: Bibliografia," *Il Verri* 9–10 (1986): 204–208.

⁷ Banfi's first articles on Husserl are: "La tendenza logistica della filosofia tedesca contemporanea e le 'Ricerche logiche' di Edmund Husserl," *Rivista di filosofia* XIV/2 (1923): 115–33; and "La fenomenologia pura di Edmund Husserl e l'autonomia ideale della sfera teoretica," *Rivista di filosofia* XIV/3 (1923): 208–24. On Banfi's introduction of phenomenology to Italy, see M. Mocchi, *Le prime interpretazioni della filosofia di Husserl in Italia. Il dibattito sulla fenomenologia: 1923–1940* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1990); S. Zecchi, "La fenomenologia in Italia, Diffusione e interpretazioni," *Filosofia italiana e filosofie straniere nel dopoguerra*, eds. P. Rossi and C. A. Viano (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), 15–33.

“Milan School.”⁸) It was Paci who told Filippini to translate *Ideen I* using Biemel’s text as the principal source. For the same reasons, he asked Filippini to translate Gerd Brand on the late Husserlian manuscripts and the *Krisis*.⁹ As Costa writes, “Biemel’s editorial decision is rooted in a particular context, defined by a revival of Husserlian studies that tended to favor the later developments of Husserl’s phenomenology, in order to reveal a sort of ‘new’ Husserl.”¹⁰ This was Paci’s intent as well:

Milan, September 10, 1958. My attempt is to influence Italian philosophy and culture through phenomenology. Mine is a “relational” phenomenology that would take account of the entire history of phenomenological thought and overcome existentialism. The central points are: *time*, as it was conceived by Husserl already in 1904–1905, and *relation*, as it appears in the fifth *Cartesianische Meditation* and in the *Krisis*.¹¹

Now, *time* and *intersubjective relation* are issues that Husserl treated when he wrote *Ideen I*, but their implications in *Ideen I* are still hidden, not explicit. In this sense, Paci states that “the reasons for this rebirth of Husserl’s thought” are to be found in “the publication of the Husserlian unpublished works,” because “the present culture needed Husserl and, in particular, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*.¹² Paci then interpreted *Ideen I* as a fundamental but unfinished introduction to phenomenology, not yet able to grasp the full concreteness of human experience: “Phenomenology, between the two World Wars, has remained on the level of *Ideen I*, i.e., in the stage in which Husserl has elaborated the *eidetic* perspective ... Now, phenomenology is an analysis of essences, but essences have a root, constituted by subjective and intersubjective operations.”¹³ This is what the publication of the *Krisis*, *Erfahrung und Urteil* and *Ideen II*, in Paci’s view, allowed us to make explicit. Banfi, who introduced Paci to Husserl, also had the *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen I* as references, but he was able, according to Paci, to see the further development of Husserl’s thought still implicit in *Ideen I*. In his

⁸ We should mention, as most eminent figures of this school, Piero Martinetti, Antonio Banfi, Mario Dal Pra, Ludovico Geymonat, Giovanni Emanuele Barié, Giulio Preti, Enzo Paci, Dino Formaggio (another important protagonist of Italian phenomenology, in particular for his attempt to apply phenomenological analysis to the art,) Mario Untersteiner, and Remo Cantoni. See F. Papi, *Vita e filosofia. La scuola di Milano. Banfi, Cantoni, Paci, Preti* (Milan: Guerini 1990); A. Vigorelli, *La nostra inquietudine. Martinetti, Banfi, Rebora, Cantoni, Paci, De Martino, Rensi, Untersteiner, Dal Pra, Segre, Capitini* (Milan: Mondadori, 2007); and D. Assael, *Alle origini della scuola di Milano. Martinetti, Barié, Banfi* (Milan: Guerini, 2009).

⁹ G. Brand, *Welt, Ich und Zeit: nach unveröffentlichten Manuskripten Edmund Husserls* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955); *Mondo, io e tempo nei manoscritti inediti di Husserl*, with an essay by Enzo Paci, trans. E. Filippini (Milan: Bompiani, 1960); and E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserliana vol. VI, ed. by W. Biemel (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954); *La crisi delle scienze europee e la fenomenologia trascendentale*, trans. E. Filippini, with an essay by Enzo Paci (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1961).

¹⁰ V. Costa, “Sulla storia editoriale di *Idee I* e sui criteri di questa edizione,” LIV.

¹¹ E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico* (Milan: Bompiani, 1961), 77.

¹² E. Paci, “Attualità di Husserl,” *Idee per una enciclopedia fenomenologica* (Milan: Bompiani, 1973), 9. See also E. Paci, “I temi husserliani fino al primo volume di *Idee*. 1. Sulle Ricerche logiche; 2. Sul primo volume di *Idee*,” 159–215.

¹³ E. Paci, “Attualità di Husserl,” 9.

essay *L'eredità di Banfi*, after quoting where his teacher says that “phenomenology concerns every kind of object of a higher dimension,” such as “cultural objects, state, law, church, traditions,” and therefore is able to “reveal the levels of reality’s constitution,”¹⁴ Paci writes: “That Banfi says that reality itself should be phenomenologically considered is important,”¹⁵ indeed it is a sort of “miracle,”¹⁶ because “in Husserl it will become clear in *Ideen II* [published in 1952].”¹⁷ He continues:

What is at stake here is just what usually is refused to phenomenology: its substantial *praxis* and historical nature … Husserl poses for us again … the problem of history, in a way according to which *praxis* and reflection are not divided and every particular action, although particular, has in itself the universal sense of the history and the meaning of truth, although the truth could never be something real … Banfi lived all these problems in a very radical way.¹⁸

In order to understand Paci’s perspective we should also consider the Italian philosophical environment of the time,¹⁹ but this would go beyond the scope of this chapter. Moreover, I shall not present Paci’s philosophy in each of its single aspects, either. In particular, I intend to focus on the most important consequence of Paci’s theoretical choices, i.e., a peculiar interpretation of the concept of *phenomenological reduction*—which Husserl defines clearly for the first time in *Ideen I*. On the contrary, Paci argues that before the publication of *Ideen II* and of the *Krisis* “even the return to the subject was not understood in its fundamental sense.”²⁰

In this chapter I show how Paci gives an existential tone to the *epochē*, interpreting it as the only act through which the subject starts considering himself and the other as such. His existential interpretation has different nuances, which I intend make explicit. First of all, I present the nature of “cognitive *praxis*” inherent to the *epochē*, which is not only an epistemological method, nor a blind decision of the will. Second, I consider the affinities that Paci finds between phenomenology and Marx’s thought, showing the *epochē* as an overcoming of (scientific and social) alienation. In this sense, the *epochē* is a negation of mundane data, a denial of the *abstraction* in which we are alienated, aimed at establishing a society in which every subject is recognized as such. Third, I make explicit the *poetic* character belonging to the *epochē* in Paci’s view. The *epochē* achieves a poetic intuition of the universe’s cosmic structure, in which we discover ourselves as the transcendental center of everything precisely insofar as we are *human*. Fourth, I consider the two fundamental dimensions of experience that the *epochē* reveals to us, and by which is itself made possible: the *irreversibility* of time and the original “economic” *need*. I focus on

¹⁴ A. Banfi, *Principi di una teoria della ragione* (Milan: Isi, 1926), 567–68.

¹⁵ E. Paci, “L’eredità di Banfi,” *Idee per una enciclopedia fenomenologica*, 26.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ About the Italian philosophical context of the time, see P. Rossi and C. A. Viano, eds., *Filosofia italiana e filosofie straniere nel dopoguerra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991); E. Garin et al., eds., *La filosofia italiana dal dopoguerra ad oggi* (Rome: Laterza, 1985).

²⁰ E. Paci, “Attualità di Husserl,” 9.

Diario fenomenologico as the main source for this chapter because in both form and content it constitutes the place where his phenomenological perspective emerges in a very clear way. Paci's peculiar conception of the *epochē* shows the hidden implications of phenomenology and its underground affinities with other philosophical perspectives. In this sense, the source of Paci's greatness is at the same time his biggest shortcoming: an enormous capacity to “live again” what another philosopher has already lived, through a radical reinterpretation of that philosopher’s work. Phenomenology in Italy was born under and has developed thanks to Banfi and Paci, and through the perspectives established by them. Now phenomenology can at last be considered more directly, referring to Husserl’s original text. Every critique of Paci should at least take note of his great philosophical fecundity.²¹ In fact, Costa, Franzini and Spinicci—who favored a different understanding of Husserl—are all former students of Giovanni Piana,²² another decisive figure in the development of phenomenology in Italy, who was, in turn, a student of Enzo Paci.²³ Paci then, in a sense, taught phenomenology in precisely the same way that Husserl did, that is, regardless of their respective intentions, *de facto* their teaching encouraged their students’ corrections, revisions, and even dissent.²⁴

²¹ We must name, as Paci’s most outstanding students, Pier Aldo Rovatti, Salvatore Veca, Stefano Zecchi, Alfredo Marini, Amedeo Vigorelli, Andrea Bonomi, Giovanni Piana, Carlo Sini, Sandro Mancini. They were all protagonists in the diffusion and development of phenomenology—not only Husserl’s, but in general—in Italy. There are, of course, also several scholars from other universities who contributed (and some of them are still contributing) influentially to the study and the diffusion of Husserlian phenomenology in Italy. We already listed some of them among the authors involved by Enzo Paci in the 1960 volume *Omaggio a Husserl*. Apart from them we should also mention Angela Ales Bello (University Lateranense, Rome); Mario Sancipriano (University of Siena); Mario Signore, Antonio Ponsetto and Giorgio Scrimieri (University of Lecce/Salento); Enrico Garulli and Vittorio De Palma (University of Urbino); Franco Bosio (University of Verona); Massimo Barale (University of Pisa); Renato Cristin (University of Trieste); Aldo Masullo (University of Naples); Bianca Maria D’Ippolito (University of Salerno); Virgilio Melchiorre and Michele Lenoci (Catholic University of Milan); Pasquale Pantaleo and Arcangelo Licinio (University of Bari); Stefano Besoli (University of Bologna); Francesco Saverio Trincia (University La Sapienza, Rome); Roberta Lanfredini (University of Florence); Nicoletta Ghigi (University of Perugia); Corrado Sinigaglia (University of Milan); Luca Vanzago (University of Pavia).

²² Among his important works, see in particular *I problemi della fenomenologia* (Milan: Mondadori, 1966); and *Elementi di una dottrina dell’esperienza. Saggio di filosofia fenomenologica* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 1967).

²³ He wrote his thesis on Husserl’s later manuscripts under Paci’s supervision, published as G. Piana, *Esistenza e storia negli inediti di Husserl* (Milan: Lampugnani Nigri, 1965).

²⁴ Among others, Carmine Di Martino, professor at the State University of Milan and former student of Carlo Sini, after a long study of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Derrida, in the last years has devoted several courses to the interpretation of Husserlian phenomenology, trying to point out within it an original philosophy of experience. See for instance C. Di Martino, “Il senso comune nella fenomenologia,” *Valore e limiti del senso comune*, ed. E. Agazzi (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2004), 165–90; “Esperienza e intenzionalità nella fenomenologia di Husserl,” *Intenzionalità e progetto. Tra filosofia e pedagogia*, ed. F. Cappa (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2007), 17–46.

Paci's Interpretation of the *Epochē*

Paci assumes the concept of phenomenological reduction without denying either its possibility or its necessity. In his perspective the reduction still plays a central role: We *can* effect the reduction and we *need* to do it in order to enter into the philosophical dimension. The phenomenological reduction in Paci's philosophy can appear as an existential "dramatization" of its version originally worked out by Husserl.

First of all, Paci argues, "reducing to subjectivity is an act required by life."²⁵ Hence, according to him, there is an inexorable demand that belongs inherently to life itself. Why does our life have this demand? In Paci's perspective, "life has to reconstitute itself because it has gone far away from its living principle. Life loses itself, wears off, dies."²⁶ It is an existentialization of the naïveté of the Husserlian natural attitude: "We are actually lost ... in what we believe is real life but, rather, is the life in which the living principle is "covered," hidden, forgotten, ... not present to himself. This sleepy oblivion of life itself is, for Husserl, the "mundane" life characterized by losing ourselves in our mundane world."²⁷ He is speaking about consciousness' orientation in the natural attitude, essentially naïve, described by Husserl in §§27–30 of *Ideen I*.²⁸ The anonymity that characterizes subjective operations does not imply only an epistemological problem, parallel to the existential and social. It is the "living principle" itself that is forgotten. What is really under threat is nothing less than the possibility of living a human life. For this reason, the crisis of the European sciences is the crisis of our civilization. The way in which Paci conceives the *epochē* as what allows us to discover the living principle presents strong connections with Heideggerian and Marxist perspectives (besides the evident Platonic references,²⁹) as we can notice in the following passage:

Life must return to itself, to its own principle, because it is lost in the mundane. The return will be, then, a denial of "vanity" of the mundane and the most important act of phenomenology, therefore, will be the negation of the world in which we are lost. The world must be suspended, should not have our "yes," our assent, should be placed in brackets, should be denied. Suspension, "bracketing," denial of the mundane world: Here is the operation that is called *epochē*. In order to live authentically, we must strive to deny the world.³⁰

²⁵ E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico* (Milan: Bompiani, 1961), 20.

²⁶ E. Paci, "Husserl sempre di nuovo," *Omaggio a Husserl*, 10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁸ E. Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, Husserliana, vol. III/1, ed. K. Schuhmann (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976); *Ideas pertaining to a pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Fr. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1983), 51–57.

²⁹ Plato was a fundamental source for Paci since the beginning of his studies. His first work's title (an adaptation of his thesis, written under the supervision of Banfi) was *Il significato del "Parmenide" nella filosofia di Platone*, (Milan: Principato, 1938).

³⁰ E. Paci, "Husserl sempre di nuovo," 11.

For Paci the most important issue is the effort to *live authentically*. The dimension of intellectual knowledge is not parallel, but rooted in this fundamental issue. Like Heidegger, Paci makes explicit this aspect of phenomenology, emphasizing the originality of the pre-categorial dimension of experience. However, the category of *praxis*,³¹ which plays in Paci's view a decisive role in Husserlian thought, defines the original form of our relationship with the world more than the Heideggerian "care" (*Sorge*). This is, in Paci's perspective, the meaning of the Husserlian concept of life-world. Since the knowledge presents a practical basis, its development in a philosophical sense toward self-awareness participates of the same nature: "The *epochē* is not only a cognitive process. It is the insertion of oneself into a lived reality, in the temporal process."³²

According to Paci, phenomenology is not a science that should assume experience as its own *object*, "because phenomenology is life, is life itself."³³ This idea does not imply that natural life is already a complete phenomenology, but that phenomenology is required and realized by life itself in order to "grasp" itself again, to achieve a new possession of itself, precisely because it is lost:

When phenomenology adopted as its slogan "Back to things themselves," by "things themselves" it meant simply life. Phenomenology, then, is life itself and is a *return* to life ... The return is necessary for life because it has lost, because it has moved away from itself, from what makes it as a life, from what is truly alive, the living principle, the *arché*.³⁴

This idea that "getting lost" is the essential and original movement of life, and that phenomenology is the counter-movement of life attempting to return to itself, we can already find in the thought of Martin Heidegger during his first period in Freiburg, from 1919 to 1923.³⁵ Nevertheless, the way in which Paci conceives the nature of this mundane life tends to distinguish his perspective from Heidegger's. Paci presents a "feeling" for this phenomenon that is closer to the Marxist tradition: Life that loses itself is like the *alienation* described by Marx. In fact, the culmination of life's dispersion is the scientific objectivism that leads to the *reification* of the subject, the supreme form of alienation: "The central point of the relationship between Marx and Husserl is in the concept of objectivity. ... Objectification

³¹ See E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico*, 98: "In Husserl perception is never a merely cognitive fact in the narrow sense of the word. In each perception there is an interest ... a minimum and a maximum of interest. Practical situation ... Forseeable scholars' misunderstanding of Husserl's *praxis*. Knowing itself is *praxis* insofar as it is constituted ... by operations which ... tend to meaning, to truth."

³² Ibid., 45–46.

³³ E. Paci, "Husserl sempre di nuovo," 10.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ See M. Heidegger, *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*, Gesamtausgabe 56/57, ed. B. Heimbüchel (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1987); *Toward the Definition of Philosophy*, ed. E.H. Sadler (London: Athlone Press, 2001); M. Heidegger, *Ontologie. Hermeneutik der Faktizität*, Gesamtausgabe 63, ed. K. Bröcker-Oltmanns (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1988); *Ontology. The Hermeneutics of Facticity*, trans. J. van Buren (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999). On this topic, see C. Esposito, *Heidegger. Storia e fenomenologia del possibile* (Bari: Levante, 1992).

is precisely alienation in its various meanings.”³⁶ The main form of this life’s dispersion, namely, the objectification realized by the science dogmatically conceived, leads to the subject’s oblivion: As Husserl writes, “merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people.”³⁷ In the same sense, Paci argues that “the sciences are in crisis because they transform into objects those who are subjects or, in the language of Marx, because they transform social relationships between people into relationships between things ... [Husserl] criticizes objectification, which is to be understood as the Marx’s alienation.”³⁸ In Paci’s perspective the abstraction realized by capitalism has the same effect as that of the sciences that forget their roots in subjective operations: They both hide human *praxis* as the origin of every possible meaning.

At the same time, Paci interprets the Marxist perspective in the light of phenomenology. He poses the problem of knowledge—no longer conceived as parallel to the dimension of *praxis*, but deeply intertwined with it—at the heart of every political issue, as its root. For this reason he argues that the origin of the alienation is the misuse of science:

When Marx criticizes the concept of capitalist economics, he criticizes the *misuse of science* and a science that does not recognize to be determined by the historical situation and reality. From this point of view, a science so conceived, is abstract ... Capitalism, through the misuse of science, *transforms the concrete into the abstract*, and then considers concrete the abstraction, while hiding with its ideology this transformation.³⁹

The fundamental problem has a “cognitive” (to be interpreted in a wider sense) nature because it is in the cognitive acts that the “play” between the recognition of the subject as such and its opposite reduction to object takes place. This recognition is the fundamental basis for every kind of *praxis*, scientific as well as political: “The *telos* or meaning of truth, both for the natural sciences and for the human sciences, is the establishment of a society of people where no man is or made object.”⁴⁰ Hence, phenomenology and Marxism have the same task: To fight against *naturalization* of man, overcoming the oblivion of original *praxis*, and trying to achieve a society in which a man is a subject and not an object.

³⁶ E. Paci, “Marxismo e fenomenologia,” *aut aut* 133 (1973): 8.

³⁷ E. Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, Husserliana vol. VI, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954); *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. D. Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 16.

³⁸ E. Paci, “Il significato dell’uomo in Marx e Husserl,” *aut aut* 73 (1963): 19.

³⁹ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁰ E. Paci, “L’enciclopedia fenomenologica e il *telos* dell’umanità,” *Idee per una enciclopedia fenomenologica*, 43. See also E. Paci, “Il significato dell’uomo in Marx e Husserl,” *aut aut* 73 (1963): 19, “Phenomenology is transcendental ... by laying concrete subjects as sciences’ base. Husserl thinks that a true society is a society in which no man is an object, or a thing, but in which all are subjects. To him the idea of this society is the *telos* of history and only this society gives a meaning to life of all men and is the very truth of the real historical movement.”

Paci does not mean to reduce phenomenology to Marxism: By showing affinities between objectivism and alienation, he wants to make explicit the political implications of the phenomenological perspective, and in particular the political power hidden in the concept of *epochē*—where “political dimension” has to be understood as the problem of intersubjective relationships. The political change depends on the phenomenological attitude and, at the same time, this attitude is not a merely intellectual act, but one’s position before the other.

In this sense, Paci writes that “subjectivity, … which through the *epochē* overcomes oblivion and alienation—namely the “getting lost” in the mundane—transcendental consciousness as a radical return to the *cogito*, here becomes a historical awareness and has a historical role.”⁴¹ The real “factor of change” is the subject, which can have an impact on society through the *epochē*, becoming therefore historically decisive. On the one hand everything begins with the subject’s decision, but on the other hand every personal decision is always deeply influenced by relationships with others.

We can find exemplifications of this idea in many passages of Paci’s *Diario fenomenologico*, which contains his philosophical reflections written between 1956 and 1961. First, it should be noted how he emphasizes the *epochē*’s character of *negation* of mundane data, abstract and therefore limiting. In this way he puts his phenomenology in the dialectical and Marxist tradition. As he writes in other essays, “the *epochē* is the refusal of the conclusiveness of data”,⁴² i.e., “the taken of awareness of the negativity of a fact in order to understand it, reveal it, transform it.”⁴³ However, in his *Diario fenomenologico* one could notice a different nuance as well, a different tone in this denial, a tone that might be defined as *poetic*:

January 8, 1958. The pavement on which I walk … the impenetrability of things. To the philosopher, to the man who lives in the philosopher, all this may become enigmatic … Everything: His city, his home, the table at which he is working. And all the events in which he lives, and the people. They are there. But in some sense I deny the events, the people and the things. This negation is fundamental … I do not accept this impenetrability, the opacity of things. By saying ‘no’ … I exercise the *epochē*.⁴⁴

I have to negate the mundane data in order to grasp their meaning, because only if I suspend the obviousness of experience, i.e., the way in which everything is already given to me (by tradition, perception, etc.), I could know something in my own life, in my personal and unique experience. The *epochē* is a “no” said to reality as naturalistically reduced, dogmatically understood, and therefore deprived of its meaning. In other words, it is the refusal of the lack of meaning or, more precisely, of its *expression*: Through the *epochē* I say “no” to the way in which I would live spontaneously, naturally—a way that for essential reasons prevents me from feeling and knowing the meaning present in my experience.

⁴¹ E. Paci, “Sul significato dello spirito in Husserl,” *aut aut* 54 (1959): 348.

⁴² E. Paci, “Vita e ragione in Antonio Banfi,” *aut aut* 43–44 (1958): 59.

⁴³ E. Paci, “Fondazione fenomenologica dell’antropologia ed enciclopedia delle scienze,” *aut aut* 96–97 (1966): 29.

⁴⁴ E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico* 41–42.

The world is there and until now I thought ... that its being was obvious. Now I know that its being is obscure, enigmatic, problematic. My “no” is the “no” to a world without a meaning for me, even if it has had a meaning for others, even if its soil carries the traces of others’ footsteps and is loaded with the sediments of the countless meanings it has had for the others. But these meanings are crystallized, are sleeping ... In order to awaken them I must say “no” to everything, which is sleeping, which is obscure, hidden.⁴⁵

How to achieve this denial, aimed at the liberation of the expression of meaning? By letting everything in my personal experience resonate, without predetermining the limits of this experience, and thematizing the way in which the world offers itself to me. This is the return to the *cogito* and the obedience to the Husserlian “principle of all principles,”⁴⁶ in Paci’s interpretation. So, for instance, the whole history of a city can become *present* in my personal experience.⁴⁷ We can notice the poetic tone intertwined with the philosophical interest in many passages of Paci’s phenomenological descriptions.⁴⁸ These pages are not the result of improvised pseudo-literary exercises to which Paci devoted himself overnight. On the contrary, in his theoretical perspective, they have a decisive philosophical function. This form of description, in fact, should be the beginning of a philosophical research. In other words, this diary does not want to be the final aim of phenomenology, but its essential (and never completed) introduction. In this diary, according to Paci, we can face the new dimension to which we are led by the *epochē*, which opens the level of our original and concrete experience: “The *epochē* ... makes us live in the concreteness of experience.”⁴⁹ In fact, the *epochē* leads us to a radical questioning about the truth of our personal lives, and in this sense Paci writes also that “phenomenological attitude ... is Socratic”⁵⁰:

What do we really do and live every day? This question allows us to understand how, in a particular sense, phenomenology makes a *diary* possible, a new form of diary, where abstract words tend to disappear in order to make room for what they are indicating ... This diary is not yet a phenomenology, but can be the introduction to it.⁵¹

This idea is based on the belief that “truth is not a static thing, but a lived meaning, to be always recuperated in the exercise of the *epochē*.⁵² From this point of view, the diary is a privileged form of such an inquiry: “Most of all, in the *Diary* emerges the sense of time, the incarnation of philosophical truth in everyday life ...

⁴⁵ Ibid., 42.

⁴⁶ E. Husserl, *Ideen I*, §24, 44.

⁴⁷ See E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico* 77–78: “September 18, 1958. Venice: The past that becomes, in Husserl’s sense, presentification and that, at the same time, keeps alive the lived horizon. Continuous comparisons between today and yesterday, presence of all that happened here, known and unknown. Venice seems to bring back any gaze which was ever cast on her and to communicate to us secret messages of unknown lives that reach us as if they had remained in some way inside the stones of the great palaces, in the labyrinth of the ‘calli’, on the doorsteps worn out by the waves.”

⁴⁸ See ibid., 11, 25, 41.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 50.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 48.

⁵¹ Ibid., 6.

⁵² Ibid.

for me the subject is a mode of relations and an experience lived in the first person. Again: We can start only from what we ourselves experience.”⁵³ The form of the inquiry, then, is suggested by the structure of the experience itself.

But here one could refuse this perspective, denying the legitimacy of this effort to extend personal experience to philosophy, and even to that kind of philosophy (phenomenology) that wants to constitute itself as rigorous and fundamental science, as first philosophy. So the problem that imposes itself is: What kind of *universality* might be present in a diaristic, personal and poetic expression of one’s experience? Without universality, in fact, a description has no scientific value, and could not ultimately be shared nor communicated. Paci claims that phenomenology reveals to us a new form of universality, which presents a *cosmic* form. In the first page of his *Diario fenomenologico* he explains this perspective: “In every fact, in every isolated thing, there appear connections with all the things, with all other facts ... And each fact is individuated, even if it has the form of all the other facts of its genre ... No fact is purely individual, no fact is purely universal.”⁵⁴ Since poetic intuition can grasp this cosmic horizon in every particular thing, poetry could become the basis for a philosophical and scientific inquiry. One could notice a Goethian influence in this perspective, as Paci himself shows in an essay dedicated to the German thinker:

Goethe observes: “Nobody wanted to admit that science and poetry could go together. They were forgetting that science was generated from poetry, and they were not considering that, in a different time, poetry and science could amiably meet each other again at an upper level, with a mutual benefit.” In order to accept Goethe’s position it should be enough think at Lucretius’ *De rerum natura* and Boscovich’s poem on Newton’s physics.⁵⁵

Moreover, the awareness of this cosmic perspective is not only at the beginning of phenomenology in a *chronological* sense, but also in a *transcendental* sense, as its radical condition of possibility. In this sense, after a long description of how his teacher Antonio Banfi taught him the phenomenological method⁵⁶ starting with asking him to describe the vase that he had before him, Paci writes:

The description of the vase contains in itself the meaning of my world, of my life, of everybody’s life. It has it in itself as a truth that is to be lived, increasingly achieved ... according to an infinite *telos*. Infinite, but potentially present in each of my experiences, if I try to examine it, to turn it into a *phenomenon*.⁵⁷

⁵³ Ibid., 7–8.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁵ E. Paci, “Frammenti da una lettura fenomenologica di Goethe,” *aut aut* 277–278 (1997), 4–18. Also Whitehead, another fundamental reference for Paci (who dedicates him several essays and introduces his work in Italy, making his scholars study him and translate in Italian his works), presents a similar position on this issue. See A.N. Whitehead, *The interpretation of science. Selected Essays* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961), 167: “It is essential to keep in mind that science and poetry have the same root in human nature. Forgetfulness of this fact will ruin ... our educational system.”

⁵⁶ See E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico*, 84–88.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 88.

In this passage we can see that for Paci the grasp of the infinite's presence in our experience is the reason why phenomenological description does not remain a positivistic psychological analysis: In describing every single aspect of my consciousness' life, in fact, I can discover a connection with everything.

Now, this cosmic structure can be revealed through our personal experience and *only* through it, because "the individual is unique, but it is all."⁵⁸ Therefore, Paci argues, "philosophy starts when this individual discovers he has within himself essential relationships with everything else."⁵⁹ It is a sort of Pascalian revival of Kant's Copernican revolution in an existential key: "I am the first fact ... Not the subject of idealism, not the absolute, but the concrete encounter of finite and infinite, of light and shadow. I, as a man, as that man who has within himself the world, even the world that he ignores."⁶⁰ It is Husserl, according to Paci, that raises up to a philosophical level this perspective⁶¹: The German philosopher shows us that in every *ego* takes place an "involvement between finite and infinite, between the whole and the part".⁶² For this reason, continues Paci, "Husserl speaks about a 'cosmic' correlation in which there are always subject and object, the 'I' and the world."⁶³

Paci interprets those sections in *Ideen I* on the absoluteness of consciousness in these terms.⁶⁴ He describes *intentionality*, our consciousness' essential structure, as a relation that is at the same time *immanent* and *transcendent*. Paci indicates the condition of possibility of this paradox in the Husserlian model of *temporality*: "The relation must be transcendent without creating an abyss between *ego* and *cogitata* ... In other words, the relation must be both immanent and transcendent. It is very important that the last Husserl clearly understands that such immanence-transcendence is possible only as temporality."⁶⁵ It is the way in which Husserl conceives the *internal temporal self-awareness* that allows us to grasp this original relation within our experience: "Husserl does not conceive time as confined in the atomic instant, and therefore characterizes the instant as something wider, as enlarged time, relational and not atomic. The *Gegenwärtigung* is this *enlarged presence*".⁶⁶ In the so-called living-present we have then a finite point in which the past and the future condense themselves:

The *Gegenwärtigung* is yet a part of time, but in this part there are, in the modalities of retention and protention, both the past and the future, as well as, in the *monad* all the universe is present. From this point of view, the *Gegenwärtigung* is a finite part of the time in which the whole as infinite is present.⁶⁷

⁵⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid., 12: "But this is Husserl, and it is the opposite of absolutization of the 'I', because it is the relational mediation, the self-recognition of the truth which man has within himself and which must be realized in history, in time, in the world. Individuation as the meaning of truth."

⁶² E. Paci, "Sulla presenza come centro relazionale in Husserl," *aut aut* 58 (1960): 240.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ See E. Husserl, *Ideen I*, §§55, 128–129.

⁶⁵ E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico*, 69.

⁶⁶ E. Paci, "Sulla presenza come centro relazionale in Husserl," *aut aut* 58 (1960): 237.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 237–238.

Paci argues that Husserl's analysis leads us therefore to identify the real transcendental in *man* as that point in which the encounter between finite and infinite, the whole and the part, nature and spirit, takes place.⁶⁸ He recognizes "Husserl's 'thing itself' in *concrete human life*, as daily work, in touch with nature."⁶⁹

In particular, there are two fundamental dimensions of the structure of our experience, in which the two modalities of time-consciousness, retention and protention, reflect themselves. The first one is the *irreversibility* of our time, because of which we cannot negate what has already happened: "What has happened is here, insuppressible, present in us. What has happened is the unavoidable side of what has already been lived."⁷⁰ First of all, this is a structure that we cannot elude, an essential law of our lives: "The essential and necessary modality of time is irreversibility."⁷¹ Second, every attempt to overcome this modality, trying to return to the "naturalistic origin" is the opposite of the search for the "original," which is the transcendental: "The original, the authentic, is not the return to the starting point, *it is not going back* (the irreversibility of life prevents it), but rediscovering the nature, new, after the *epochē*."⁷² This idea might appear contradictory within Paci's thought, since the *epochē* is first of all a form of negation of what is ready-made. Yet, this concept is an integration of what we have stated about the negative nature of the *epochē*. In fact, Paci writes that "time has an irreversible direction, but this direction can be transformed by man into sense, meaning of history, of reality."⁷³ In other words, far from implying a realistic and dogmatic perspective, the concept of irreversibility allows precisely for a teleological perspective, because from irreversibility can arise the fundamental experience of *lack*, that is, in turn, the source of every form of *need*: "Since it is not possible to go back, the pain for the loss of the mother appears as need, as *eros*, as direction toward truth, as intentionality ... Organic and psychic tension toward truth, daily work needed to realize it."⁷⁴ The category of *need* is the second category that defines the structure of our experience: "Irreversibility is one of the fundamental structures of the life-world, just like economic need."⁷⁵ Paci interprets this category in an economic sense because, on the basis of our essentially corporeal constitution, "the need that can be satisfied with economic goods is more original than any other needs."⁷⁶ As we said, it is irreversibility that makes economic needs possible: "the essential and necessary modality of time is irreversibility, on

⁶⁸ See E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico*, 64.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 39.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 76.

⁷¹ Ibid., 108.

⁷² Ibid., 45.

⁷³ Ibid., 109.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁶ E. Paci, "Due temi fenomenologici. I. Fenomenologia e dialettica; II. La fenomenologia e la fondazione dell'economia politica," *aut aut* 116 (1970): 24. On this issue, see also E. Paci, "Per una fenomenologia del bisogno," *aut aut* 123–124 (1971): 117–26.

which ... ‘economic structure’ constitutes itself.”⁷⁷ This is the dimension of man’s life that allows him to address the future, transforming time in history. In other words, it is the way in which life itself demands the *epochē*. A dialectical relationship between *irreversibility* and *need* leads us to the *epochē*, which in turn reveals them to us. There is a passage in which Paci describes in a synthetic and suggestive way the new perspective on the world that arises from the *epochē*: “*Everything is connected to a cosmic perspective*. The universe emerges in me as a need, as a project, as a way in which it can proceed and in which ... it engages the whole of itself.”⁷⁸ With the negation of mundane data the world appears no longer as “already made,” and therefore is also “no longer incomprehensible.”⁷⁹ It starts to express itself through me, i.e., through my experience of it: “We feel it in our body and in the mutual feeling of our bodies. It is a world ... that *expresses itself* from within. And it is the more internal the more it expresses itself, the more it is alive in exteriority.”⁸⁰ After the *epochē*, then, one perceives the things as if they were “just born now” and therefore he has to let “them introduce themselves,” because he is not their “owner.”⁸¹ For this reason Paci speaks about this experience as “a good that one can live only if he accepts it as a gift.”⁸² These two words, *birth* and *gift*, characterize our experience as essentially temporal and therefore irreversible.

But experience is not only a “show” to contemplate and a gift to receive. The universe, in Paci’s perspective, “thinks itself in us, and in us it struggles to become clear, to come to light.”⁸³ In this sense he writes that it emerges in me *as a need*, opening me toward the future, toward new possibilities. Toward the world that is rising in us we are *responsible*: “Man, who perceives himself as being invested by the meaning of the cosmos, who feels his responsibility toward the sense of this universal process, perceives the dignity of all perspectives and all forms, of minerals, of vegetables, of animals, of things and of persons.”⁸⁴ In this sense we can understand better why Paci insists on claiming that phenomenology is a *praxis*:

The tree [*after the epochē*] is not any longer in the air, it is “crystallized,” and with it everything else. It is waiting, and exists in this waiting. It has no longer an obvious, ordinary meaning. I must give it its meaning. The world is awaiting its sense, its meaning, its aim from me, the subject. I am the instrument through which the world can become true, can transform itself into truth. I have to see it as it appears to me, I have to describe it, make it become revelation, phenomenon.⁸⁵

⁷⁷ E. Paci, *Diario fenomenologico*, 108.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 25.

⁸² Ibid., 88: “This gift is the always renewed and always renewable meaning of my life, of the others’ life and of the world’s life.”

⁸³ Ibid., 58.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 42–43.

Paci argues that this transformation of the world must be achieved in the light of the *ideas*, which are not something *real*. They can act in the history and change it as the *telos* toward which man is attracted. The emergence of these ideas is made possible by the phenomenological negation of mundane data: “The truth overwhelms me; it appears to me as an infinite idea that I keep trying to get closer. I have made a revolution … The world that was already there … is no longer a world already made, but to be made. It has become a task, a goal that gives meaning to life.”⁸⁶ This is the *transcendental* nature of Paci’s phenomenology, which shall not become an *ontology*, like Heidegger’s, but a *praxis*, because truth is something to achieve: “What phenomenology strives for, then, is not the inquiry on being, a being which would be behind things. Its aim is the truth which is not behind us but in front of us.”⁸⁷ The fundamental political issue emerges as the main goal of the transcendental research:

Infinite truth lives in the finite, but the finite can never claim to exhaust it in itself … and to have realized it … The truth we are trying to reach is not a *being*, a metaphysical-theological being, but a *meaning*, which is conceived in a transcendental teleological horizon as *telos* of an intersubjective rational life—i.e., of a life in which each subject is subject for the other, not object.⁸⁸

In Paci’s view, phenomenology is first of all an education for the subject aimed at transforming society: “Phenomenology is not a form of contemplation, but an *ascesis*, in its etymological sense of *exercise*. It is a transformation of society.”⁸⁹ The start of this exercise adopts the form of a “diary [*that*] is a personal way of living the crisis, of finding the directions of the dialectic;” it is a “lived reflection, with its own limits, which seeks however an encounter and wants to realize concretely a path.”⁹⁰

Considering this last quote, we can conclude by emphasizing how in Paci’s perspective his diary takes the place of the Husserlian *first philosophy*, whose field should be the transcendental dimension opened up by the *epochē*. This dimension, as transcendental, is essentially autonomous, *pre-empirical* and therefore also *pre-human*, as Husserl explains in §§ 27–32 and 47–55 of *Ideen I*. On the contrary, for Paci the dimension to which we are led by the *epochē* is precisely human life. This is the reason why the personal and poetic descriptions of this diary can present themselves as already phenomenological, playing the role of the fundamental introduction to the research. In this consists Paci’s “existentialization” of phenomenology which allows, in turn, the “dramatization” of the *epochē*, conceived as (1) a negation of mundane data, (2) a poetic intuition of the cosmic nature of experience—as something that has an *irreversible* direction but at the same time is not “already made”—(3) the assumption of responsibility toward it and (4) a political action based on the fundamental economic needs. The poetic intuition of the cosmic form

⁸⁶ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 106–107.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

of experience develops into a political *praxis* and into a dialogue with the arts⁹¹ and the sciences. In fact, Paci had the project of a new encyclopedia of sciences elaborated in a phenomenological perspective.⁹² Moreover, one of his greatest works was the foundation and the editorship (until his death, in 1976) of the philosophical magazine *aut aut*,⁹³ in which several engagements with scientists and artists have taken place.

We might summarize Paci's phenomenological perspective by considering the double meaning of the word “*conception*,” which indicates at the same time the cognitive act of ideation (*poetic dimension*) and the physical act of conceiving a new life (*political dimension*). This is in Paci's view the double power of the *epochē*, which starts a political revolution by introducing us to a new form of knowledge.

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⁹¹ A very interesting example of the dialogue with the arts is the one that took place between Paci and Giuseppe Ungaretti. See G. Ungaretti, *Lettere a un fenomenologo*, with an essay by Enzo Paci (Milan: Scheiwiller, 1972.)

⁹² See E. Paci, *Idee per una enciclopedia fenomenologica*; S. Zecchi, “L'idea di enciclopedia fenomenologica di E. Paci.” *La fenomenologia dopo Husserl nella cultura contemporanea* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1978), 72–79.

⁹³ On the history of this magazine, see A. Vigorelli “Una rivista milanese di filosofia e cultura: *aut aut* di Enzo Paci (1951–1972),” *Rivista di filosofia* 3 (1995): 645–55; L. Boella, “La responsabilità di pensare: *aut aut* e il rapporto della filosofia con la realtà,” *La cultura filosofica italiana attraverso le riviste 1945–2000*, ed. P. Di Giovanni (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2006), 277–81.

Chapter 11

Martin Heidegger and Grounding of Ethics

Thomas J. Nenon

The Impact of the “*Ideen*” on Heidegger

The lecture courses Martin Heidegger gave in Freiburg and Marburg between 1919 and the publication of *Sein und Zeit*¹ in 1927 provide a solid basis for understanding the influence of Husserl’s *Ideen I*² and *Ideen II*³ on him and definitive confirmation that *Ideen II* is one of the main texts that he had in mind in the famous footnote where he thanks Husserl for “intensive personal guidance and the most generous access to unpublished investigations that had acquainted him with the most diverse areas of phenomenological research” (SZ 38). Heidegger’s own account in the early lectures conveys the image of two fellow researchers each pursuing phenomenology as—to use Heidegger’s words—the “original science of life in itself”

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1972), abbreviated in the following as SZ. All citations will be listed according to the page numbers in the Niemeyer edition, which are also listed in the margins of both of the published English translations.

² Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch, Husserliana*, Band III (den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976). References to Husserl’s works will be cited using the volume number from the *Husserliana* series in roman numerals followed by the page number in Arabic numbers. These page numbers are normally listed in the margins of translations into other languages, including English.

³ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch, Husserliana*, Band IV (den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952).

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(“*Ursprungs wissenschaft vom Leben an sich*”) (GA 58, 1)⁴ or simply of “*Geist*” (GA 58, 19), not only in parallel, but also in collaboration. Part of the reason for Heidegger’s close identification with Husserl was not only the fundamental insights he had gained ever since reading the *Logische Untersuchungen* beginning with his university studies in 1909,⁵ but also the trajectory that Husserl’s work had taken after his encounter with Dilthey as articulated, for example, in the Third Part of *Ideen II* and in his lectures on “*Natur und Geist*.⁶

Heidegger was certainly also well familiar with *Ideen I*,⁷ but, even after the appearance of *Ideen I*, it is the *Logische Untersuchungen* that he considers the ground-breaking work that remains the basis for own phenomenological investigations (see, for example, GA 63, 70; GA 17, 49–50). He provides a positive account of both phenomenological reduction and the noesis/noema distinction that are important new additions introduced in *Ideen I* as crucial elements of phenomenology, yet he also finds much there that is problematic and indicates that Husserl has not distanced himself as much from unquestioned assumptions of modern philosophy, especially Descartes, as Heidegger considers necessary if phenomenology is to realize its fullest potential. The two main lecture courses in which *Ideen I* are discussed explicitly and in some detail are the 1923–1924 course entitled *Einführung in die phänomenologische Forschung* (GA 17) and the 1925 course *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20).

In the 1923–1924 course, Heidegger introduces the object of phenomenological research by means of “Husserl’s up until now furthest developed position, the ‘Ideas concerning a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Research’” (GA 17, 47). He cites Husserl’s description of phenomenology “as the *descriptive eidetic science of pure consciousness*” (ibid., 139), but criticizes Husserl’s assumption that philosophy must be a science (ibid., 79–82) and its overemphasis on theoretical knowledge as the model for experience as a whole (ibid., 82–83). Between the earliest Freiburg lectures and this course in Marburg, Heidegger had come to see a difference between the basic direction of Husserl’s work and his own. He does not see Husserl’s orientation on verifiable truths as helpful for the kinds of questions now in the foreground for him. “One should note above all that truth, in as far as it is interpreted as validity, hides the

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (Wintersemester 1919/20), ed. H.-H. Gander, *Gesamtausgabe*, Band 58 (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann Verlag, 1992). References to Heidegger’s works other than *Sein und Zeit* will be cited according to the *Gesamtausgabe*, listing the volume number, followed by the page number. The English translations of the lecture courses list these page numbers in the headers of the translation text.

⁵ As reported in his own account of his life from the Foreword to his *Friühe Schriften* from 1972 (GA 1, 56).

⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Natur und Geist. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1919, Husseriana. Materialien*. Band IV (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002).

⁷ The 1914 work contains what is probably his earliest reference to Husserl’s *Ideen I* in a footnote to the section on “The Negative Judgment” (GA 1, 181). Other references to the *Ideen I* there include a distinction between simpler forms of knowledge and knowledge that takes the form of a judgment, (GA 1, 268) positive appropriations of his conception of the “noematic,” (GA 1, 282 and 310) and a footnote that cites “the valuable statements by E. Husserl regard ‘pure consciousness’ ... that provide a decisive insight into the richness of ‘consciousness’” (GA 1, 405)—all of which show that he worked through *Ideen I* soon after it appeared.

decisive problems of *Dasein*. The question is whether for historical knowledge in general the interpretation of truth as validity makes any sense. Even more questionable is it with regard to philosophical knowledge, most impossible is it in the case of the ‘truth’ of art and religion” (*ibid.*, 98). He emphasizes that “... what Husserl says about evidence is vastly superior to everything else that has ever been said about it and that he placed the issue on secure footing for the first time” (GA 17, 272–73), and he acknowledges—without reference to the specific passages in *Ideen I* to this effect⁸—“... that Husserl sees that each domain of objects has a specific evidence corresponding to its content ...” (*ibid.*, p. 273), but adds, “... by contrast, the *authentic* question of evidence in the most fundamental sense only begins with the question about the *specific* evidence of the access to Being and the disclosure of a being, of retaining and holding on to a being that has become accessible. Only within the phenomenon grasped in this way does theoretical evidence have its place” (*ibid.*). Heidegger says that *Ideen I* fails to move far enough beyond the tendencies within modern philosophy to categorize and scientifically determine everything including consciousness itself. He sees the project of determining life as the whole of experiences that are seen as individual facts instead of “understanding *life itself in its authentic Being* and responding to the *question concerning the character of its Being*” (*ibid.*, 274–75) as deeply problematic.

The fundamental character of life in its authentic Being is what he calls “temporality,” which now means above all a confrontation with one’s finitude and the fact that life is a performance (*Vollzug*) that must be understood as “call.” Life is not a fact but something that must be accomplished. This reliance on facts is what Heidegger means by “validity” in the passage cited above. The critique of truth as validity implies that Heidegger now sees Husserl’s project as hindered by his presumption the kinds of questions at stake in the truth of art and religion can be answered by intuitions that will provide the same kind of certainty and universal validity that is possible for theoretical questions.

Heidegger’s position will eventually culminate in the famous dictum from *Sein und Zeit* that the most fundamental questions must be faced with the awareness that no one and nothing can provide *Dasein* with the answer to the question of the ultimate source of meaning for one’s life and that facing up to the essential indeterminacy of the proper response is essential for authentic *Dasein*. Hence the remarks at the end of the course where he describes the task of phenomenology as “explicating *Dasein in its Being*” (*ibid.*, 278) and as “the exhibition (*Aufweis*) of *Dasein itself*” (*ibid.*, 279). What Heidegger calls the “historical” here is not a set of facts, but a point of decision. His critique of Husserl, above all of the predominant tendencies still present in his work but as expressed already in *Ideen I*, is that his orientation on reason modeled upon the search for knowledge is ill equipped to handle these sorts of questions.⁹

⁸Namely §§138–39 (Hua III, 321–24).

⁹If one wants to try to identify a “turning point” in this gradual development, a good candidate would be the lectures on *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens* (GA 60) in which the guiding model is the early Christian issue of the “conversion” to a whole different dimension of temporality—the time of eternal life versus the time of mundane existence—as articulated in the Pauline epistles. See on this issue Ted Kiesel, *The Genesis of Heidegger’s Sein und Zeit* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 176–227.

Heidegger's critique of these limitations is described not so much as a difference between Husserl and himself, but as a tension within Husserl's own phenomenological project. The countervailing tendencies that he sees as positive are articulated in the manuscripts and lectures from Husserl during precisely this period. In a footnote to the essay "*Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*" from 1924, Heidegger acknowledges the debt he owes to the method of phenomenology first laid out in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, but continues with the observation that phenomenology is much more than a "technique" (GA 64, 18). Rather it requires that "the way of investigating (*Untersuchungsart*) must be prescribed (*vorgegeben*) by the in each case specific things themselves. The author [i.e., Heidegger] owes his understanding of this fact less to that book than to intense personal guidance by Husserl himself, who familiarized him with the different content domains (*Sachgebiete*) of phenomenological research through repeated instruction and the most generous access to unpublished manuscripts" (ibid.). One can well assume that one of the primary manuscripts Heidegger has in mind here must be *Ideen II*, but explicit confirmation of this can only be found in the lecture course *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (GA 20) from 1925. There, Heidegger cites Scheler and Husserl as building upon insights from Dilthey that move the analysis of pure consciousness from a naturalistic to a personalistic perspective and recognize that, "the person finds herself in a specific self-sameness over against the world, which actively influences and which reacts back upon her; that in each moment the person as a whole reacts, not just in willing, feeling, and viewing, but simultaneously all of those in one; and that the connected life (*Lebenszusammenhang*) of the person in each situation is one that is in development" (GA 20, 164).

Heidegger further locates Husserl within the arc laid out by Dilthey and Scheler when he calls Husserl's investigations into the structures of personhood a "personalistic psychology" (ibid., 167). He reports that Husserl's first attempt to work out such a personalistic psychology began with intense work in 1914/1915 that leads to the courses on "Natur und Geist" mentioned here (and that Heidegger had recommended earlier to his students in 1919¹⁰). More importantly, Heidegger confirms that Husserl had shared the manuscripts from the "second part" of the *Ideen* with him during the winter of 1924/1925, in light of which some of the criticisms to Husserl's approach to personhood are now "in a certain way already somewhat antiquated" (ibid., 168), but his final word is that still, "he hardly gets further than Dilthey, even though his [i.e., Husserl's] analyses are in particular regards superior to his" (ibid., 173).

Here he is probably referring to the typed manuscript that Ludwig Landgrebe had just prepared based on Edith Stein's handwritten manuscripts from 1916 and 1918. However, it is possible, and even probable, that Heidegger had access to the earlier hand-written manuscripts since they were one of the few comprehensive sets of manuscripts that were available when he wrote his footnote mentioning manuscripts Husserl had lent him in the summer of 1924. There is no doubt, however, that the

¹⁰ GA 56/57, 165.

concepts and the general direction of the analyses later published as *Ideen II* were familiar to Heidegger soon after he arrived in Freiburg, both through conversations and through Husserl's lectures on "Natur und Geist." Since the early manuscripts on which the original research manuscripts of *Ideen II* were based were composed under the heading of "Natur und Geist," the question is to a certain extent moot. What is beyond doubt is that Heidegger was acquainted with this area of Husserl's work, found it very promising and helpful, and incorporated much of what he learned from it into his own thinking, but that he ultimately also came to the conclusion that Husserl himself remained too much under the sway of the tradition of modern epistemology to take full advantage of the possibilities it offered. In sum, Heidegger saw in both books of the *Ideen* an important point of departure for his own work, but one which he saw himself moving beyond already in the early 20's.

Husserl and Heidegger on the Ultimate Grounds for Action

The Fundamental Difference

The previous section of this chapter described how, by 1925 at the latest, Heidegger had come to the conclusion that, in spite of Husserl's contributions to phenomenology, his approach still remained too strongly oriented on the model of theoretical knowledge and a conception of truth that was not adequate to address questions about "the truth of art and religion." He also claimed that Husserl's his approach was not adequate to the primary task of phenomenology, which is "understanding life itself in its authentic Being and responding to the *question concerning the character of its Being*" (GA 64, 274–75), life not as an object of knowledge, but as something that must be enacted and accomplished.

The task of the remaining sections will be (1) to explain just what Heidegger has in mind when he criticizes Husserl's approach to life and to other issues that he believes cannot be addressed adequately using models taken from theoretical knowledge, (2) to identify the other genuine points of difference between them, and then (3) to examine the phenomenological justification for the different positions that each of them occupies with regard to those fundamental issues. Put very briefly, the remaining sections will attempt to show that the basic difference consists in their differing views on the possibility of a grounding for ethics, if by ethics we mean an inquiry into the nature and foundations for right action. Husserl contends that the very nature of reason involves the implicit claim that all sorts of position-takings, including decisions about right actions, point to the possibility of an intuition, an experience that can confirm or refute the validity of that position-taking consistent with the intention/fulfillment structure of consciousness in general. Heidegger by contrast considers this an illusion about the basic questions that provide the ultimate grounding for action, and sees this view as an illicit reliance on a model taken from theoretical reason. He contends rather that authentic Dasein recognizes that Dasein

itself must take on the responsibility of providing meaning to a life, but that “no one and nothing” can relieve one of the burden of that choice—which is why in authentic Dasein, the voice of conscience that calls one to face up to this fact speaks silently because it cannot tell you what the right choice is. The main sources that I will use to highlight these differences will be Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* and Husserl’s lectures from 1920 to 1924 entitled “*Einleitung in die Ethik*” (“*Introduction to Ethics*”), published a few years ago as Volume XXXVII of the *Husserliana*.¹¹

Heidegger on the Groundless Ground

Reading *Sein und Zeit* in light of the line of thinking developed in the early lectures, it is very clear that when Heidegger criticizes earlier philosophers for having failed to address the question of the meaning of Being, it is the Being not of things that populate the world, but of the world itself, of Dasein that has been overlooked from his perspective. Reading the early lectures in light of the much more extensive discussion of death, conscience, resoluteness, and temporality presented in *Sein und Zeit* allows the reader to see much better what Heidegger was thinking in the much briefer discussions of those topics with which he closes the 1925 lectures cited in the first section of this chapter. The general direction of the analyses is already apparent in those lectures when he says that “Facing (*Vorlaufen*) death in each moment (*Augenblick*) of Dasein signifies Dasein’s self-retrieval out of the They (*Man*) in the sense of choosing oneself” (GA 20, 440) and that, “In facing its death, Dasein can make itself responsible in an absolute sense” (GA 20, 440–41). To argue that the main topic of *Sein und Zeit* is the possibility of grounding an ethics is at least controversial, and perhaps even provocative, but it is a thesis that I will attempt to explain and defend in the following remarks. It is, however, not completely new; for instance, Francois Raffoul claimed something quite similar at OPO II in Lima and made a good, but slightly different case for it compared to the description I will lay out here.¹²

In some ways, it is easier to see how the project of *Sein und Zeit* can appropriately be described as a non-metaphysical grounding of an ethics in light of the earlier lectures that provide some of this background to *Sein und Zeit*. In general terms, one can see how the question that later shows up as the question of the meaning of the Being of beings in general and of Dasein very specifically and its relationship to originary temporality emerges against the background of questions into the proper kind life as a practical matter, as a choice for which one must take responsibility. My

¹¹ Edmund Husserl, *Einleitung in die Ethik, Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1920/1925, Husserliana Band XXXVII*, ed. Henning Peucker (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004).

¹² Francois Raffoul, “Heidegger and Ethics,” *Selected Essays from North America. Phenomenology 2005*, Volume 5, eds. Lester Embree and Thomas Nenon (Bucharest: Zeta Books 2006), pp. 501–22.

claim is that, in spite of the changes in terminology, the same question is still the fundamental issue at stake in *Sein und Zeit*.

Of course, we recall that Heidegger does not begin *Sein und Zeit* with an analysis of Dasein *per se*. Rather, in the First Division of *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger introduces the notion of world by way of an analysis of how objects within the world show up for us in our daily lives. The fundamental trait that this analysis reveals is that it is part of their very nature that they have *Bewandtnis* or relevance in some way to us (SZ 83–85). They are meaningful not in themselves, but in reference to what can or cannot be done with them, how they affect us in our daily lives. “Relevance” points in two directions: something (an object within the world) is relevant for doing or accomplishing something (an activity). Hence “worldhood” is introduced by showing how things we encounter in our daily lives are organized around the way they fit into our goals and are well or ill-suited to helping us accomplish the things we want to do, “possibilities of Dasein” he calls them. “World” then is not a sum of objects within the world or a temporal-spatial realm within which objects are located, but a set of possibilities of Dasein that form the backdrop for how objects within the world appear for us.

Moreover, Heidegger also points to the fact that these “possibilities of Dasein,” as ways of doing things or reacting to things we encounter in our lives, are themselves organized into interrelated “contexts of meaning” (*Bedeutungszusammenhänge*) and that there is a hierarchical relationship between the levels of meaning, where objects are not only organized according to their function as means towards some end that is a possibility of Dasein (hammers for driving in nails, and homes as places to live), but that these possibilities themselves are organized into means/ends relationships (driving in nails to make a home, having a home to provide shelter, be a good investment, or impress one’s friends) in which every means (*ein Wozu*), be it an object or an activity, points to some other activity (in the broadest sense whereby even having things happen to you is an activity), a way of being (“*Seinsweise*”), or a “possibility of Dasein” that has meaning for us and from which it derives the significance it has, until ultimately one comes upon some possibility that has meaning in itself and for no other purpose outside itself (SZ 84). This is the *Worumwillen*, the “for-the-sake-of-which,” what one might call the ultimate end or the highest priority in light of which all other things and activities derive the significance that they have for Dasein (*ibid.*).

But where does this *Worumwillen* come from? What provides the justification for it? Heidegger’s analysis of fallenness suggests that in everyday life meanings seem just to be there “in” the things within the world or that they are social conventions whose substantiality (to use Hegel’s term) consists in the fact that they seem as solid and objective as the brilliance or hardness of a diamond because there seems to be no one individual to whom they can be traced back as their source, and hence no one who could simply revoke them and their power if he or she chose to do so.

What anxiety, as Heidegger describes it, reveals is that this substantiality is an illusion (SZ 184–88). In anxiety, things lose their meanings, their relevance becomes questionable or it fades away. If indeed they were as substantial as they otherwise might seem, this would be impossible. This does not necessarily mean that there

is not a right or a wrong answer to the question about what really is good, and of course it does not mean that it makes no difference which answer you choose. As much as anything else within the world, the answer one accepts is decisive for who one is and what course one's life will take. What anxiety reveals is that no thing and no one can tell you the answer, can tell you what is really important, what the ultimate ends, the highest priorities for a life should be. If there were something or someone that could tell you that answer apart from a standard one has already accepted, in terms of which something would count as the answer, then things would once again regain the meaning that is missing in anxiety. But if no one and nothing can, then there is no firm ground from which to make a decision, but since each life is always explicitly or implicitly guided by some sense of an ultimate end or highest priority for a life, one cannot wait around to make a decision until such a firm ground emerges.

Perhaps there are other modes of access to this insight than the experience of anxiety as Heidegger describes it, but even if that is true, the basic point stays the same. No thing and no one can tell you what the ultimate norms for a life should be—or better put—no one can tell you who to listen to (people try to tell us all the time) about the ultimate norms, the highest priorities for a life, except in terms of ends or priorities that we have already accepted as valid. If those are precisely what are in question, then this is indeed a rather unsettling experience, especially if you would like to have something solid and substantial to tell you what is and is not good and important, and thereby to provide a reliable guide for action.

In everyday life, it looks like the answer is settled or at least like there is some firm ground for settling the issue. I take it that one of the main differences between authentic and inauthentic being-a-self is that in authentic being-a-self, one is aware that there is no firm ground outside of oneself to which one can appeal to find out what the ultimate end or the highest priority for a life should be. For Heidegger, the question of the good is the question of what is important *in life*. And once again, we recall that, already in the First Part, Heidegger had suggested that no one (the They) and nothing (no being within the world or any feature of it apart from the relevance we give it in light of the significance we attach to the possibilities of Dasein that it furthers or hinders) can tell us the answer. In fact, even the call of conscience that Heidegger sees as calling one to authentic existence, speaks “silently” for precisely this reason (SZ 277, 296). If conscience could tell us the answer, then a force outside of ourselves other than Dasein, and not Dasein itself, would be the source of meaning and direction.

So if there is an answer, it has to be one for which I am responsible. Even if I choose an answer that I take from someone or somewhere else—revealed religion, the traditions of my ethnic background or my family, my friends, my teachers—, then it is I who have done so and no one else. The fact that I am the one who accepts this answer that sets the overall priorities in my life and has a certain view about the significance of events and things within the world for me, Heidegger terms—I do not think, inappropriately—“freedom” (SZ 266; cf. *WdGr* 51), moreover not just freedom in general, but “freedom towards death.”

Why does he call it “freedom towards death”? I would like to suggest that this is intimately connected with the way that Dasein is the ground of its choices through the adoption of a *Worumwillen* that, precisely because it is ultimate, cannot be grounded in anything else. It is freedom, among other things, because it involves a choice and because no one and nothing can determine this choice for Dasein. It is appropriately called “freedom” because it is about a choice, and it is about a choice that is not determined outside of Dasein. It does indeed have ontological significance because it sets the context against which things can show up as the kinds of things they are, but since what it above all concerns is the “*Worumwillen*” of a life that is Dasein’s own, this is not a matter of theoretical classification as much as it is about what things matter and what things do not, and how they matter—whether they are to be embraced or avoided, valued or shunned. And it not only has practical implications, but if this is right, it is this primary or original choice that determines what one should and must do. If the examples of “ways to be” are taken simply from the everyday activities of Dasein, then the kind of practical concerns one is describing are things like “building a house” or “being a chemist” whose value is presupposed, and the predicates for objects within the world are simply utility-characteristics. But if, in authentic Dasein, what one realizes is that the question is what gives meaning to a life, then the question goes far beyond utility and what is up for debate is not just how best to accomplish a given aim, but rather what the proper aim for a life in general is.

To say that it is “freedom towards death” is another way of stating what he calls in *Wesen des Grundes* the “finitude” of human freedom. In that essay, the finitude is connected with the fact that freedom is something that “happens to us,” and that our choices are “finite.” This explains why he says that freedom is not only the “ground,” but also the “*Ab-grund*” (“abyss”) of Dasein, that it is the “*Ohnmacht*” (powerlessness) because it is not in Dasein’s control whether this originary event occurs. Dasein projects (*entwirft*), en-visages a *Worumwillen*, but it does so as thrown, which is the first limitation. Dasein does not get to decide its starting point or its circumstances. For instance, I did not choose to be born into a modern technological age any more than a ancient Greek chose not to, but our possibilities are very different nonetheless and both of us must still make choices about the ultimate priorities for our lives within each of those different contexts. Moreover, Dasein is also not free not to choose, Dasein does not get to decide whether to set a highest priority for itself or not; and, at any point where the moment of authentic decision arrives, Dasein discovers that it has already been making this basic decision all along whether it knew it or not. In *Sein und Zeit*, the finitude that I am or rather enact at each moment (what he calls “being-towards-the-end” or “constantly dying”), is brought out by such phrases as the “impossibility of Dasein,” or my being “*das (nichtige) Grund-sein einer Nichtigkeit*” (SZ 285). Finally, setting an end or a goal for a life does not necessarily mean one will achieve that goal.

Heidegger stresses that Dasein never has complete control over its existence, making clear that even authentic Dasein is not synonymous with a kind of self-consciousness that is completely autonomous and transparent to itself. It is not a subject conceived of in the modern sense. Rather human life as Dasein is always the

choice about priorities that it does not make all on its own, but rather “adopts,” “appropriates,” “takes on.” Moreover, it is also limited through the fact that the choice, as a genuine choice, means that to choose it involves failing to choose another. If I set financial success as my highest goal, I have not made having time for my family, pursuing knowledge for its own sake, or sense pleasures my highest goal. If I adopt one of the others as my highest goal, then I have not chosen financial success as my highest priority and thereby make it much less likely that I will actually achieve it. If I choose a balance of financial success, professional satisfaction, and contributions to my family and my community as my highest priority, I am likely to be less successful at any one of them than I would be if I made that one my exclusive priority. “Freedom however exists only in the choice of the one, that means in bearing the not-having-chosen, and not-having-been-able-to-choose the other” (SZ 285).

The finitude of freedom also means that fallenness is not an accident because to live is to act in a concrete setting that involves interaction with things in the world (that are not under my complete control) and other people. It involves not just holding possibilities open as such, but also necessarily seizing one of them not just as a possibility but as the actual priority that guides my actions and my refraining from acting and thereby becomes part of something concrete as well—or if I fail to do so, then the abstract choice of holding open possibilities is my highest priority, whose choice prevents me from seizing upon any one of them, and this is in itself a concrete course of action or “inaction” that I have chosen.

Is there any way of knowing what will happen if I make one sort of life my ultimate priority instead of another. For Heidegger, the answer is no. Is there someone who can tell me the answer? Again, the answer is no. It is something for which each individual must take responsibility. And are there any facts in the world that can tell me what matters, what makes a life meaningful? This is for Heidegger the most important question and what we have been suggesting is that the answer here is once again no, but that the decision about what is to count as significant is the most important question there is and that it is the ground of all other significance and relevance of events and things that happen in the world, which is to say within one’s life. That is why I have been arguing that for Heidegger the most important question in ethics is one that one can only face authentically when one recognizes that Dasein is the groundless ground of all meaning in the world and that what counts as right and wrong is decided by Dasein’s resolute commitment (he calls it a “projection”) to the goodness of a specific form of life that it recognizes is just one possibility among many. This is then anything but a theoretical question and there is no “fact,” nothing that theoretical reason or anything like it can contribute to the solution or grounding of the answer to this question.

Husserl on the Ultimate Grounds of Ethics

Husserl’s project in his *Einleitung in die Ethik* lectures, by contrast, is to show how moral and ethical reasoning functions in ways that parallel theoretical reason. The general program of a Husserlian ethics could hence be described as the programmatic

attempt to show that there are structures of reason within the practical and axiological spheres that are analogous to those within the sphere of theoretical reason, and he even provides a relatively specific example of this parallel in a passage from the lectures that deserves to be quoted in its entirety:

Indeed we have spoken repeatedly about a distinction within the sphere of emotional acts that we called evaluative acts of feeling that precisely parallels the distinction between judgments of opinion and judgments based on insight that are grasped as the truth. We just need to emphasize that these are not passive graspings of value, but rather acts that have been performed by the I. We can say that the so-called grasping of value, of which it is said that it is a loving grasping of value, in which the value itself is comprehended and possessed is the originary acquisition through a conscious act as opposed to a mere opining its value, this I's act of loving, looking forward to something etc. that just opines it as something to look forward to, considers it lovable, but has not appropriated the value in an originary way and in itself—or in the opposite case, has experienced a rejection, a disappointment when the I in the attempt at originary appropriation experiences that the thing that was valued is in truth not something pleasant, that the thing that was considered beautiful is a piece of awful kitsch, etc. In the same way in the sphere of willing, there is a new kind of motivating acts for practical decisions just as there are for acts of believing and in acts of valuing. (XXXVII, 120)

“Reason” in the practical sphere is not, therefore, a matter of theoretical calculation or of the intellect alone. It is the self’s directedness towards appropriate experiences and intuitions that can serve as confirmation for the purportedly beautiful or valuable in the aesthetic or the good in the ethical sphere. It is also clear how reason is not the opposite of feelings. Rather it is the search for appropriate feelings and dispositions for acting. For Husserl, not all feelings are created equal and not every feeling is *sui generis* pathological in a Kantian sense. For him, the question is not how to have pure practical reason trump all of our inclinations, but rather how to sort out the appropriate from inappropriate inclinations. In fact, Husserl believes that all actions are motivated by feelings: “Mere understanding is not practical. Only feelings can determine actions” (XXXVII, 170), and further,

Human beings’ practical conduct is manifestly determined by feeling. If we attempted to extinguish all feeling from the human breast, then concepts such as end and means, good and bad, virtue and vice and all of the concepts that belong to them would lose their meaning. Human beings would not then be striving, willing, acting beings anymore. We must then have recourse to feelings and more precisely investigate them, in order to be able to clarify the sense of ethical concepts and to study human beings as ethical beings, to clarify the uniqueness of their moral conduct, and to provide grounding for the ethical laws that explain it. (XXXVII, 148)

Even Kant recognizes that feelings must play a central role in ethical life when he acknowledges that the awareness of the obligatory character of the moral law gives rise to the feeling of respect that motivates a person to act in a manner consistent with the law, but Husserl wants to recognize a much wider range of acceptable feelings as appropriate motivating factors for rational agents. He mentions approval and disapproval, but also love—love of oneself and love of others—and “*Seligkeit*,” two concepts that he adopts from Fichte, and some of his other examples seem to point to feelings such as pride, a sense of accomplishment, and others that could be legitimate reasons to act ethically as well.

Even though Husserl disagrees with Kant on the role and range of feelings in ethical decision-making, he does agree with him on one point, namely that the fundamental concept of an ethical life as rational is duty, and that duty involves the decision-making that any rational agent should in principle be able to accept as appropriate in these specific circumstances. Husserl is not a formalist, among other things because he believes that the specific circumstances and limitations do matter in ethical decision-making, but he believes that it is inconsistent with morality for an agent to place a higher priority on his or her own specific ends or perspective than to those of other rational agents. Here again he sees a parallel with theoretical truths. People often disagree even about fairly basic matters of fact and often have their own individual views about them, but from Husserl's perspective that does not mean that they are all correct or that none of them are. So too in the moral realm the idea of a moral ought or duty means:

... that every moral judgment does not merely express a subjective feeling and not even just the general fact that every normal human beings in fact tends to feel and act this way, but rather that according to its very sense contains the claim that the particular practical conduct is correct or incorrect ... Moral truth includes just as every mathematical and every other judgment the sense that whoever decides this way, morally, mathematically or any other way, decides correctly, just as falsehood includes the sense that whoever decides this way decides incorrectly, in a way that is to be condemned. (XXXVII, 149)

He stresses a couple of pages later that there are also some significant differences between mathematical and practical truths. For instance, mathematical truths do not express norms as practical truths do. However, he does agree that the very nature of practical reason itself dictates that everyone should recognize the truth of some basic practical principles such as the principle of love of neighbor (*Nächstenliebe*) that follows from the nature of reason itself as universal and establishes an affinity to Kant's categorical imperative, in spite of Husserl's reservations about Kant's "formalism" and Kant's refusal to recognize moral differences among the very different kinds of feelings that can legitimately motivation ethical decisions beyond mere respect for the moral law. He agrees with Kant about the universal responsibility of all human beings to recognize these principles when he says that even the moral sinner can recognize the sin and know what should have been done.

The parallels between the theoretical and practical reason for Husserl then are explicit and very clear. Just as within the theoretical sphere, for Husserl reason is universal. In a negative sense, this means that anything that could not in general be compatible with the willing of other free beings is ruled out. Positively speaking, it means that any reasonable person should be able to agree with the rightness of practical decisions under similar circumstances. Circumstances matter for Husserl, including one's historical and cultural settings against which authentically egoic acts are undertaken, and these include acts of valuing and willing, so different persons will reasonably choose differently, and what makes the decision or act right in a given setting is not something that the individual decides but rather discovers. It is something about which the person can be right or wrong and that the further course of experience or perhaps reflection or discussions with others can confirm or disconfirm. Although it is not theoretical insights guiding practical actions alone or

even primarily, the structure of intention and fulfillment that Husserl identifies with the sphere of theoretical reason as the rational ground of theoretical judgments has parallels in notions of right valuing and right action that find confirmation or disconfirmation through the further course of experience as well.

The Question Itself: Grounding Ultimate Grounds?

We recall Heidegger's frequent comments described in the first section about the extent to which both he and Husserl share much that is common in their investigations. Both are working within the general framework of transcendental phenomenology according to which objects (along with events and actions) present themselves to us in various ways according to the meanings that they have for us. Both begin with an analysis of our everyday experience of things instead of adopting assumptions about objects and their properties from the natural sciences, maintaining rather that the natural sciences are abstractions from and derivative of the experience of things in our daily lives. Moreover, it is also clear that for both of them, our primary access to objects within the world in our daily lives is not primarily in terms of their mere perceptual features but rather in terms of the values and uses they have for us.¹³ Both recognize that these common meanings are at first taken from a shared background of understanding that has both a historical and a social dimension.

For Heidegger, these issues addressed in his descriptions of *Befindlichkeit* or *Geworfenheit* and of the “They” (“*das Man*”) of the self in everyday life. For Husserl, they are described in genetic accounts of the establishment of sedimented tendencies in believing, valuing, and willing throughout the course of a life and in his descriptions of the *Umwelt* as originally social in *Ideen II*. It is also true that both Husserl and Heidegger believe that what Husserl calls persons, beings who have the form of being that Heidegger calls *Dasein*, possess the ability and even the responsibility to move beyond these sedimented histories and shared assumptions about what is true, valuable, and good through what Husserl calls authentically egoic acts or what Heidegger calls authentic existence. Hence, for both of them the question about the ultimate grounds of practice and values are at the heart of the philosophical concerns as of the early 1920s at the latest. What are the standards to be applied when one is asking about what is truly good?

This chapter has attempted to show that Heidegger correctly identifies a fundamental and important point of difference between them. When he argues that Husserl is too much oriented on the model of the science and the theoretical realm that cannot appropriately deal with questions about the truth of art and religion, I am suggesting that what is really at issue is the question about the ultimate principles

¹³ I have attempted to document and describe these commonalities in more detail in Nenon, “Husserl’s and Heidegger’s Conceptions of the *Umwelt*,” *Hermeneutical Heidegger*, eds. Ingo Farin and Michael Bowler (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, forthcoming 2013).

for practice, for actions, and whether they can be justified in ways that parallel justification of theoretical beliefs or not. Heidegger thinks not; Husserl believes that they must be. For Husserl, responsibility involves critical reflection on and submission to the constraints of practical reason through respect for universality and the constant reexamination of sedimented values and tendencies to action through the confirmation that appropriate kinds of experiences or intuitions provide. For Heidegger, responsibility means recognizing that these are fundamental choices for which no one and nothing else can provide justification, that these choices must be resolutely faced as “projections” of *Dasein*. This is what authentic futurity entails and why he calls this feature of human existence originary temporality.

Heidegger not only notes the differences, but claims that Husserl is mistaken. Is there a way to decide? In the concluding paragraphs of this chapter, I would like to reflect on our experience of setting or accepting ultimate priorities for life and see if we cannot find examples that might lead each of them to the insights that they articulate. At the same time, however, I think that these examples also illustrate the problematic character of both of the alternatives as they describe them. Since antiquity, one way of marking differences between lives governed by different priorities is in terms of the professions they pursue. In Plato, the common examples we find are the lives guided by the appetites, namely the merchants’ and craftsmen’s; those guided by a sense of honor, the guardians’; and those guided by the search for truth, i.e., the philosophers’. Some contemporary examples might be those persons whose highest priority is physical fitness and attractiveness, those whose highest priority is financial success, and those interested in learning and education. Most of the readers of this chapter will belong to the third group. If you picked academic philosophy as your profession, it is clear that financial success was not your highest priority. Some academics and some people with a great deal of money and leisure time might spend much of their time and efforts on physical fitness and attractiveness, but a glance around the room at most philosophy conferences and many business conferences suggests that most do not. What is it that a member of one of these groups would say to the member of another group that would make that person come to the conclusion that the life that he or she has hitherto considered superior is actually inferior? Heidegger’s analysis would suggest that there is nothing one could point to unless that person were already inclined to see those features of a life as an integral part of a good life, and I think he is right about that.

Academics might point to the relative autonomy of academic life or the joy of continued learning. To the extent that members of the other groups find these things attractive and important, this might help convince them of some of the virtues of academic life, but unless these are higher priorities for them than physical fitness or financial success, they are unlikely to have a significant effect on those other persons’ highest priorities. To put it a different way: I think that Heidegger is correct in recognizing that there is no fact that by itself can show something is valuable or good without some other prior commitment to the goodness or value of something that this instantiates or fosters. Or to put it in philosophers’ language: you cannot derive an “ought” from an “is” without some implicit attachment to another “ought.” I think this is the phenomenon that Heidegger captures when he claims that “no one

and no thing within the world” can tell us the correct priorities for a life. That is why, over the course of the last few years during which I have had many more interactions with persons who have not chosen academia as a profession, I have come to believe that there really is nothing that I can say that will make them come to believe that my priorities are the right ones and theirs the wrong ones; and, for me at least, the converse holds as well.

So the notion of some standard or experience that could demand universal agreement about priorities seems mistaken to me. Perhaps that is one reason why, except for formal principles such as respect for other persons, Husserl himself fails to provide a normative ethics, and that where he does move in that direction by praising the virtues of the arts or learning over other more “base” activities, the case he makes for them seems weak, and seems more to represent the consensus of a specific society (Germany) at a specific time (late nineteenth, early twentieth century) than a universal principle.

At the same time, however, I do think that Husserl is correct when he emphasizes that we do not believe something is preferable because we prefer it, but that we prefer something because we find it preferable. I think it belongs to the phenomenon of seeing something as good or valuable that we sense ourselves as recognizing, not making it. I think that I recognize something about the goodness of continuing learning that I think other people miss. They are sure that they are recognizing something about the importance of physical attractiveness or great wealth that I miss. We have different priorities because we see things differently. This is, I think, what Husserl means when he says that recognizing values and goods are “intuitions.” From the perspective of the person “choosing” a life, they are choosing it because they *recognize* it as the best.

What I am less sure about for these ultimate priorities is what would count as “disconfirmation” or “disappointment.” The obvious candidates for such examples fail, in my view. Someone might aspire to the academic life and seek a position in academic philosophy because he or she is convinced that it is a domain filled with persons devoted as that person is to truth and the dissemination of learning. After a few years in a dysfunctional department or after several experiences with colleagues or administrators interested much more in self-aggrandizement or power than in education and learning, this person might decide that the decision was a mistake. That would fit the description of an experience of disappointment that would be consistent with Husserl’s claim that I can be mistaken about the value or goodness of something, namely a career in academia. Nonetheless, I do not think that this is a case where one becomes convinced that one’s ultimate ends or priorities in life are mistaken—just an example of a case in which one learns that the means one pursued to achieve those priorities was mistaken or at least less suited to them than one had expected.

Perhaps there is another kind of example that really does have to do with the ends themselves. Think of the case where a young man was sure that life-long learning and education were goals worthy of a life’s devotion, but later comes to wonder about that in light of the hardships and frustrations he experiences along the way. Maybe he then begins to reconsider whether he really is so committed to this goal

that it is worth sacrificing financial opportunities he might otherwise have. This seems to be a case where the experience of the life as a whole, not just as an envisaged end in the abstract, but as a concrete event, does not seem to be measuring up to one's expectations. It is not any one thing that causes this change of heart, but the experience of all the things that happen along the way.

On the one hand, this does seem to fit fairly well with Husserl's descriptions of "disappointments" or "refutations" within the practical realm, but this kind of example suggests that there are still very important differences between disappointments within the practical realm and those within the theoretical realm. We are well aware that the life that one person finds fulfilling might not seem so to another person, and that one person will find the difficult sides of a particular life very frustrating, but another person might find them quite bearable compared to the satisfactions that this life has to offer—something that Heidegger's account handles much better than Husserl's.

However, it is important to distinguish between one's satisfaction with a life in light of certain priorities that one has, and the question of whether these priorities are the right ones for a human life. In the latter case, the decision is not whether a specific goal can be achieved or not, or whether different people have different goals or not, but whether there is some measure for whether one has the right goals, the right priorities for a life in general. On one point, Husserl and Heidegger would agree, namely that this measure does not show itself through something outside of life itself, but within the life-experience of individual human beings.

The question is whether it makes sense to think of the answer to this question not just in terms of the general structure of intention and fulfillment, but whether the model of fulfillment (or disappointment) from the theoretical realm is applicable here as well, in particular whether what one person learns and experiences is generalizable for experience in general in a way that is similar to way that fulfillments in the theoretical realm purport to hold for everyone in similar circumstances. My own view is that Heidegger is correct when he claims that ultimate ends are foundational in a way that makes them significantly different from claims about theoretical states of affairs and even of practical judgments about means and ends. I think that what I or anyone else comes to view as the appropriate priorities for a life under certain circumstances will not always or even normally seem compelling to others. However, I still disagree with Heidegger's description of these ultimate priorities as mere "projections" instead of what present themselves to us as insights. Even if do not necessarily expect others to share my insights, I do believe that they are valid, that my own experience confirms their validity, and that they therefore do not operate completely outside the intention/fulfillment structure. The fact that not all people share these insights does not make them seem less compelling for the person who has them. I would argue that these kinds of insights resemble theoretical insights to the extent that the act of seeing, the noesis,—in this case the recognition of the valuable and the good,—is directed to what is seen, the noema—in this case the truly valuable and the good. We prefer this life over that because we really do

think it is more valuable and better—a fundamentally Platonic position perhaps. But whereas Plato could claim that the recognition of the good is a kind of *theo-rein* because there is something to be seen there, it is hard to think of an example of confirmation or disconfirmation for ultimate ends that is akin to that of theoretical intentions if these ultimate ends are, to use Heidegger's language, not anything that resides within the world, but rather constitute the meaningfulness of the world as such.

Chapter 12

Aron Gurwitsch and the Transcendence of the Physical

William R. McKenna

The Impact of *Ideen I*

Aron Gurwitsch was an important expositor of Husserl's philosophy. But most of his written expositions of Husserl were not made for their own sake, and rather served to set the context for his original contributions to phenomenology. Gurwitsch was inspired to devote his career to advancing phenomenology by a deep impact that Husserl and his philosophy had on him. As he told it, "when the author made his first acquaintance with Husserl's philosophy about 40 years ago [probably 1922], he was overwhelmed by the spirit of uncompromising integrity and radical philosophical responsibility, by the total devotedness which made the man disappear behind his work. Soon the young beginner came to realize the fruitfulness both of what Husserl had actually accomplished and of what he had initiated, the promise of further fruitful work."¹ He went on to explain how Husserl's writings presented the "promise" of future work, and specifically named *Ideen* as a source of his inspiration: "In *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* Husserl had disclosed a vast field of research and had indicated approaches and methods of analysis by means of which results of enduring value could be obtained."² Also, "It was the style of Husserl's philosophizing, painstaking analytical work on concrete problems and phenomena rather than the opening up of grand vistas, that made the

¹ Aron Gurwitsch, *Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1966), xv-xvi, hereafter *Studies*; *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*, vol. II, *Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology*, Phaenomenologica 193, ed. F. Kersten, (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010).

² Ibid., xvi.

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young student take the decision to devote his life and work to the continuation and expansion of Husserl's phenomenology—in a word, to become a disciple forever, faithful to Husserl's spirit and general orientation.”³ But he qualified this “faithfulness” by saying that he was “prepared to depart from particular theories if compelled to do so by the nature of the problems and the logic of the theoretical situation.”⁴ And Gurwitsch did just this. He appropriated Husserl's phenomenology and developed his own thoughts as alternatives to or corrections of Husserl. This was particularly true in the case of some of the concepts and theories that Husserl communicated in the *Ideen*.

The concern here is not to detail Gurwitsch's contribution to Husserlian phenomenology, but there is an aspect of it that is useful for showing the specific impact of *Ideen* on Gurwitsch.⁵ Husserl's work presented in *Ideen* provided a place for Gurwitsch to develop theories and concepts that he had been working with before the encounter with Husserl, especially his work with Gestalt psychology.⁶ Gurwitsch explained the rationale for bringing the work from these different fields together in this way:

The differences between Gestalt theory and phenomenology are indisputable and have their basis in the fact that Gestalt theory is psychology, while Husserl's phenomenology aims at, and prepares the ground for, a universal philosophical science. Notwithstanding these differences resulting from divergences of general theoretical orientation, there is a common ground for these two lines of inquiry upon which they meet one another and upon which they can be further developed, the one with the help of the other. Precisely the problems dealt with in the first and, up to now, only volume of the *Ideen* lie upon this common ground.⁷

The most significant parts of this “common ground” within Husserl's work were the descriptive study of consciousness, particularly as being carried out under the phenomenological reduction, and the concept of intentionality, particularly as conceived in the form of the noetic-noematic correlation. But the common ground did not totally preexist as “common” and needed to be prepared. Gurwitsch explained this in a passage where he wrote in general about his approach to using work from different areas and fields to further phenomenology: “The integration into the context of constitutive phenomenology of results and theories which have been developed within a different context and in a different general orientation will, of course, entail something other than simple

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For some recent accounts of Gurwitsch's impact on Husserlian phenomenology, see “Editorial Introduction,” *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*, Vol. 3, ed. Richard M. Zaner and Lester Embree (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), hereafter *CW III*; Peter M. Chukwu, *Competing Interpretations of Husserl's Noema, Gurwitsch versus Smith and MacIntyre* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009); and Lester Embree, “Aron Gurwitsch's Theory of Cultural-Scientific Phenomenological Psychology,” *Husserl Studies* 19 (2003): 43–70.

⁶ In addition to Gestalt psychology, Gurwitsch brought his background in the work of people in other areas to bear on phenomenology. See *Studies*, xx–xxii.

⁷ Aron Gurwitsch, “Critical Study of Husserl's Nachwort,” *Studies*, 113–14.

acceptance. They will have to be adapted to the new context by means of being reinterpreted in phenomenological terms.”⁸ Explaining further how he worked to “interpret phenomenologically certain psychological theories as well as to use them for the advancement of phenomenological problems,” he wrote, “Here, psychology is not looked at from without; rather the psychological theories are received into the philosophical context and are made instruments, not objects, of analysis.”⁹ In preparing the common ground, for example, Gurwitsch interpreted Gestalt theory’s dismissal of the constancy-hypothesis “as an *incipient* phenomenological reduction.”¹⁰ Moves like this show us that the impact of Husserl’s work in the *Ideen* on Gurwitsch was to provide him with a way to make contributions to *philosophy* with psychology.

For the sake of completeness it should be mentioned that the preparation of the common ground entailed more than changes to the psychological side. Gurwitsch also used the notion of “reinterpretation” to describe how he changed some of Husserl’s theories to adapt to Gestalt theory because he thought the latter better accounted for the phenomena. He did this most notably in connection with his finding that Husserl’s treatment of the relationship between sense data (hyletic data) and their noetic interpretations showed that the constancy hypothesis, which should have been excluded by the Husserlian phenomenological reduction, “surreptitiously intervenes in phenomenological investigations” (*Field*, 271; *CW III*, 262). This led Gurwitsch to make some changes in two key parts of Husserl’s theory: “Husserl’s theory of the inner horizon, it seems to us, must be reinterpreted in Gestalt theoretical terms. The concept of intentionality fundamental to phenomenology, must also undergo a reinterpretation so as to become independent of the dualistic conception of consciousness with which it appears somehow connected in Husserl’s theory” (*Field*, 272–73; *CW III*, 264). This preparation of the common ground allowed Gurwitsch to utilize notions from Gestalt theory to describe the organization of the perceptual noema. To do this, Gurwitsch relocated sense data from the noetic side of the noeto-noematic correlation, where Husserl had them, into the noema itself (*Field*, 269; *CW III*, 260–61). In Husserl’s descriptions, the same sense data (thought to be within the noetic side of consciousness) could undergo different interpretations and themselves remain unaltered by the difference in interpretations. Relocating the sense data into the noematic side of consciousness, where they are parts of a Gestalt

⁸ *Studies*, xxi.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Aron Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1964), 168, hereafter *Field*; *CW III*, 162. This work has been reprinted in Volume III of *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*. Vol. 3, ed. Richard M. Zaner and Lester Embree (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010). To use the “constancy hypothesis” is to think that “sense-data depend entirely upon, and are determined exclusively by, the corresponding physical stimuli” so that “whenever the same physical events stimulate the same elements of the nervous system, the same sensation cannot fail to appear” (*Field*, 90; *CW III*, 88).

contexture and thereby intrinsically affected by the prevailing noetic interpretation, allowed Gurwitsch to show how they could be altered, as part of what appeared, by the noetic functions operating in conformity with Gestalt theoretical organizational principles (*Field*, 269–72; *CW III*, 260–64).

In making this change, Gurwitsch pursued an aspect of experience on the noematic side that Husserl often did not pursue. In the work he published in his lifetime, Husserl emphasized what I would call the “ontological” dimension of the noema. This is a concern with *what* the object is taken to be in a given experience of it and along with the properties and relations it is experienced to have (for example, a “bright blue” “book” “on the desk”). Within this dimension there is no place for sensory data. The “bright blue” that is experienced, for example, is the bright blue color that is a property of the object. Imagine that a dark blue sensation is experienced. Husserl could have this sensation, considered as part of the noetic side of consciousness, undergo two different interpretations: one that brought about the experience of an object as having a dark blue color; and another that brought about the experience of an object as having a bright blue color “covered” by a shadow. For Husserl, the dark blue sensation (in the noesis) remains identical throughout these two interpretations. Gurwitsch, on the other hand, focused on an “appearance” dimension of the noema, “relocating” sense data there, and would discuss the coloration within the appearance itself as something appearing differently as it changes as a result of the different interpretations: from being experienced to be a surface phenomenon under one interpretation to being experienced as being part of a detached sheet of shadow in the second—changes that alter the coloration intrinsically, so that no identity is experienced.

Husserl was not unaware of an “appearance” dimension of the noematic side of consciousness, however. But he identified something seemingly very different from what Gurwitsch focussed upon.¹¹ Gurwitsch seems not to have related to this aspect of Husserl’s work, which remained in manuscript form during Husserl’s lifetime and has now been published in *Husserliana*, some of it after Gurwitsch died. Whether “Gurwitschian” phenomenology could have been further impacted by this work of Husserl, and in particular whether it could have become the locus of Gurwitsch’s Gestalt theoretical reinterpretations of Husserl, is a question I will leave to others to explore.

¹¹ For instance, what Husserl called the “phantom,” an abstract dimension of the appearance of a material thing. See my “The ‘Inadequacy’ of Perceptual Experience,” *The Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 12/2 (1981) and John Drummond, “Objects’ Optimal Appearances and the Immediate Awareness of Space in Vision,” *Man and World* 16 (1983): 177–205. Most, if not all, of Husserl’s work on this is contained in posthumously published work in *Husserliana*, for instance in *Ding und Raum*, *Husserliana XVI*, ed. Ulrich Claesges (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973).

The Transcendence of Physical Things

Introduction

In §§38 and 41–44 of *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch* Husserl contrasts the consciousness of physical things, as these things are encountered in everyday life, with the reflective awareness of the consciousness of those things and with reflective awareness of mental processes generally. He claims that physical things, in relation to the mental processes that are the consciousness of them, are “transcendent,” whereas, in relation to the reflective mental processes that are the awareness of them, mental processes are “immanent,” being in a way a part of them.¹² The overall point of this discussion is to establish that the reflective consciousness of mental processes has a certain epistemic superiority over sensory perception in that reflection is indubitable, guaranteeing the existence of its object, whereas this is not the case with sensory perception for essential reasons.¹³ In the process of pursuing this goal Husserl opens a line of inquiry concerning the transcendence of physical things that in the end remains underdeveloped, having been developed by him far enough for him to make a *prima facie* case for the epistemic superiority of reflection. But if we develop one aspect of his discussion a bit more, we can learn more about the sense of the transcendence of physical things than he makes explicit. That will be my project here.

Husserl in the Ideen

In his discussion Husserl relates the transcendence of physical things to the fact that sensory perception is always perception through perspectives. He discusses the effects of perspectivity in two ways, only one of which turns out to bear on the transcendence of physical things. One way he does this is to point out that perspectivity has a limiting effect on the scope of our knowledge of a thing in any given perception, since what we actually sense is only part of the object. When an object is seen from one point of view, for example, many of its features are not visible and we cannot be certain what they are like. Of course we can change our orientation with respect to the object and then can come to directly encounter formerly non-visible parts, but then the former sides disappear from view, so that the changes in orientation

¹² See especially Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1982), §38, 78–80 and §42, 89–90.

¹³ Ibid., §46, 100–104.

just exchange presence and absence and consequently maintain the epistemic loss. Added to this is the fact that objects have a seemingly endless number of features that any one perception or even series of them cannot encompass, especially if we consider ways objects may behave in countless different circumstances. Husserl writes of this as an “inadequacy” of perception, and “imperfection,” although one that is necessary for there to be experience of a physical thing.¹⁴ However, this kind of inadequacy, having to do with the scope of our knowledge, is also true of the reflective experience of mental processes: “It is the case also of a mental process that it is never perceived completely, that it cannot be adequately seized upon in its full unity,”¹⁵ so that in this respect sensory perception and reflection are not different. One needs then to look elsewhere for insight into how the perspectivity of sensory perceptions relates to the transcendence of physical things (and for its comparative epistemic inferiority).

In §§41–44 of *Ideen I*, Husserl also goes into a related, but somewhat different issue involving perspectivity. He claims that sensory perception always involves “appearances,” and that as perspectives change, any physical thing as a whole, as well as any of its individual features, is necessarily given in different appearances, *none of which can be said to give the feature in an “absolute” form, i.e., to give it as it really is in itself.*¹⁶ Husserl explains this using the example of a violin tone:

A violin tone ... is given by adumbration, has its changing modes of appearance. These differ in accordance with whether I approach the violin or go farther away from it, in accordance with whether I am in the concert hall itself or am listening through the closed doors, etc. No one mode of appearance can claim to be the one that presents the tone absolutely although, in accordance with my practical interests, a certain appearance has a certain primacy as the normal appearance: in the concert hall and at the “right” spot I hear the tone “itself” as it “actually” sounds.¹⁷

We can add the familiar example of the sound of a passing vehicle, which, let us presume, comes from behind us as we walk on the sidewalk, so that we do not see it. The sound “gets louder” as the vehicle approaches and there is a point before it passes by where we can hear it “best.” That point may not be where it is loudest, if our interest is in discerning what kind of vehicle it is (sedan, sports car, truck). Husserl also gives the example of seeing the color of a thing in normal daylight, as opposed to other conditions of lighting. “We say of the color ... which we see in normal daylight, that is how the thing actually looks; this is its actual color.”¹⁸ We say the same of the volume of a sound of a steady violin tone or of an approaching vehicle. We hear what we take to be the *same* volume from far away

¹⁴ Ibid., §44, 94.

¹⁵ Ibid., §44, 97.

¹⁶ Ibid., §44, 96.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid. This example shows that Husserl is thinking of perspectivity in a broad sense, that includes environmental conditions of perception.

and then from increasingly close up, and there is a small range of distances where we may think that we best have a sense of what the volume is and say: “there, that’s how it actually sounds.”

Husserl contrasts this with the givenness of a mental process like a feeling: “If I look at it I have something absolute; it has no sides that could be presented sometimes in one mode and sometimes in another … what I see when I look at it is there, with its qualities, its intensity, etc., absolutely.”¹⁹ Note that the issue of perspectivity here is different from the one concerning the scope of knowledge that was discussed above. It is not that a mental process has aspects that are not perceivable in any given reflective perception of it, but that what *is* perceived, unlike in the case of sensory perception of physical things, is not presented in different “modes.” However, a sound or a color appear differently depending on circumstances of perception, and so, generally speaking, the way a physical thing or its features are given is *relative* to those circumstances. Husserl’s reference to “something absolute” in the case of reflection on mental processes, then, is to be understood in contrast to the *relativity* to such circumstances. In reflection, unlike sensory perception, instead of something “relative” being given, there is something non-relative, or “absolute.” Let us see how this relates to the issue of transcendence.

According to Husserl, when we think that a particular appearance, the “normal” appearance, is how a thing actually looks or sounds, “that points to what is only *a kind of secondary objectivation* within the total objectivation of the physical thing.”²⁰ In this and his other comments above about the “normal” appearance Husserl is making two points. First, the normal appearance is just as much an appearance as any other. When we come to it in the series of appearances it is not as if at that point we are no longer experiencing the thing through an appearance and rather experiencing something “absolute.” What we perceive then is just as relative as at any other time. Second, although the normal appearance has a “certain primacy” as the “normal” appearance, this value is not derived from some correctness it registers in regard to how the thing is “in itself,” in comparison to other appearances, but from the interest governing our perceptual process at the moment. When Husserl calls our tendency to think that the normal appearance is the way the thing actually looks, sounds, etc. a “secondary” (or “intermediary”²¹) objectivation this amounts to a critical judgment about everyday experience. We are aware of physical things and their features as having quite definite determinations: we experience the tone’s volume as unvarying but as now appearing loud, then soft; the same unchanging color of the object now appears one way and then another; the unchanging rectangular shape of a door appears with obtuse and acute corner angles from every orientation to us but the one when it occupies our fronto-parallel plane. We are aware of the constancy of the determination, of the volume, color, shape, through the appearances, and from that posit it as the “in-itself” of objects and their features. But

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., fn. 204.

everyday experience goes further and identifies one appearance, the normal appearance, as that in-itself, as if “wanting” more, “wanting” an unmediated grasp that is then satisfied by the normal appearance.

However satisfied, everyday experience is with this, from a philosophically critical point of view, the normal appearance is just another appearance, so that when experiencing it we do not possess the object as something “absolute” with the epistemic guarantee that comes with that. With this result, Husserl leaves the discussion of the normal appearance in *Ideen I* and continues to develop the epistemological and ontological consequences of this critique, and eventually its implications for the reflective philosophical method of the phenomenological epochē and reduction. In doing this, Husserl leaves aside an opportunity for inquiry that his analysis of secondary objectivation has opened up. The critique shows that from a theoretical point of view, secondary objectivation fails to achieve that for which it strives. But the positing of the in-itself that the striving took up is still there with unaffected validity.

To go where Husserl did not take us, we can say from a theoretical point of view, that the posited in-itself *evades* us in the process of secondary objectivation. It is there for us in the form of the constant determination through the varying appearances, but in a sense it escapes us and is beyond our grasp. In this “beyond” that this evasion yields lies, I believe, the sense of the transcendence of physical things. In order to continue to proceed through this opening for analysis that Husserl has provided, and learn more about this transcendence, it will be helpful to look at the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who has commented insightfully on this matter of the “normal appearance” and what Husserl calls “secondary objectivation.”

Merleau-Ponty

In *Phénoménologie de la perception* Merleau-Ponty wrote:

When I contemplate before me the furniture in my room, the table with its shape and size is for me not a law or rule governing the parade of phenomena, and an invariable relationship: it is because I perceive the table with its definite shape and size that I presume, for every change of distance or orientation, a corresponding change of shape and size, and not the reverse. Far from being the case that the thing is reducible to constant relationships, it is in the self-evidence of the thing that this constancy of relationships has its basis.²²

Here Merleau-Ponty is discussing the role of the “privileged perception” (“*perception privilégiée*”) in the organization of the perceptual process. This is the perception that involves the “normal appearance” discussed above. It is this “normal appearance” that constitutes the “evidence of the thing” mentioned in the above quote.

²² Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), 302. Cf. *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris, Gallimard, 1945), 348. In the English translation, “*perception privilégiée*” is rendered “crucial perception.”

Merleau-Ponty is discussing how, for example, a table top that is experienced to be rectangular (the “definite shape”) when seen from different orientations gives rise to appearances of the table top that has acute and obtuse angles instead of right angles, and these angles change in regular ways as the orientation changes. The “privileged perception” is “privileged” because it plays a special role in the organization of the perception of physical things: the “crucial perception ensures the unity of the perceptual process and draws into it all other appearances.”²³

In the context of the long passage quoted above, Merleau-Ponty is involved in refuting two theories, both of which seek to explain how we experience objects as having determinate sizes and shapes. The first theory asserts that one size and shape, from among the many that are presented to us as our perspective on an object varies, becomes conventionally regarded as the true size and shape, for example, the size an object appears to have when it is within reach, and the shape it looks to have when it is oriented in our frontal-parallel plane.²⁴ The second theory states that size and shape are actually not perceived as attributes of a single object at all, and that they are just names for the relations between parts of the phenomenal field.²⁵ The true size or shape of an object is just a constant law governing varying appearances, distances, and orientations.²⁶ Merleau-Ponty finds that both of these theories presuppose what they are to account for, namely, how there are *determinate* shapes and sizes at all for the objects of our experience. The first theory presupposes “a gamut of *determinate* sizes and shapes from which it is sufficient to select one as the real size and shape.”²⁷ In the second theory it is assumed that appearance, distance and orientation “can be treated as variables or measurable sizes, and therefore that they are already determinate.”²⁸

In a manner characteristic of the style of his thought, Merleau-Ponty retains something from both these theories and leaves behind what he finds objectionable in them. He keeps the idea of the “relations between the parts of the phenomenal field” from the second theory, while purging the terms of the relations of their determinateness. Thus:

the distance from me to the object is not a size which increases or decreases, but a tension which fluctuates round a norm. An oblique position of the object in relation to me is not measured by the angle which it forms with the plane of my face, but felt as a lack of balance, as an unequal distribution of its influences upon me. The variations in the appearance are not so many increases or decreases in size, or real distortions. It is simply that sometimes the parts mingle and become confused, at others they link up into a clearly articulated whole, and reveal their wealth of detail. There is one culminating point of my perception which simultaneously satisfies these three norms, and towards which the whole perceptual process tends.²⁹

²³ Merleau-Ponty, 302.

²⁴ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 299.

²⁵ Ibid., 300.

²⁶ Ibid., 300–301.

²⁷ Ibid., 299.

²⁸ Ibid., 301.

²⁹ Ibid., 302–303.

This “culminating point” is what Merleau-Ponty retains of the first theory and is what he calls a “privileged perception” and that he is referring to when he says, that “upon the evidence of the thing is founded the constancy of relations, rather than the thing being reduced to constant relations.”

Merleau-Ponty gives the example of the perception of a living body. A “living body,” he writes, when

seen at too close quarters, and divorced from any background against which it can stand out, is no longer a living body, but a mass of matter as outlandish as a lunar landscape, as can be appreciated by inspecting a segment of skin through a magnifying glass. Again, seen from too great a distance, the body loses its living value, and is seen simply as a puppet or automaton. The living body *itself* appears when its microstructure is neither excessively nor insufficiently visible, and this moment equally determines its real size and shape.³⁰

When Merleau-Ponty writes here of the living body “itself,” he does not mean that, as a person approaches me from very far away, for a while I perceive only the *appearance* of the living body and not that living body “itself,” and then, as some crucial distance, there is an ontological discontinuity such that the givenness of appearance gives way to reality, only to yield to appearance again as I get very close. He knows that it is the living body of another person that is perceived all along. His point is that it is only from a certain distance or range of distances that the *aliveness* of the body is given to me in an original manner, and that it is this perception that is the basis for my being able to see the far-off living body *appearing as* a puppet or automaton. In his account, that appearance of the other sets what will be experienced as the “real” size and shape of the other person, and in this way he gives detail to the process of secondary objectivation.

Within this context Merleau-Ponty says some things that bear on the issue of transcendence. Writing of what we have called “secondary objectivation” he notes, rejecting the idea that a thing is absolutely “in-itself,” i.e., separable from a perceiving person, since “the thing is correlative to my body and, in more general terms, to my existence,”³¹ since it is “the goal of a bodily teleology, the norm of our psycho-physiological setting,”³² Merleau-Ponty finds that the meaning of “the thing” is not exhausted by defining it in this way. “One cannot,” he says, “conceive any perceived thing without someone perceiving it. But the fact remains that the thing itself presents itself to the person who perceives it as a thing in itself, and thus poses the problem of a genuine *in-itself-for-us*.”³³ Here Merleau-Ponty articulates the issue raised earlier of the positing of the in-itself of objects and their features that remains after the critique of secondary objectivation. Then he expresses the sense of the transcendence of physical things that is connected with this positing. He says that the thing “holds itself aloof from us and remains self-sufficient.”³⁴ “This,” he says,

³⁰Ibid., 302.

³¹Ibid., 320.

³²Ibid., 322.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

“will become clear if we suspend our ordinary preoccupations and pay a metaphysical and disinterested attention to it [that is, move beyond our satisfaction with the normal appearance through philosophical critique]. It is then hostile and alien, no longer an interlocutor, but a resolutely silent Other, a Self which evades us no less than does intimacy with an outside consciousness.”³⁵

Going Further

In describing this “evasion” Merleau-Ponty alludes to Husserl’s discussion of the consciousness of the mental life of another person in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*. The way that the mental life of another person is conscious to the person whose mental life it is, which would be its “in-itself,” is a way of being conscious of it that I am essentially incapable of having and in that sense it evades me.³⁶ Merleau-Ponty sees an evasion as complete as this in the case of the awareness of physical things. I find in Merleau-Ponty’s description something that captures the sense in which the physical thing in-itself is *beyond* appearances and any system of appearances, and is *other* than appearance. Let us investigate this.

Imagine a tone sounding with what we take to be unvarying intensity that we hear at first from far away and then closer up as it approaches us. There is an appearance content that changes, the loudness of the tone, but through this change we experience a tone unvarying in intensity but getting closer. This spatial apprehension of our meaning bestowal is what achieves this unvarying-but-moving-toward. Now if we pay attention to this varying appearance of intensity, adopting a theoretical attitude, we can ask, not being satisfied with the answer that secondary objectivation gives us, “What is the invariant intensity of the tone?” and mean “What does it sound like in-itself?” Or, imagine sitting outside at a table of a café and your awaited friend approaches from down the street. The size of the friend is experienced to be invariant throughout the changes in the “size” of the appearance of the friend. Again rejecting the answer of secondary objectivation, we ask: “What is the invariant size of the friend itself?” These questions stem from the motive for secondary objectivation, that directedness toward the determinate size, sound, shape, etc. When we reject the response of secondary objectivation, we can start by answering in this way: The intensity, the size, the shape, themselves, are each just that which is given as self-identical in and is intended through, certain particular series of appearance-manifolds. Each one is, as it were, a kind of “X” (an unknown) in contrast to the knowing of it through its sensuous modes of givenness, something quite definite,

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 119.

but still, elusive. Every perceived object and every perceived feature of every object is a different X, different from every other in being the self-identical in different series of appearances.

If we follow the analogy with the consciousness of the mental life of another person, then it is senseless to seek the answer to our “What is X?” question in some intuition that would present the object or feature of an object as it is in itself and apart from its presentation through appearances. However, such questions themselves are not meaningless. It is just that a special attitude is required which can take up such a question and transport us beyond the confines of everyday experience. In *Phénoménologie de la perception* Merleau-Ponty is concerned with overcoming the prejudice of objective thought (scientific thought, for example) so as to disclose a pre-objective “knowledge” of the world that underlies objective thought and provides a ground for it. Husserl has a similar project in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*. In the context of this project we can get insight into what “primary objectivation” could be. Primary objectivation can be thought of as the basic directedness toward the determinate, independently of how this directedness may be satisfied. It is the deep pre-objective “knowledge” that can provide a basis for objective thought. Everyday life provides one way of satisfying the “desire” of this directedness. By virtue of the “privileged perception” and the “normal appearance” my friend who is approaching from down the street has “a size.” The question “what is her size?” is answered in the experience of that appearance. But there is in this experience no basis for objective thought. However, when we ask “what size is she?” and answer “five feet two,” the answer implies that the basic directedness toward the determinate has been transported to the level of (intersubjectively) objective thought. The answer refers us to a standard measuring stick that anyone can use and get the same result and it is not relative to the circumstances of experience or to the varying interests of different persons.

A different analogy will perhaps be helpful here, the analogy with mass and weight. The mass of an object is the measure of the amount of matter that it contains. An object’s weight is the measure of the force exerted by gravity on the object that has mass. What we experience as weight is the reaction to this force against a solid surface (like our hands when lifting something). The mass of an object is independent of its location, but its weight does vary with location if the strength of the local gravitational field varies (like on the moon vs. on earth). Now, in everyday life we may think of what we experience as the weight of an object as an intrinsic property of that object, and not a relational property that varies depending on the object’s relation to something else. This is like thinking that objects have definite sizes, shapes, colors, etc., and that we experience these when we experience an object via its normal appearance. But when five feet two is the way we think of an object’s size, we have our mental sights on something invariant in all of the changing appearances of our friend, including the normal appearance, something that will determine that *this* particular set of appearances will arise given the variations within the relativity of the situation. This is like focusing on the mass of an object. Five feet two is another attempt to capture the elusive “size,” to satisfy the directedness

toward the determinate. And like mass, five feet two seems to be an intrinsic (absolute) and not relative determination. But this is just another “secondary objectivation” that is motivated by the interest to understand with precision the series of variations that “the same” undergoes in changing circumstances. And just like the normal appearance, it should not be thought of as the ultimate satisfaction of the “desire” of primary objectivation.

Chapter 13

Ludwig Landgrebe and the Significance of Marginal Consciousness

Daniel Marcelle

Landgrebe with Husserl

Edmund Husserl's *Ideen* was formative and foundational in the thinking of Ludwig Landgrebe (1902–1991), who worked as Husserl's assistant for seven years (1923–1930). The first book of the *Ideen* had just been reprinted in 1922, and Landgrebe prepared the final version of *Ideen II*, which influenced his early thinking and shaped the future of his work. The key to this is his understanding of the permeation or co-constitution of nature and the human world through the body, which he derives from *Ideen II*. He then applies this to the constitution of regional ontologies and develops a sense of metaphysics that is to some extent a criticism of Husserl. Here, we will first discuss Landgrebe's work as Husserl's assistant particularly on *Ideen II*, and then consider the body as nexus of nature and spirit on one level and the regions of material nature and human world respectively on a macrocosmic level. Finally, we will briefly trace the development of Husserl's thought that Landgrebe would witness during his time in Freiburg and the course this will take in his career.

Landgrebe's involvement with the *Ideen* was immediate and direct when he, on the recommendation of Max Scheler, left Vienna to study in Freiburg. Replacing Martin Heidegger, he became Edmund Husserl's personal assistant in 1923, which would officially continue until 1928 when he had successfully defended his dissertation, “Wilhelm Diltheys Theorie der Geisteswissenschaften: Analyse ihrer Grundbegriffe.”¹ Eugen Fink then took over as Husserl's assistant, but Landgrebe

¹ In *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, ed. E. Husserl et al. (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1928).

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received funding from the Emergency Association of German Science to stay another two years to begin working on *Erfahrung und Urteil*.²

As Husserl's assistant, Landgrebe's first task was the final preparation of the *Ideen II* for publication. Edith Stein had already prepared the manuscript by transcribing it from the Gabelsberger shorthand and redacting it from 1916 to 1918. In 1923, Landgrebe took up the work where she left off and spent more than a year preparing it for publication. He used Stein's second redaction and the revisions that Husserl had recently made on the third section. He balanced the unity and coherency of the volume with Husserl's wish that many more writings from what came to be known in the Husserl-Archives as the "H-folio" be included by making these supplemental appendices. A "clean copy" was finished by 1925 that was typed and ready for publication. Husserl continued to emend the text until 1928, when it was finally set aside only to be published posthumously in 1952 by the Husserl-Archives.³ From this, it is safe to say that his work on the *Ideen II* was the centerpiece of Landgrebe's assistantship with Husserl and that this volume and the discussions they had concerning it made a tremendous impact on his thinking.

Landgrebe's first essay, "Die Phänomenologie der Leiblichkeit und das Problem der Materie,"⁴ concerns the role of the body in the constitution of material nature. He takes the interesting position of distinguishing the body as a constituted object from the correlative body as constituting but in a manner that erases the Cartesian and even Kantian distinction of subject and object: "This relation [of corporeality and material nature] shatters the traditional separation of inner and outer, of an *immanence* as the range of the subjective from a *transcendence* of objects which stand in opposition to it."⁵ At the heart of this distinction lies the contrast between the naturalistic and personalistic attitudes and their interaction. The problem that leads Landgrebe to this conclusion is the constitution of matter that begins in the natural sciences, but leads from there to the experience of the interwovenness of the body with material nature.

Since the modern period, there has been a certain preference for the objective descriptions of the exact sciences. Landgrebe does not see the activity of these natural sciences as the construction of the famous *Ideenkleid* that Husserl develops in his

² Landgrebe thanks this organization in his "Editor's Forward to the 1948 Edition" of *Experience and Judgment* and discusses the development of this book. See *Experience and Judgment*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe, trans. J. Churchill and K. Ameriks (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 3–8. *Erfahrung und Urteil* (Prague: Academia-Verlag, 1938).

³ The facts pertaining to the preparation of *Ideen II* come from the "Translator's Introduction" of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), xi–xvi.

⁴ While this is Landgrebe's first essay, it would not be published until Eugen Fink's *Festschrift* in 1965. Ludwig Landgrebe, "The Phenomenology of Corporeality and the Problem of Matter," *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl: Six Essays*, ed. and trans. Donn Welton, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 33–49; "Die Phänomenologie der Leiblichkeit und das Problem der Materie," *Beispiele: Festschrift für Eugen Fink zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. L. Landgrebe (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965), 291–305.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 45. Author's emphasis.

Krisis, but instead the determination of a method or attitude; it is a “method-directed activity” primarily interested in the appearance of being that renders this appearance as universal.⁶ From there we begin considering how material things are constituted in consciousness as sense objects in ever-changing adumbrations. The synthesis of these adumbrations is correlated to the synthesis of the body’s kinaesthetic functioning in head, eye, limb, and torso movements, to name a few. It is through this functioning that we are immersed in the causal nexus of material nature. Landgrebe describes this:

The synthesis of sensations is not merely the productive accomplishment of consciousness related to one and the same perceptual thing in the synthesis of the impressions of the various sensible fields, but rather “aesthetic” synthesis is interwoven with “causal” synthesis. ... Through my body I am interwoven with the causality of the thing-world.⁷

It is in this way that there is a freedom of activity, the famous “I can,” in the possibility of exploring the object from different perspectives, nearing to it and distancing oneself from it and so on, that material nature and the body are co-constituted, i.e., not only are surrounding material objects constituted, but so is the body. There is a “reciprocal relation between the constitution of material thinghood and material nature, on the one hand, and the constitution of the kinaesthetic body functioning in it as a living body, on the other hand.”⁸ It is in this way that we have an immediate and intuitive knowledge of nature’s matter and causality that simple external perception does not afford. It is through this connection that the naturalistic attitude and personalistic attitude of the practical lifeworld permeate one another. We can understand, then, how the naturalistic attitude is on its own an abstraction of the personalistic attitude attainable through a kind of forgetting or “self-oblivion” of the personal ego.⁹ At a higher level, regions are also co-constituted in this way.

The naturalistic attitude and personalistic attitude have their correlates in regions of being, which are material nature and the human or spiritual world, respectively. Regions are designated by a domain of objects essentially homogeneous in terms of their being, structure, and mode of givenness.¹⁰ Landgrebe emphasizes that the

⁶ Ibid., 37. There he goes on to write: “The physicist does not construct a world which would lie behind the world of sensible things, but instead he has developed a method which determines these same things and occurrences in an unconditional universal manner, which holds true for all thinking subjects.”

⁷ Ibid., 38–39. My emphasis.

⁸ Ibid., 39. Farther on Landgrebe writes: “This means that sensations, especially the *kinaesthesen* belonging to them, not only constitute the material thing as the correlate to external perception, but also constitute the body at the same time.”

⁹ Landgrebe quotes Husserl’s *Ideen II* on this point. Rojcewicz and Schuwer translate this as “self-forgetfulness of the personal ego,” Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book, trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989), 193.

¹⁰ Ludwig Landgrebe, “Regions of Being and Regional Ontologies in Husserl’s Phenomenology,” in *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl: Six Essays*, ed. Donn Welton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 149–175; “Seinsregion und regionale Ontologien in Husserls Phänomenologie,” *Studium Generale* 9 (1956): 313–34. Cf 151–53.

differentiation of regions depends more on the mode of intuition through which they are constituted than the simple description of the kinds of beings and their differences.¹¹ In *Ideen II* Husserl explores the constitution of three such regions of being: material nature, animal nature, and the human world. These three regions seem to be “three successively established strata of entities,” a foundational order.¹² In the classical sense of reductionism, material nature, which is defined by causality, is the foundational strata, upon which are founded animal nature and the human or spiritual world, both of which are defined by motivation, but distinct in their givenness, which is empathetic in the first case and reflective in the second.

Reductionism makes sense as you go from material to animal nature, but Landgrebe points out that when the constitution of the human world is considered, “there occurs a reversal of the entire investigation.”¹³ Rather, a certain priority of the personalistic attitude is revealed. How are we to understand this priority? We have to remember that we have already established above that the naturalistic attitude and its correlate region of material nature are only attainable through methodological self-forgetting. Landgrebe writes: “The reason for the priority of the ‘personalistic’ attitude is that it is not one which is secured by means of a methodological decision but rather in the way in which we are immediately conscious of ourselves and of our world.”¹⁴ Thus, instead of a tripartite structure a duality is actually the case. Nature, it turns out, is in a constitutive sense a construct of spirit.¹⁵ He then discusses how Husserl designates consciousness as the absolute being and region with an “ontological priority” over nature.¹⁶ Landgrebe sees this as a transition from a methodological concept of constitution to a metaphysical one. The methodological conception has all being as essentially being *for* consciousness, whereas the metaphysical concept is that all being is being *by means of* consciousness, that is, absolute idealism.¹⁷

Landgrebe, though, wants to move this priority from spirit to animal nature, that is, to permeation. He points out that “my immediate consciousness of myself is not simply the consciousness of myself as a positing spirit, as one who performs positing acts, but rather it is precisely, in itself, already a consciousness of ‘nature’ to the extent that I am a corporeal, sensing ego.”¹⁸ There is a residuum of matter in perception that disallows the complete reduction of nature to spirit, which is the sensuous *hylē*; it is the

¹¹ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 154. On the next page he goes on to write: “It is to be noted, therefore, that talk about regions of being is meaningful only with reference to this necessary and essential correlation with the mode of consciousness in which existents of a respective region arrive at givenness.”

¹² Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 156.

¹³ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 166.

¹⁴ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 166.

¹⁵ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 170.

¹⁶ The final chapter of *Ideen II* is “The Ontological Priority of the Spiritual World over the Naturalistic.”

¹⁷ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 169–70.

¹⁸ Landgrebe, “Regions of Being,” 173.

interwovenness of spirit with nature that prevents the total constitution of the one from the other. If spirit is absolute, then it cannot have anything that is over and against it, much less a consciousness of affection, which sensation is.¹⁹ Landgrebe writes:

What is prior to each such objectivating apperception, however, is immediately sensing consciousness with its kinaestheses in which not only things in their modes of appearance are constituted for me but, also, I am conscious of myself as sensing and affected and not just a positing ego.²⁰

Thus, it is in the permeation of nature and spirit at the nexus of the body that has a primacy to which these two regions are subordinate. Landgrebe does point out that Husserl takes note of this in his later manuscripts and especially in his analyses of the lifeworld.

During his time with Husserl, Landgrebe witnessed Husserl's departure from Cartesianism and the development of the lifeworld that would occupy him into the 1930s.²¹ Landgrebe saw the *Formale und transzendentale Logik* come to completion as well as the beginnings of *Erfahrung und Urteil*, which he would work on through to its publication in 1938.²² Considering his exposure to Dilthey, it would be an excellent study to consider whether and in what way the problem of history would impact *Ideen II* and *Erfahrung und Urteil* through Landgrebe's interest and influence.²³ He witnessed Martin Heidegger's visits with Husserl throughout the 1920s that would eventually lead to their famous falling out. He also witnessed a young American phenomenologist named Dorion Cairns introduce himself unexpectedly to Husserl in 1924.²⁴ Landgrebe went on to habilitate with Oskar Kraus at Charles University in Prague on Anton Marty's philosophy of language in 1933. He stayed there working until 1939 and during this time would collaborate extensively with Jan Patočka in the Prague Philosophical Circle. In 1939 and 1940 Landgrebe traveled to Leuven, Belgium, to work with Eugen Fink at the Husserl Archive recently established there.²⁵ He worked for a private firm in Hamburg during the war and afterwards became a professor at Kiel (1947–1956). He was then called to Chair at Cologne and to direct the Husserl Archive established there in 1951 by the Leuven archive to share in the work. Landgrebe made a significant impact on Husserlian phenomenology for the rest of his career and life.

¹⁹ Landgrebe, "Regions of Being," 170–71.

²⁰ Landgrebe, "Regions of Being," 172.

²¹ See Landgrebe's "Husserls Abschied vom Cartesianismus," *Philosophische Rundschau* 9 (1962): 133–77; "Husserl's Departure from Cartesianism," *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl: Six Essays*, ed. Donn Welton, trans. R.O. Elveton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 66–121.

²² See footnote 2 above.

²³ In this regard, see Dieter Lohmar, "Zu der Entstehung und den Ausgangsmaterialien von Edmund Husserls Werk *Erfahrung und Urteil*," *Husserl Studies* 13 (1996): 31–71.

²⁴ See Dorion Cairns, "Nine Fragments on Psychological Phenomenology," ed. Lester Embree, Fred Kersten, and Richard M. Zaner, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 41 (2010): 3. Also see Lester Embree's "Dorion Cairns, Empirical Types, and Field of Consciousness" in the present volume.

²⁵ At this time Landgrebe wrote his "The World as a Phenomenological Problem," trans. Dorion Cairns, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1/1 (1940): 38–58.

The Significance of Marginal Consciousness

One of those on whom Landgrebe made an impact is Aron Gurwitsch. In order for him to receive restitution money from the German government, Landgrebe testified that Husserl would have habilitated him if he not had to flee Nazi Germany for France before World War II and hence Gurwitsch would have enjoyed an academic career there. Drawing a direct philosophical connection is more difficult, but it is possible to say that the phenomenological community was small and that they would have been familiar with one another's contributions and efforts to promote Husserl's thinking. In the following, it is interesting to point out that both shared an interest in the theme of the body. Rather than beginning with permeation, though, Gurwitsch begins from marginal consciousness.

When I consider my own awareness as thematic object, it is possible to notice three fields of consciousness. There is the theme of my thought, that is, the object I am consciously aware of. There is a kind of thematic field surrounding this material, which contributes to it in certain ways and is always relevant for it. Our theme here, though, is the final field of consciousness, which is marginal consciousness. It is composed of copresent contents that are neither relevant for the theme, nor thematically explicit. These contents include such things as the space of one's surroundings, bodily comportment and position, and the flow of time. For instance, as I sit here now with marginal consciousness as my theme, I am also aware of the feel of my clothes on my skin, the fact that there are other rooms adjoining this one, and that time is passing, although inexplicitly. It is commonly thought that these peripheral regions of our awareness are mere happenstance contents that do not make a significant contribution to our conscious lives. In this study, I will bring out and explore five important features of marginal consciousness to demonstrate that these contents make significant contributions to the constitution of the lifeworld. First of all, these are not dumb and unorganized contents that they have been assumed to be, but rather are richly organized. Second, the awareness that we have of ourselves is in part supplied by marginal contents. Third, our spatial orientation is maintained in the margins. Fourth, we have a constant awareness of our embodiment and bodily comportment. And fifth, marginal contents of our consciousness play an important role in the constitution of our natural attitude. This investigation largely stands on the work of Aron Gurwitsch, but strives to expand and build upon it as well.

The “Organization” of Marginal Contents

First of all, we will describe the nature and organization of marginal consciousness. Such consciousness is defined by its copresence with but irrelevance for the theme. As the thematic field is defined by its relevancy for the theme, marginal contents are

defined by their irrelevancy.²⁶ The contents of the marginal horizon beyond our focal or attentive awareness are not materially related to the content of the theme or thematic field in any way and do not contribute anything or have any influence upon the content of thematic consciousness. Relevance is a kind of codependence of objects and their contexts that respectively contribute to and determine one another in terms of meaning and existence. To be relevant for something is to both contribute to and be defined by that something. It is in this way that we can understand that marginal contents are irrelevant for thematic consciousness.²⁷ They are merely co-present with the theme and experienced simultaneously with it.²⁸ In gestalt terms, the margin is related to the theme by a merely summative “and-connection” (*Undverbindung*). The importance of this relationship in this case is like elements being added to or grouped with one another, they maintain their identities as do thematic and marginal contents, which just happen to be given together. For instance, we can take the content of the theme and vary, imaginatively or in reality, the marginal contents of such awareness without affecting the content of the theme just so long as we are careful not to make such marginal contents themselves thematic, which would lead to a global transformation and restructuring of the contents and fields of consciousness. Gurwitsch describes this situation in the following way: “It is one of the characteristic properties of the and-connection that when $A_1 + A_2$ is given, A_2 can undergo modifications which do not concern A_1 .²⁹

It is because the content of the margins is utterly disconnected from and irrelevant for the theme that there really is no limit to the amount and kind of marginal data present with any given theme.³⁰ There are no restrictions, boundaries, or limits placed on the contents of marginal consciousness by the theme; thus, we can say in this respect that this is a domain of contingency as well.³¹ The contents of marginal consciousness are contingent in the sense that any content may appear with any other content and does so. Right now my thematic awareness is copresent with the slight hunger that I have, my anticipation of the class that I will teach in the morning, the sound of a TV in another room of my residence, and the darkness outside. All of these facts are irrelevant not only for the theme but for each other as well.

²⁶ Aron Gurwitsch, *The Field of Consciousness: Theme, Thematic Field, and Margin*, Vol. III, *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*, Phaenomenologica 194, ed. Richard Zaner and Lester Embree (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 335–36; hereafter CWAG III.

²⁷ Aron Gurwitsch, *Constitutive Phenomenology in Historical Perspective*, Vol. I, *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*, Phaenomenologica 192, ed. Jorge García-Gómez (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), Chapter 3, §9; hereafter, CWAG I.

²⁸ See also CWAG III, 334.

²⁹ Aron Gurwitsch, “Phenomenology of Thematics and of the Pure Ego: Studies of the Relation between Gestalt Theory and Phenomenology,” *Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology*, Vol. II, *The Collected Works of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973)*, Phaenomenologica 193, ed. Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 298; hereafter, CWAG II.

³⁰ CWAG III, 442.

³¹ CWAG III, 443.

It is important to point out, though, that while the content we are marginally aware of is irrelevant for the theme and contingent for other such contents, in no way can such be considered chaotic or disorganized. Rather, the contents of marginal awareness are richly organized and structured in themselves and their distinct contexts. Relevancy quite often describes the internal relationship of marginal contents; they are not relevant for the theme, of course, but when they are themselves made a theme their structure and relevancy become apparent and the contents of consciousness are restructured. The natural surrounding world is an example of one such organized content of marginal awareness, but we could take simpler ones as well such as the objects surrounding the theme. Around the book that I am focused on now, there is a pencil, computer equipment, a lamp, a Satchel Paige playing card, a picture that my daughter drew, a phone bill, etc. Some of these things cohere with one another, such as the objects of the desk, but others are out of place such as the leash for my dog or engines for my son's rocket; these things are, of course, internally relevant for their respective contexts. The important point is that although these marginal contents, which I have now made thematic, are quite often irrelevant for one another and essentially irrelevant for the theme, these objects are of themselves well-formed and distinct; if they are articulated, they are organized in terms of wholes and parts, and they are relevant for the world or milieu of which they are a part as well. We have to remember that all of the contents of marginal consciousness have a potential to become thematic. We confirm the facts of their organization when these marginal items become thematic objects of our attention. It is not the case that they suddenly become organized only when I make them thematic, they were so all along, it is just that I am now attentively aware of this, whereas I was previously only marginally aware of it.

Self-Awareness as Marginal

Possibly the most important feature of marginal consciousness is that apperception or self-awareness are always marginal contents that ultimately make explicit self-awareness possible. As we are attentive to some theme or other, there is a kind of self-awareness that is necessarily and always marginally concomitant with thematic awareness that pervades all of conscious life.³² Whatever kind of act of consciousness we happen to be engaged in, we are at least marginally aware of being so engaged, that is, we are always marginally aware of our own awareness. The content of such self-awareness is marginal because it is neither thematic nor relevant for the

³² See CWAG III, 447–48, where Gurwitsch writes: “The self-awareness of an act of consciousness thus turns out to be a *necessary condition for the existence of this act. That every act of consciousness carries self-awareness with it, so that this self-awareness accompanies us throughout all our conscious life, is more than a merely empirical fact, ascertained with utmost empirical generality; it is an a priori condition for consciousness.*”

contents of straightforward thematic consciousness. Gurwitsch describes this in the following way: “In an exhaustive description of the theme, the inner awareness of the act through which the theme is given does not appear as an ingredient of that which is given. … From the point of view of the theme, the *self-awareness of an act is merely additional, a concomitant of the act.*”³³ Thus, we can say that self-awareness is a necessary condition for the very existence of such acts and the possibility of reflection, which would render such thematic.³⁴ It is important to keep in mind that the self-awareness that we are presently describing is not itself reflection, but is the condition for the possibility of reflection. Reflection is defined as the thematization or objectification of an act and its object, i.e., a noesis and its noema, by another special act that itself is accompanied with marginal self-awareness and may also be reflected on by yet another higher order act, and so on; such thematization is the making thematic of a previously marginal content, which is a transformation of consciousness.³⁵ It is this making reflection possible that is an absolutely important aspect of marginal self-awareness, which is clearly important for phenomenological work, but another important aspect concerns the experience of temporality.

The Streaming Character of Consciousness Constituted in the Margins

Marginal consciousness is absolutely important for consciousness in that it makes possible a kind of continuity of consciousness in a stream-like form. We are not simply conscious of the present moment without anticipations for the future or reminiscence of the past. Mental life is not a series of disconnected activities and themes, but rather as a unity and continuity that is the result of temporal marginal awareness. We retain at least a marginal awareness of the duration of our mental activity and of having changed themes, the both of which constitute our temporally streaming continuity of consciousness. Marginal self-awareness of acts also includes the awareness of the act’s essential temporality. As we are aware of something, thematically or marginally, we are also aware of that act’s duration as it develops as a unit passing through different phases.³⁶ Gurwitsch describes the awareness of temporality resulting from the marginal awareness that we have of the duration of our acts in the following

³³ CWAG III, 446, emphasis added.

³⁴ CWAG III, 448, where Gurwitsch writes: “Thus by its very existence, every act of consciousness fulfills a condition of its possibly being grasped by an act of reflection; in other words, owing merely to its existence, every act of consciousness is open to reflective apprehension.”

³⁵ See CWAG III, 449, for a discussion of self-awareness and reflection.

³⁶ CWAG III, 453. See CWAG III, 450–55, for a discussion of the temporal structure of consciousness. See also CWAG III, 338, where he writes: “Every act of consciousness occurs in phenomenal time and thus is subject to the laws of phenomenal temporality, that is, it must necessarily exhibit the essential structure of phenomenal temporality.”

way: “every act of consciousness is pervaded by some reminiscence or retention of at least those acts immediately preceding the present act and also by some expectancy, however vague, that further acts will follow.”³⁷ The way in which marginal consciousness grants chronological order or phenomenal time to conscious life, then, is through the retention of past acts; the phenomenon of duration is a function of marginal consciousness. As conscious life flows, present acts of consciousness recede into the past, but are retained in memory. It is this memory that we are marginally aware of, but the future is also marginally present as a non-thematic awareness of anticipations that we are presently experiencing but only marginally aware of. Simply put, we are marginally conscious that we have been attentive to the same theme for a duration and we also marginally anticipate continued duration.³⁸ The continuity of context of the thematic field is founded upon this more profound temporal continuity in the sense that such is a necessary condition for any act of consciousness and of its contents.³⁹ It is in this way that we are at least marginally aware of the ever-present flow of time that grants consciousness its streaming nature.

Also important for marginal temporal awareness is that beyond the present awareness and retention of the duration and succession of our mental activity there is also an awareness of the themes of these enduring and succeeding acts so that we are aware of presently changing themes or having changed themes altogether at some point in the past. It is in the marginal awareness of this succession of acts and themes in which the temporal order and structure of consciousness is constituted.⁴⁰ In much the same way our sense of place is also constituted in the marginal contents of consciousness.

Marginal Awareness of the Surrounding World and Our Place

We are also always at least marginally aware of our surrounding environment and our place in it. Gurwitsch describes this: “the subject … is always in possession of an inarticulate, indefinite, vague awareness of the fact that he finds himself in the surrounding world, and keeps a certain approximate and global orientation therein, at least so far as its generic style is concerned.”⁴¹ As we attentively gaze upon some object in our perceptual environment or consider a non-perceptual theme such as some theory or another, we are also aware of the objects and space surrounding the

³⁷ CWAG III, 337.

³⁸ CWAG I, Chapter 3, §9.

³⁹ CWAG III, 337–38.

⁴⁰ CWAG III, 453–55.

⁴¹ CWAG I, Chapter 3, §9. CWAG III, 457, where Gurwitsch writes: “Whatever the theme of our mental activity, we cannot help being aware of a certain sector of the perceptual world, viz., our present perceptual environment, no matter how unconnected this sector may be, where relevancy is concerned, with that with which we are actually dealing.”

object of attention. As you read this, copresent with your awareness of the pages, paper or electronic, presently dealing with my formulations concerning marginal consciousness, you are also aware of those things surrounding these pages such as walls, floors, ceiling, desk, lamps, windows, pens, music, noises outside the room, etc., which also happen to fall within the field of your present perceptual awareness.

Our awareness of the environment extends into non-perceptual areas as well. In addition to those things that I just mentioned, you are also aware of the surroundings that exceed your present perceptual awareness. You have a certain awareness of how those things behind you would appear if you turned around, what is happening in the rooms outside of the one you presently occupy, the adjacent city streets, etc. Gurwitsch grants a certain privilege and priority to this non-perceptual cognizance for making us aware of the surrounding world; while perceptually marginal facts are thereby limited to the perceptual field, non-perceptual awareness of our environment extends indefinitely in all directions. The perceptual field is only a small moment of this greater whole of one's surrounding environment for which it is functionally significant and by which it is determined; the meaning and significance of those things of which we are presently perceptually aware derives from non-perceptual things of which we may only be marginally aware at the time. It is in this way that we are aware of the natural world and also aware that it is continually present for us.⁴² At the same time, it is the particular environmental experiences that inform the horizon of the perceptual world that is implicated. From my present position, I do not implicate the horizon of a rainforest or desert surrounding me, but rather my home and the streets of West Palm Beach, i.e., the horizon is determined as to its kind by present perceptual circumstances, which can be considered the "kernel" of the perceptual world. The type and style of this horizon, no matter how indeterminate, are implied by the present perceptual content; this horizon should be considered a continuation of the present perceptual kernel. The horizon and kernel are in a kind of harmony and are relevant for one another.⁴³ This backs up our earlier assertion that the contents of marginal consciousness are not a chaos, but are organized and structured, and even exhibit relevancy within horizons. From this kernel we may explicate the greater horizon through reflection.

Marginal Awareness and the Body

In the great majority of what we have been describing, we have been considering the mental or psychic ego, but now we have to consider somatic aspects of the ego in terms of their necessary marginal presence in consciousness. No matter what theme it is that one is focused upon, accompanying the theme there is always in certain

⁴² CWAG II, 295.

⁴³ CWAG III, 494.

ways an awareness of one's embodied existence or corporeity. Such awareness is not of a somatic ego or representation of the body that somehow accompanies our consciousness, but instead what we might call indications of a body. We will take this opportunity to say a few words about Gurwitsch's descriptions of the body and embodiment and the important role that this ever-present marginal awareness of the body plays in the constitution of the lifeworld. While consciousness as a whole includes both psychic and somatic aspects and to consider either without the other can be a dangerous and problematic abstraction, we will see that the psychic or mental ego, for Gurwitsch, enjoys a certain priority over that of the somatic ego, which is important because it aids in understanding differences that he has from other writers on the body. Let us begin with marginal awareness of the body, which is our primary theme in this section and the inroad to the body for Gurwitsch.

While we entertain one theme or another, we are concomitantly always at least marginally aware of our bodily posture and general corporeal condition.⁴⁴ Such consciousness is both proprioceptive in that we are aware of our motion, posture, and position, through sensory receptors within our muscles, tendons, joints, and inner ear, and exteroceptive in that we are aware of stimuli impacting our body from the outside. In the case of perception, if I take some perceptual object such as a building or tree, I am aware of this object as the theme of my attention, but I am also aware of the movement of my eyes as they scan over the object and my feet and legs as I walk around the object, and crouch or tip-toe to get different views. Similarly, I feel the exertion of my muscles and strain on my body when I lift something heavy and the wind on my face or the feel of stiff jeans on my legs as I walk. Even for intellectual themes, we are at least marginally aware of our bodies; for instance, we may breathe quicker with the excitement of coming to understand the solution to a logical problem, the bodily distension of finishing the writing of an essay, or experience the flush of caffeine from the coffee we are drinking. Marginal bodily awareness, unless such is made thematic by reflection, is not a content of whatever theme it is that we happen to be attending to, but is marginally concomitant. This is true even though the appearance of perceptual objects depend to a certain extent upon the position of our body and sense organs in relation to them; in terms of content, they are irrelevant for one another.⁴⁵ The primary point is that these somatic contents are at least marginally co-present with any theme whatsoever.

Another important point concerning marginal bodily awareness is that we are also at least marginally aware of our freedom of movement within certain limits, i.e., that we may move in certain ways and directions or not move at all.⁴⁶ Right now

⁴⁴ CWAG III, 477–78.

⁴⁵ “No feature, tinge, or aspect of the theme (the latter taken as it stands before our minds in a phase of the thematic process) derives from the actual bodily condition or is modified by an alteration of this condition. This condition, although given all the time with more or less distinctness, is nevertheless experienced as being of no material concern or relevancy to them; it is *concomitant with* but not *integrated into* the thematic process,” “On Thematization,” ed. Lester Embree, *Research in Phenomenology* 4 (1974): 29.

⁴⁶ CWAG III, 477–78.

I am at least marginally aware of the possibility that I may get up and walk out of the room through the door behind me, or continue sitting at the desk writing.

Regarding the status of the body, Gurwitsch recognizes the distinction between the “body” and the “organism,” that is, the body as it is experienced by a living subject from within, so to speak, and the body as an object in the world.⁴⁷ This is Husserl’s famous *Leib/Körper* distinction, though Gurwitsch points out that we do not experience our body as some whole somatic ego that perpetually accompanies both thematic and marginal consciousness, but at the same time “no bodily experience appears as scattered facts.”⁴⁸ Instead of such a whole body, it is only the content of those bodily acts and processes of which we are at least marginally aware.⁴⁹ From these, though, others are implied and indicated. Gurwitsch describes this situation in terms of marginal consciousness:

All of the experiences in question, both those of actual bodily facts and those of potentialities, point and refer to each other. ... The experiences of bodily facts refer and point, furthermore, beyond these facts to an inarticulate and confused horizon which, when apprehended and unfolded in the appropriate attitude, displays itself in a coherent and systematic group of bodily facts, both actual and virtual, the totality of the latter actually defining the bodily condition of the subject at the given moment. ... The general awareness of our embodied existence or corporeity, which, as a marginal fact, accompanies us throughout our conscious life, consists in the presence of this horizon, conveyed by particular bodily experiences.⁵⁰

Each bodily experience implies or is indicative of this horizon of other bodily experiences. In the same way that our present perceptual is a kernel or index of our greater surrounding sense of place, so too does the experience we have of parts of our body imply the body.⁵¹ This points to the vague background of our bodies. In other words, we are referred to the order of bodily existence from any single experience.

Regarding the discussion of the body in general, beyond the marginal references to it above, Gurwitsch has very little to say about embodied existence. He only mentions the body in four places, only one of which was published in his lifetime.⁵² We get a feeling of Gurwitsch’s emphasis and prioritization of the psychic aspects of consciousness over that of the somatic in the following quote from one of his letters to Alfred Schutz: “And the whole displacement of consciousness to the body in Sartre and also in Merleau-Ponty seems to me to *turn things upside down*. The correct question is of course: What does consciousness of my body look like?”⁵³

⁴⁷ “The Phenomenological and Psychological Approach to Consciousness,” CWAG II, 110–11.

⁴⁸ CWAG III, 483; he is making this point contra Max Scheler’s position that we have consciousness of the body as a whole, which is prior to any somatic experience.

⁴⁹ CWAG III, 484–85.

⁵⁰ CWAG III, 482.

⁵¹ CWAG III, 482–83.

⁵² Gurwitsch does mention the body in the sections concerning marginal consciousness in his dissertation (CWAG II). The other two places include “Marginal Consciousness,” CWAG III, and Gurwitsch-Schutz 1985.

⁵³ Gurwitsch, Schutz 1985: 101.

We can take this last question as a statement of the constitutive problem; like all other objects, the body is constituted through acts of consciousness noematically. Gurwitsch writes: “awareness of bodily processes and activities is also a matter of consciousness, no less and no more than cognizance or awareness of anything else. ... that facts related to bodily activities and these activities themselves exist for us and may be subject matters of observation and reasoning is due to certain states of consciousness through which the facts and activities in question offer themselves.”⁵⁴ But still, “The fact of our embodied existence is an ultimate and irreducible phenomenal datum for our consciousness.”⁵⁵ In conjunction with the other necessary orders of marginal consciousness, somatic awareness has much to contribute to the constitution of the natural attitude.

The Role of Marginal Consciousness in the Constitution of the Natural Attitude

While the three permanent orders of existence or marginal consciousness are distinct and separated, i.e., coherent and closed, from one another and have thus far been considered individually, in our conscious lives and daily awareness there is an important correspondence among them or, as Gurwitsch says, an “intervention” of them upon one another, which makes possible the constitution of the natural attitude and its general thesis.⁵⁶ First, we will discuss the correspondence or intervention of the marginal orders of existence upon one another. And, second, we will discuss their role in the constitution of the natural attitude.

It is quite easy to come up with examples of how the perception of our surroundings and the awareness of our somatic existence intervene or correspond to one another. It is clear that perception provides the orientation by which our bodily movements are guided. We adjust our footing or change our direction based on our perception of the ground upon which we are walking; we step lightly when walking on ice, walk briskly on smooth pavement, and step carefully on roughly cobbled walkways. Another example is the way that we handle certain objects based on our perception of them. We handle objects that we perceive as fragile with careful movements, and familiar objects with well-practiced movements. It is in this way that perceptual objects guide our bodily movements and provide spatial orientation for our movements. Gurwitsch writes: “Perception’s guidance of the movements consists in the movements taking place on the grounds of and in accordance with what is offered by perception. ... To be performed, the movements require and refer to points of orientation which can only be found in perception.”⁵⁷ In his *Marginal*

⁵⁴ CWAG, 474.

⁵⁵ CWAG, 484.

⁵⁶ CWAG III, 501–503.

⁵⁷ CWAG III, 503.

Consciousness Gurwitsch only refers to the intervention of perception and the somatic ego, which are certainly good examples in the clarity of such intervention, but it would be easy to come up with examples of time intervening with the other two orders as well. Think of the batter in baseball who perceives the ball approaching and must make bodily movements at the right time in order to hit the ball. Or there are the cases in which one has a limited amount of time to complete a task of some kind; in such cases the sense of streaming temporality intervenes on one's bodily movements in order to quicken them. Musicians, especially those of rhythmic instruments, mark the passing of time and must feel temporality informing their bodily movements. It is the awareness of temporality, in such cases, that informs the orientation of one's bodily movements within a certain spatial environment. The embodied ego is in this way integrated into the world of perception and is one worldly existent among others.⁵⁸ It is through such interrelations, correspondences, and interventions that the natural attitude is constituted. An interesting example that Gurwitsch brings out is that of trial and practice, say of an athlete such as a gymnast or a drummer, who is training him or herself in terms of the intervention of the surrounding environment, temporality, and one's bodily existence.⁵⁹

An important aspect of the intervention of marginal orders of existence is the way they implicate one another and, most importantly, the perceptual world. Gurwitsch points out that bodily postures do not happen “*in vacuo*,” but rather provide us some information about the surrounding perceptual environment; “A sufficiently complete analysis of kinesthetic experiences and the awareness of our bodily existence as conveyed by these experiences leads to the perceptual world as ground and basis of our embodied existence.”⁶⁰ It is through such intervention that we come to understand the body as a worldly or mundane object in the world like the other objects that we perceive, but as a peculiarly privileged and special object different from other objects as well. Gurwitsch points out that “we can have kinesthetic experiences of no object other than our body,” while all other objects may appear only externally.⁶¹ In addition, whereas we may cease our perception of other objects, “we are immediately and directly aware of our body, at least in marginal form, at every moment of our lives, under all circumstances, and at whatever place we might happen to find ourselves.”⁶² It is in this omnipresence of these three special orders of existence that Gurwitsch describes as constituting the natural attitude in the following way:

This evidence consists in the permanent presence to consciousness, at least in marginal form, of the three orders of existence ... Because at every moment of conscious life (whatever our special attitude and the subject matter of our thematic activity), we are aware of a certain segment of the stream of consciousness, of our embodied existence, and of the

⁵⁸ CWAG III, 504.

⁵⁹ CWAG III, 503.

⁶⁰ CWAG III, 504.

⁶¹ CWAG III, 508.

⁶² CWAG III, 508.

perceptual world, the belief in the existence of this world and the apprehension of ourselves as pertaining to it as mundane existents are permanently present to consciousness. Thus the facts treated here under the heading of “marginal consciousness” prove to be the root of what Husserl calls “the natural attitude.”⁶³

It is marginal consciousness that makes it possible to give up one theme in order to take up another willfully or not. Gurwitsch writes: “Marginal consciousness finds a further and essentially new possibility of relinquishing the actual theme and turning to a new one.”⁶⁴ It is in this way that the transformations of consciousness are possible.

Concluding Remarks

Marginal consciousness plays a significant role in the constitution of our natural attitude and the lifeworld. We have seen that marginal contents are not a disordered chaos and in fact potential themes that may be taken up along with their contexts. Second, we have shown that along with any awareness that we may have there is also apperception of our act and ourselves supplied by marginal consciousness, which renders the possibility of reflection. Third, we are now aware that the streaming temporality of our consciousness is, in large part, supplied by marginal consciousness of our protentions and retentions of the given present. In addition to time, our spatial and environmental awareness is to a large part constituted in the margins of our awareness. Fifth, we explored the manner in which embodiment is a marginal content. Finally, this essay was brought together more specifically how our natural attitude is in part constituted through the intervention of these marginal “orders of existence.”

⁶³ CWAG III, 507–508.

⁶⁴ CWAG II, 301. See also CWAG III, 499.

Chapter 14

Dorion Cairns, Empirical Types, and the Field of Consciousness

Lester Embree

The *Ideen* and Dorion Cairns

At the New School for Social Research during 1954–1968 Dorion Cairns (1901–1973) typically taught two courses a year of phenomenology and two seminars on texts by Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, or lecture courses on “Western Philosophy: 1840–1900,” “The Scottish School and Hamilton,” and “Modern Formal Logic.” In phenomenology, “Husserl’s Theory of Intentionality” was twice taught in a course that lasted four semesters with some additional lectures and then that course was reworked into two semesters on intentionality and one semester each on “Phenomenology of Thinking,” “Theory of Knowledge,” “Theory of Value,” and “Advanced Theoretical Ethics,” which sequence was then taught repeatedly. Because he was teaching phenomenology and not scholarship, Cairns practically never mentioned texts in his phenomenology lectures, but he did encourage students to begin their study with Part II, the “Phänomenologische Fundamentalbetrachtung,” of the *Ideen* that Husserl had begun him on in 1924.¹

¹ “In 1924, after studying philosophy at Harvard for 5 years, I was awarded a traveling fellowship. During the academic year of 1923–1924, I had learned from Winthrop Bell enough about Husserl to persuade me to begin my foreign study in Freiburg. With letters from Bell and W. E. Hocking, I called on Husserl toward the beginning of the winter semester of 1924–1925. He put me to work at once, on the second volume of the *Logische Untersuchungen* and on the “Phänomenologische Fundamentalbetrachtung” in the *Ideen*. At the same time he told me, in effect: ‘We cast no magic spells here. Everything depends on you seeing for yourself the things we describe. It is up to you to follow our descriptions and either confirm or correct them. Read slowly, pen in hand, and then bring me your difficulties and objections.’” Dorion Cairns, “Nine Fragments on Psychological Phenomenology,” ed. Lester Embree, Fred Kersten, and Richard M. Zaner, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 41 (2010): 3.

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In the fall of 1964 Cairns did, however, offer a seminar on Husserl's *Ideen*. That was the only time he taught a course about a phenomenological text. I regret not taking or sitting in on that course and do not remember why I did not. This is especially regrettable because notes on only four lectures survive in his Nachlass (027552–027575) and they are unusually sketchy. We do have audio tapes of the whole course, but these have yet to be converted into forms that can be listened to and transcribed, the technology having evolved. Some comments based on the notes on the four lectures must suffice here (the quotations below are from these incomplete sketchy lecture scripts).

The seminar was taught at the request of students who had already taken the two-semester course on intentionality. It was not offered as an introduction to Husserl's thought. The first purpose of the course was to understand as clearly as possible what Husserl meant when he was writing the book in 1912 and this included not only the thoughts expressed by his words but also "the thoughts that were either thought *along with* or *implied* by the ones he *did* express." To accomplish this, relevant passages in the first edition of the *Ideen* needed to be collated with earlier and later texts. "By doing this we can, in fact, bring to light changes in some of his opinions and concepts and consequent changes in his terminology and emphases—most of which are improvements." The final purpose was to criticize the thoughts. "First, an examination of the thoughts in question in order to see whether they are adequately or inadequately expressed, clear or obscure, distinct or confused. Then in cases where this is possible, we ought to confront the thoughts in question with the things they are about, in order to see whether the former are correct or incorrect, true or false."

About the text to use, Cairns was concerned that it be the first edition of the *Ideen*, which could be established by using the appendices of the Biemel edition of 1950 to identify later changes. By "the *Ideen*" he referred only to Book I because he had doubts about the authenticity of Book II. Otherwise, he said that "Boyce Gibson's translation is misleading, obscure, or downright wrong in so many ways that it could be of little use by itself. But you might bring a copy to meetings if you can read neither German nor French—Ricoeur's French translation, on the other hand, though sometimes free, is rarely downright wrong."

Commenting on the title, Cairns said that "*Gedanken*" ("thoughts") is another name for "*Ideen*." Ricoeur's "*idées directrices*" ("guiding ideas") is an interpretation, while "ideas pertaining to" is literal. Husserl thought the phenomenology in question was "pure" first of all because it concerns phenomena that he thought of as transcendentally pure. "Such phenomena he contrasts with what he would call *reale Phänomene*—by which he would designate just essentially possible individual phenomena in an essentially possible spatio-temporal world. Transcendentally pure phenomena, on the other hand, are the same essentially possible individual phenomena, but 'purified from that which confers upon them reality.'" The phenomena are also called "*Erlebnisse*," which Cairns had come to prefer to translate as "mental processes," "though 'processes of mental life' would be closer" (for his own work he preferred "intuitive processes" and this occurs in his lecture scripts as well).

Cairns subsequently adds that “In the Introduction and in Book I, the phrases ‘pure phenomenology,’ ‘transcendentally pure phenomenology,’ [and] ‘transcendental phenomenology’ always designate a phenomenology that is not only *transcendentally* pure, transcendental, but also *eidetically* pure, eidetical.”²

Many of the surviving written notes are adversely critical. “The exposition [is] inevitably confusing before an analysis of the structure of the concrete noesis has been presented. This, however, is fully presented only in the course of later sections: §§92, 99, 104, 105, and, in Part IV, §§129–133—notably: §131. The ‘object’ as determinable X in the noematic sense<of the intentive process>.”—“Furthermore, [the] *Ideen* does not point out that there are as many intentional objects of an intentive process as there are ‘determinable X’s’—in particular, that each moment of an object-sense is itself a determinable X.”

“Other faults in [the] *Ideen*’s exposition are [that the a]nalysis is worked out expressly only for *actional* intendings [and] only for separate intendings, not for syntheses of intendings—actual and potential (horizontal). This has led some to interpret the noema erroneously as an appearance of the intended thing.”³

The surviving notes focus finally on time. “‘Phenomenological’ Time [is] the unitary form of all *Erlebnisse* in one *Erlebnisstrom*. [This is r]egardless of whether the *Erlebnisse* are taken as occurring in the spatio-temporal world or as transcendental. . . . ‘Objective time—cosmic time.’ [“Raumzeit” is written on the margin.] It is in fact one non-self-sufficient dimension of an integral form, as *space-time*. But this fact, so far as I know, [was] not seen by Husserl. [It is s]uggested by twentieth Century physics, but the case [is] not just of the twentieth Century physicists’ world. This becomes plain only through an analysis of world constitution. Such an analysis makes it plain also that there are many space-times. Husserl saw at least that there are many spaces, but so far as I know, [he] did not draw the consequence that there are many transcendent times, as many as there are levels of noetic-noematic constitution.”

Cairns’s revision of Husserl’s *hylē-morphē* doctrine is mentioned, but was better expressed six years later.³ His alternative view distinguishes sensings and transcendent sensa. Then he could assert that, “Fundamentally important . . . is the failure of Husserl to distinguish the times of sensa fields from the pure time of mental life. [This is f]undamentally important because [the] self-apperception of mental life as in the same space-time with all sensa is [the] first and most important step in ‘self-mundanization.’ In [the] *Ideen* . . . all the intermediate steps in automatic self-mundanization of a mental life [are] ignored.”

² Cairns may be alluding here to Aron Gurwitsch, whose work, *The Field of Consciousness*, he had recently refereed for Harvard University Press and whom he said on other occasions tended to reify the noema. After all, who else was writing extensively about the noema in that time?.

³ Dorion Cairns, “The Many Senses and Denotations of the Word *Bewusstsein* (‘Consciousness’) in Edmund Husserl’s Writings,” *Life-World and Consciousness, Essays in Memory of Aron Gurwitsch*, ed. Lester E. Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), 19–31. See also my “Objects Inside and Outside the Body According to Dorion Cairns,” *Thinking in Dialogue with the Humanities: Paths into the Phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty*, ed. Karel Novotný, Taylor S. Hammer, Anne Gléonec, and Petr Špecián (Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2010), 13–30.

Elsewhere in his Nachlass Cairns has much to say about founded noetico-noematic strata, i.e., between the doxic and the non-doxic or the emotional-valuational and the conative-volitive. He also asserted that he could not verify some aspects Husserl's descriptions of non-doxic syntactical acts, e.g., collective liking and collective willing. Moreover, he was unable to verify the alleged one-to-one correlation of moments in the noesis and in the noema.⁴

In sum, Dorion Cairns took Husserl's *Ideen* very seriously, but was somewhat ambivalent about it.

Types in the Field of Consciousness

Introduction

In §22 of his *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, I. Buch* (1913), Edmund Husserl writes: “The truth is that all human beings see ‘ideas,’ ‘essences,’ and see them, so to speak, continuously; they operate with them in their thinking, they also make eidetic judgments—except that from their epistemological standpoints they interpret them away.”⁵ Nothing will be said here about interpreting things away. Rather, I shall consider how material universal essences can indeed be said to be seen continuously. Referring to the analysis of the field of consciousness of Aron Gurwitsch (1901–1973), my contention is that when such universals are not thematic or relevant, they are marginal. And, to begin with, it will help this thesis if we follow Dorion Cairns (1901–1973) on how what are called “empirical types” in Husserl’s *Erfahrung und Urteil* (1939) are understood as unclarified material universals, which goes beyond the account of the eidetic in the *Ideen*.

Types

Cairns always taught that eideation and universal essences were as important for Husserl in the *Ideen* as the transcendental phenomenological epochē, reduction, and purification, but came to be of secondary importance for him by the time of the *Cartesianische Meditationen* (1931), were they were dealt with in the IV. *Meditation*, which is in effect a set of appendices (and the V. *Meditation* is in effect a separate

⁴ Cairns also based his critique and alternative on Husserl's *Ideen I*. See Lester Embree, “Wisdom more than Knowledge and more than Loved: Dorion Cairns's Revision of Husserl's Philosophic Ideal,” *Journal of British Society of Phenomenology* 41/2 (2010).

⁵ *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983), 41.

treatise). Nevertheless, Cairns once lectured at length about universal essences, emphasizing the account in Part I of the *Ideen*, but going on to include some later thought:

In *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Husserl distinguishes between empirical type and essence; an empirical type is a kind of pure essence as in the *Ideen*. The word *type*, meaning a generic or specific type, is used interchangeably with essence or *reine Wesen* up to the *Ideen*. In *Erfahrung und Urteil*, a distinction is made, namely, the distinction between *reine Wesen* and *Typus*. What is pre-constituted passively or constituted automatically, prior to any activity on the part of an ego, is the empirical type—it is a universal, but it subsumes under itself already just those *variants* of the universal that have happened to come along empirically in the life in question.⁶

Thus if all the books one had ever seen had blue covers, one could be expected to assert that “All books are blue.” This is why types are said to be “empirical.” Eidetic epochē, free-phantasy variation, and eidetic evidencing would transcend this to clarify what had been obscure and make it possible to say that “All books are colored.” Prior to the practice of eidetic method, however, there is always at least vague awareness of material universals.

The Formal and Conceptual Excluded

Cairns’s account is especially interesting because it distinguishes material from formal universal essences and pursues the pre-constitution of the former. While the structure of the evidencing and thus eidetic cognition of universals of both species are the same, he writes:

The *eidē* have, however, their pre-constitution; they are pre-constituted before an ego singles them out, objectivates them, and makes them objects for himself. The pre-constituting of an *eidos* turns out to be, in the case of a material essence, different from what it is in the case of a formal essence. We may say that the material *eidē* are pre-constituted by *primarily* automatic intendings, whereas the formal ones are pre-constituted by acts, or actional intendings—notably by those that may be subsumed under the heading “thinking,” but also by mental acts which are of such a *primitive* sort that they can hardly be called “thinking,” but such actively paying attention to something gives it a *form* (in a logical sense). Upon conferring this something-form upon a plurality of things, there is [also] pre-constituted the *eidos* “something” which is exemplified in each of the particular something-forms. The pre-constituting of the formal *eidos* “something” is an automatic affair as the basis for the active picking-out of this “thing,” “this” ...

The more fundamental *eidē* are the material ones. Redness, coloredness, texture, smoothness, etc. are not universals like whole, part, subject, predicate, collection, etc. Those universals (e.g., redness, which is exemplified in each of the red things by its individual redness) are there ready for an ego to apprehend them, to pick them out—no action creates them; they are created, however, automatically; we have to go down to automatic synthesis to uncover the manner in which they are ready to be picked out and be clarified by an ego.

⁶Most of Cairns’s lecture is in the appendix of this chapter and quotations are from there.

My other teacher, Aron Gurwitsch, had grave doubts about the *Abbau-Aufbau* method so important for Cairns and Husserl. Nevertheless, he does describe the constitution of what needs to be abstracted from in order to reach the level where material universals can most readily be seen. In his contribution to the Cairns Festschrift, “Perceptual Coherence as the Foundation of the Judgment of Predication,”⁷ which he considered a reworking of what was central to *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Gurwitsch describes “articulating thematization” as follows:

Articulating thematization proves to be a special mental operation performed on a given perceptual situation, which thereby undergoes categorial formation. To that specific operation corresponds a specific noematic correlate, namely, the *state of affairs* (*Sachverhalt*) which is the *judgmental noema*, founded on but different from, the perceptual noema. Husserl has formulated the difference as that between ... “what is judged” (*das Geurteilte*), and that on which the judgment bears or to which it refers (*das Beurteilte*). The latter denotes the thing perceived, the former the state of affairs which results from and is constituted by the categorial formation of the thing perceived by means of articulating thematization (Idem, 262).

What Gurwitsch is referring to here are, however, not material universal essences. This is clear in two respects. On the one hand, categorical form is precisely not the content or matter that is abstracted from in formalization, but is rather what is focused on in obtaining a particular form from a verbal expression such as “this table is brown” and, on the other hand, that particular form is not eidetic but categorial or conceptual. To be sure, we do indeed proceed in logic from the categorial forms of particular judgments to the universal essences that they exemplify, but what we reach then are formal universals, e.g., “S is p,” and not material universals such as tableness and brownness. (It may well be a source of confusion that as students we often early learn in studying logic to formalize and eideate practically simultaneously.)

Let me confess at this point that for the longest time I did not distinguish between concepts and universal essences. Then one day it dawned on me that while both concepts and essences can be referred to, only concepts can be conveyed or expressed by words. Essences, individual as well as universal, cannot themselves be expressed verbally, but can be referred to. Concepts refer, universal essences do not. Thus the concept expressed by the word “bookness” refers to or is about—but is different from—the universal material essence that particular books can be seen to exemplify.⁸

If we abstract from how objects are conceptually formed, we reach prepredicative perception, which is what Gurwitsch is chiefly interested in and where, of course, he draws on Gestalt Psychology in order to object to Husserl’s doctrine of hyletic data and to offer what I have called a “Gestalt phenomenological” alternative instead.

⁷ Reprinted as Chapter 10 of Aron Gurwitsch, *Phenomenology and the Theory of Science*, ed. Lester Embree (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

⁸ It seems that even Husserl recognized that he sometimes confused universals and concepts, for the following is translated from his marginal note on Copy A beside the passage from *Ideen I*, §22 quoted at the beginning of the present essay: “False. Idea and essence are identified here, and signification taken as essence.”

The Structure of the Field of Consciousness

What Gurwitsch nowhere asks about is whether and how we might be aware of material essences continuously. As intimated, however, he might have, because he had the resources to do so in his field theory. He offers this description of the field of consciousness in his last paper:

Thematization may be understood in a very broad sense to denote any change or modification of thematic consciousness. Sitting at our desk, we are perceptually occupied with a book or—as it is usually put—we devote our attention to the book, while at the same time we perceive a sheet of paper also lying on the desk and pertaining to the perceptual surroundings or—as I have called it—the thematic field of the book, which is our actual theme. We are free to change the direction of our perceptual attention so as to devote it to the sheet of paper. What previously had been a “potential” theme, that is to say a segregated unit within the thematic field and, hence, a component of the latter, now becomes a theme in its own right, while the previous theme, the book, is inactualized and relegated to the status of a component of the thematic field. The situation is substantially the same when, being engrossed in a mathematical demonstration and having reached a certain step, we “look back” at a mathematical theorem which leads to the present step. In both cases, we shift from one theme to another. Still, we are moving within the same thematic field, its reorganization and reorientation notwithstanding. The situation is slightly different in the following case. Suppose that, while dealing the mathematical theorem, we hear a noise which on account of its irrelevancy to the theorem does not belong to the thematic field but—as I have proposed to call it—the margin. We may turn our attention to that noise either of our own free choice or because it has become so intrusive as to divert us from the mathematical demonstration. In contradistinction to the previously mentioned examples in which it meant freely wandering, so to speak, within the same thematic field or, at least, the same thematic context, thematization here purports relinquishing not only the theme but also the thematic field.⁹

There are thus three zones, one might say, in the field of consciousness. To be seen constantly, material universals need always to be found in at least one of them. Before I attempt to show this, one more passage deserves quotation to show how Gurwitsch agrees with Cairns and Husserl concerning empirical types, something that will be useful presently.

Gurwitsch writes the following about what we always begin from in the life-world prepredicatively:

On this level, we do not encounter things and persons presenting themselves in their full individuality. With the exception of persons and also things which have for us the sense of uniqueness, as, e.g., my father, my apartment, and the like, we rather encounter beings of a kind or sort: another woman, another child, another policeman, another tree, another car, and so on. What is encountered appears in the light of a certain typicality. (Idem, 43)

Three Descriptions

With these points from Gurwitsch and Cairns as preparation, some phenomenology can now be undertaken regarding the three ways in which a book and a sheet of

⁹ Aron Gurwitsch, “On Thematization,” ed. Lester Embree, *Research in Phenomenology* 4 (1974): 35, hereafter cited as “Thematization.”

paper on a desk in the library might be encountered. It is for the hearer or reader of the following descriptions to decide for herself on the basis of reflective observation if these descriptions are true or not.

1. ***Experiencing material universal essences.*** Even though everybody already thinks they know what one is, it is not unphilosophical to ask, “What is a book?” and go into a fairly extensive investigation of bookness. It helps to refrain from focusing on the unique individual book on the desk as actually existing and instead to consider it as merely another example on a par with various feigned books. Then other things of the same sort can be reviewed and one might suppose that the book is something that can be read, that it is a species under the genus Reading Material or somesuch. One might then see that it must be artifactual, which is to say something produced through human action. The tracks that a hunter follows are certainly natural things that represent her prey, but it is metaphorical to speak of “reading” in this connection. What is read, strictly speaking, has been humanly structured so that concepts are conveyed by perceivable marks.

With modern technology, there can be audio recordings in which concepts are conveyed by sounds, and hence “audio books” are a species and then there are books for the blind that can be read through touching patterns of raised dots with the fingers and thus are another species, but let us confine ourselves to the species of books relying on visible marks to convey concepts. Sets of pictures—or samples of wallpaper—that have been bound together may resemble the familiar artifacts called books, but if they do not convey concepts, they are not literally books qua things to read. Books of matches are also not in the species being clarified.

Most books for reading today are composed of multiple pages bound on one edge and this seems to distinguish them from piles of sheets with writing on them, but this binding on the edge is at best characteristic of a modern subspecies of book and not of the genus, for the rolls of papyrus used in ancient Greece and Rome are certainly books, as are Asian scrolls, and now there are e-readers, such as the Kindle. Today there are also books that can be read on computer screens where the pages follow one another fairly continuously. What is necessary is a spatial area (or areas) displaying visible marks that convey concepts.

Length is another consideration, for a pamphlet or indeed a “book” of postage stamps or a telephone directory is not a book of the sort focused on in this analysis. Perhaps a book is something to read that usually takes more than one sitting. Then again one might wonder if a book must have multiple copies, but since the last copy in existence or the first copy printed are still books, that is not essential. There are subspecies of books, some with one or more author writing together throughout and some with separate authors for different chapters. And even further, there is the matter of content that makes a book fine literature or trash, fact or fiction, poetry or prose, and so on. No doubt this inquiry about what a book is can continue further, but already what has been said occurs on the eidetic level and exemplifies generalization and specification and throughout one somehow always already has an awareness of what is to be clarified.

While it can help fix the significations of words, such descriptive work is fundamentally about what is being referred to, which is to say that it is a matter of getting clearer about some of the material universals that particular factual or fictive books do or can exemplify. Such an operation involves shifting back and forth between subordinate, superordinate, and coordinate species in genera.

Nothing new has been said here, it is all almost too familiar to any intellectual, but in Gurwitschean terms, there is shifting between what is thematic and what is relevant within a field composed of material universals. It is all about seeing material universals. But it can also be said that prior to this process of clarification empirical types, as they are called in *Erfahrung und Urteil*, are always already there and being brought from the margin into the thematic field. The way that, in Plato, one can recollect forms that one saw before birth and then forgot, seems convergent with this.

2. ***Experiencing unique individuals.*** Then again, as Gurwitsch maintains in one of the passages quoted, one can focus on or thematize in its full individuality the unique book on the table that one is studying and the unique sheet of paper on which one is taking notes and have that sheet relevant to the book. Alternatively, the unique individual sheet of paper on which one is taking notes can be one's theme and the book studied can be relevant to it. What was thematic and what was relevant to it then exchange places. (One might consider this case problematical because reading and writing involve concepts, but the concepts involved can be abstracted from.) Here no universal essences are immediately involved in the thematic field. Factual assertions are appropriate, e.g., "This book is blue." Nevertheless, bookness and paperness can be found in the margin. This is again a situation in which the universal essences are vague and thus types but nevertheless constantly there as objects of awareness, i.e., marginal awareness. This is analogous in a reverse way to how a mathematician pondering theorems while walking down the street is not unaware of the street, other pedestrians, etc.

I find this species of experiencing of unique individuals to require a special attitude that is actually not easy to maintain until it becomes a habitual skill, but it might be fundamental for a great deal of modern philosophy and psychology, i.e., empiricism, with the original derivation from lifeworldly encountering overlooked.

3. ***Experiencing Things in the Light of Types.*** Gurwitsch refers, e.g., to "another woman, another child, another policeman, another tree, another car." Thus when I walk through the library what I encounter in passing "another desk" can be "another book," "another sheet of paper," and indeed "another person" not as unique individual things, but in their typicality. They present themselves as things of certain sorts or kinds preconstituted in primary passivity. These sorts or kinds are somewhat obscure, they are types, but the desks, books, sheets, and persons are also somewhat obscure and these objects as well as the types make up thematic fields from which one can go on to clarify the universal essences that particulars exemplify or to thematize the unique individuals with types left on the margin.

In sum, material universal essences are among the things of which there is always marginal if not relevant or thematic awareness. But a terminological question remains. Should the vague awareness of at least types when they are not thematic or relevant but in the margin be considered “seeing”? Such material universals can certainly be clarified and then evidenced eidetically, i.e., seen in a fairly strict signification, but usually they are not. If one wishes to recast Husserl’s statement to read, “The truth is that all human beings are at least vaguely aware of ‘essences,’ and are vaguely aware of them continuously,” I would not object.

Appendix

Eideation is discussed in a series of extra lectures on “Problems of Transcendental Phenomenology” that Dorion Cairns delivered at the New School for Social Research in Spring Semester 1966. Two pertinent passages are transcribed below from the notes of Professor Jorge García-Gómez. Professor Richard M. Zaner, Cairns’s literary executor, as well as Professor García-Gómez, are thanked for permission to publish from this transcription.

The intuiting of essences and eidetic cognition are now our concern here. The classic use of the word “essence” and the account of these topics is in Husserl’s *Ideen I*, Bk I, Pt. I. There he is concerned with the *active* intuiting of essences, and, since such active intuitions are the same in structure whether the essence is a material essence or a formal essence they are treated together. The *eidē* have, however, their pre-constitution; they are pre-constituted before an ego singles them out, objectivates them, and makes them objects for himself. The pre-constituting of an *eidos* turns out to be, in the case of a material essence, different from what it is in the case of a formal essence. We may say that the material *eidē* are pre-constituted by *primarily* automatic intendings, whereas the formal ones are pre-constituted by acts, or actional intendings—notably by those that may be subsumed under the heading “thinking,” but also by mental acts which are of such a *primitive* sort that they can hardly be called “thinking,” but such actively paying attention to something gives it a *form* (in a logical sense). Upon conferring this something-form upon a plurality of things, there is pre-constituted the *eidos* “something” which is exemplified in each of the particular something-forms. The pre-constituting of the formal *eidos* “something” is an automatic affair as the basis for the active picking-out of this “thing,” “this”...

The more fundamental *eidē* are the material ones. Redness, coloredness, texture, smoothness, etc. are not universals like whole, part, subject, predicate, collection, etc. Those universals (e.g., redness, which is exemplified in each of the red things by its individual redness) are there ready for an ego to apprehend them, to pick them out—no action creates them; they are created, however, automatically; we have to go on to automatic synthesis to uncover the manner in which they are ready to be picked out and be clarified by an ego.

Most of Husserl's published work has had to do with active clarification and constitution and the method of free variation (which *requires* an ego to be engaged) but has little to say about the automatic (except for something in *Erfahrung und Urteil*). His motives for the preference are twofold: (1) the active processes are easier to observe and describe; (2) Husserl carried on his analysis of the complexity of the mental life along those lines in the whole which were necessary to clarify the nature of phenomenologizing which is a doxic theoretical activity, and so the doxic theoretical is described there fundamentally and in more detail than the non-doxic. The activity of the phenomenologist is a doxic theoretical activity as Husserl conceives it, especially at the time of the *Ideen* (whose aim is *eidetic*), since he seeks to establish the fundamental discipline (Phenomenology), which is *eidetic*, and clarify the fundamentally possible and impossible modes of intentiveness to things (e.g., the essential nature of sense-perception, judging, i.e., the universal exemplified by any possible sense-perception, judging, etc.) Because this is the case, the nature of the grasping of essences is something which Husserl thinks must be clarified to make his method explicit and clearer—it will clarify Phenomenology for himself. This diminishes his treatment of the automatic pre-constituting of the material and formal *eidē* in his published works.

Since *material eidē* in their pre-constitution involve *no* action of an ego while *formal eidē* in their pre-constitution involve action, and since in general the actional strata of the mental life presuppose the automatic strata, the systematic treatment is to expound the pre-constitution of the material *eidē* before that of formal *eidē*. We ought to examine how *specific* redness is constituted before the manner in which wholes and parts are there ready to be objectivated by an ego. This involves, if properly undertaken, a systematic procedure which Husserl called *Abbau*, un-building; in particular, it involves an abstracting from all those strata of the mental life that are either actional intendings or that have as their objects things the constituting of which presuppose actional intendings; by such an abstraction, one uncovers an *abstract* stratum of one's mental life which is purely automatic having as its objects only those things pre-constituted purely automatically; one abstracts from active thinking, judging, etc. and their results, from all the conceptual form that the *world* has for this mental life by virtue of active thinking; one abstracts also from all actional valuing and striving; what is *left*, ultimately, is a sub-stratum of this mental life including substrata. Material universals are of diverse sorts, and, as one proceeds with this unbuilding from higher to lower strata of automaticity, one would get to the lowest stratum of all, which is an intending *simply* to *fields* of sensa (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.) in which, to be sure, one *can actively* pick out individual sensa, but one refrains from such active picking out but concentrates on what makes them specifically different and on the *genera* exemplified by these species. We find that the phenomenon of automatic transfer is fundamental to the preconstitution of material universals at this level and thus to their constitution at all levels.

The question about the existence and status of universals and their relations to individuals is as old as Platonic philosophy. The question has been traditionally likewise such a straightforward, ontological treatment with arguments for the

existence (*not* the reality) of universal *essences* and concepts, but one also has a phenomenological treatment; were it not for the latter, the ontological arguments and analysis of the relation of the universal to the individual would be merely a continuation of the tradition.

What do I mean by a phenomenological treatment? In such a treatment in general the things inquired about are not taken by the phenomenologist as existents or non-existents but as objects of intendings. The inquiry is one into the *nature* of the intendings, the intentive synthesis in particular, of which the things in question are objects of. This is true both of realities and idealities. The procedure is: (1) what is the objective sense of “these things” for the mental life; (2) are there any intendings in which a thing of the sort in question is itself *given*, *presented*, intuited? The contention for the existence of *ideal things*, in particular ideal essences or *eidē*, becomes transformed into the contention that there are modes of intending in which, descriptively speaking, these things are given in person or intuited and, as intuited or experienced (generally understood); they are on a par with men, chairs, tables, stars, etc. (all of which for the phenomenologist are given in person, *originaliter*: to this extent that they are given, they—the universals—are in ontic coordination with other things; the test of a thing is that it be given in the harmony of an identifying synthesis and universals meet this test). These are *data*, and Ockham’s razor was not meant to cut data out, but only hypothetical entities.

The phenomenological inquiry into *universals* was begun historically by Husserl as an inquiry into what he later called *formal universals*, formal *eidē*, or pure formal essences, along with universal concepts (which at that time he did not discriminate). In his *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, he was to clarify the concepts of number; there we have an inquiry into the forms exemplified by collections of elements and the forms 2, 3, 4 ... (as exemplified in any pair, trio, quartet, etc. of things of any kind and the formal *eidē* that are pre-supposed by these collection-forms); but these forms are *analogous* to other forms that have long been considered (since Aristotle) the forms of the propositions (historically, of predicative propositions). There has been a failure to distinguish between a proposition made up of concepts and a sentence made up of words; the former, if it exists, is an *ideal* affair. We have to make a threefold distinction: (1) the proposition as a conceptual whole; (2) the state of affairs or the *fact* (as contrasted with the proposition); (3) the predicatively formed affair complex or fact which is the analog of a set of five things: “Socrates being mortal” is not the proposition “Socrates is mortal.” Each one of these categorially formed objects has a form which is part of it. The fact has its particular form which exemplifies a universal form; the same is true of a proposition: “today is Friday,” “Johnson is President,” etc. All have *one* form which is *its* form as a part of it, but *each* of these forms exemplifies the formal *eidē* which is symbolizable by “S is p,” and the same is true of the corresponding “facts”: three angels, three propositions—each of these sets has *its* threeness, but they exemplify the formal universal “three” (whose concept also exemplifies a universal).

It was Husserl’s contention that on the basis of comparing a number, say, of propositions with different *conceptual* stuff in them (as in the examples above), I can find something *identical* (not *sensu stricto* are they identical); this can be

discriminated not only from the concrete collection or proposition but also from the *form* which is a part of the particular collection or proposition. These were the first universals Husserl dealt with, but something similar is the case with non-formal universals: if I take a red rose, and a red billiard ball—two objects of sensuous perceiving; each of these things is given as having its own redness which is a *part* of the thing in question—these forms are spatio-temporally individuated *colors*. But we say of the rose and the ball that they are similar with respect of color (at the ideal limit, they are exactly the same color). This is not the same as saying that there is one red as a *real* part of both things. It is to say that redness is exemplified in each of these concrete, individual things in its individual redness. There is a universal redness exemplified here now and there now. The phenomenological (not ontological) contention is that there is a mental process characterized as a presentation of universal redness just as there is one characterized as a presentive awareness of the individual redness; both presentive awarenesses are different intutive processes, each having a peculiar object, one being generic, the other individual. These, of course, are actional intendings characterized as intuitive, as presentive.

Here, however, the difference roughly ends, because the structure of the presentive intending to an individual and that of the presentive intending to an *eidos*—be it formal or material—are different. The intending to the universal is founded on the intending to a particular example and, more specifically, an intuiting of the *eidos* must be founded on an intuiting of a particular. To intuit a generic essence or *eidos* I must intuit a particular, which does not mean that I must always for this purpose remember or perceive a particular redness; it is enough that it be a (clear) *quasi*-remembering or perceiving. An animal sees red without seeing it as a species of color or crimson as a species of red. Once we have got to the point at which we have a word “red” as distinct from “yellow” and “orange,” there is an awareness of the universal, so that when we see a new individual, we include it in a “kind” which is, according to Husserl, a consequence of having *once upon a time* intuited the generic and the individual form. When I see a particular color as a particular color, it is because once I had “perceived” color in general as well as *this* color, but it is possible for a mental life to go on without an *active* grasping of universals (which is probably the case of animals). It is not necessary to see the universal to see the particular, but it is necessary to see the particular to see the universal, and once the latter has been done, I see the particular as an example of the universal (as a consequence of my history). The formal universals *presuppose* some kind of mental action (collecting, judging, etc.). Do the material objects presuppose it? No, but this is our topic now.

Conclusion

The texts devoted to *eidē* in Husserl’s works are *Ideen I*, Book I, Part I and *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Part III, a most important supplementation in which Husserl deals with the pre-constitution of the material *eidos*. This text, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, is *stylistically*

the product of the editor, Dr. Landgrebe, and it seems to me that the whole thought is filtered through the editor's mind and occasionally does not express Husserl's mind. So this text should be used, yes, but with *caution*. Concerning *Ideen I*, Pt. I: it was written and published at a time in which the two aspects of phenomenology had for him *equal* importance; phenomenology was to be, on the one hand, transcendental and, on the other hand, eidetic. These two features loomed in his mind with equal importance. Part I of the *Ideen* has as its purpose the vindication of the eidetic sciences, whether it be developed in the natural or in the transcendental-phenomenological attitude. He wanted to show that it is a possible science, with its own subject-matter over and against the sciences of matters of fact. From this follows, in particular, the justification of an eidetic science on the transcendental level; but this is not his concern here. Eidetic cognition is a term which includes not only knowings whose objects are *essences* but also those whose objects are essential possibilities, impossibilities, necessities. In geometry and the traditional eidetic sciences we do not speak of *de facto* triangles, lines, etc., but of evidently possible lines, triangles, etc.; that is, the essentially possible exemplifications of the *essences* (which are not the objects of those eidetic sciences).

In the first part of Book I, Husserl is concerned with the differences between sciences of matters of fact and eidetic sciences; in §2 he rapidly goes into the development of the concept of *pure essence*: here there is an important distinction between the *individual* essence of a thing and its *pure* essence, a fundamental distinction for what Husserl *intends* to say in this section (although this is not clear). The distinction is this: we are concerned in this section with *individuals* and their essences, which also have essences: essences of essences, more especially *real* individuals, that is, with a *spatio-temporal* (or at least temporal) locus in the space-time of the real world. In the case of any such thing, i.e., a real individual, we can distinguish between its *character* and its spatio-temporal *locus* and distinguish them in the following way: suppose I take a stone or a pack of cigarettes or a psycho-physical individual—it is what it is and is when and where it is, and, as being when and where it is, it has its spatio-temporal relations to other individuals. But in respect of its *essence*, this or any real individual could be at any other place or time—it just happens to be here and now but it might be there and later or earlier so far as its essence is concerned. The distinction is between what the thing is in itself (as the respect of its essence) and its spatio-temporal, non-essential, accidental determinations.

The *essence* Husserl speaks of here is *not* the *eidos*, but the *individual* essence of the thing—its fully concrete, individual *what*, which is apart from its spatio-temporal individuation. But this individual essence of the individual *can* be put *into idea*. What does that signify? Freely speaking, it signifies that, with respect to its *complete* determinacy, the individual may be taken as exemplifying something *universal* that might be and *perhaps* is exemplified by *other* things at other times and places, that is, two things at different places or times or both maybe perfectly alike in their *what*. The *universals* that are exemplified here, however, are *more* than just the completely determined universal in its specificity (since above them there are others which are more general). Shades of brownish yellow fall under brownish yellow and

brownish yellow under yellow and yellow under *color*. These *colors* or chromatic shades have (under each) nuances of colors. There is a hierarchy of generic and specific universals. If we take the summa genera (color in general, shade in general, etc.), they determine in their interrelations, *a region*—they are *regional essences*. The *individua* which exemplify these genera belong to this particular region of material things; they, with *all* their determinations, stand in the multiplicity of genera and species.

Strangely left out here, as if it did not belong to the essence of a thing, is the place and time of the individual (and whatever relations based on them which they may have). This distinction between the individual essence and the pure essence (*reine Wesen*—*eidos*) offers a tremendous difficulty here, except for the manner in which pure essence is introduced here in relation to individual essence as contrasted with contingency, accident: this has no place in the conceptual scheme to be developed. The contrast that is valid and relevant here is not between the universal and its exemplification, on the one hand, and the individual—in its full determination—and its *eidos*, on the other, which means: any attempt to introduce the traditional distinction between essential and accidental—at this point and in this manner—brings confusion. I can however bring such a distinction in this way: what is essential for something to be an exemplification of an *eidos*? Namely, what can I vary while it remains being an exemplification of a genus or of a species?

In *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Husserl distinguishes between empirical type and essence; an empirical type is a kind of pure essence as in the *Ideen*. The word *type*, meaning a generic or specific type, is used interchangeably with essence or *reine Wesen* up to the *Ideen*. In *Erfahrung und Urteil*, a distinction is made, namely, the distinction between *reine Wesen* and *Typus*. What is pre-constituted passively or constituted automatically, prior to any activity on the part of an ego, is the empirical type—it is a universal, but it subsumes under itself already *just* those *variants* of the universal that have happened to come along empirically in the life in question. Then comes the eidetic scientist, and guided by these generic and specific types, he institutes a process of free variation in phantasy; he clearly quasi-perceives variants which have *not* come along empirically, and thus he causes to be pre-constituted *for himself* (and grasps properly) the *pure essence*, subsuming under it not only the actually perceived variants but all possible variants. The exposition of *Erfahrung und Urteil* suggests that there are two *different* kinds of universals, but it seems to me that they are the same, in one case clarified and in the other unclarified. The fact that the word *type* is used, in one sense in some contexts and in another sense in other contexts, has caused problems with critics.¹⁰

¹⁰Cairns may be alluding to Alfred Schutz's "Type and Eidos in Husserl's Late Philosophy" (1959), *Collected Papers*, Vol. III, ed. I. Schutz (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).

Chapter 15

Ideen I and Eugen Fink's Critical Contribution

Ronald Bruzina

Ideen I and Eugen Fink

The idea of giving an account of the influence of Edmund Husserl's *Ideen I* on other thinkers does not quite fit the role in phenomenology played by his last research assistant, Eugen Fink. The most telling reason for this mismatch begins with the fact that Fink's acquaintance with Husserl's publications was not the principal source of his entry into and progression in understanding Husserl's program. Unlike others who followed Husserl such as Martin Heidegger or Jan Patočka, Fink's learning of phenomenology came primarily first-hand, namely, by attending Husserl's lectures over five semesters before the latter's retirement.¹ Fink, of course, carefully read the *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen I*, but Husserl's lectures were closer to exemplifying his actual on-going thinking and rethinking. Of course Husserl's lectures were only one component of what Fink was absorbing in his studies.

¹ The list of Fink's courses with Husserl:

Winter 1925/26 – Grundprobleme der Logik
Winter 1926/27* – Einführung in die Phänomenologie und die phänomenologische Philosophie
Summer 1927* – Natur und Geist
Winter 1927/28* – Geschichte der neueren Philosophie
Summer 1928* – Einleitung in die phänomenologische Psychologie

* includes a seminar, Phänomenologische Übungen, directed by Husserl. Fink's first university semester, Summer 1925, was taken at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, and he spent the summer semester 1926 at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin. In the winter semester of 1928/29, he took Heidegger's first course on his return to Freiburg as Husserl's successor, Einleitung in die Philosophie (along with Heidegger's Philosophische Übungen), as well as the last course Husserl would offer, Phänomenologie der Einfühlung, soon broke off and canceled when it interfered with his writing projects.

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Still, whether Husserl's lecture courses or his own readings, Fink's understanding seems from the outset a grasp of philosophic *possibilities*, not points of doctrine to be followed. His written summaries [*Nachschriften*] especially of Husserl's lectures are indications that he was already thinking in terms of implications and alternatives that might spring from what Husserl was pursuing in his courses. It was the grasp of *issues and themes* as they were being formulated, reconsidered, and pursued that mattered. And nothing less than a stunning insightfulness and rethinking mark his research notes, modestly before and then massively during his years of assistantship with Husserl—notes bespeaking an engagement of the most original kind, both penetrating and critical. At the same time, too, one sees that Fink learned as much about philosophical thinking from the lecture courses he attended by others on other philosophies and philosophers.²

The effect of this entry into phenomenology is demonstrated dramatically when we look at how Fink responded to *Ideen I*. He himself unambiguously situated his first writing, the *Preisschrift*, an essay written in February 1928 for a prize competition, entirely within Husserl's work—not least of all because the topic for the prize was to write a study on “thinking ‘as if’,” “merely presenting something to oneself,” “fantasizing.”³ All the primary work pertinent to this topic for Fink was produced by Husserl, first and foremost in summary treatment in *Ideen I*, for which the primary work covering much of these matters had been done in the decade before that seminal book.⁴ Fink revised the essay into his dissertation, conceiving it as having two parts, the first on two of the methodologically central operations in the work of phenomenological descriptive analysis—“presentification [*Vergegenwärtigung*]” and “image [*Bild*]”(hence the eventual title of the dissertation, *Vergegenwärtigung und Bild*)⁵—and the second, not completed for the doctorate itself, on the question of temporalization, *Zeitigung*, as the fundamental level of the constitution that *Ideen I* had set aside. Indeed, it was Fink's explicit awareness of the need to go further into

² Altogether, although Husserl's lecture courses were the most that Fink took from any one professor, the 15 other lecture courses in philosophy—not counting the more numerous *Übungen* sessions—comprised a rich and comprehensive surrounding for his concentration in phenomenology.

³ Following strictly the assigned theme, the title of Fink's essay is *Beiträge zu einer phänomenologischen Analyse der psychischen Phänomene, die unter den vieldeutigen Ausdrücken: "sich denken, als ob," "sich nur etwas vorstellen," "phantasieren" befaßt werden*. See Eugen Fink, *Phänomenologische Werkstatt, Eugen Fink Gesamtausgabe, 3/1: Teilband 1: Die Doktorarbeit und erste Assistenzjahre bei Husserl*, ed. Ronald Bruzina (Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006), p. 107 for this title, and p. 108 for Fink's “Foreword” acknowledging his dependence on Husserl's work (Abbreviation EFG 3/1).

⁴ Husserl had shown Fink typed-out materials from his earlier lectures in the area of the prize-competition topic—as e.g. in Husseriana 23, *Phantasie, Bildbewusstsein, Erinnerung, Zur Phänomenologie der anschaulichen Vergegenwärtigungen, Texte aus dem Nachlass (1892–1925)*, ed. Eduard Marbach (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980)—, it may be supposed, but there is no documentation confirming it.

⁵ The dissertation was in fact presented with the very same title as the prize-essay bore (see footnote 3 above). When, however, it was published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, IX (1930), it was titled *Vergegenwärtigung und Bild*.

temporalization that required the dissertation's first-part work to be recognized as provisional and incomplete: “[With] the regression from identical sense into the living experiences in which that sense becomes conscious, the phenomenological sphere properly speaking is not yet reached.” This stage of experiential intentionality concentrates on unities achieved in *acts*, with the result that “radical phenomenological understanding” is not gained: “The act-intentional layout of the whole of a phenomenological analysis of constitution can itself only have the function of an initial guiding theme [*Leitfaden*] for the proper, compactly full sense of constitutive clarification.” And this means that ultimately full clarification is only achieved with “an origin-level return into the temporal constitution of acts themselves.”⁶

Clearly indicated here is the kind of thinking that was rapidly maturing as Fink became a research assistant to Husserl (late 1928 until Husserl's death in April of 1938). Fink's working for Husserl soon became working *with* Husserl, which meant that he engaged *actively* in advancing Husserl's phenomenological program. It was not just a matter of following Husserl's lead, respecting and adopting all the already laid down patterns of overall framing and interpretation, such as in *Ideen I*, but rather of probingly *re*-considering what needed to be taken up again precisely because of the *initial stage* status of that broad picture of the scope of reduction-led phenomenology. Such was indeed what Fink saw Husserl himself undertaking in his lectures and Fink's notes show from the start how Fink's thinking through Husserl's phenomenological achievements are their *rethinking*. It is a stunning record of effort that expands as his years with Husserl begin—five folders of notes from 1927 to 1929 for reworking his 1927 prize-essay to be more than a piece of writing that was to become a doctoral dissertation.⁷ It was to be a major step in the reworking of phenomenology as such by taking up the very aims that define Husserl's phenomenology as a project and a program, namely, to reconsider Husserl's investigational studies so as to refashion more radically their phenomenological meaning in view of the advancing depth of Husserl's analyses—most especially in terms of the reinterpreting implication of describing the base-level and all-comprehensive constitution endlessly done and redone in temporalization, *Zeitungung*. Fink's “Introduction” to his dissertation emphasized just this.

Issues for the reinterpretation implicated by the role of the fuller analysis of temporalization abound here. For example, together with the question of time in the five mentioned folders,⁸ the status of “subjectivity” itself (including its I-character) on the one hand and on the other the character of the world are repeatedly raised,

⁶ From the dissertation text in Eugen Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie 1930–1939*, (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 19. My translation, from this collection of Fink's Husserl-period publications, of which only three of its five essays have been translated. (See footnote 15 below.)

⁷ EFG 3/1, Z-I, Z-II, Z-III, Z-IV, and Z-V. For a fuller treatment of Fink's idea in the full dissertation project, see my *Edmund Husserl & Eugen Fink, Beginnings and Ends in Phenomenology, 1928–1938* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004), Ch. 1, 17–19, and the surrounding account of the active scene in philosophy at Freiburg before and after 1928.

⁸ For example, in the first folder of notes Fink has a transcription of his first recorded discussion with Husserl, from December 1, 1927 (EFG 3/1, Z-I 23a–24b), and in it Fink poses two questions regarding temporality, one about the fundamentality of the noesis-noema correlation, the other about if temporality can have a beginning or end.

both require a penetrating understanding of what the “transcendental reduction” means. So it is, then, that as Fink began his assistantship (late 1928 and early 1929), Husserl asked him to edit his Bernau manuscripts. Thereafter, Fink works again and again at clarifying the same themes.⁹

The full complement of the materials Fink wrote—folders of his notes (1927–1940); typed drafts for Husserl to consider, of which the two *Beilagen* in Husserl’s *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzentrale Phänomenologie, Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*¹⁰ are examples; drafts of letters Husserl asked him to write—are an extraordinary resource far beyond the usual expository treatment of Husserl’s phenomenology generally seen, especially in embodying the kind of self-critical return to beginnings that was supposed to be the core of phenomenology’s advance. More than that, the counter-orthodoxy interpretive recasting Fink was thinking through for and with Husserl was a unique kind of difference in cooperation. Husserl spoke of the two of them as “thinking together,” “like two communicating vessels,”¹¹ “an extraordinary collaborator,” with a mind “that productively thinks with you, that fills in gaps and understands how a development is going.”¹² It was a situation that very few had any idea was going on in this two-man “phenomenological workshop” of the last decade of Husserl’s life, and it was only by happy accident that this body of materials came to be known.¹³ Dorion

⁹ While all-pervasive, samples of these can be found in EFG 3/1, Z-IV Z- 11a–b, on the question of how the “intentionality” of temporality’s three dimensions are to be conceptualized for which he, in his dissertation, proposes “de-presenting [*Entgegenwärtigung*]” as more suitable; 15a–18b and 27a–29a on the reduction and the world; and 110a to 112b, on “pure consciousness” and “absolute” being (all approximately from late 1928 into 1929, though not specifically dated).

¹⁰ I.e., Husseriana 6 that almost everyone is familiar with: *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzentrale Phänomenologie, Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954). Drafts written by Fink are noted as such, Beilagen XXI and XXIX. Many portions of text in which Fink’s suggestions have been incorporated are noted in the “Textkritische Anmerkungen zum Haupttext,” 521–43. Finally, the most extraordinary set of drafts by Fink for Husserl comprise Fink’s, VI. *Cartesianische Meditation, Teil 1 Die Idee einer transzendentalen Methodenlehre, Texte aus dem Nachlass Eugen Finks (1932) mit Anmerkungen und Beilagen aus dem Nachlass Edmund Husserls (1933/34)*, Husseriana Dokumente II/1, hrsg. von Hans Ebeling, Jann Holl and Guy van Kerckhoven; *Teil 2 Ergänzungsband, Texte aus dem Nachlass Eugen Finks (1930–1932) mit Anmerkungen und Beilagen aus dem Nachlass Edmund Husserls (1932/33)*, Husseriana Dokumente II/2, hrsg. von Guy van Kerckhoven, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988. English translation by Ronald Bruzina, Eugen Fink, *Sixth Cartesian Meditation, The Idea of A Transcendental Theory of Method* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995).

¹¹ From a letter by Husserl to Father Daniel Feuling, from March 30, 1933, in Edmund Husserl, *Briefwechsel*, Husseriana Dokumente III/ I–X, edited by Karl Schuhmann with Elisabeth Schumann (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), VII, 89.

¹² From a letter by Husserl to his close friend Gustav Albrecht, from October 7, 1934, in *Briefwechsel*, III/IX, 105. Husserl also speaks of certain of Fink’s characteristics that are nonetheless a bit worrisome to Husserl. For a fuller presentation of such remarks as given above, including Fink’s own remarks on their relationship, see my *Edmund Husserl and Eugen Fink*, 49–54.

¹³ A brief account of this is given in the opening pages of the “Preface” to my *Edmund Husserl and Eugen Fink*.

Cairns' fascinating *Conversations with Husserl and Fink*¹⁴ almost displays this cooperative effort, but in Cairns' book what we have are conversations with *Cairns*, by Husserl and then by Fink, not those of Husserl and Fink with *themselves*. That remained out of sight, on the margins.

What *does* show is how distinctive Fink's contributions were; for in these *Conversations* the kinds and character of points that Cairns' notes down from Fink have nowhere their like outside of Fink's own writings in phenomenology; and these are relatively few: two collections of essays.¹⁵

Long after Fink's death (1975) his "Sixth Cartesian Meditation" with its attendant draft texts¹⁶ was edited and published, to reveal dramatically more of that Freiburg "phenomenology workshop." And now, finally, the complete edition of Fink's research notes and drafts from the period of Husserl's and Fink's collaborative labors is appearing.¹⁷ Of the essays in the two collections already mentioned, probably the single most comprehensive treatment of Husserl's phenomenology is Fink's essay published originally in 1933 in *Kant-Studien*, "Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik."¹⁸ The essay offers a carefully and precisely drawn distinction between Husserl's phenomenology and Neo-Kantianism, from the vantage-point of Fink's own reframing of Husserl's program beyond the, in many respects, Neo-Kantian-seeming schema of *Ideen I*. In other words, Fink adopts the critical points expressed in his research notes to explain

¹⁴ *Phaenomenologica* 66, edited by Richard M. Zaner, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976.

¹⁵ These are: Eugen Fink, *Studien Zur Phänomenologie 1930–1939*, Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966, and Eugen Fink, *Nähe und Distanz, Phänomenologische Vorträge und Aufsätze*, hrsg. von Franz-Anton Schwarz, Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 1976. Of the 18 essays in these two collections, only the following have been translated:

Studien zur Phänomenologie;

- "The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism," see footnote 18 below;
- "What Does the Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl Want to Accomplish?" tr. by Arthur Grogan, in *Research in Phenomenology*, II (1972), 5–27;
- "The Problem of the Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl," tr. Robert M. Harlan, in *Apriori and World, European Contributions to Husserlian Phenomenology*, ed., William McKenna, Robert M. Harlan, and Laurence E. Winters (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 21–55.

Nähe und Distanz:

- "Operative Concepts in Husserl's Phenomenology," tr. William McKenna, in *The Human Being in Action: the Irreducible Element in Man, Part II*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tyniecka, *Analecta Phenomenologica* 7 (Dordrecht/Boston: Reidel, 1978), 56–70.

¹⁶ See footnote 10 above.

¹⁷ Eugen Fink, *Phänomenologische Werkstatt*, Eugen Fink Gesamtausgabe, 3/1–4, ed. by Ronald Bruzina (Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006) for Vol. 3/1, 2008 for 3/2, and with Vols.. 3/3 and 3/4 under way.

¹⁸ "Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik," originally in *Kant-Studien* XXXVIII (1933), pp. 321–383, and republished in Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie*, 79–156. The English translation is *The Phenomenology of Husserl: Selected Critical Readings*, trans. and ed. R.O. Elveton (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 73–147.

how, in moving beyond the “*Ideen-project*” and focusing on a temporalization-grounded reconception of the phenomenological reduction, one comes to a clearer idea not only of how transcendental phenomenology is fundamentally *unlike* Neo-Kantianism, but also of how one can fulfill the promise of *radicality* for phenomenology’s initial thrust of reduction beyond the mundane notions and schemata that can remain in the *pre-ultimate* status of Husserl’s best-known writings.¹⁹

This pre-ultimacy characterizes the situation of us readers of Husserl; for we are likely to remain largely in Husserl’s own situation as he entered his retirement years. In his remarkable “Nachwort zu meinen *Ideen*,”²⁰ Husserl, like Moses, found himself *not yet in* that long-sought “Promised Land,” seeing it still but not actually *come into* it. In this, nonetheless, he is *at another beginning*, even if long past his first steps to reach his goal; and in this he can now call himself “a *true* beginner [*einen wirklichen Anfänger*],” someone who still must try to bring that “promised land” of phenomenology to its “fully cultivated form,”²¹ even if he suspects he will not actually achieve this.

What I find Fink doing in the years after Husserl wrote these lines was in effect to contribute directly in the labor of this “full cultivation.” Husserl had transformed this land of philosophy by making it *phenomenological*; and Fink was helping to make that transformation *adequate* to the very program principles that governed Husserl’s judgment of his own stage of unfinished advance.

***Ideen I* Does Not Get Us There Yet**

Introduction

It is well known that Husserl at 70 years of age saw himself as finally “a *true* beginner” in his phenomenological labors, that the best part, the *fulfilling* part of his efforts laid ahead of him, and that he saw clearly all that had preceded was simply preparation for the final achievement, his “Promised Land.”²² But what exactly was this achievement *to be*? Had he not already laid out the essentials of a genuinely transcendental phenomenology of the constitution of the things we experience in the world,

¹⁹ One should note that it is Husserl himself who warns of the provisionality of the studies in both *Logical Investigations* (Introduction to Volume II, in particular §3 and §6, Note 2) and in *Ideen I* (even if he does not make it a matter specifically of naïve-mundane conceptual remnants as Fink does).

²⁰ Nachwort,” Husseriana V, 138–162.

²¹ Ibid., 161: “Der Verfasser sieht das unendlich offene Land der wahren Philosophie, das ‘Gelobte Land’, ausgebreitet vor sich, das er selbst nicht mehr als schon durchkultiviertes erleben wird.”

²² Edmund Husserl, “Nachwort,” in *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Drittes Buch*, Husseriana V, hrsg. von Marly Biemel (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 161: “Der Verfasser sieht das unendlich offene Land der wahren Philosophie, das ‘Gelobte Land’, ausgebreitet vor sich, das er selbst nicht mehr als schon durchkultiviertes erleben wird.”

and, perhaps more than any other work, in *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch?* Was not the making of phenomenology basically done, with only some loose ends left to be taken care of?

I wish to present a case that having “true beginner” status was not simply a matter of an event in the life of the *person* Husserl, but an event *intrinsic to the making of phenomenology*, and consequent upon the essentials of its method. And *this* is how we must understand his labors in the final decade of his life. But I also want to emphasize two other things: (a) that Husserl’s final decade was a joint effort, and that this was indispensable to its fuller achievement; and (b) that this achievement showed how it is essentially an *open program* of investigation rather than one with a definitive attainable completeness. This second point, however—by virtue of space constraints—can only begin to be indicated in the present essay.²³

***Ideen I*, an Incomplete Beginning More Critically Considered**

Quite apart from the three-part structure of the full-scale three-volume “*Ideen-project*,”—of which the second and third books remain in preliminary draft form at best—Husserl comments again and again in the various chapters of *Ideen I* that the treatments they offer are preliminary: they are an indispensable first stage effort, but they need to be considered further.²⁴ The status of the book demands that one not *stop* with its analyses, but rather take them up again to move its initiating momentum further. Thus Husserl himself calls *Ideen I* “fragments [*Bruchstücke*]” for beginning phenomenology.²⁵ And he writes: “I would like to hope that those who come after me will take up these beginnings and steadily carry them further, but also correct their great imperfections—imperfections that can hardly be avoided in a science’s beginnings”²⁶

²³ See the article referred to in footnote 34 below for some of the further treatment of this point.

²⁴ The very title of *Ideen I, Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, (my bold face) indicates that the book is working toward an achievement, rather than being its definitive completion. The first book itself, as an *Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, reinforces its initial and introductory status. Within the texts from which I draw my material here, note the following remarks. (1) “The indications just given make us sensitive to how far we are from understanding phenomenology” ([143], in the pagination of the 1913 edition, given here for all quotations from *Ideen I*). (2) “Here, in the context of our merely initiating meditations, [some] parts of phenomenology cannot be treated systematically” (200). Finally, speaking of noesis and noema, Husserl writes: (3) “The parallelisms obtaining here—and there are many of them that are all too easily confused with one another—are fraught with great difficulties that still need clarification” (207). (My translations) Finally, the corrective process is explicitly mentioned: “[I]t is to be noted that in phenomenology as it begins all concepts, all terms, have to remain in a certain way fluid, always ready to become differentiated in accord with the advances made in the analysis of consciousness and the recognition of new phenomenological strata within what is at first seen in undifferentiated unity” (170).

²⁵ Again, “Nachwort,” Hua V, 161.

²⁶ Op. cit., 161–62.

Karl Schumann has detailed some of the efforts Husserl had taken as he now looked over *Ideen I* to improve it.²⁷ More than anything else it is the sense of the reduction that he wishes to enforce, and relative to this the emphasis on how transcendental phenomenology is to be distinguished from psychology. Yet some years before this burst of attention given to revising *Ideen I* in 1929–1930—as again Schuhmann points out—he had already acknowledged serious disadvantages in the way he set out his ideas in that book. This we can see in the volumes of *Erste Philosophie*, especially its second volume.²⁸ Yet perhaps the most serious limitation in *Ideen I* is the lack of full treatment of the ultimate constitutive “absolute” of *temporalization*, an omission that is well-known because Husserl himself explains it as necessary in §81 of Chap. 2 in Part III. Perhaps the pedagogical purpose of the book, rather than any systematic neglect, was Husserl’s reason for not making more explicit mention of this limitation in his retrospective in the 1929 “Nachwort.” Yet setting aside the account of temporalization is not just a matter of leaving out of the whole “picture-puzzle” of phenomenology one set of pieces that would complete it, whose absence for the moment does not actually diminish our view of the whole “picture” itself. It is far more serious than that, and while in fact Husserl does give many indications of matters that need further study, he does not say *in just what ways* setting aside an adequate analysis of *temporalization*²⁹ leaves the analyses he does provide *provisional* and *unfinished*.

Paul Ricoeur, in his masterful French translation and commentary on *Ideen I*,³⁰ published in 1950 just as the first volumes of Husserliana were appearing,³¹ already adverts us to heavy implications of the way in which the analyses of “Intentionality as Phenomenology’s Principle Topic” (the title of §84, in Chap. 2 of Part III) begin right after the mention of this limitation in §81 and proceed, without temporalization, in full swing. These analyses, from §84 on, through Chaps. 3 and 4, have been taken more or less as the Bible-like source for understanding the structural complex of functioning intentionality, being credited with perhaps more basic finality than is

²⁷ See the “Einleitung” to the revised edition of *Ideen I*, Hua III/1, xlxi–lvii.

²⁸ Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/24), Zweiter Teil*, edited by Rudolf Boehm, Husserliana VIII (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), Beilage XX, from 1924, gives the most specific of Husserl’s self-criticism. Again Schumann includes in his edition of Hua III/1 (liv–lv) the instructive comments and corrections Husserl saw to be needed, written in on the pages of his copies of *Ideen I* and placed by Schumann in Hua III/2, companion volume to the main text.

²⁹ It should be remembered that it is not temporalization *as such*—*Zeitungung*—that is the focus of Husserl’s remarks in §81 and §82, but the temporality of *experiential streaming* precisely as the *transcendental* to be focused on here in *Ideen I*. Husserl does not even use the word “temporalization” [Zeitungung] when he speaks of this way the experiential transcendental is not “in truth the last thing,” “the Ultimate”—“das Letzte.” All he says is that “the transcendental absolute” reached in the reductions has “its proto-source in an ultimate true Absolute.” Hua III/1, §81. [162–63].

³⁰ Edmund Husserl, *Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie*, translated and annotated by Paul Ricoeur (Paris: Gallimard, 1950).

³¹ Namely, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, Hua I; *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, Hua II; and *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Erstes Buch*, Hua III.

justifiable.³² This status of unquestionability in its basics is what Ricoeur challenges in a note to §85, one of the key sections on the detailing of constituents as its title makes explicit in just four words: “Sensuous *νλή*—intentional *μορφή*.” To this title itself Ricoeur writes the following:

The study of *hylē* pertains to the constitution of objects in consciousness to the extent that intentionality animates it. The “hylic” corresponds to the “noetic” as matter to form. But in a more profound sense, *hylē* has to do with the constitution of time and the Urkonstitution of the I (cf. [163]): it is the flow of “adumbrations” that gives immanent duration to the intention of an object. As E. Fink has emphasized, if we do not get all the way to the constitution of the *hylē* (and thus to the constitution of time and of the pure I), the constitution of the thing itself cannot take on its radical sense, that is, as creative sense. The beginning of §85 gives notice that, by not “descending to the dark depths of the ultimate consciousness that constitutes all temporality in living experience,” the analysis of *Ideen I* will remain relative only to transcending intentionality. Same restriction in the last paragraph on [172].³³

The real question, now, is what we might find if we turned to the actual source in which Ricoeur finds Fink’s “emphasizing” of the unconsidered dimension of “the constitution of the *hylē*,” namely, Fink’s 1933 *Kantstudien* essay. In a passage that carries on for a good 20 pages, Fink elaborates on the points in Ricoeur’s note in a critical discussion of the whole matter that is Husserl’s concern in his “Nachwort” about how to make clear the distinction between psychological consciousness and transcendental “consciousness.”³⁴ Using a minimum of phrasings from Fink’s text, let me review briefly the relevant points Fink makes in his treatment:

³²Indeed, Ricoeur himself unabashedly points out serious difficulties in *Ideen I* in the “Introduction” to his translation see xiv–xv.

³³*Ideas*, note 1 to §85 [171], 287–88. A translation of Ricoeur’s “Introduction” and notes, by Bond Harris and Jacqueline Bouchard Spurlock, ed. by Pol Vandvelde, has been published as Paul Ricoeur, *A Key to Husserl’s Ideen I*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1996. The translation here is largely the one in this book, but I have modified it slightly. I might suggest, too, that in the last line above “transcending intentionality,” a close rendering of Ricoeur’s *l’intentionalité transcendance*, could be translated as “intentionality aiming at the transcendent.” In the passage in the same §85, Husserl points out that he is leaving aside the questions (a) whether the sensuously experiential could ever be without “animating apprehensional take [*beseelende Auffassung*],” i.e., without “intentional function,” and (b) whether intentionality could be *concrete* without “the sensuous.” Ricoeur’s translation for *Abschattungen* is *esquisses*, which in a way is better in its suggesting detail while slowly less-essential features might diminish, than “adumbrations” with its connotation of general vagueness.

³⁴Eugen Fink, “Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik, mit einem Vorwort von Edmund Husserl” *Kantstudien* 38 (Berlin 1933), 319–61; reprinted in Eugen Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie*, (den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 79–156; English translation by Roy Elveton, *The Phenomenology of Husserl: Selected Critical Readings*, Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970. The pages from 122 to the end of the essay on page 145 in the English translation deal with the distinction referred to here, while the treatment on which Ricoeur bases his remark is run from page 123 to 137. Early in this passage Fink discusses the distinction between the transcendental and the psychological, asserting quite straightforwardly that “The *Ideas* does not give a thorough discussion of the difference between the psychological and the transcendental noemas.” (124.) In almost all cases of cited material from Elveton’s translation I have modified the wording. In my references here I give the pagination in the English translation first, then that in *Studien*, and finally that in the *Kantstudien* original.

1. *Ideen I* is primarily and centrally oriented to the question of consciousness as intentional specifically in relation to an object, and this determines the characterization of the “constituting” involved here in terms of relating to the object.³⁵
2. Thus intentionality and constitution are represented in *Ideen I* in terms of “acts” focused on objects. This orientation accords with psychology but, Fink argues, it does not genuinely reach the character of fundamental transcendental constitution because phenomenology’s true core theme is “the world’s becoming in the constitution of transcendental subjectivity.”³⁶ For characterizing this constitution, “acts” of intending aimed at “objects”—are too much in the mold of in-the-world doings and hence cannot represent the constituting of the world in which they function. Act-intentional analysis must be surmounted in order to clarify transcendental constituting life properly.³⁷
3. Hence the “heterological basic principle in the idea of constitution: ‘sensual hylē and intentional morphē,’ cannot mean that transcendental analysis is ultimately “heterological.” This heterological feature remains naïve and relative because it is offered on “phenomenology’s first problem-level.” This “dualism of heterological moments” described in the analyses of constitution actually represent “relative strata [when taken] within the unified constitutive disclosure of the world’s origin from within the depths of the transcendental subjectivity’s life.”³⁸
4. The concept of the *noema*, in the stratification found in *Ideen I* thus needs to be radically reconsidered in order for its ultimate and genuinely fundamental transcendental role to be disclosed, specifically as having to do basically with the world as such.³⁹
5. The properly transcendental noema, accordingly, “is the world itself as the unitary-whole-of-holding [*Geltungseinheit*] lying in the belief belonging to the streaming world-apperception in transcendental subjectivity.”⁴⁰ Since in transcendental constituting “life” all determinate “having” or “intending” is of “meaning,” of

³⁵ Fink, “Husserl’s Philosophy and Contemporary Criticism,” 126–28, 133–34, and 136–37 [*Studien*, 134–136; *Kantstudien*, 365–67].

³⁶ Elveton, 130 [*Studien*, 139; *Kantstudien*, 370]; my italics.

³⁷ Elveton, 130–34 [*Studien*, 139–43; *Kantstudien*, 369–73].

³⁸ Elveton, 136 [*Studien*, 146; *Kantstudien*, 376] (my italics here and my phrase in brackets for clarification). The relativizing is expressed as follows: “In the provisional conceptual indicating of the constitution problematic constitutive achievement is identified with the *act’s* intentional bestowing of sense, so that, measured by this preliminary indicative concept of constitution, the deeper lying constitution by transcendental temporalization [*Zeitungung*] cannot be brought out; and so ‘hyle’ had to appear as sheer matter.”

³⁹ Elveton, 124–25 [*Studien*, 132–33; *Kantstudien*, 364–65].

⁴⁰ Elveton, 124. [*Studien*, 132; *Kantstudien*, 364] The German in the *Kantstudien* article is as follows: “Mit anderen Worten, das transzentale Noema ist die Welt selbst als die im Glauben der strömenden Weltapperzeption der transzentalen Subjektivität liegende Geltungseinheit.” (*Studien* 132; *Kantstudien* 364). *Geltung* is usually translated as “validity,” but because of the logical connotation so predominantly clinging to “validity,” this word does not suggest the *phenomenological* force of “holding-and-counting” in *gelten* here.

“sense”—*Sinn* is the word almost always used in Fink’s text here (as in *Sinn-Haben* or *Sinn-Meinen; Studien*, 123–24 [KS, 363]); and since here the transcendental “sense [*Sinn*]” which is the *noema*, in its always temporalized consolidation of the partialities of protention and retention, is “*that-which-holds in world-holding*,” the properly “transcendental noema is the *being* [*das Seiende*] *itself*” that is experienced. This is what is most specifically transcendental about the noema “in the hitherto never recognized depth of its hidden sense-as-being [*seines Seinssinnes*]”⁴¹

6. Here is the context for another point that Ricoeur underscores regarding the limitations of Husserl’s analysis in *Ideen I*: the *creativity* of the “constitution of the object.” This descriptive term “creativity” has to be handled carefully. Obviously it is not a matter of the production of physical substance, but rather of the *sense*-consolidations that are the manifestly appearing and sense-modally experiencing of temporally determinate Somethings.⁴² It is a matter of the dimensional character intrinsic to the whole order of “sense,” and hence as well to the order of the perceiving sense(s) involved in experiencing the world: “the whole world has its whole being as a kind of ‘sense’ [‘*Sinn*’], which presupposes absolute consciousness as the field for sense-giving [*Sinngebung*]”⁴³

It is this same productivity in the “realm” of *sense* (which phenomenologically embraces absolutely everything) that is called *creative* precisely because sense is not a matter of *receptivity* (which is a mark of the psychological). At the same time, as Fink points out in the pages where the perhaps disturbing designation “creative” is discussed, to pose the distinction between the psychological and the transcendental-constitutive as the difference between “receptivity” and “productivity” is to remain within *mundane* conceptual contrasts. What kind of “relationship” transcendental “constitution” properly understood should be positively characterized as signifying—and he insists that actually it should be deemed neither “receptive” nor “productive”—can only be “indicated by carrying out constitutive investigations.”⁴⁴ Before looking further into any such characterization, however, it is crucial to be clear about this category of sense (or: meaning) in phenomenology. Or, rather than “category,” perhaps sense/meaning would be better considered as the very “realm” or “dimension” or “determinability” for what phenomenology takes up regarding the core matters in experiential life in order to disclose their actual phenomenological character, role, and significance in the reduction-guided analyses that disclose how they come about and function in what is called “transcendental origenerative constitution.”

⁴¹ Elveton, 125, [*Studien*, 133; *Kantstudien*, 364] my boldface.

⁴² In *Ideen I* Husserl’s use of such words as *Erzeugung*, *Produktion*, and *schöpferisch* should be read as meaning ultimately the syntheses of *sense*—*Sinn*, but equally as well *Bedeutung*—i.e., *meaning* in general, both experiential (predominantly termed *Sinn*) and linguistically articulated (predominantly termed *Bedeutung*). In this, as we see in §122, the emphasis is on the character of these “productions” (positing, counter-positing, setting as antecedents or as consequences, etc.) as *free* and *spontaneous*—by virtue of being of *meaning as such*—rather than as *causally effectuated*.

⁴³ *Ideen I*, §55, [107].

⁴⁴ Elveton, 134. [*Studien*, 143; *Kantstudien*, 373].

The Task at Hand, Basic Principles

Transitional Considerations

In the transformation of the matters of ordinary life's experiences into properly phenomenological terms via the epochē, Husserl in *Ideen I* gives many indications of the distinctive, unique, the *sui generis* character that everything is to take on, even if this transformation cannot be achieved all at once. Indeed the indication he gives at the very beginning in his “Introduction” to that book characterizes the phenomena of phenomenology’s analyses as *irreal*—irreal.⁴⁵ The point is repeated a page later: “. . . [I]t will be further shown that that all transcendentally purified ‘lived experiences [*Erlebnisse*] are irreals [*Irrealitäten*],’ and thereby are not ordered in terms of naïve conceptions about the ‘actual world.’”⁴⁶ The effect of this characterization is to “do away with the barriers to cognition” and the “one-sided direction in looking at things” that prevent gaining a full grasp of “consciousness” and “phenomena” as such.⁴⁷

This is where the sentence quoted above (#6 in the previous subsection), about “the whole world’s” having “its whole being as a kind of ‘sense’ [‘*Sinn*’],” by virtue of a “sense-giving [*Sinngebung*],”⁴⁸ takes on its full weight: phenomena are “irreal” because they are matters intrinsically of *sense* as such. Let me offer just three texts on the intrinsic constitution of “irreal” phenomena as sense:

- (1) From §86. “The Functional Problems”—specifically the noetic “animating” of hyletic sense so as to have “apprehensional” capability (Husserl’s term: *Auffassung*):

Consciousness is precisely consciousness “of” something; it is of its essence **to bear in itself “sense,”** the quintessence, so to speak, of “soul,” “spirit,” “reason.” Consciousness is not a name for “psychical complexes,” for “contents” fused together, for “bundles” or streams of “sensations” which, in themselves without sense, also cannot lend any “sense” to whatever mixture, but is through and through “consciousness”. . . . Consciousness is

⁴⁵ Hua III/1, [3]. The English writes “irreal” exactly like the German. The translations here are my own, but in many subsequent quotations I make of Fred Kersten’s translation, Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy*, The Hague: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1983, although in these cases I usually modify the translation. Page numbers are given in the original German pagination, and as such are placed in brackets [NN]. Kersten’s translation retains these page numbers in the margins.

⁴⁶ Op. cit. [4].

⁴⁷ Op. cit. [3]. The conjunction of “consciousness” and “phenomena” is obvious from the whole passage here, but the two terms are not actually placed in a single-sentence statement of the “field” in question, the “field of phenomenology.” What Husserl does write, however, is that *phenomena* as “transcendentally purified phenomena” become the “field of phenomenology” (*ibid.*).

⁴⁸ Cf. *Ideen I*, §55, [107].

therefore *toto coelo* different from what sensualism will only see, from what in fact is irrational stuff without sense . . .⁴⁹

- (2) From §88—"Really Inherent and Intentional Components of Lived Experience. The Noema":

In every case the noematic correlate, which is called "sense" here (in a very extended signification) is to be taken *precisely in the way it lies "immanently"* in the lived experience of perceiving, of judging, of liking, etc.; that is, just as it is offered to us *when we inquire purely into this living experience itself*.⁵⁰

- (3) Finally, from §90—The "Noematic Sense" and the Distinction between "Immanent" and "Actual Objects":

Like perception, *every* intentional lived experience—and this is just what makes up the fundamental part of intentionality—has its "intentional object," i.e., **its objective sense**. In other words: "to **make/have sense** [Sinn zu haben]" (or: "to take **in terms of sense**"), is the fundamental characteristic of all consciousness which, therefore, is not just any lived experience [*Erlebnis*] whatever, but rather a "noetically" sense-having/making lived experience.⁵¹

Once again, it should be clear that, whatever our imaginative inclinations may perhaps be to "visualize" what kind of "unit" the integrating of the kinds of sense in play here might be—the hyletic, the noetic, the noematic, and the object—they one and all must be thought of *as sense*, not in any way as *things* posited as in themselves physically *real*. More than that, the manner in which they are thought of as "brought together" in the experience has to be in terms *precisely* of *sense-complexes*, as senses not so much "interwoven" as in an interplay of "coherence." The manner of their "coherence" has to be nothing like what we find in the interplay of elements or particles or masses of any kind of material substance. These "senses" are precisely the modes primarily by which something is *the phenomenon for perceptual intending*. They cannot be taken in terms of the things in the world that these senses *bring to appear*, but as that which is the *antecedent, in the "realm" of sense, for* those things' very appearing thereby enabling the taking of the appearings as of the "*things themselves*." Here is where we might find the grounding for Husserl's proposals that phenomenology be the antecedent to any science, any psychology, and, more comprehensively, any determinations that are ontological or metaphysical such as are inevitably built into and presupposed by the methodologies of natural

⁴⁹ Op. cit., [176]; my boldface for emphasis here and in the following two quotations. Note an allied remark from §85 "Sensuous ὑλήν—intentional μορφήν": "These noeses make up what is specific to *nous in the broadest sense* of the word . . . At the same time, it is not unwelcome that the word, *nous*, recalls one of its distinctive significations, namely, precisely 'sense,' although the 'sense-bestowal' which is effected in the noetic moments comprises many different things and only as foundation<is>a "sense-bestowal" joined onto the succinct [*prägnant*] concept of sense." Translation modified.

⁵⁰ *Ideen I* [182]. Translation modified.

⁵¹ Op. cit. [185]. Translation modified.

or human sciences.⁵² This would mean, too, that the *manner* of the “distinction between,” and then the “interplay of,” sense-“components” cannot be left to being simply obvious as “psychological” factors now stipulated as transformed into “transcendental” factors; for it is not clear how this transformation *changes* the otherwise mundane character of the components’ *compositionality*: they can still seem to be cast in the mold of functional unit-parts in an as it were psychological “mechanism.”⁵³

Here, however, I must turn to the kinds of sense that Husserl himself goes on to inquire into in the phenomenology that, meant to move beyond the unification of the three senses that compose perceptual experience, takes up the matter of *Urzeitigung*, the true absolute of constitutive origin.

The Character of the Conceptuality for Analyzing Origination and Transcendental Constitution, i.e., for Sense-Constitution as the Ground-Level for Consciousness

First Point: Access to Urzeitigung

Every “going on” of cognitive effort—which here means getting to the genetic temporalizing of my own perceptual experience—is itself an instance of a “going on” that is “being constituted” right as it “goes on”; but we must ask, is it the *same* temporalizing in each case, that is, is the temporality of my accessing effort the *very same temporality* that my effort is aiming to analyze?

Here is our first problem: If we are—that is, if *I* am—trying to reach absolutely *first-level* temporality, i.e., *proto-temporalization*, what is the manner of its *being manifest* to me? First of all, temporalization is certainly not like a perceptually appearing object. Yet inasmuch as the going-on of any thus characterized duration of either a cognitive or a perceptual experience will be temporalized, that dynamic formative integration in-the-making will be *discernible*. How? Precisely by being discernible *as and of that going-on*, not by being observable “as a *separate object*” itself.

This is part of the situation Husserl briefly considers in *Ideen I* itself, but without actually taking it up for analysis. In §38 he points out the difference between the

⁵² A suggestion of this kind occurs, tangentially perhaps, in the passage in Hua III/1 that continues from the sentence quoted above from Hua III/1 [4] (with footnote 46). There he is talking about the inquiry into “essence,” but the “irreality” of matters inquired into for their essences—which I am arguing here are essential matters precisely of “pure phenomenological sense”—remains amenable to the same caution he voices there.

⁵³ A treatment of the “interworking” of this (as it were) “mechanism” is offered in my “Phenomenology in a New Century: What Still Needs to be Done,” in *Analecta Husserliana*, Vol. 105, *Phenomenology and Existentialism in the Twentieth Century, Book Three: Heraldng the New Enlightenment* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 39–79. See in particular 42–52.

“perception of something immanent” and the “perception of something transcendent,” as the title of that unit puts it. Again, in §42 a different kind of “givenness” characterizes the “immanent” object in contrast to that of the “transcendent” object, namely, the differences here are (a) that *reflective* experience, in contrast to *perceptual* experience with its perceived object, has the immediacy in unity of the reflecting and the reflected by virtue of a “reflective turning of regard” upon itself; and (b) that in this “reflective regard” there are no “adumbrations [*Abschattungen*]” in the sense of position- or orientation-varying perspectival differences, as is true for the perceptual object; for “adumbrations” require spatial-temporal hyletic “sensation-data” for the differences in concrete sense in play therein. Temporality is the intrinsic structural dynamic at the very heart of the going-on of experiential consciousness in all its forms, but reflective self-givenness remains structurally unlike the structural complex of perceptual experience.

Still, the question remains about how the constitutively intrinsic character of temporality for all experiential goings-on allows a *manifestness* in the reflective turn, such that it is *therein* that reflective regard will have access to not just *one's own* going-on as temporalized, but to that *Urzeitigung* that is said to be the “*true absolute*” of constitutive genesis and the transcendental heart of subjectivity as such.

Second Point: The Lessons of Husserl's Studies in Reaching for the Level of Urzeitigung: Husserl's Pursuit of the Question

It is the detailed analysis of “proto-temporalization” that Husserl undertakes in the third set of his time-investigation manuscripts called the “C-Manuscripts.” However, by 1934, when the last of these new manuscripts was produced, Husserl had turned over to his assistant Fink the entire effort of synthesizing and developing fully the clarification of temporality as the core of transcendental constituting “process,” to be done on the basis of Husserl's total accumulated manuscript work on the matter. The account of that task is of course too long to bring in here, and the basics of I have laid out elsewhere.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, certain methodological and substantive points pertaining to the present issue will have to be drawn from Fink's many still preserved hand-written notes on temporality.

⁵⁴ Fink's beginning to work on editing the Bernau manuscripts of 1917–1918, the first task Husserl gave him as assistant (which normally involved almost daily conversations with Husserl), is likely to have been the instigation for Husserl's beginning the new series of manuscript studies on temporality that continued until 1934. Fink thus worked frontally on the question of the analysis of *Urzeitigung* in the very years in which the third set of manuscripts was produced. Ultimately Fink's work on this project, which by now had to take into account Husserl's new C-manuscripts, became the composition of an entirely new monograph on temporality. As such, it went beyond being simply the analysis of temporalization to offer a whole interpretive and critical drawing of methodological and philosophical lessons. Unfortunately, the entire draft has been lost. There is good reason to believe that Fink destroyed it himself, in view of his own judgment on it as expressed in a note from 1969 to 1971 (EFA 3.2, 441): “Das Manuskript ist 654 Seiten stark – und ‘mißglückt’.” For a fuller account, see Chapter 5 of my *Edmund Husserl & Eugen Fink, Beginnings and Ends in Phenomenology, 1928–1938* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004).

At the same time, a number of things are clear in Husserl's C-Manuscripts themselves. For example, quite plainly there is no such thing as getting to pure temporality without there being "something" that *undergoes* temporalization. Of course it is not an *already* "something" that gets "subjected to" temporalization, and thus gets transformed from what it already was; rather the *forming-up* of what is *not yet formed* to what becomes thereby *something formed* is precisely what temporalization is about. Yet even this is incorrectly put; for what is in question here as the "to-be-formed" is not *any kind of "thing"* or "substance." It is instead the temporalized coming-together of a *sense/meaning*—in the specifically *phenomenological* order—which can only do so in the "coursing," the "streaming," of temporalization. The streaming of temporalization, now, is itself in no way a matter of spatial or stuff-like distension. It is instead the qualitative coherence and integrative consolidation worked precisely by the "protentional" and "retentional" dynamic of constitution that takes place in the totally *non-spatial* now—this non-spatial now being the very *dimensionality-moment* for the "taking place" of this dynamic. The dynamic happens simply in an utterly *non-spatial Present*: in temporality's *Living Present*. If Husserl's analyses do anything they make this point, whichever of the sets of manuscripts one reads.

Secondly, in the C-Manuscripts the kinds of sense that comprise not only the perceiving of objects, as in *Ideen I*—where, as exemplified earlier, Husserl insists on the sense-character of the structures he is analyzing—but more importantly *other sense-factors* that lie "behind" or "below" or "deeper within" the object-centered, psychology-based framing of *Ideen I*. Specifically, there is the whole dimension of the "affective"—*Affektivität*—as a dimension of its own, the dimension of "feeling" as such, rather than the specific *feelings* otherwise known as the emotions, that is, the dimension of *das Gefühl* as coterminous with living experience [*Erlebnis*]. It is astonishing how fundamental a role "feeling" has within the streaming of temporalization, given its sidelining in *Ideen I*, but that is precisely one of the cardinal lessons of the move beyond object-focused analytic framing.⁵⁵

For example, the *identity* of the I of concrete experience with the I-pole of temporality, a major theme of the C-Manuscripts, is brought about, Husserl finds, by "affectivity and activity."⁵⁶ More than this, it is affectivity that can *instigate* activity

⁵⁵ For more on this, see my Husserl Circle paper in Paris, June 2009, "Husserl's 'Naturalism' and Genetic Phenomenology," from which the present points are drawn. This paper is now published in Vol. 11 of the *New Yearbook of Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy*. (I must correct a spelling of the pivotal German word *Vergeistigung* that appears in this Husserl-Circle study [see below Section C on this term]. By some oversight this word's misspelling as *Vergeisterung* had gone uncorrected.) I should also mention that *Affektivität* in question here becomes the question of the *pathic* character of what Fink terms *Vollzugsbewußtsein*.

⁵⁶ Examined in a C-manuscript from May 1932 published not in Edmund Husserl, *Späte Text über Zeitkonstitution (1925–1934)*, *Die C-Manuskripte*, Husserliana Materialien VIII, ed. Dieter Lohmar (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), but as Beilage XX in Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität, Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, Husserliana XV, ed. Iso Kern (den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973); the text on the issue emphasized (too briefly) here is on 355. A supporting passage to this is Husserl's finding in Hua VIII Text Nr. 13, 41–42, from 1931.

in the form of an inclinational “feeling of attracting and repelling.” Indeed, the I here and its non-I “feeling” “are inseparable,” and this inseparability is such that in the complex “the I is a feeling I,” so that to be this way in terms of “feeling [*Fühlen*]” is **“the way the I has its basic character** [*die Zuständlichkeit des Ich*] before any activity, and, if it is active, in the activity.”⁵⁷ Husserl then makes a remark about one of the fundamental features of many of the manuscript analyses, namely, the inability to reach a point in the analysis *before* complexities of normal orders have begun to shape up—a situational moment that in fact does not seem to be either actually given or givable—here specifically in regard to the pivotal role of the sensuous material “hyletic” *as itself*.

Of course talk about the I is ultimately determined by the ‘polarization’ of I-action. In genetic regressive inquiry we **construct as a beginning the still world-less pre-field** [*Vorfeld*] **and pre-I** [*Vor-Ich*] that is **already a center, but not a “person,”** not to speak of a person in the usual sense of the human person. . . . To the streaming present, in the temporalizing-temporalized flowing of which all genesis is living genesis, there belongs, now, the **constant hyle structure** and the **hyle in the characteristics that feeling has.**⁵⁸

What we find here is a simple “fact-like,” *already-in-play* character unavoidably typical of genetic factors named at this ultimate level of phenomenological reach. Even this, however, amounts to “reaching” it as the “construction” of what *must have been*, rather than of what is encountered or encounterable in an *actually given* “some point, somewhere.” Notice that the at the moment *activity* is in play—which implies, if not motivation, at least *instigation* for movement on the part of an I—the *hyletic* is in play, here as affective sensuous “materiality.” The *hyletic* is primordially “there” at the very outset, *and thereafter*, in its fundamental *already* making-sense, *as “felt.”*

Here I must summarize the remarkable conjunction of manuscript analyses that, taken together, work a profound reinterpreting cast upon the way, in their limitations, the “meditations that merely get us up and going [*unserer bloß emporleitenden Meditationen*],” i.e., the treatment in *Ideen I*,⁵⁹ need to be rethought in terms of the *relativity* of that stage of effort:

- (1) Through the hyletic in play in the “world-less pre-field[*Vorfeld*]” with the “pre-I [*Vor-Ich*] that is already a center, but not a ‘person,’”⁶⁰ “in the proto-temporalization in which an ego-alien hyletic quasi-world has its ‘pre’-being [*in der eine ichfremde*

⁵⁷ Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 79 (from 1931), pp. 351–352 (my emphases in boldface.) *Zuständlichkeit* is not an ordinary word in German usage. *Zustand* generally means state or condition—the concrete way something is what it is. *Zuständig*, then, means having to do with the concrete way something is what it is constitutively supposed to be. Husserl’s making a noun of the adjective suggests the fundamental constitutive state of something, its concretely basic way of being and continuing to be itself.

⁵⁸ Hua Mat VIII, the same Text Nr. 79, 352 (again, my emphases in boldface).

⁵⁹ Phrasing from Hua III/1, in the paragraph that begins on [200] and carries on in [201] to end Chapter 3—“Noesis and Noema.”

⁶⁰ See the quotation above, on 23, from Text Nr. 79 in Hua Mat VIII (from 1931).

*hyletische quasi-Welt ihr ‘Vor’-sein hat]”—which in fact is effectuated “by this or that operation in affection and action [*Affektion und Aktion*]”—“the genuine world [*die eigentliche Welt*] comes to be created” in the “multitude” of those levels on which the world of our experience has its magnificent variety.⁶¹ Yet this “operation,” though only imagined (i.e., “constructed”) in its actually inaccessible status, is a “proto-flowing” with a “proto-impressional” element that in fact changes and coalesces exactly like the sense in genuine perceptual experience in an actual world—specifically, for example, with “the change of proto-impressionality into retentionality” that allows for “total coinciding in the content [*Gehalt*]” which is effected as such by the temporalizing dynamic.⁶² That is, in fact it is precisely *sense*-like in all respects—except that it is not yet endowed with *intentional* force, which first comes into play in actually constituted perception in the actually constituted world.*

- (2) This “proto-impressional core [*urimpressionalen Kern*],”⁶³ again, not yet intentional and not yet *perceptual*, is also not something one could call “consciousness” in its full sense.⁶⁴ In its “primordial temporality” it is “a pre-time” (or, otherwise rendered: a “‘time’ before ‘time,’” “an ‘antecedent’ to time”) in the sense that “it is not yet any form of objects for the living I in this flow of consciousness.”⁶⁵ The framework for the conceptuality of analysis here seems to be that of *Ideen I*, whereby the “beforehand” of this “world-less pre-field[*Vorfeld*]” (see the text referred to in #1 right above) with its “flow of consciousness” is not “an object-relevant continuous succession[*eine gegenständliche kontinuierliche Sukzession*]”,⁶⁶ which, even though it may have “appearings-of [*Erscheinungen-von*]” something or other, is not the exercise of “I-acts” that are object-aimed.⁶⁷ Yet if we are talking about temporalization in its absolute genetic ultimacy, how could this *not be* temporalization?
- (3) Despite the stricture that the line of analysis Husserl offers in the manuscript material just referred to—on having to respect the difference between (a) the fully

⁶¹ Portions of text from Hua VIII, Text Nr 79, 250, again the same text as just referred to in a the previous footnote.

⁶² See Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 20, from 1931, 81. In more detail, Text Nr. 21 asserts: “Flowing is a proto-phenomenon, it is not an explicit following of one thing after another. To the proto-phenomenon of flowing there belongs a phenomenon of increase (a phenomenon of increasing ‘magnitude,’ a graduality), namely of shorter- or longer-lasting or a lasting that just keeps going on longer.” This is clearly nothing less than temporalization, and specifically “die lebendige Gegenwart.” (Hua Mat VIII, 93).

⁶³ This first is from Hua Mat VIII, Text nr. 21 (1930), 99.

⁶⁴ This qualification is well expressed in Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 24 (1930), 112–13.

⁶⁵ Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 62, 269. This phrase in brackets is my gloss, which in view of the rest of the sentence seems the preferable reading.

⁶⁶ The phrasings in this half up to this point here in this paragraph are from Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 62, 269 (1934).

⁶⁷ These qualifications are from Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 24, 112, the same text as referred in note 42 just above.

constituted intentional-experiential life in the world that is our everyday situation, and (b) that which would be the *antecedent* process-like interplay of factors and elements—Husserl allows himself extraordinary latitude for indicating what is to be identified in that antecedent play of components that constitutively *bring about* and continually *support* our full-fledged life in the world as *intrinsic* to it. Husserl passes from the proto-hyletic and proto-impressional—the proto-temporalization, the “pre-field” and the “pre-I”—to what we would be (and he allows to be) *subsequent* factors and elements—mainly *nature itself* and the *human body*; and yet these subsequent factors and elements, as “correlative” to the antecedent factors, nonetheless have a special relevance to the “material proto-core” that grants them a “primordiality” of their own. Basically here is where nature itself and the human body pertain to the “apprehension” of nature “as spatio-temporal nature” and of space “**in orientation around my living body** [*Leib*] and its exceptional way of appearing.”⁶⁸ This, however, increases the paradox of illustrating the unconditioned antecedent in terms of the there-with conditioned resultant. Can this be at all legitimate?

- (4) Husserl offers a way of resolving this: He has to admit that, in the “regressive inquiry” that is under way here, there is “an identification produced” that “creates object-status [*Gegenständlichkeit schafft*]” for what actually, “as pre-being,”⁶⁹ is “**non-experienceable and non-sayable**” (my boldface). What we are doing, then, is converting it—*as it were*—into an *actual object-like something* in order to imagine it, delineate it, and differentiate it from other matters. It is, in Husserl’s own words, “exhibited” by being “ontified.”⁷⁰

Yet the fact remains that this effort with its “ontification” amounts to the attempt to display the constitutive “source” of the structures that make for the definiteness and holding-value [*Geltung*, usually rendered “validity”] *in terms of*, and indeed *as* intrinsically (seemingly!) subject to, the very conditions that determine constitutive *products*, the very structures and units that *result from* transcendental constitutive originative “agency” as such. (In effect, Husserl implied something of this kind in his very first time-consciousness analyses, and it should be no surprise that it occurs to him again in his last; and that realization is far more in play there.)⁷¹

- (5) In Husserl’s phenomenological workshop there had been a vigorous display of the difficulty evident at this point in this final set of Husserl’s time-analyses, on

⁶⁸ Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 23 (1930), 110–12.

⁶⁹ Here again, “‘before’-being” could be the rendering.

⁷⁰ Again from Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 62, 269. Not accidental is the parallel here to Fink’s point in *VI. Cartesianische Meditation, Teil 1 Die Idee einer transzendentalen Methodenlehre* (see note 10, in the first part of the present paper), 85–86; *Sixth Meditation*, 76. See also Husserl’s marginal remark no. 257 in this document.

⁷¹ See Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (1893–1917), Husserliana X, ed. Rudolf Boehm (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), §36: “Für all das fehlen uns die Namen,” despite the fact he had just provided a description for them.

the very issue of supposed access to that which is in principle beyond the reach of the capacities of intentional cognitive accession; and this is the transcendental methodological critique that Eugen Fink provided Husserl in writing in the summer of 1932. Moreover, Fink's notes on the principles of his "transcendental *Methodenlehre*" antedate 1932 by several years, back to his first year of work with Husserl beginning in the fall of 1928. In addition, the first formally written indication of this line of thinking afforded Husserl lies in sketch-like form in the remarkable "Layout for Edmund Husserl's 'System of Phenomenological Philosophy' (August 13, 1930)," which opens the second volume of the edition in Husserlian Dokumente of the "VI. Cartesianische Meditation."⁷² Unfortunately, there is no room here to take up this "Layout" adequately; all that I can present are very summary points on some of the basic issues in how Husserl's analysis of *Urzeitungung* works.

Elements for the Radical Interpretive Revision in Pursuing the Question of Proto-Constitution and Proto-Temporalization

- (1) *Phenomenology as regressive (or, perhaps preferably: regressional) analysis*⁷³: Husserl had long and regularly spoken of phenomenology as "regressing," that is, as working from the constituted back to the constituting. This, of course, is the whole point of the "re-duction": to move from what is already constituted by transcendental sources to the sources that "do" that transcendental constituting—except that to think of this as "doing" is to impose on the trans-mundane what is specifically mundane, namely, the doing of an action in temporal and/or spatial horizontal settings. What kind of a doing, then, is a *transcendental* "doing"?

It is in regard to this that Fink has some insightful things to say. To begin with, a simply descriptive observation, namely, that the whole investigational method of *positively* descriptive phenomenology, in being *regressive*, is that it "lays back" onto the transcendental the characterizing terms of that which is originated transitinally from it; it is a *rücklegende* method—"retro-application [*Rücklage*]".⁷⁴ Fink, however, pushes this idea to a further level of interpretation, namely, by insisting that the non-accessibility *in se* of the originating makes the accessibility lie precisely *in the originated* as such. The character of the constitutively *originating* is only discernible precisely *as* the very *constitutedness*

⁷² Eugen Fink, *VI. Cartesianische Meditation, Teil 2 Ergänzungsband*, Hua Dok II/2, 3–9: "Disposition zu ‚System der phänomenologischen Philosophie‘ von Edmund Husserl (13. August 1930)."

⁷³ From Section 2, "Regressive Phänomenologie," subsection E: "MethodischeReflexionen," in Fink's "Layout [Disposition]": *VI. Cartesianische Meditation*, Hua Dok II/2, 7.

⁷⁴ The way this is treated in *Edmund Husserl & Eugen Fink* can easily be found by searching "retro-application" in the index.

of the originated. The paradoxical positivity of this is nicely expressed in two notes of Fink's from late 1928 or the first half of 1929 (my boldface for emphasis):

"Absolute" being is not in any way a being that would be found alongside of or outside that-which-is. Rather it is only accessible at all from the ontical as a point of departure. It is, in a certain way, **the ontical itself, but inquired into so radically that it is the ontical, in a certain way, before its εἰνα.**—The relation of "the absolute" to the ontical we shall call the "origin." "**Origin**" is not an intra-worldly beginning but **is seen in an intra-worldly way always according to that of which it is precisely the origin.** "Origin" has an antecedency τῇ φύσει [by nature], and not πρὸς ἡμᾶς [to us].⁷⁵

Again, from the same folder of notes:

Genetic clarification leads into self-temporalizing time, and so is **not a regress into the intra-temporal past.** Genesis is the temporalization of time. In this fundamental problem of the temporalization of time, in this proto-happening that first makes possible all happening, is revealed the puzzling phenomenon of "retro-application." The temporalization of time is not a "happening" any more than it "is," but it can be philosophically described **only by retro-applying** [to it] **what is made possible by it (intra-temporality).**⁷⁶

(2) *Phenomenology as integratively positive, and forward looking.*⁷⁷

Among a richness of other points, Fink writes this in key-word style:

Progressive analysis as setting one's aim on the *perfektivität* [Perfektivität] of the transcendental. Regressive analysis as analysis that takes apart[*Abbau-Analyse*]; progressive analysis as analysis that puts together [*Aufbau-Analyse*.]⁷⁸

Here is what is implied in this brief proposal:

As already pointed out earlier, the effect of the limitation in the regressive move from the givenness of the already constituted to the constituting, in the inquiry into proto-temporalization, was one of Fink's main preoccupations from the very beginning of his work with Husserl, and these lines on *Perfektivität* pertain precisely to that. However, my understanding of the point of this term is something that I do not find actually spelled out by Fink in his notes. The one mention of *Perfektivität* there that,

⁷⁵ Eugen Fink, *Phänomenologische Werkstatt*, Eugen Fink Gesamtausgabe, 3/1: *Teilband 1: Die Doktorarbeit und erste Assistenzjahre bei Husserl*, ed. Ronald Bruzina (Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber, 2006), Z-IV 112b, 269.

⁷⁶ Op. cit., Z-IV 10a, 213–14 (my addition in brackets).

⁷⁷ From Fink's "Layout [*Disposition*]": VI. *Cartesianische Meditation*, Hua Dok II/2, Section 3, "Progressive Phänomenologie," subsection A "Das methodische Problem," (a), 7.

⁷⁸ VI CM, Hua Dok, II/2, 7. Rather than the overused Latinate words, "deconstruct" and "construct," a more colloquially based rendering is adopted here (one could also say "take down" and "build up"). The general idea is that of the difference between seeing something in terms of distinct components and seeing it in terms of integrative coherence and meaning. One of Fink's striking watchwords throughout his research notes is *Integration*, a task regularly spoken of by Husserl but largely not pursued thoroughly enough in terms of the problematic depth to which phenomenological investigation, on its own principles, had to reach, as the whole of this section 3 on "Progressive Phänomenologie" indicates. The possibilities and demands in Fink's bare-bones outline suggests what all would remain to be done when Husserl's corpus of writings came to a close with his death.

no more than a hint, I totally overlooked in my reading of the C-Manuscripts, suddenly struck me as exemplifying what this term basically signifies⁷⁹. It is a simple point: the word *Perfektivität* refers to a grammatical form, the perfect tense (sometimes called the present perfect) in the conjugation of verbs, which in German technical usage is das *Perfekt* (or *Perfektum*). The verbal tense indicates an action whose operation has already done its work, has as of now carried through its performance. That state of already completion is *Perfektivität*.

In the context of the analysis of *Urzeitigung*, then, this is the feature of *originative* “agency” as *always already* “having done its work,” and always *before* we begin phenomenology (otherwise, indeed, we could not “work back” to its “beginnings”). That is, before we begin phenomenology the *Perfektivität* of constitution, the constitution that enables our life now to be going on—whether as experiential in the world, or in the highest abstractions of concentrated thought—is its *having always already set things up in their going-on*; and we *literally* can never find ourselves, the constituted, in a state of affairs *before* its being thus in operation in our basic capabilities, in our full-scale experiential being in the fully formed horizons of the world.

- (3) Now, this is precisely the situation that we find repeatedly described by Husserl as he tries to plumb “the depths” for the operations antecedent to our already constituted experiential living; for there we continually come upon things *always already set up* in their basic compositional structure. The *very beginning*, before any such compositional completeness, is never there to be found. Basic elements are always found already in play, *or* are “envisioned” as *not quite yet* put together *in full*. Yet even in this case, all is *already ready* for the “play” to begin: the elements are conceived as all waiting “in wings,” so to speak, fully determined and apt for their roles and about to be brought onto the scene to play them out for the onlookers.

To put it another way, however, we have to admit that we do not actually *find* a genuine beginning; we have to *construct* it to make it a something definite—or “reconstruct” it (to use another word Husserl also uses in the C-Manuscripts)⁸⁰—in such a way that we suppose the non-assemblage of the elements we already know, and then we *posit* the actual assembling, precisely in some form of what we already know as the “always-already-having-been-set-up” so as “to-be-going-on-now.” At first this “already going-on” may well be envisioned without a fully structurally and actively filled-out human person—that is, without the object-focused engagement with an already set-up surrounding milieu such as is in the forefront of *Ideen I*,⁸¹ even while the situation is imagined as it would be *before* an actual experience with that object-focus in play. Yet, again, all the elements analyzed in *Ideen I* as belonging

⁷⁹ It should be said that for the native speaker of German, while in everyday situations—say, in arranging for a convenient time for some kind of event—one could easily express satisfaction by saying “*Perfekt!*” nonetheless, in a theoretical discussion of *Perfekt* (such as in Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit*, (Tübingen, 1963, 85)), the grammatical connotation would be obvious and its relevance understood. Fink’s one mention of *Perfektivität* is in notebook OH-II, manuscript page 53, which will be in *Phänomenologische Werkstatt* 3.3.

⁸⁰ See for example Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 80, 357.

⁸¹ See the situations represented in section 2, p. 250 above.

to it are not actually “*coming to be*”; they are already expected as fully “*ready*” to be put into play. We do not see and cannot find a *genuine* genesis. We envision, again, an assembling of (at least virtually) pre-formed parts, not an *absolute origination*.

A *true* genesis phenomenologically speaking begins not with any such *parts*, but with the dynamic of *temporalization* modulating and integrating the “*constituents*” precisely as *senses* in the flow of protentional-retentional diversity-in-integration such that the integration is *ipso facto temporally, inflectedly realized*. It is *this factor*, precisely as *integrative* and making for the unity of the supposedly already *pre-unification* component parts, this integrative unification precisely as *temporal*, that is the point of the analysis; and that is what is here *perfect (perfekt)*. It is this *integratum* has its central role at the heart of the experiential both noetically and noematically, as the entirely coincident “*of-*” and “*to-*” in experiential and phenomenological *intending* and *appearing*.

The Task That Remains

With this, *new ways* are opened up for reinterpreting and rephrasing phenomenological elements of transcendental constitution and how it genetically proceeds as “always-already” under way. This, however, cannot be taken up now.⁸² A further matter cannot go unmentioned as well, namely, the way the hyletic plays the role of the “proto-natural” in the temporalized multi-phased building up of sense. One striking example of this is Text Nr. 23 (from 1930).⁸³ Here “the proto-hyletic core” as it functions in “the natural field of perception”—which is of course the site of its role in *Ideen I* and the site most familiar and basic for us as reflecting humans—is shown in a “a new mode” of “apprehensional take [*Auffassung*],” namely, “for the perception of the **hylē of the natural** [*für die Wahrnehmung der naturalen Hylē*].” Let me quote a few lines in their entirety for the remarkable descriptions they offer:

“Nature” is the core, the matter (*hylē*) of the world as experienced, a core that takes on and, in consciousness of the world, already antecedently has “spiritualization [*Vergeistigung*]” but objective nature is not constituted simply on the basis of the unitary hyle, but rather the primordial core is first constituted through which the sense of nature for me is constituted on the first level.⁸⁴

⁸² For a preliminary representation of some of this innovative reconception that Fink considers, see my *Edmund Husserl & Eugen Fink*, in particular in Chapter 5 “Fundamental Thematics II: Time,” section 5.1.2.3.3, 276–80. Here too (specifically on 277) “field-intentionality” is mentioned, again with further places locatable via the index.

⁸³ Hua Mat VIII, 111–12. Before the passage quoted here, Husserl goes through several pages of “regression” from the familiar—perceptual objects in the world—to the unfamiliar—the proto-temporalized constitution of sense. The present passage, however, is not simply a further stage in a unilinear sequence, but rather a deepening *redoing*, with further development, of those previous analyses in this manuscript.

⁸⁴ Op. cit. 111.

The “nature” talked about here is certainly the sense of nature in its *originative* cast: *not* in the mode of naturalistic physical science, but one intrinsic to what he might have called “life-world” experience. Equally significant, and pivotal here, is the “spiritualization” [*Vergeistigung*] (which could also be rendered “mentalization”), a term Husserl puts in quotation marks to suggest its taking a new sense, namely, from the context of genetic ultimacy. The question is, what is this *Vergeistigung*, especially in that this *has already been done* in that this hyletic “core” is *already in play* in the temporalization of experience? And we see here that the materially hyletic is intrinsic to the very *capacity* of sense to function as the heart of both experiential and theoretical intelligence. Intrinsic as well to this capacity of sense is that it comprises, in the same function, the spectrum of modalities wherein the sense of the natural is also the spectrum of the ways in which perceptually experiential being *appears*—i.e., in the character as fundamentally “*irreal*” precisely as *phenomena*.

What we have here is a transformation that—unlike for example the treatment in *Ideen II* where the *Vergeistigung* seems to be the endowing, from “higher up” (ultimately by “spirit”), of bodily material factors with the meaning-character of *sense*—places that operation of “*Vergeistigung*” right “at the bottom” of the temporalized sense of the senses.⁸⁵ Here the *Vergeistigung*—and its material (“hyletic”) character—seem *indigenous to temporalization* as such from the very beginning.

This, however, in turn means that in the C-Manuscript studies the metaphysical distinction, and any absolute dichotomy, between *Natur* and *Geist* is *undercut* right at the core of the phenomenology of *Sinn* in *Urzeitigung*, in the very play and interplay that makes perception to be of natural reality in horizontalities of the world. Indeed, this undercutting is shown further by other texts of the C-Manuscripts—again, something space does not us to into here.⁸⁶

To draw to a close, then, I am offering here a set of considerations that show Husserl’s investigational project, both in the manuscripts and in his own published writings, to be *intrinsically*, and not simply by accidents of individual human foibles, to require reconsidering and reinterpretation. *Ideen I* is noteworthy as calling for just that. It is thus inescapably preliminary and non-final precisely in its achievements; for therein *Ideen I* gives us the first-stage results that enable return to beginnings so that we may reach for the ultimates to which it offers the opening.

⁸⁵ See, for example, Hua IV, §56 h, 236–41. There the terms are *beseelen* and *begeistern* (the latter quite distinct from *begeistern*, which means “to fill with delight or enthusiasm”).

⁸⁶ See for example, Hua Mat VIII, Text Nr. 23, 111–12, also important in my 2009 Husserl Circle paper. (See note 54 above.)

Chapter 16

Emmanuel Levinas and a Soliloquy of Light and Reason

Nicolas de Warren

C'est sans doute Husserl qui est à l'origine de mes écrits.

—Levinas

Introduction

As with others, Emmanuel Levinas was drawn to Freiburg—"the city of phenomenology, small, tidy, and pretty"—in 1928, at the age of 22, by the spell of discovering "more than a new theory," but a "new ideal for life, a new page in history, almost a new religion."¹ Amidst a parting of ways between Husserl and Heidegger, Levinas began to fashion an original form of thinking that, despite evident markers of its genesis, phenomenological and otherwise, appears to have alighted from nowhere. As Levinas repeatedly stressed in his writings on Husserl and Heidegger, the phenomenological movement provoked an unparalleled *liberation* of thinking, the significance and direction of which still remained open. Levinas was not alone in reacting to phenomenology with such a heightened sense of promise.² Nor was he alone in defining his own philosophical Odyssey as an over-coming and radicalization of phenomenology, as revealing its inherent limitations while also fulfilling its

¹ Emmanuel Levinas, "Fribourg, Husserl et la phénoménologie," *Revue d'Allemagne et des pays de langue allemande* 5/43 (May 1931): 403.

² Edith Stein: "I was twenty-one and all excited over everything that was going to happen to me. Dear old Göttingen! I think only people who were between 1905 and 1914, in the brief flowering of the Göttingen School of phenomenology, can appreciate what that name contains for us." Quoted in Alasdair Macintyre, *Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue, 1913–1922* (Rowman and Littlefield: London, 2005), 20.

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inner meaning. Years before Levinas reached Freiburg, the earliest gathering of students around Husserl in Göttingen (Reinach, Hering, Conrad-Martius, Stein) were infused with a comparable vitality in reaction to the *Logische Untersuchungen*. In Levinas's case, however, assessing the significance of Husserlian phenomenology for the formation of his thinking is not as easily spelled out, as it does not take its bearings from familiar points of reference, such as the question of realism and idealism, much debated among Husserl's Göttingen students, for example. Indeed, it should ring strange to our ears, in light of which we might smile approvingly without genuine conviction, to read Levinas's Freiburg testimonial. Who today could speak of Husserl's phenomenological thinking as more than a theory, as opening nothing less than a "new ideal for life, a new page in history, almost a new religion"?

Levinas's engagement with Husserl can be plotted along two axes. Along a first axis, Levinas was an unsurpassed interpreter of Husserl: he published a thesis on Husserl's conception of intuition; wrote a lengthy review of the *Ideen*; co-translated the *Méditations cartésiennes*; and authored articles on significant themes in Husserl's thinking.³ These writings cover a broad spectrum of genres: academic dissertation and monograph; review essay; introductory survey; translation; and interpretative essay. Along a second axis, Levinas integrated basic impulses within phenomenology, often in transfigured form, into the fabric of his mature thinking. Against the simplistic view that Levinas progressively abandoned interest in Husserlian phenomenology, Levinas in fact penned some of his most original essays on Husserl while finishing his first major work, *Totalité et Infini* —a work in gestation since at least the 1940s. In writings on the first axis, Levinas reads Husserl in the manner of critical exposition; and yet, one already discerns the lineaments of Levinas's own nascent thinking *within* these texts explicitly dedicated to readings of Husserl. In writings on the second axis, one routinely discovers indices of a profound and patient absorption of Husserlian themes.⁴ Perhaps most significantly, Levinas incorporates the Husserlian imperative "back to the things themselves" in his uncompromising recourse to the irreducible experience of the Other, understood, however, in decidedly "non-phenomenological" terms, that is, without recourse to light and reason. The face of the Other does not present any evidence of the Other's presence, but on the contrary, for Levinas, offers the plentitude of an absence that I am called to witness, and to which I am beholden, held hostage. Taken together, these two axes orchestrate an exposition *and* exposure of Husserl's thinking: a masterful exposition from the inside and a challenging exposure to an outside.

This dual manner of exposition and exposure was present from the beginning of Levinas's engagement with Husserl. Levinas's review of Husserl's *Ideen* represents his first philosophical publication, appearing one year prior to the 1930 publication of his thesis, *Théorie de l'intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl*.⁵ At first

³ Throughout this paper, I shall refer to *Ideen I* simply as "*Ideen*."

⁴ Cf. Yasuhiko Murakami, *Lévinas phénoménologue* (Jérôme Millon: Grenoble, 2002).

⁵ "Sur les 'Ideen' de M. E. Husserl," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'Etranger* CVII/3–4 (March–April, 1929): 230–65; hereafter HI.

glance, Levinas's review appears philosophically unremarkable, as we might expect of the due diligence required of a book review in which the work, and not the reviewer himself, is the primary subject of consideration. In Adriaan Peperzak's estimation, "a survey of his [Levinas's] own evolution with regard to Husserl can start from Levinas's dissertation," and so forgo a treatment of Levinas's review of the *Ideen*, since the latter is merely deemed "a faithful exposition without any criticism."⁶ While Levinas indeed "faithfully" presents the structure and argument of the *Ideen* to his French-speaking audience (Paul Ricoeur's translation of the *Ideen* would only appear in 1950), traces of a more profound germination of thought are nonetheless discernible, appearing as protentional contours, as it were, hinting towards central pre-occupations of Levinas's thinking to come. In Levinas's review, subtle inflections that would have appeared insignificant at the time of publication come to appear, in hindsight, from the vantage point of Levinas's mature thinking, as foreshadowing it. More significantly, Levinas's entry into philosophical visibility *via* a review of the *Ideen* (irrespective of its modesty as a "faithful" piece) can be seen as symbolic of the significance of Husserlian phenomenology for his thinking in general, and of the *Ideen* in particular.

Despite its austere framework, daunting vocabulary, and demanding opening section, Levinas insists that the *Ideen* does not contain a finished system of thought. On the contrary, the *Ideen* presents an emerging constellation into which we are asked to enter; it constitutes an *invitation* to think. Within this newly forged constellation, traditional philosophical questions are posed anew and approached from fresh perspectives with the over-arching intent of rendering them "susceptible to solution" (HI, 231). Under the call "back to things themselves," phenomenological analysis is not justly a method of descriptive analysis or an innovative manner of re-stating traditional philosophical questions. More stridently, Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is committed to the idea that man can only meaningfully pose problems that man himself can solve. Without, however, disregarding paradox and complexity as they arise, without, in other words, a self-directed critical impulse, Husserl's thinking manifests a confidence in rationality, and thus responds to the deepest motivations for philosophical thinking, which, in its original Platonic form, can be characterized as the liberation of human existence from naiveté through the awakening of reason and its radical pursuit of insight. This fulfillment of the "secret desire of Western philosophy," as Husserl characterized the meaning of the *Ideen*, would resonate profoundly in Levinas's thinking, and yet would ultimately be revealed by Levinas as possessing an ambiguous meaning: the violence of light. As I shall presently argue, Husserl's *Ideen* delivers to Levinas a paradigmatic conception of the identity of reason and being that comes to steer his critique of totality and ontology, while at the same time signaling an horizon "otherwise than essence and beyond being" on the contours of Husserl's own conception of transcendental subjectivity. Husserl's *Ideen* exposes in a historically definitive fashion the truth of

⁶ Adriaan Peperzak, *Beyond: The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1997), 39.

idealism: “Reason is alone. And in this sense knowledge never encounters anything truly other in the world.”⁷ Any account of the evolution of Levinas’s thinking must thus begin with Levinas’s review of Husserl’s *Ideen*, not despite its philosophical modesty, but precisely because of it—as I hope to demonstrate in this essay.

The Transcendental Turn of the *Ideen*

The first volume of the *Ideen* (1913) represented a contentious turning point in the development of Husserl’s phenomenological thinking. Among a number of Husserl’s students, the *Ideen*’s transcendental turn was judged as betraying the gains of the *Logische Untersuchungen* and as succumbing to the institutional sway of Neo-Kantianism. As Edith Stein recalled: “The main reason the *Logische Untersuchungen* had made such an impact was that they seemed to mark a radical break with critical idealism, both of the Kantian and neo-Kantian types … In *Ideen*, however, a number of expressions cropped up which seemed to indicate a reversion to idealism on the part of the author. Nothing he [Husserl] said to us by way of explanation was able to allay our suspicions … His old Göttingen students could not support him in this move, to his regret and theirs.”⁸ While Paul Natorp welcomed the transcendental aspiration of the *Ideen* into the ranks of Neo-Kantianism, Heidegger submitted its key theses to scrutiny in his Marburg lecture courses, reserving his most strident critique for the Master’s dogmatic commitment to the primacy of theoretical knowledge and scientific certitude.

Although removed from the first generations of Husserl’s students, Levinas’s framing of the *Ideen* shares, in an important sense, the primacy of ontological concerns that defined the enthusiastic reception of the *Logische Untersuchungen* among Lask, Heidegger and Husserl’s Göttingen followers. As Conrad-Martius notes: the “newly-won insight into the intellectual attainability of Being in all of its possible configurations united us.”⁹ Edith Stein equally considered the liberating effect of Husserl’s *Logische Untersuchungen* in terms of its rehabilitation of ontology (along with implied religious significance), encoded (and perhaps garbled, as Heidegger perceptively charged) in the language of realism. Husserl’s *Logische Untersuchungen* facilitated the return of the “real” and “concreteness” into philosophical reflection against the orthodoxy of Kantian idealism. In surveying these expressions of enthusiasm for Husserl’s breakthrough work, notable is the refrain of the experience of *liberation*—understood as the liberation from abstraction and concepts—and the dawn of a new horizon of thinking based on intuition. This vein of interpretation

⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. R. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), 68.

⁸ Quoted in Alasdair Macintyre, *Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue, 1913–1922* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 18.

⁹ Quoted in Alasdair Macintyre, *Edith Stein: A Philosophical Prologue*, 15.

surfaces prominently in Levinas's thesis, with the Heideggerian qualification that Husserl's commitment to the primacy of theory forfeits the genuine meaning of this liberation of "being": the "objective" intentionality of knowledge, exemplified in perceptual consciousness, constricts the manifestation of beings to the demand of certitude and complete self-presence.

I am here not so much concerned in critically assessing whether Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, and, in particular, the ontologically charged Sixth Investigation, does address, even in missing it, as Heidegger provocatively claimed, "the problem of being." In drawing attention to this ontological promise of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, my point instead is to draw attention to a crucial difference between Levinas's reaction to Husserl's *Ideen* and his fellow phenomenological enthusiasts, one that is crucial for a proper assessment of his assessment of the *Ideen*. From the vantage point of Husserl's Göttingen students, (but also from Heidegger's, for different reasons), a principal fault with the transcendental turn of the *Ideen* consisted in its embrace of idealism. Seen in this manner, the idealism of the *Ideen* represents a reversal of the primacy of ontology heralded in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Levinas does share this common and critical perception of the *Ideen* as representing a form of idealism; and yet, whereas Husserl's Göttingen students unambiguously perceived this transgression of the ontological orientation of the *Logische Untersuchungen* as a reversal, Levinas discerns a more subtle meaning that forecloses any return to the so-called ontological realism of the *Logische Untersuchungen* (as advocated by Husserl's Göttingen students and the Munich School). Quietly whispered in his review of the *Ideen*, and more explicitly formulated in his later essay "Intentionality and Sensation," the other truth, as it were, of Husserl's transcendental idealism consists in its supreme effort to pry open a space of thinking "beyond essence and otherwise than being."¹⁰ This, we might say, is the true secret of transcendental idealism: it heralds the possibility of a fundamental *rupture* with the primacy of ontology and the Parmenidean identity of thinking and being.

Whatever the merits of the passionate reactions provoked by the *Ideen*, it is clear that Husserl considered the transcendental expansion of phenomenology as a necessary consequence to the breakthrough of the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Throughout his life, Husserl continually insisted on the centrality of transcendental idealism for his phenomenological enterprise, even if its precise contours and exact content remained in need of systematic realization and refinement. This untiring commitment to *transcendental* phenomenology did not preclude an innovative exploration of the meaning and challenge of transcendental idealism. On the contrary, Husserl's writings contain a wide variety of transcendental argumentation, from formal proofs to the sophisticated methodological centerpiece of the phenomenological and transcendental reductions. More importantly, Husserl conceived of the *Ideen* as an introduction to philosophy *as such*, on the basis of his robust identification of transcendental idealism with the only possible rigorous form of philosophical thinking.

¹⁰Cf. "Intentionalité et sensation," in *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger* (Paris: Vrin, 1988), 145–164.

In its phenomenological identity, transcendental idealism represents nothing less than the fulfillment of the historical *telos* of rationality, although, in truth, the full scope of Husserl's historical conception of Western reason would only find its mature expression in his later writings. As evident from the reactions it produced, and still produces, the *Ideen* represents a philosophical provocation: genuine philosophy is only possible as transcendental phenomenology.

The centrality of the problem of reason pervades Husserl's thinking from the *Logische Untersuchungen* through the *Ideen* to the *Krisis*. As Husserl writes in the *Krisis*: "Thus philosophy is nothing other than rationalism through and through, but it is a rationalism differentiated within itself according to the different stages of the movement of intention and fulfillment; it is *ratio in the constant movement of self-elucidation (Selbsterhellung)* begun with the first breakthrough of philosophy into mankind, whose innate reason was previously in a state of concealment (*Verschlossenheit*), of nocturnal obscurity" (Hua VI, 273). Husserl's thinking exhibits in its own internal progression this dynamic of reason's progressive self-illumination and self-discovery.¹¹ One might even characterize the development from the *Logische Untersuchungen* to the *Ideen* as recapitulating the historical development (mapped by Husserl in his lecture course *Erste Philosophie*) from the original Greek *Durchbruch* of the idea of philosophy in Plato to the *Einbruch* of the transcendental attitude in Descartes, and as further developed in Kant. The *Logische Untersuchungen*, famously: *ein Werk des Durchbruchs*. The *Ideen*, controversially: *ein Werk des Einbruchs*—one could add. Even if the *Logische Untersuchungen* lacks the transcendental framework of the *Ideen* (noetic-noematic conception of intentionality, the method of reduction, transcendental subjectivity, etc.), its ambition to provide a fundamental clarification of knowledge is equally motivated by the urgency of articulating the meaning of rationality and the rationality of meaning against various deflations of reason: logicism, psychologism, evolution, etc.¹² Although it would be too narrow to ascribe a response to the problem of skepticism as the primary motivation for Husserl's transcendental enterprise *as a whole* (different currents within his enterprise respond to different motivations), when writ large as a moniker for the broader problem of reason (i.e., not simply the intelligibility of the world but what we might dub the intelligibility of intelligibility), then, indeed, since its Platonic origin, the scandal of philosophy consists in the inability to respond conclusively to the "immorality of skepticism" (Hua VII, 57). In other words: the inability to articulate the rationality of the real, or alternatively formulated, the intelligibility of human experience, as rendered transparent through thinking (about) itself. In his own manner, Husserl's transcendental phenomenology encapsulates the Hegelian formula: the real is the rational, the rational is the real—a formula echoed in the final Part of the *Ideen*, "Vernunft und Wirklichkeit," albeit, in a decidedly un-Hegelian register.

¹¹ Cf. André de Muralt, *The Idea of Phenomenology: Husserlian Exemplarism*, trans. G. Breckon (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

¹² Cf. James Dodd, *Crisis and Reflection* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004).

The Problem of Reason

This centrality of the problem of reason is apparent from the first Part of the *Ideen*, “Wesen und Wesenserkenntnis.” Although Levinas provides a thumbnail sketch of this opening section in his review essay, it is nonetheless embroidered with suggestive inflections. For Husserl, a scientific discipline is defined as a body of eidetic knowledge, whereby an essence, or *eidos*, is understood as an ensemble of predicates belonging to a particular kind of object. As Levinas notes, eidetic structures (or groups of eidetic predicates) are not contingent features of an object. By way of eidetic variation, Husserl describes a method for arriving at the knowledge of essences, which operates in every scientific discipline. As Levinas remarks, an individual object is indispensable for the intuition of an essence, yet such an intuition, or *Wesensschau*, is not merely the apprehension of an individual.

Important for Levinas is here the enlargement of intuition implicated by the theory of eidetics, and which Husserl first proposed in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. The knowledge of individual objects (“perceptual experience”) as well as the intuition of essences is a “vision,” or seeing, in which the object is not merely intended or signified, but *given* with evidence, as its own evidence, as itself, clearly and distinctly. As Levinas remarks, this “extension of the concept of intuition in the sphere of essences and categorical forms allows Husserl to see in intuition the essential moment of true knowledge” (HI, 234). In this manner, knowledge aims at truth, and truth is a matter of vision and light. Levinas draws from Husserl’s theory of intuition the lesson that “truth depends on its object”—yet, this does not imply, as he is quick to note, and clearly with an eye towards Husserl’s Göttingen students, a “realistic metaphysics” (HI, 235).

Levinas marks a fine line between a “realistic metaphysics” and a traditional form of idealism in arguing that Husserl’s theory of eidetics commits him to neither. On the one hand, the theory of eidetics contains a critique of the critical idealism prevalent among Husserl’s contemporaries, for example, in Rickert. As Husserl develops in his 1927 *Natur und Geist* lectures against Rickert, a theory of eidetics short-circuits the Kantian problem of a transcendental deduction or, in other words, the problem of how *a priori* formal concepts are justifiably applicable to a manifold of sensations *external* to the space of reasons.¹³ On the basis of his theory of eidetics, Husserl rejects a “constructivist” program of idealism, as with Rickert’s method of *Begriffsbildung*, and as still widely present today in different forms and guises.

On the other hand, the anchoring of a theory of eidetics in Husserl’s theory of intuition attempts to balance (albeit unsuccessfully, as Levinas argues at length in *Théorie de l’intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl*) an openness of knowledge (consciousness as primarily an epistemological relation to beings) to evidence, to objects in their “self-givenness,” while at the same time rejecting the mute existence of the object of knowledge as independent of consciousness. Although here is

¹³Cf. Andrea Staiti, *Geistigkeit, Leben und geschichtliche Welt in der Transzendentalphänomenologie Husserls* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2010), Chapter 1.

not the place to fully explore this decisive claim, Husserl's notion of intuition does not revert to a classical notion of intellectual intuition. Nor is Husserl's *eidos* a Platonic idea or an Aristotelian essence. Husserl's concept of intuition indicates a radical openness of consciousness to the alterity of *evidence*, of the object as itself-given. In defining knowledge as targeting truth, knowledge targets its objects as "other than consciousness," as transcendent, in the form of a face-to-face encounter. As Husserl writes: "Evidenz ist ein einem allerweitesten Sinne eine Erfahrung von Seiendem und So-Seiendem, eben ein *Es-selbst-geistig-zu-Gesicht-Bekommen*" (my emphasis, CM, § 5)—a characterization of evidence to which I shall return. For Levinas, the immediate consequence of Husserl's theory of intuition and eidetics, in the *Ideen*, consists in the view that rationalism and empiricism are reconciled; knowledge has its source in experience, yet experience, as intuition, is "self-givenness" of the object itself.

As Levinas further presents, this notion of eidetic sciences and *Wesensschau* frames Husserl's formulation of a theory of regional ontologies. Different regions of being are circumscribed by different structure of givenness, thus defining different kinds of objectivities; each region of being (life, culture, etc.) refers to a possible eidetic science (biology, etc.), and thus to a specific form of objectivity, or domain of possible experience. In addition to such material ontologies, Husserl identifies the idea of a formal ontology, since each regional science, while referring to a particular materiality (animality, etc.), is also structured by formal concepts, such as "object in general." Formal ontology deals with structural features and predicates belonging to all possible regional ontologies. Significant for Levinas is that regional ontologies are determined through material essences, and not just in terms of formal ontology. Material ontologies are thus correlated to an *a priori*, synthetic materiality of knowledge, such that, contra Kant and his epigones, there are as many categories of the understanding as there are regions of being. The categories of the understanding cannot be derived from a single principle (self-consciousness for German Idealism) or simply reflect formal concepts aligned with different forms of judgment (as for Kant). As Levinas observes: "The field of a priori synthetic knowledge is thus extremely extended thanks to this novel conception of apriori knowledge, which, for its part, is identified with the intuition of material and formal essences" (HI, 238). As Mikel Dufrenne argued in *La Notion de l'A Priori*, the material *a priori* represents one of Husserl's most significant philosophical innovations.¹⁴

As Levinas quietly suggests, Husserl's theory of eidetics can be seen as re-casting the problem of the many senses of being. Different regions of being are structured by different eidetic structures; there are as many scientific disciplines as there are regions of being. These different (material) regions of being define the totality of human experience and knowledge. Additionally, considerations of formal ontology close, as it were, the rationality of the real. As Levinas notes, the task of exploring regional ontologies from a phenomenological standpoint became the endeavor of

¹⁴ Cf. Mikel Dufrenne, *The Notion of the A Priori*, trans. E. Casey (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966).

Husserl's students (with many of these studies appearing in Husserl's *Jahrbuch*). However, "the phenomenology in the form sought after by Husserl is something else," for phenomenology is neither defined by a particular regional ontology nor identified with formal ontology, nor even concerned with the question of being—contra Heidegger's loud complaint. Instead, the genuine aim of phenomenological reflection resides with providing an "absolute foundation for the sciences" or, in other words, a foundation for *ontic sciences*—but this involves, as Levinas comes to understand, the radical possibility of a *break and distance* from beings, from an attachment and directedness towards beings, but not, however, in the direction proposed by Heidegger towards the "hiddenness" of being. In the *Ideen*, this challenge consists in questioning the intelligibility of beings in their many senses of givenness, without, however, appealing to any given region of being. In this manner, transcendental phenomenology aspires to achieve a transcendental status as a universal science, where the meanings of "transcendental" and "science" become mutually transfigured.¹⁵

The Passage to Phenomenology

As Levinas presents, phenomenology, as a new science of foundation, takes consciousness, to which objects are given, as its principal theme of investigation. This turn away from beings (objects of consciousness) to consciousness itself requires an act of self-reflection and a distancing, or bracketing, of any assumptions regarding the existence of objectivities. Stated with greater precision, phenomenology investigates descriptively the structured manners in which objects of experience are at all possibly given to consciousness. In this fashion, as Levinas observes, phenomenology innovatively reformulates "the great philosophical problem concerning the sense of transcendence" of objects (HI, 240). Levinas speaks here of "the sense of transcendence," not "the sense of being," nor "reality" or "existence," and thus grasps the genuine intention of Husserl's thinking in recognizing Husserl's focus on the problem of transcendence. As Levinas further specifies, to question the sense of how objects are given to consciousness, the sense of their objectivity as their transcendence, *is at the same time* to question the meaning of existence as such, but to do so counter-intuitively in disregarding "existence" in favor attending to *how* such objects are at all manifest, or given, as transcendent.

This "passage to phenomenology in the Husserlian sense of the term" requires what Husserl dubbed the suspension of the natural attitude and the reduction to transcendental consciousness (HI, 239). As Levinas proposes, the reduction is "*une violence que se fait l'homme*" in order to discover "man" (i.e., subjectivity) as *pure*

¹⁵ It would be an intriguing exercise to read Levinas's assessment of the *Ideen* in tandem with Husserl and Heidegger's joint attempts to arrive at common ground in their unsuccessful *Encyclopedie Britannica* article.

*thinking.*¹⁶ This unusual depiction of the phenomenological reduction contains two mutually enhancing expressions: violence and pure thinking. This “violence” of which Levinas speaks is to some degree anticipated by Husserl himself in the *Ideen* with his characterization of the suspension of the natural attitude as figuratively tantamount to a “destruction of the world.” Even if Husserl would later regret this sharp formulation, the salient point for Levinas consists in the thought that the suspension institutes a fracture with our naïve attachment and directedness towards beings. With this fracture, a space of reflection is opened in which, according to Levinas, transcendental subjectivity is discovered and illuminated as both origin and as pure thinking.

With the natural attitude, Husserl fashions one of his most fecund ideas, the aim of which is to describe the extent to which ordinary experience, but also the natural sciences and, indeed, the full spectrum of ontic scientific disciplines, are determined by a transcendental naiveté with regard to the possibility of experience. The natural attitude is properly speaking not a psychological state or disposition, but an unspoken assumption and framing, a primordial belief, or *doxa*, in the existence of the world. It designates, in other words, a pervasive condition of *unthinking* in the sense of an unquestioned acceptance of the givenness of the world. In this regard, for Levinas, the dual operation of suspension and reduction rekindles and realigns—indeed: re-invents—the meaning of philosophical questioning itself. This phenomenological renaissance of questioning represents a liberation of thinking from the world, not in any practical or political sense, but theoretically, in opening a critical distance from unreflective, “natural,” attachments to the world. The suspension of the natural world sets into motion a movement of detachment, not for the purpose of an escape towards a world beyond, but on the contrary, as a means of encountering the world anew from the disinterested perspective of thinking, from the standpoint of reason, in the pursuit of fundamental clarity.

The reduction represents a neutralization, not rejection or refusal, in the specific sense that the world is no longer taken for granted when placed under the demand for transcendental clarification. Importantly, this self-reflective distancing from the world does not amount to the discovery of negativity—and thus the first motion of spirit’s progressive self-realization, nor, as with Descartes, the irruption of a doubt, or skepticism. As Husserl developed in the *Ideen*, the suspension is a *modification or neutralization*, a “putting out of play,” of the general thesis of existence. In Husserl’s thinking, the radicality of reason is manifest through this change of attitude; transforming our unthinking comportment towards the world, predicated on the naive acceptance of the world, into an attitude that seeks above all fundamental clarification. In this respect, Husserl remains “Cartesian” and “Platonist,” remains true, in other words, to the legacy of metaphysics: the radicality of reason consists in the capacity to take exception from the world and to rupture the pervasive *theoretical* naiveté of human existence. This violence against

¹⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, “L’oeuvre de Edmund Husserl,” in *En découvrant l’existence avec Husserl et Heidegger* (Paris: Vrin, 1988), 7–51; 35; hereafter OH.

captivity to a condition of “unthinking” is motivated by the interest of knowledge and directed by a demand for evidence. The violence of the reduction is the violence of light itself.

Husserl never explored the implicit ethics of knowledge that underlies the method of suspension and its guiding problem of transcendental constitution, even if he did struggle with the question of what motivates the transcendental reduction. In the *Ideen*, Husserl refers opaquely to a “will to knowledge” in bluntly stating that the suspension and reduction are expressions of a theoretical freedom, otherwise left unspecified. Along with this question of motivation, the reduction cannot be understood without attending to the problem of transcendental constitution. The suspension clears the ground, as it were, for the implementation of the reduction, in its different moments, the aim of which is to uncover the basic activities, in their passive and active synthetic forms, of transcendental constitution. I will not here engage in the complex question of exactly what constitution means for Husserl—a topic that has been treated elsewhere, and yet remains in need of further understanding, as it defines the philosophical core of Husserl’s thinking. For my immediate purpose, and briefly stated, the reduction opens a field of transcendental experience, by which Husserl understands, the *a priori* correlation of noetic acts and noematic objects. In slackening the bonds of intentionality, as Levinas once elegantly stated, in order to render them descriptively available for investigation, the reduction also displaces the primacy of the question “what is x?” In this manner, the suspension of the natural attitude can be seen as a neutralization of the primacy of an ontological form of questioning in favor of a genuinely *transcendental* question of constitution (i.e., questions of givenness).

Along with this displacement, the reduction also functions as the means for the self-illumination and self-discovery of transcendental subjectivity. In the form of transcendental reflection (not to be confused with psychological reflection or introspection), the reduction is performative of transcendental subjectivity itself. As with the critical self-definition of reason in Kant’s *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, transcendental subjectivity is in the *Ideen* the object as well as the agent, or subject, of phenomenological critique: the reduction is performed *by* transcendental subjectivity as well as performed *on* transcendental subjectivity. A vexing problem emerges from this reflective structure of investigation, namely, the apparent circularity of constitutional analysis—but whether this circularity is vicious or not I shall leave here in suspense.

For my present concerns, it is because the question of givenness necessarily implicates a consciousness to whom something is given that the reduction is a performative activity of transcendental subjectivity, part and parcel of a reflection in which subjectivity comes to see itself in its own power of transcendental constitution. And it is precisely because transcendental subjectivity is the agent that constitutes the sense of the world that this very same subjectivity can (and must, for Husserl) exercise responsibility for its own activity of constitution. In this regard, the reduction is the exercise of a transcendental freedom, understood primarily as a *responsibility* of subjectivity for its own transcendental activity of constitution. Importantly, transcendental reflection does not *create* its object of reflection.

It discloses its object—its own activity of constitution as structured in intentionality—in bringing itself to (its own) light. Transcendental reflection discloses what has already been performed, and through phenomenological analysis, thus becomes re-activated; it represents a kind of transcendental *anamnesis* of the forgetfulness of an (its own) original constitution.

Transcendental Subjectivity

According to Levinas, the suspension of the general thesis of the natural attitude is radical in two related senses: it is universal in suspending the general thesis of the natural attitude; it leads to an origin in the sense of an absolute: transcendental subjectivity is absolute because it is essentially *pure thinking*. The first sense of relativity provides the center of gravity for the operation of the reduction and its *terminus ad quem*, the uncovering of absolute subjectivity (defined essentially as “consciousness”). Objects of experience are questioned as relative to consciousness in terms of their respective manners of givenness. This discovery of the relativity of experience to absolute consciousness does not, however, amputate the world from consciousness, but, on the contrary, discovers the irreducible and primary *a priori* correlation of consciousness and objectivity.

In his review, Levinas repeatedly underlines that intentionality is not a relation among separately existing dimensions (mind and world), but a “primordial phenomenon.” The aim of phenomenological reflection is to provide descriptive analyses of how sensible givens (hyletic data) are animated by intentional acts in view of object so as to constitute an object as a unity and an identity (HI, 253). Levinas here speaks of the object of consciousness, constituted in intentionality, as “*un existant, comme connu avec raison*” (HI, 253). This emphasis on “known with reason” signals the primacy of theoretical knowledge that shapes Husserl’s conception of intentionality (as paradigmatically perceptual and objectifying). With the noetic-noematic correlation, “the investigation of consciousness allows us to apprehend the manner of being of each category of objects in consciousness, and thus, allow us to investigate the sense of the existence of things” (HI, 255). Within this field of research, Husserl distinguishes between immanent and transcendent perception. In transcendent perception, the object is given inadequately, whereas in immanent perception, the object is adequately given. Even though Levinas notes Husserl’s divergence from Descartes, he nonetheless considers Husserl beholden to a Cartesian privilege of the knowing subject or, more accurately stated, the self-knowing subject, since Levinas stresses the passage from inadequate to adequate perception as the passage through the reduction to the field of transcendental subjectivity and its adequate self-illumination.

The accomplishment of the reduction illuminates the relativity of the world in both senses: if objects of experience are objects *for* consciousness, the reduction thus opens the way for an investigation of distinctive styles of givenness as revealed in the field of transcendental experience. This field of pure consciousness is, in turn,

itself adequately given to phenomenological reflection, as distinguished from the inadequate manner of perceptual givenness. For Levinas, both of these senses of relativity reflect the “primacy of theoretical knowledge” that motivates the reduction. Levinas here most clearly adopts and endorses Heidegger’s critique: the determination of consciousness through immanent perception reflects Husserl’s commitment to the privilege of theoretical (self)-knowledge. As Heidegger would have it, Husserl’s conception of transcendental subjectivity is over-determined by a care for knowledge.¹⁷

In addition to this critical posture towards the theoretical over-determination of the reduction, Levinas proposes a second, contrasting reading of the reduction as an “inner revolution rather than a search for certitude” (OH, 38), the axis of which turns on the freedom of consciousness; as Levinas further specifies: “the freedom of consciousness is defined precisely by the situation of evidence” (OH, 38). The radicality of reason consists in the demand for evidence, for the showing of things themselves. As Levinas critically investigated in his study of Husserl’s theory of intuition, evidence, for Husserl, is not a psychological quality or feeling, nor a naive acceptance of the brute givenness of things (i.e., the myth of the given). Evidence, robustly understood and concretely experienced, that is, *meaningfully* experienced, is the fulfillment of an empty intentionality. In this regard, the Husserlian thesis of consciousness as intentionality is not simply to be phrased as the claim that “consciousness is the consciousness of an object,” but more emphatically, as the claim that, dynamically structured in empty and fulfilled intentions, consciousness is open to the transcendence of evidence, of objects as presented to consciousness “in flesh and blood.”

It is in this sense that we are to understand Levinas’s contention that the reduction, as the disclosing of the situation of consciousness in the face of evidence, represents a “liberation of human beings from the world.” This liberation is not a denial or negation of the world; it is the recognition—and the value placed on this recognition—of the relativity of experience to evidence. This relativity of experience is not the superficial sense of things changing, but the recognition of how the inadequacy of perceptual experience (a perceptual object as given through adumbrations, etc.) motivates the pursuit of evidence (i.e., adequation or pure thinking, “intellecction,” given that both expressions appear synonymous for Levinas). If we turn directly to Husserl’s meticulous descriptions of perceptual experience in his lectures on passive synthesis, for example, the perceptual object is characterized as “calling” to be turned, to be seen, etc. It belongs to the movement of perceptual experience to pursue what is seen through the further unfolding of seeing itself; it belongs, in other words, to the nature of perceptual experience to be *curious* in wanting to see (to know) (more).

There is yet another significant aspect to Levinas’s portrait of the reduction as the openness of consciousness to evidence. As a counterpart to this stress on evidence as a moment of liberation from naïve acceptance of the world, the reduction also

¹⁷ Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, trans. D. Dahlstrom (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

represents the liberation of transcendental subjectivity from attachment to beings and ontological determinations. As is well known, Husserl took Natorp to task in the *Logische Untersuchungen* for his acceptance of a pure ego; namely, the view that, along the lines of Kant's transcendental apperception, the pure ego is the subject or bearer of experiences, or mental representations. In the *Ideen*, in avowing, on the one hand, that this earlier rejection of the pure ego in the *Logische Untersuchungen* was pre-mature, Husserl, on the other hand, still retains a critical distance from Natorp's notion of pure ego as well as the original Kantian conception of transcendental apperception. As Levinas argues, when situated within the methodological operation of the reduction, the pure ego in the *Ideen* does not represent the re-introduction of an underlying subject as the bearer of mental states. As Levinas stresses, transcendental subjectivity cannot be grasped as a being or as an entity—as something existing or substantial—thus further radicalizing Kant's critique of rational psychology in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. As proposed by Husserl, the pure ego (or transcendental subject/subjectivity)—Levinas appears to take these terms as synonymous) is, *pace* Levinas, “a manner of experiencing or living intentional relations” (OH, 40).

In the context of transcendental phenomenology, and as Husserl himself was at pains to understand completely, “this manner of living” (or “transcendental experience”) cannot be thought in a constituted, objectified manner, as formally isometric with its constituted objectivities. Transcendental subjectivity, as a constitutional activity, or “living,” is not to be confused with the psychological mind or other naturalized conception. If the reduction aims to uncover absolute consciousness, this absolute is in turn not characterized as “being.” In Husserl’s writings, this obscure status of transcendental subjectivity played itself out on the conceptual terrain of the self-constituting form of absolute consciousness and its paradoxical condition as both constituted and constituting—problems whose center of gravity are located in the issue of inner time-consciousness.

As Levinas notes in his review, inner time-consciousness contains the “veritable secret itself of subjectivity,” as it holds the key to understanding the absence of any subject, or ego, behind the flux of time, and thus the genuine meaning of consciousness as absolute *in a transcendental meaning*. Transcendental subjectivity is constituted within the flow of constituted temporality and itself constitutes this flow without, however, collapsing, as it were, entirely into the flow of constituted intentionalities, including its own self-objectified manner of being. Notoriously, however, as Husserl indicates in §81 of the *Ideen*, this fundamental dimension of inner time-consciousness is omitted from the scope of the *Ideen*, thus indicating that the absolute status of transcendental subjectivity, as discovered by the reduction *within* the purview of the *Ideen*, remains fundamentally incomplete. The *Ideen* has not discovered the genuine absolute; the reduction has not proceeded far enough.

In the context of his review, what Levinas characterizes as the “freedom of consciousness” is expressed in Husserl’s thinking as the power of constitution or, in other words, the power of transcendental synthesis that defines the primary and irreducible manner of “living” intentional relations. The freedom of consciousness resides in its capacity of *Sinngebung*. Transcendental subjectivity is not itself “of the world” in the

sense of an entity or being, something itself constituted; it is an *origin* in the sense of *self-* and *other-constituting*. Thus understood, the certitude of the cogito (the “absolute” of consciousness—that which survives the reduction) is neither an axiom or first principle, nor even a foundation in any traditional sense, but an original situation, or, more precisely stated, the situation of an origin—the situation of consciousness face to face with evidence. This uncovering of transcendental subjectivity as origin requires, *pace* Levinas, an uncompromising reduction of all reference to exteriority. As Levinas writes, the reduction leads to “the situation of a mind that, instead of relating or comporting itself as a being among other beings, finds itself the moment it has neutralized all of its relations with exteriority.” In other words: “a situation in which the mind exists as a commencement, as an origin” (OH, 46).

In Levinas’s assessment, the phenomenological reduction discovers transcendental subjectivity as an origin but also as inseparably wedded to itself, as self-constituting. To be absolute, on this reading, is to be condemned, as it were, to be oneself, to only be oneself and nothing else; it is to be alone and to discover this solitude as one’s ownmost, as one’s constitutional power of solitude. Levinas identifies the discovery of transcendental subjectivity as framed and motivated by the primacy of theoretical knowledge, and thus repeatedly speaks of the reduction as the liberation of “pure thinking.” Even if Husserl did not himself baptize absolute subjectivity as “pure thinking,” Levinas must surely have in mind echoes of the Aristotelian active intellect (*noesis noeseos*). In Husserl, however, and in the specific form of transcendental subjectivity, “pure thinking” refers to the power of constitution (*Sinngebung*) in its self-temporalization.

Gadamer registers a similar proposal in his comments on the fundamental status of time-consciousness for Husserlian phenomenology. As he observes: “But clearly on this deepest level of the self-constitution of temporality, where it is a question of the primal source of the flow of the immediate present, a self-relational character that contains no distinction between what is giving and what is given (or better, what is received) must be assumed. Instead, it is a kind of mutual encompassing, as it is structurally appropriate to life—to Plato’s *autokinoun*. But the classical doctrine of the *noesis noeseos* and the doctrine of the *intellectus agens* are also confirmed here.”¹⁸

Even if Levinas recognizes the self-relation of transcendental subjectivity as involving an intentionality of a different kind from the intentionality of objects (indeed, this is one the main lessons learned by Husserl through his meticulous investigations into inner time-consciousness), he nonetheless speaks of this self-relation as an “intuition,” by which he understands primarily the Parmenidian identity of being and thinking. For, indeed, as Husserl argues in formulations of absolute time-constituting consciousness known to Levinas by way of Heidegger’s 1928 edition of the *Vorlesungen zum inneren Zeitbewußtsein*, absolute consciousness is defined by the seamless identity of being and perceiving: for absolute consciousness, *esse est percipi*.

¹⁸ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “The Phenomenological Movement,” *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 167.

On the one hand, as Derrida observes, Levinas clearly recognizes that, “Husserl so little predetermined being as object that in the *Ideen I* absolute existence is accorded only to pure consciousness.”¹⁹ This transcendental—as opposed to ontological—determination of subjectivity represents in Levinas’s eyes the promise of a radical non-metaphysical conception that has ruptured with ontology. On the other hand, Levinas objects to the recalcitrance of the subject-object correlation, as manifest in Husserl’s argument for the irreducible phenomenon of intentionality, even in the form of its own self-relation as absolute. Transcendental subjectivity is “pure thinking” to the extent that, as Levinas proposes, “what characterizes the essence of reason is thus not such and such form, such and such law of thinking or a logical category; it is a certain mode of relating to an object in which the object is given with evidence and is present ‘in person’ in front of consciousness” (HI, 260).

On this interpretation, two decisive thoughts are brought together. Levinas traces the contours of the discovery of transcendental subjectivity by way of the reduction as the discovery of freedom. This freedom, however, is thought as *sovereignty*, understood in a transcendental sense: it designates the mastery of subjectivity over beings through the constitutional power of *Sinngebung* and the responsibility of such mastery over its own power as expressed in the reduction. The dual characterization of subjectivity as origin and self-relation (or “ipseity”) forms Husserl’s thinking into an incandescent medium for a metaphysics of light in two senses: as self-relation (or identity) and as *Sinngebung*, as the source of “illumination,” understood by Levinas in a Heideggerian vein: transcendental subjectivity is the clearing (*Lichtung*) in which beings reveal themselves.

Light and Reason

The dual aspect of the inner revolution of the reduction (transcendental subjectivity and transcendence of evidence) reflects a tension within Husserlian phenomenology. As Levinas proposes, “Husserl’s idealism attempts to define the subject as origin, as the place or situation in which all things *respond* themselves” (my emphasis, OH, 46). As discussed, Levinas interprets Husserl’s conception of transcendental subjectivity as “origin of the world” situated in front of evidence. As already indicated, Husserl defines evidence as the “living presence” of an object, as given to consciousness “in flesh and blood.” As Husserl writes in *Cartesianische Meditationen*: “Evidenz ist in einem allerweitesten Sinne eine Erfahrung von Seiendem und So-Seiendem, eben ein *Es-selbst-geistig-zu-Gesicht-Bekommen*” (my emphasis, CM, §5). Evidence is, in other words, a “face to face encounter,” an encounter with an object in such a manner that this object reveals its own true face.²⁰ Levinas, for

¹⁹ Jacques Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics,” *Writings and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978), 85.

²⁰ One cannot fail to recognize the manner in which, in Levinas’s own rehabilitation of the priority of the Other, the face of the Other is not a visible form of self-showing or evidence: the Other resists the Husserlian conception of *Es-selbst-geistig-zu-Gesicht-Bekommen*.

his part, speaks here of evidence in terms of response; it is a suggestive interpolation that already indicates one of the basic trajectories of Levinas's own thinking. This shift from "showing" to "responding" is not an innocent change of terminology.

Consciousness responds to evidence; by the same token, evidence solicits forth a response from consciousness (in the lectures on passive synthesis, for example, Husserl describes objects as calling to me, etc.). A tension takes form between, on the one hand, transcendental subjectivity as an origin in the sense of its constitutional activity of *Sinngebung* and, on the other hand, transcendental subjectivity as an origin in the sense of a situation, or posture, before evidence to which the subject responds. We can here discern the outlines of a further radicalization of thought with the *inversion* of transcendental constitution that generally structures Levinas's over-coming of transcendental phenomenology. For instead of speaking of intentionality as grounded in the *constituting* sovereignty of subjectivity, Levinas will propose the notion of *counter-intentionality*, by which the constitutional privilege of subjectivity is both undermined and reversed. Rather than the (solitary) subject constituting itself, the subject becomes itself *called forth* in responding to the solicitations of the Other. Rather than respond from and for itself, the subject is itself a response to the Other—it responds *to* the Other, in the name of the Other.

Although Levinas does not spell out this guiding insight, the intentionality of evidence can be seen as an intentionality of question and answer, or response. An empty intentionality is akin to a claim or question posed to the world. In so doing, consciousness exposes—opens—itself to evidence and, likewise, implicitly accepts itself as responsible for its claim on the world. Evidence is the vulnerability of consciousness in its claim to knowledge. When one, in addition, considers the teleological dynamic that, according to Husserl, structures intentionality in its empty and fulfilled dimensions, one can further characterize consciousness as animated by a "desire to know," that is, a desire for an encounter with the object itself. An empty intention is animated by a desire for the presence of its intended object. Moreover, evidence is neither mechanically imposed from the outside nor unthinkingly accepted from inside. Our taking responsibility for evidence takes the form of speaking for it, on speaking on its behalf. We come to speak on behalf of evidence in taking responsibility for it. In taking responsibility for evidence we take responsibility for ourselves as knowing subjects. This ineliminable self-reference in responsibility marks the transcendental sovereignty of self-constitution. As Levinas writes: "The subject is absolute not because it is indubitable but the subject is indubitable because the subject always *responds* from or for itself and to itself" (OH, 47; my emphasis).

With this characterization, the circle is closed: despite Husserl's stress on evidence as the genuine mark of transcendence, his commitment to the determination of evidence as "presence" and "face-to-face encounter" reveals the profound relationship between reason and solitude, between the violence of light and constitutional sovereignty. In Levinas's construal, the solitude of pure thinking (alternatively: transcendental subjectivity in its primarily theoretical relation to beings) takes the form of a radical reduction of exteriority; the reduction is the exercise of a self-responsibility directed at oneself, not towards the Other. As Levinas further spells out: "Vision, in effect, is essentially an adequation of exteriority to interiority: exteriority is reabsorbed

in the contemplating soul, and, as an *adequate idea*, is revealed *a priori*, resulting in a *Sinngebung*.” This characterization of transcendental subjectivity, in its activity of constitution, as “responding for and from itself,” reveals the truth of transcendental idealism as a perfected soliloquy of light and reason. Platonism is fulfilled in Husserl’s *Ideen* by transcendental means, for even in the form of transcendental subjectivity, and despite its radical rupture from ontology, “the idea of light, the intelligible sun conditions all existence.”

As I have argued, Levinas considers Husserl’s *Ideen* as the perfected soliloquy of light and reason; the reduction to the absolute of a solitary transcendental subjectivity, as situated “face to face” with beings, fulfills the secret (metaphysical) desire of Western Philosophy. Yet, this soliloquy of light and reason is nonetheless perforated by “holes,” or omissions, that render its phenomenological song of reason incomplete. These two omissions define a negative space around the image of the *Ideen* that progressively defines the space of Levinas’s thinking against Husserl’s transcendental soliloquy. I have already noted Husserl’s exclusion of the “deeper layer” of absolute time-consciousness from the scope of the *Ideen*’s reduction and its exposition of absolute subjectivity in the *Ideen*. As Levinas examines in his later essay “Intentionality and Sensation,” Husserl’s analysis of inner time-consciousness harbors the thought of a non-objective intentionality that promises a path for regaining an exteriority that is not reduced to objectivity and the active, constitutional sovereignty of the solitary ego. Likewise, and as Levinas observes in the concluding paragraph of his review, the image of transcendental thinking in the *Ideen* critically excludes a full account of inter-subjectivity, on which, however, the structures of horizon are dependent. As Levinas remarks, if phenomenology aims to fulfill its ambition of investigating “the sense of the truth of being, it must over-come [*depasser*] the quasi-solipsistic attitude put in place by the phenomenological reduction and which can be called an egological reduction” (HI, 265). As with the problem of time-consciousness, Levinas discerns in the egological reduction, leading to the constitution of the Other, the promise and means of transcendental phenomenology’s own undoing from within. It would not be an over-statement to claim that this dual exclusion of time and the Other from the image of thought in the *Ideen* negatively traces a possible space of thought that Levinas would untiringly explore in his epic struggle against Western philosophy’s soliloquy of light and reason.

Chapter 17

Jan Patočka and Built Space

James Dodd

“And So I Became Heir of a ‘Tradition’”

Above and beyond the influence of any one of his books, Edmund Husserl had an important personal impact on the young Jan Patočka. The two first met in Paris, on the occasion of a series of lectures that Husserl, at the invitation of Alexandre Koyré, gave at the Sorbonne in 1929; these lectures, which were also attended by Emmanuel Levinas, were to form the textual basis for the *Cartesianische Meditationen*. At the time, Patočka was still a student, and his encounter with Husserl sparked his philosophical imagination, leading to a research visit in Freiburg that began in the dark year of 1933, after Husserl’s final retirement. In these last years before Husserl’s death in 1938, the two men developed a close philosophical relationship that, even if not as extensive, was at least comparable to that of Husserl and Eugen Fink, with whom Patočka would also develop a lifelong relationship. In 1934, Husserl asked Patočka to read his paper for the Philosophical Congress in Prague, and in 1935, Patočka was involved, as secretary of the *Cercle philosophique*, in hosting a lecture Husserl himself gave in Prague, the text of which represents an important background source for Part I of the *Krisis*.¹ The fundamental characteristics of Patočka’s philosophical sensibilities and commitments were forged in these years, as well as his interest in a wide range of questions both phenomenological and historical; above all, his thinking about the meaning of Europe received a decisive impetus that would unfold into one of the

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserliana 6, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976).

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most striking reflections on the problem in the history of twentieth century philosophy.² Yet the most important factor in Patočka's development was, in ways reminiscent of Levinas' account of the profound personal impact that Husserl had on many of his students,³ the fact that the belief in philosophy as a vocation, one tied intimately to the spiritual situation of the age, was driven home for Patočka by the inspiring figure of the aging Husserl. This finds symbolic expression in the story Patočka tells late in life (in his 1976 "Erinnerungen an Husserl") of a gift Husserl presented to him in Freiburg on Christmas 1934 of an old wooden lectern that had once been owned by T.G. Masaryk, a common influence on and fellow countryman to both men. "Ich wurde so zum Erben einer großen 'Tradition,'" Patočka recounts, "welcher ich mich nie würdig genug empfand."⁴

This relationship, both with respect to its deeply personal character as well as its formative intellectual influence on Patočka's early career, is important to keep in mind when assessing the specific influence of Husserl's 1913 *Ideen* on the development of Patočka's phenomenology. As an intimate member of Husserl's circle during his last years, Patočka experienced phenomenology as an ethos of philosophical practice; he had access to Husserl's working manuscripts, and in Eugen Fink an indispensable guide to a first introduction, not so much to the dogma of Husserlian phenomenology, as to its promise and hope. The promise of phenomenology for this circle of thinkers was to open up traditional problems anew, to rediscover in a radical fashion the existential motivations of philosophical reflection that had once and could still animate the tradition. Thus when, in the passage from his "Erinnerungen" cited above, Patočka puts the word "Tradition" in quotes, he is reflecting an attitude towards philosophy characteristic of these early years of his career, for which phenomenological philosophy was not a "tradition" in the sense of the forward movement of something established, but as something taken up *to be* established.

When we turn to Patočka's relation to the *Ideen*, we need to keep this attitude in mind, in order to understand Patočka's complicated relationship with Husserl's thought. And in fact from this perspective one could argue that the *Ideen* proves to be the most important of Husserl's published works for Patočka, an argument that becomes even stronger when we take into consideration the obvious importance of the second volume of the *Ideen*, above all with respect to the problem of the body.⁵

² For an early example of this line of thought that is contemporary to the period of his association with Husserl, see Jan Patočka, "Masaryk's and Husserl's Conception of the Spiritual Crisis of European Humanity," *Jan Patočka: Philosophy and Selected Writings*, trans. E. Kohák (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). (Translation of "Masarykovo a Husserlovo pojedí duševní krise evropského lidstva," *Kvart* 3/2 (1936): 91–102).

³ See Levinas, "The Ruin of Representation," *Discovering Existence with Husserl*, trans. Richard Cohen and Michael Smith (Evanston: Northwestern, 1998).

⁴ Patočka, "Erinnerungen an Husserl," *Jan Patočka: Texte—Dokumente—Bibliographie*, ed. L. Hagedorn and H. R. Sepp (Freiburg: Alber/Prag: Oikomenh., 1999), 282.

⁵ Here see from around 1960 "L'espace et sa problematique (Prostor a jeho problematika)," Patočka, *Qu'est-ce que la phénoménologie?*, trans. E. Abrams (Grenoble: Millon, 1988); from around 1967 "La phénoménologie du corps propre (Fenomenologie vlastního těla)," *Études phénoménologiques*, trans. E. Abrams 1 (1985): 41–63; and the 1968/69 lectures *Body, Community, Language, World* (Tělo, společenství, jazyk, svět), trans. E. Kohák (Chicago: Open Court, 1998).

For the transcendental idealism that Husserl articulates in the *Ideen* becomes the central challenge of his thought for Patočka; its critique forms the crux of his attempt to appropriate, in many ways against Heidegger, those philosophical insights into phenomenality and method that he considers essential. The main line of Patočka's approach is to submit to a fundamental critique Husserl's conception of transcendental consciousness, and to argue that Husserl's conception of phenomenality can be separated in a meaningful fashion from his conception of transcendental subjectivity. This twofold strategy takes on a number of permutations in Patočka's work from the 1930s until his death in 1977.

To understand what is at issue, Patočka's own 1936 Habilitation can be employed as representing an argument for the *inseparability* of transcendental subjectivity and phenomenality, interestingly articulated in terms of the problem of the “natural world.”⁶ Here Patočka understands Husserl's approach as essentially a metaphysical reflection, one that secures the possibility of an access to phenomenality—that is, where the being of transcendental subjectivity secures the conditions for the philosophical problematic of the phenomenon as such. Through the influence of Fink and Heidegger, this understanding of phenomenology (even as a reading of Husserl) gradually becomes problematic for Patočka, culminating in the robust formulation of its critique in the philosophical program of an “a-subjective” phenomenology in the early 1970s.⁷ This program is best understood as an attempt to preserve what Patočka considers to be of fundamental value in Husserl's thought, namely the philosophical concept of the *epochē*. The program in its essentials can in fact be described as an attempt to decouple the *epochē* from the reduction to transcendental subjectivity, thus in effect arguing for the independence of phenomenological reflection from the metaphysics that Patočka sees dominating the discussions in *Ideen I §§47–55* concerning the contrast between the being of the world and the being of subjectivity.⁸

This strategy of decoupling also guides Patočka's reading of Husserl's own development. In Chapter Six of his 1965 *Introduction to Husserl's Phenomenology*,⁹ for example, he contrasts Husserl's first presentation of the *epochē* and reduction in the 1907 lectures *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*¹⁰ with the presentation in *Ideen*

⁶ Patočka, *Le monde naturel comme problème philosophique* (Přirozený svět jako filosofický problém), trans. J. Daněk (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976).

⁷ Two texts are of central importance here: “Der Subjektivismus der Husserlschen und die Möglichkeit einer <<asubjektiven>> Phänomenologie (1970),” and “Der Subjektivismus der Husserlschen und die Forderung einer asubjektiven Phänomenologie (1971),” both in: Patočka, *Die Bewegung der menschlichen Existenz. Phänomenologische Schriften II*, ed. K. Nellen et al. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1991).

⁸ See here the invaluable collection of late essays and manuscript materials published as *Vom Erscheinen als solchem: Texte aus dem Nachlaß*, ed. H. Blaschek-Hahn and K. Novotný (München: Alber, 2000).

⁹ Patočka, *Introduction to Husserl's Phenomenology* (Úvod do Husserlové fenomenologie), trans. E. Kohák (Chicago: Open Court, 1996).

¹⁰ Edmund Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie. Fünf Vorlesungen. Husserliana 2*, ed. W. Biemel (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

I §§27–32, 56–62, tracking Husserl's development from an initial position, which on Patočka's account is effectively metaphysically neutral, to the position of the mature Husserl that embraces the absolute character of subjective being as securing the ground of phenomenological method. Yet one should also cite here a number of texts of Patočka's where the issue does not simply turn on a critique of metaphysics in Husserl, but where instead he attempts to highlight the importance of the individual phenomenological investigations of space, temporality, bodily comportment, ideality and the like that are indifferent to the contrast between the absolute being of consciousness and the relative being of the world. Patočka points in this direction in the last two chapters of the *Introduction* which are dedicated to the topics of temporality and incarnate existence, but above all one thinks here of the 1968/1969 lectures *Body, Community, Language, World*, which draw on many levels from the individual analyses of *Ideen II*.

Body, Community, Language, World also exemplifies another fundamental aspect of Patočka's engagement with the thought of Husserl, namely his attempt to read phenomenology in dialogue with other moments both ancient and modern in the history of philosophy. Few thinkers have done this with the breadth of scholarship and interpretive courage of Patočka, who during his career embarked on major studies of Renaissance thought (here one thinks of his seminal work on Comenius), ancient philosophy (above all Aristotle), and the history of science.¹¹ If Patočka never felt himself worthy of the tradition to which he was symbolically and personally bound by Edmund Husserl, one must nevertheless recognize in his *oeuvre* a remarkable achievement in illuminating both its deep roots in the history of thought and its ongoing future promise.

Remarks Towards a Phenomenology of Built-Space

The phenomenology of Jan Patočka is characterized by a strong emphasis on the description of incarnate, bodily existence in the development of the philosophical problem of the being of the world. In this spirit, I would like to pursue a reflection here on what I take to be an essential dimension of human incarnate existence, namely that it is able to comport itself as an access to the world in the form of something *built*.

In what follows, I will emphasize three phenomenological aspects of the built-world. All three have to do with the central theme of *orientation*. The first is the *intersubjective* dimension of built-space; the second its *egoic* or *personal* dimension; and finally its *bodily* or *corporeal* dimension. These three senses of orientation interpenetrate, of course, and in fact the first, that of intersubjectivity, cannot be properly understood outside of this interpenetration—thus we will take it up first.

¹¹ See the extensive bibliography of Patočka's work, both published and unpublished, in, *Texte—Dokumente—Bibliographie*, ed. L. Hagedorn and H. R. Sepp, 527 f.

First Dimension: Intersubjectivity

A difficulty in any discussion of intersubjectivity is the tendency to understand the theme too narrowly, limiting the question to a description of the experience of the presence of other individual subjects. Clearly, others leave their marks on things (this chip on the edge of the coffee table comes from Pierre, who dropped a heavy paperweight on it; the wooden threshold of the doorway is worn away from years of human and animal traffic, and so on); and it is also clear that others have an impact on how I go about moving around in space (I made it to the café by following Pierre’s directions, or just by following Pierre himself). A narrow sense of intersubjectivity would limit the issue to the manner in which we can “read” things so as to trace their properties and features back to the actions of a particular individual or individuals—such as the bricklayer who carefully laid the courses of the brick wall in a stretcher bond, or the artist who applied paint to a prepared canvas surface. Things are shaped, formed, and ordered by the actions of others, and we can think of any such construction or ordering of things that results in terms of the function of the actions of those who “built” them (as when archaeologists, for example, try to “reconstruct” the techniques of Egyptian pyramid builders based on clues provided by the given structures themselves, functionally mapping their properties onto the known capacities of tools from the same historical period).

This point of departure sets up a particular focus, whereby we make thematic the “others”—those who built, lived, and experienced what it is that we encounter in the things that bear their mark—in a manner that keeps close to the given things *as things*. This focus is not in itself objectionable. The phenomenality of the thing certainly includes this feature of an actual or possible having come from the hands of others. The thing-character of the brick wall, or the worn doorway, is plastic enough to capture and absorb in a manifold of ways those activities that gave it shape. This plasticity in turn partially justifies the limitation of the theme of intersubjectivity I would nevertheless like to guard against, according to which we take to be relevant only what this capacity of things to bear the mark of others can bring *close to us*. We are, in fact, most inclined to engage this capacity of things to bring others close to us; so we “see,” manifest in the ordered pattern of the bricks in a wall, the active being of the “other,” a being manifest not only in the visible effects of the application of a technique. There is also, for example, the unbearable effort and pain of laborers made present to us in the monstrous mass of the pyramid; or we recall in the grace of the columns and facades of the Parthenon that fateful mix of industriousness and ambition characteristic of the ancient Athenians. We want to see artifacts as connections, bringing the lives of others into proximity to us.

However, this approach tends towards a distortion. For in the end, what is essential with respect to the theme of “others” must include a consideration of what is and remains *distant*. The entire force of the presence of others is not limited to what we know about them having an anchor, so to speak, in the given, or in the potential for things to serve as instances or evidence of the known, but is also embodied in the force of distance constitutive of intersubjectivity.

Yet here problems arise. What does it mean, that others are “distant,” and how can *distance* be understood as a force of *presence*? Do not others have presence for me precisely to the extent to which they are situated among things, just as I am? And if they are no longer “here,” how could they form and shape the sense of things, apart from leaving their prints, so to speak, on the surface of things, as a kind of mark of their past presence, to be interpreted by our knowledge of them? What more could be said about distance, apart from the simple fact that I cannot always take a print and match it up to the finger that put it there?

Let us consider an example different from pyramids, brick walls, and thresholds to see if we can, if not break, then at least put into perspective the hegemony of the theme of proximate presence. I am walking along a path in the woods, and come upon a bench that looks out over a view of the valley. As I look around, I notice that this spot must have been chosen precisely because it is the position from which one has the best view of the valley, and that the bench has been placed in the optimal orientation within the parameters of the location. If it had been turned more to the left or the right, it would have been more difficult to take in the full force of the view; or if it had been facing in the opposite direction, I would have been left staring at the side of a relatively uninteresting rocky cliff.

The space in which, sitting on the bench, I take in the view of the valley is, I would argue, “built.” Not because the things located in this space are built—certainly the bench is a built-thing, but the manner in which it is built into the space under consideration has more to do with its function in orienting my perceiving, as a bodily orientation, in accordance with the manifestation of the view of the valley. What is built in a primary sense is the “view on the valley” itself, though in a manner in which things, taken as logically individuated unities of sense in themselves, are not. The view is “built” in the sense of a patterned orchestration of the visibility of things that emerges directly out of the simple act of placing a bench that faces “towards” a potential view; the result of building is that the view now has a unique phenomenological presence within my experience of the space around me. Now, the view without the bench would be, of course, still there, in its “unbuilt” mode as it were—yet it would nevertheless remain related to the possibility of being built (“a bench would be excellent right *here*...”).

This space—whether built (with the bench, correctly positioned) or potentially buildable—is intrinsically intersubjective. The space is intersubjective, not because there are others there who experience it with me, with whom I compare notes (I am alone on my walk); nor is it intersubjective because of the proxy presence of someone in the form of the bench, pointing at the view. That is, the space is built or buildable not because it is the locus of an act of communication, actual or potential, or because one has here the resources for an expressive act that reveals that potential realized by placing a bench “at this spot.” If I had come upon a large sign with an arrow pointing towards the view, with the words “NICE VIEW” printed below, the space would not be revealed in the same manner as it is when the view is built from out of that placing of the bench; the space of signification proper, even if we emphasize the physicality of signs, is only a “built space” by analogy.

There is instead a more fundamental sense of intersubjectivity that is essential here, or rather a *threefold* sense. The space is intersubjective as something that has been (1) *lived through*, (2) *understood*, and (3) *shaped in such a way that embodies this understanding*—and that this is something that has been accomplished *by others*. This threefold sense cleaves close to the manner in which things bear the marks of the activities of others that can be re-constructed to explain why things are put together in such and such a way, but there is nevertheless an important phenomenological difference that we need to fix more precisely.

First let us consider the intersubjectivity of this built-space of the view from the bench as something lived through by others. Here we should emphasize the global character of intersubjectivity: the presence of others in whose lived experiences things become manifest is a *total phenomenon* for me, there is no element or dimension of the interest that I take in things that is not determined by the manner in which all things “of the world” are constituted in the experiences of multiple subjects.¹² The space in which I move, the things that I deal with, always have the significance of “for others” as a fundamental determinateness. Even alone on this path, things are what they are, the world is what it is, “for others” as well, whether actual or potential; the sense unity that things are qua worldly bears the sense of their being sustained by the intersubjective multiplicity of consciousness as a living unity. Likewise the built-space of the bench: even if the “one who” placed it there will forever remain anonymous, we both exist in a horizon of a world “for everyone.”

But that does not mean the whole world is built. For the bench to be placed, to orchestrate the view, requires that another understand its potential, or understand the possibility that that particular place offers “for a view.” An act of understanding lies at the origin of the built space; for it is only in an understanding, and not merely a living through (actual or potential), that the “here, not there” as a discernment of possibility is achieved. These two elements—living through and understanding—are of course intertwined in a fundamental way; what is essential is not to separate them into two unrelated or contingently connected experiences, one in which something is conceived and the other “made available” to others. Intersubjectivity is not equivalent to “publicity”; what becomes manifest need not be announced, what is recognized need not be codified.

The final element is the shaping of the space in a way that embodies this understanding, or the realization of what is set into motion by its possibility. In our example, the catalyst is the placing of the bench. This shaping can take a more complex form, in which others themselves become gradually aware of the power of the possibility—perhaps this has been a spot that people have returned to again and again for the view, for picnics or lovers’ meetings, for contemplation or meditation. The familiarity of the spot, and its view, something that had never come suddenly into the possession of anyone yet belongs gradually to everyone, can be understood as a proto-form of inhabiting the spot, one in which a buildable space takes shape in the repeated

¹² See for example Husserl, *Ideas II*, §51.

performances of the knowledge of what is possible “from here.” These performances realize the potential of the space as a place to “take in the view of the valley”; yet this gradual formation of local knowledge does not yet yield a built-space proper: the force of its manifestation is embodied only in the repeated actions of those who are in the know, who possess in an immediate sense the knowledge that articulates the possibilities of this space. The view of the valley, as it were, can shift back and forth between dormancy and the enlivened possibility of its manifestation being explicitly formed as a built-space proper.

To be built proper, I would suggest, is a formation of this space that embodies this knowledge of those who realized its potential and possibility in a form that can be experienced by those *who do not know*, and who approach this knowledge as something alien to them—that is, across a distance marked not only by the possible, but by the presence of the other who knows and has shaped this place accordingly. It is this alien character that results, which originates in the distance that others are for us, that is essential to the sense of the space as built. There is a silence in built spaces across which the knowledge of others reaches us, from out of a distance that can belong only to them. If we know too much, or allow what we know of the others who build to command our reflection by limiting us to the visible thing as an illustration of what we know, then we risk overlooking the essential role of this silence in the phenomenality of built-space. Sitting on the bench, what the other understood in living the possibilities of this space are silently articulate in what unfolds in front of me; I take up temporary residence, as it were, in the mute understanding of the other that is present, embodied in what unfolds before me, but which is not my own, and which only speaks to me in the silent gesture of the lonely bench directing my gaze out over the magnificent valley. Without this sensitivity to distance, without the realization that what we encounter in the space around us is not only the effects of what people have done but the very embodiment of what they understood (in the broad sense of Husserl’s *cogito*—what they thought, felt, willed, suffered), we trap our reflections in the narrow confines of a false proximity in which only a piece of the full breadth of the present-being of others is at play.

Second Dimension: Egoic and Personal Existence

The intersubjectivity of built-space circumscribes not only the emergence of such spaces “from others,” as systems of artifacts, but the very manner in which this space is encountered. But what do I have to do, or to be, in order to enter into such spaces? How is this engagement with the silent understanding of others at all possible?

Again consider the bench overlooking the view of the valley. In an important sense, what is at play here is an understanding that is not “my own,” yet this can have weight or value for me only if I come at it in a certain way, or from within a certain attitude. On one level, this is an attitude in which what I am interested in, or the manner in which I am concerned with things, takes form in accordance with an open relation to “others.” Yet on another level, even this openness to others, or an appreciation of the significance of the transcendence of others, is something that

presupposes a certain kind of maturity of interest—I need to be experienced enough, or to have enough of a stake in something, to absorb the full import of what its “being available to others” can contribute.

This implies that the orchestration of the view becomes manifest to me only insofar as it gives me something that I am already in a sense looking for, as if it spoke to an interest. Were I rushing down the path, desperately attempting to avoid a pursuer, the built space crystallized around the park bench would not even exist “for me”—not because it is not there, but because I am not oriented properly to “enter” into it. The entrance into a space, its bare encounter as something there, is thus potentially a relatively complicated matter. A pile of rubble in Stalingrad, for a homeowner returning back after the war, offers the former inhabitant “no way in,” as well as no place to be. But for the soldier seeking cover during a pitched battle, desperate for something to slow down the progress of the invader, the same rubble beckons with ample opportunity for shelter. Landscapes are not literally carved by interests, but they are opened and made accessible by them.

What is important is to emphasize that the issue is not so much how I enter into or take up a position in space, as the fact that I need to first inhabit myself in a particular manner in order for such relations to be possible at all. The I inhabits awareness, and pursues the possibilities of this habitation, in the form of the constitution of a life defined by the gradual sedimentation of interests—of ways of being among beings that form the basis for the style and manner of a given existence. Alone, the intersubjective being of built-space lacks the resources to become manifest in consciousness unless the I takes an interest, or better: *is* the interest on the basis of which the encounter with built-space is possible at all.

Imagine a group of friends arriving at the spot with the bench for a picnic, say the three students, one female and two male, from Lukacs’ dialogue in *Seele und Form*. They are engrossed in a discussion about how to assess the literary significance of Lawrence Stern, and are equally engrossed in the tensions that constitute an effective, if unacknowledged love triangle. The entire trip—from the walk to laying out the picnic to the enjoyment of the view—represents a manifold of opportunities for the conversation to shift, or a point to be made, a knowing glance or a false gesture to fall, all of which constitute a given, finite dynamic that unfolds within the space built by the placing of the bench. One might be tempted here to say that the scene represents the “animation” of an otherwise lonely place, giving it a life and purpose it would otherwise not have had; one might also have the opposite temptation, and insist that the ordering of the space itself anticipates the needs of the young triangle in conversation, thus animating *them* with a view towards their own possibilities. Both would risk exaggeration. The question cannot simply devolve to which side, the conversation or the space, represents form and which matter; the question is instead primarily one of *access*: how is built space accessible?

Part of the answer, I would argue, lies in the manner in which a human being accesses its own being, or has itself *in view*. The question of form and matter in fact neatly folds into this question of access, which is embodied in relative, concretely lived decisions about what is important and not important. The very encounter with others across the built has the impact it does because, as subjects, we are invested in our interests, and thereby have ourselves in view.

Something else goes with this. Having ourselves in view also means that we are committed to something that is open to being changed. This implies in turn that our interests, as the manner in which we inhabit ourselves, are fundamentally *fragile* in nature. When I sit down on the bench, my interest in such things as the view of a beautiful valley is taken up by the built space, given an articulation in light of the knowledge of the other embodied in that space. To be sure, the space is what it is only because of the interest; but that does not negate the sense in which the interest is interpreted by the space. I do not come to such spaces to be understood in terms of my interest, but in order to seek in the space the further progression of potential development and maturation of the interest. If so, then it would be misleading to say that the view is orchestrated by the other, as if the one who built this space were able to call forth those patterns of manifestation that are in the end dependent on my own being in order to emerge at all. The distance that the other represents to me is matched by the distance that I represent for the other who builds—what the built-space is to be in an experience that can only be mine is in the end an impenetrable determinant of the very phenomenality of the space itself.

If the space—understood as the embodied knowledge of the other, in the sense introduced above—opens up room for the pursuit of what it is that I am invested in, then in a specific way I also become invested in the space itself, thereby literally *feeding* its visibility. Accordingly, this space achieves a kind of stability and permanence of phenomenality in the form of a uniquely *intersubjective visibility*. What is visible here is an intersubjective anticipation of the fulfillment of my interest. Built-space is something that beckons me as the manifestation of a successful future in the pursuit of who I am, a future that is present in the form of the understanding of others embodied built-space. In entering into the built space I enter into the space of an understanding embodied in the world itself, a lasting, visible habitation of humans among things that seems to have transcended the struggle to inhabit itself, and which sets itself before me as a realization of what I am not yet, but strive to be. There is thus a *hope* at issue in built spaces, one that should not be underestimated.

Third Dimension: The Body

At this point one might have the suspicion that the *built* character of built space is something of a “higher level” determination of objectivity—perhaps, for example, comparable to the notion of a “cultural objectivity” that cannot be reduced to relations pertaining among “objects of nature.” The idea thus suggests itself that built space proper is constituted on the levels of the ego and community of egos, thus is not a phenomenon that forms on the most basic level of bodily oriented perception.

Such a thesis would be in error, for a number of reasons. First the more obvious: there are too many features and characteristics of the built environment that are clearly presentive-kinaesthetic that would stand in the way of such a reduction. Take for example the sensuous aspect of mass, so central for the political or memorial interest pursued in the construction of monuments; or the lightness or grace of structures

that seem to “float” in the air, as a buttress for an interest in a style of communal existence that emphasizes speed and fluidity; or the role of the *vast* in the potential for a built space to be the site of a *spectacle*. Take again our example of sitting on the bench: the very orchestration of the view is a function of the placement of my body as a freely moved perceptual organ; and in turn the “knowledge” of the other embodied in the site is as much a bodily comprehension of possible movements as an intellectual grasp of a schematic interpretation of the dynamics of the positioning of the bench—perhaps it is the former even more than the latter. Once we stop thinking of the body as a stimulus-response circuit, and instead see it as the manner in which the perceptual situation of an embodied being is manifest in experience, the more we realize that its structures must be deeply engrained in the phenomenon of built space.

This is even true when we focus on simple perception. What is important about sensuous perception for phenomenologists like Husserl (and Patočka) is that it represents a primordial accomplishment of sense constitution that is never superseded in its essence by any other “level” or strata, no matter how complex. This is because sensuous perception accomplishes two things that are the absolute ground of the experience of the world itself: first, it gives or presents things in an originary fashion; second, it does so in terms of a coming together of elements that constitute linkages, paths of sense development that do not move *away* from things, but progressively *towards* things, in a kind of descent of determinateness, as is described so acutely by Husserl in *Erfahrung und Urteil*. Sense perception constitutes a world as something originally present to us as that towards which we are directed, towards which we are *moving*. This means that the very theme of “approach,” of “entering” into a built space, already presupposes the original accomplishments of perceptual life—perception forms the phenomenological, presentational basis for any sense of “approach,” it is the threshold phenomenon *par excellence*. This fundamental structure of all situatedness is never replaced; it is either referred to by all other sense accomplishments, or it is imitated. The more I understand something, thus come closer to it as something known, the more I am just developing that initial “towards which” of intentional directedness accomplished by originary perception. It is because of this that Husserl refers to sense perception as “originary consciousness” (*Originalbewusstsein*); and it is why perception is always present, even if in the form of a shadow of itself.

Take for example architectural drawings.¹³ Here we are no longer talking about built space directly, but about a technique developed within a practical discipline, architecture, which is also in multiple respects a theoretical discipline. Both come together in architectural drawings. Such drawings are, from a phenomenological perspective, extremely sophisticated; they develop and explore schemas that are as much informed and governed by ideas and abstractions as by actual perception. They can be informative and useful, even if they represent something that can never

¹³ I have to thank for inspiration on this topic Parviz Mohassel’s Ph.D. dissertation, “Husserl: Phenomenology and Architectural Drawings,” New School for Social Research 2009.

be actually perceived “in the world,” or for that matter “built”—such as the suprematist explorations of form in the architectural paintings of Zaha Hadid. In every disorienting break of line, every hyper-stylized repetition of forms or planar displacement of orders and directions—in all this the originary “presentive” function of sensibility retains its shadow—even the body, which as kinaesthetic organ is just the movement of the given plenitude out towards the hope of a determinacy. However abstract and intellectualized, the originary achievements of perception are nevertheless present; even their marginalization is the result of what they have accomplished as a source of meaning: after all, their very essence directs intentionality beyond themselves, towards ever more complex patterns of arriving at what is intended. Just as we need to move away from conceiving of the body as a stimulus-response circuit, we also need to move away from the conception of perception as a kind of naïve, subjective “picture” of the world, and instead recognize it as the condition for the possibility of the very *complication* of sense and meaning.

Conclusion

I noted above that a salient aspect of Patočka’s thought was an emphasis on incarnate being as an axis of phenomenological investigation. It also bears remembering that, in his mature philosophy, Patočka conceived of incarnate existence in terms of patterns of movement—that is, the movements of rootedness, of the opening of history, and of philosophical existence. I would argue that the phenomenology of built-space, sketched above in what is more a series of suggestions than a system, has the potential to be an important supplement to Patočka’s account of the movements of human existence, and with that perhaps also take a modest step towards a genuine philosophy of *architecture*.

Chapter 18

Husserl's *Ideen* in the Portuguese Speaking Community

Pedro M.S. Alves and Carlos A. Morujão

Juridical Thinkers Took the First Step

In Portugal as in Brazil, the first dialogue with Husserl's phenomenology and, in particular, with the themes and theses in *Ideen*, happened in philosophy of law. The very first scholar who introduced Edmund Husserl's concepts and methods was Luís Cabral de Moncada (1888–1974), Full Professor at the University of Coimbra, Portugal.¹ The positivist wave in the first decades of the twentieth century suppressed the studies of philosophy of law in the Portuguese university. The return to those studies in the late 1920s and 1930s was due to Moncada. In his studies of philosophy of law, he was strongly influenced by neo-Kantianism, particularly Emil Lask, and also by Max Scheler, Nicolai Hartmann, and Husserl.

Opposing positivism, Moncada aimed to free the science of law from psychology and sociology. His main tenet was that the science of law was an apriori science, and that this apriori science was about what ought to be, not about what simply is.

Alves is responsible for the entire sections “Juridical Thinkers Took the First Step” and “Some Glimpses Beyond”, and, concerning sections “Philosophers Came Second: The Rise of the Phenomenological School of Coimbra” and “Mature Readings”, for the presentations of Barbosa and Soveral (in section “Philosophers Came Second: The Rise of the Phenomenological School of Coimbra”), and of Fraga, Gil and Saraiva (in section “Mature Readings”). C. Morujão is the author of the presentations of A. Morujão and Fraga, in section “Philosophers Came Second: The Rise of the Phenomenological School of Coimbra”, and of Paisana, in section “Mature Readings”.

¹ Luís Cabral de Moncada, *Do Valor e Sentido da Democracia*. Ensaio de Filosofia Política, Coimbra: Boletim da Faculdade de Direito, vol. 12, 1930.

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As a neo-Kantian, he stressed that law discloses a domain of prescriptions that command in an unconditioned, absolute way. Nevertheless and contrary to all formalisms, he also stressed that there was still a substantial basis for this science of what ought to be. This basis was the material realm of values. For him, the knowledge of values must secure the normative content of the juridical norm, i.e., axiology secures law and gives to it an absolute foundation.

Approaching the knowledge of values as foundational to the institution of norms, Moncada turned to the Husserlian method of *Wesensschau*. This was, in fact, one of the greatest impacts the *Ideen* had on his general theory of law: to turn axiology into a descriptive, apriori science of the *experience* of values. Another major impact was the phenomenological analysis of the content of those acts that are directed to the non-substantial, non-natural, non-empirical realm of law as such. Classical phenomenology was chiefly concerned with acts that were being-intentions, i.e., with the analysis of doxic acts. Through the analysis of the intentional acts in which law is intended, Moncada aimed to turn phenomenology to the analysis of “nomic” acts, so to speak, i.e., to the analysis of the operations in which consciousness constitutes not “what is,” but the “ought to do” injunction, along with values and norms.

In the realization of this program, Moncada employs—not always in a accurate way—several of the most important concepts and methods of the *Ideen*: noetic and noematic analysis, intentionality, immanence, transcendence, constitution, formal and material essences, and so on. He stresses the possibilities opened up by the method of eidetic variation, but he never makes use of the method of transcendental reduction. Rather, in his last essays he emphasizes that eidetic phenomenology, being concerned only with possibilities and ignoring the realm of facts, cannot address the scientific study of positive law. In the end, Husserlian phenomenology, which he introduced systematically in the philosophy of law since the 1930s, was only, for him, a preparatory step towards a fully fledged science of law as an historical formation in human culture.

Meanwhile, in Brazil, Miguel Reale (1910–2006), another philosopher of law and also Full Professor at the University of São Paulo, incorporated phenomenology in his celebrated “three-dimensional theory of law.” The “three-dimensional” theory states that law is always a conflation of fact, value, and norm. Addressing what he sees as a “dialectical relationship” between these three dimensions, he stresses that law as norm comes from a previous evaluation of facts of the social and cultural world. Trying to understand this process of a “pre-categorical” experience of law, which is, for him, the very origin of the normative objectification of law (by means of the state) that gives a positive content to the science of law, he emphasizes both its pre-theoretical and historical character. In this context, Reale sees in the Husserlian concept of *Lebenswelt* the “great discovery” of phenomenology, and talks about a “juridical *Lebenswelt*,” meaning the concrete experiences that give rise to the later establishment of positive law by means of the activity of the legislator. As he puts it in “Estruturas e Modelos do Direito”, “It seems to me that the Husserlian concept of *Lebenswelt* is very useful both in the study of the genesis of juridical rules, and in the study of its semantic modifications. … The analysis of the pre-categorical

juridical experience is essential to the full comprehension of law, in order to settle its relationship to juridical institutions that represent, in the normative realm, forms under which social conduct and actions are objectified.”²

Focused on the late Husserlian concept of *Lebenswelt*, Reale dedicates a full chapter to the phenomenology of the *Ideen* in his book *Filosofia do Direito*. He recognizes the richness of eidetic and transcendental reductions and stresses its wide applications to several domains outside philosophy. Nevertheless, he intends to block what he sees as an idealistic turn in *Ideen*. He states, using the intentionality as a guiding thread, Husserl sought to return from the transcendent object to its noematic content, and, in a final and controversial step, to a self-reflection in which consciousness exposes itself as absolute subjectivity. Contrary to this last endeavor, Reale argues, first, that the subject-object polarization is an ultimate one, and, second, that phenomenology must catch its objects in the cultural world of *Lebenswelt* and return back to the original institutions of meaning that constitute them. He displays here a Hegelian model of the anamnesis of the experiences of consciousness, combining it with a genetic approach to the original institutions and deposits of meaning. As he writes: “The subjective reflection must show the essential correlation between subject and object, and, therefore, the inconceivability of a transcendental ego without reference to objects and to the world in which they are situated. ... This is the reason why I say that phenomenological reflection culminates in a historic-axiological reflection, in which the subject recognizes itself as reflected in his own spiritual objectifications, the authentic meaning of which must be carried out to its original roots, unveiling its founding intentionality”³ in a concrete and historical subjectivity.

Another philosopher of law, Aquiles Guimarães (1937–), Full Professor at the University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, pursued these hints and developed, in a somewhat reactive fashion, a vindication of Husserl’s idealistic transcendental philosophy. As he puts it, transcendental and eidetic reductions, first fully presented by Husserl in the *Ideen*, are the only theoretical stance that can free the science of law from positivism, with its narrow understanding of the phenomenon of law as the bare realm of the posited rules of a factual legislative system. Returning from the factuality of norms to the “law phenomenon” and to the eidetic intuition of law as such, phenomenological description can show the strata of sense involved in the juridical world. Guimarães stresses that the nucleus of law consists in an “emotional apriori,” different from the rational apriori of mathematics and logic. As a result, he asserts that there is a “pure intuition of values,” and that values are objective formations that sustain an “axiological objectivism.” Law is, for him, disclosed as a “regional ontology” of the inter-subjective and cultural world regulated by the supreme value of “juridicity.”

Regarding philosophy of law, Guimarães continues as a leading personality in Brazil. His full acceptance of Husserlian phenomenology gave rise to a school of juridical and phenomenological studies at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

² “Estruturas e Modelos do Direito no Processo Cultural”, in *Teoria Tridimensional do Direito. Teoria da Justiça. Fontes e Modelos do Direito* (Lisboa: IN-CM, 2003), 110.

³ *Filosofia do Direito*. (São Paulo: Editora Saraiva, 1983), 12th edn., 365.

He published several books on the subject, for instance, *Fenomenologia e Direito*,⁴ *Fenomenologia e Direitos Humanos*,⁵ *Cinco Lições de Filosofia do Direito*.⁶ He is also the editor of the journal *Fenomenologia e Direito*, where research in the field is regularly published.

Philosophers Came Second: The Rise of the Phenomenological School of Coimbra

In the area of philosophy, the first dialogue with the *Ideen* began a few years later, with a work published in 1947 by Miranda Barbosa (1916–1973), Full Professor at the University of Coimbra, Portugal, titled *A Essência do Conhecimento*.⁷ In this work, Barbosa expressed a far-reaching critique of the very foundations of transcendental phenomenology. A little less than two decades after the publication of Barbosa's work, an essay by his student Abraches Soveral gave a phenomenological rejoinder to the critiques developed in that essay. At the same time, Alexandre Morujão and Gustavo de Fraga dedicated themselves to phenomenology at Coimbra, also under the motivation of Barbosa. Therefore, although he was not a phenomenologist, but rather a critic of phenomenology, Barbosa is at the origin of the Coimbra school of phenomenology.

In order to understand the kind of philosophical problems discussed in the context of the *Ideen*, it will be necessary to give a brief account of Barbosa's critical positions in *A Essência do Conhecimento*. The work is divided into an Analytic and a Dialectic. The similarity with the Kantian partitions is, however, misleading. Firstly, because Barbosa's Analytic is not preceded (nor followed) by an Aesthetics, that is, by a theory of intuition; secondly, because the very concept of Analytic is defined, by Barbosa, not as a logic of truth, as in Kant, but as a logical analysis of thought, which is as a kind of formal semantics, defining what is understood by concept, objective content, general and singular concept, ideosphere, etc.; thirdly, because Barbosa's Dialectic is not, as in Kant, a doctrine of the appearance of truth, but rather attempts to provide an answer to what he defines as the *essential problem of knowledge*. As it is explicitly formulated by him, “*The essential problem of knowledge* consists in questioning *what knowledge is*, i.e., in investigating what knowledge is, or not, and what it intentionally *seems* to be in the phenomenon of knowledge.”⁸

For Barbosa, there are some ideas that appear so obvious they are never explicitly discussed. The first is that what he calls logic—but which is really more of a formal semantics than what we understand by logic today—can show that concepts refer to

⁴ *Fenomenologia e Direito* (Rio de Janeiro: Lumen Júris, 2005).

⁵ *Fenomenologia e Direitos Humanos* (Rio de Janeiro: Lumen Júris, 2007).

⁶ *Cindo Lições de Filosofia do Direito* (Rio de Janeiro: Lumen Júris: 2007).

⁷ *A Essência do Conhecimento*, in *Obras Filosóficas* (Lisboa: IN-CM), 221–385.

⁸ *Idem*, p. 331.

objects, but is not able to demonstrate that the objects to which the concepts refer actually exist. Logic, therefore, does not solve, but rather raises a gnoseological problem. In his own words: “The pure analysis of the formal object … can never prove the actual existence of entities. What could assure existence would be only the “intentional reference” of the concept to the object, but, precisely because that reference is “intentional,” it cannot provide real transcendence to the objective sphere.”⁹

The second idea is that the transcendental attitude is both provisional and insufficient. In fact, for Barbosa, the transcendental attitude does not consist in the elaboration of a new concept of reality which could overcome the dispute between realism and idealism, as Husserl supposed, but consists only in a methodical operation used to analyze the connection between the thought and the thought-of objectivity, an analysis in which the ontological status of the objects is left undetermined. The transcendental attitude is, therefore, for Barbosa, not an answer to but rather a suspension of the Essential Problem of Knowledge. As he elaborates in a passage of his book: “The position of the object in relation to thought can be determined as *immanent*, *transcendent* or *transcendental*. … To raise the problem of the essence of knowledge seems to be no more than to formulate this question: which of those positions does the object occupy in relation to thought? As we can see, the transcendental option is immediately eliminated In fact, the transcendental position of the object is already a logical minimum given by the cognitive phenomenon and it is that situation which raises the question of the immanence or transcendence of the object. … To say that the object is *transcendental* is no more than to suspend judgment about its transcendence, and it is precisely this logical indeterminacy that one wants to abolish when moving to the field of theory of knowledge, eventually reaching a conclusion about whether the object is *immanent* or *transcendent* or, in other words, whether the object *exists* or *does not exist ‘in itself’*”.¹⁰

The third idea is that there are grounds regarding knowledge to distinguish between descriptive and substantive questions. In fact, the phenomenon of knowledge *seems to be* the seizing of an external reality. But is it *really so* or will we have to classify it as an illusion by showing that the object that is given in knowledge is, in fact, immanent to the act of knowing and exists only as a correlate of that act? Such are the problems which, for Barbosa, should be raised against merely descriptive questions. And it is exactly in the conflation of these two problems, or rather in the belief that descriptive questions exhaust substantive questions, that Barbosa sees the main mistake of phenomenology: “It is in this point that Husserl and his students greatly erred, in supposing that to describe is to solve and to consider that the description of the phenomenon [of knowledge] is already the solution to its essential problem.”¹¹

His critical stand regarding phenomenology is therefore very clear. It can be summarized in the three following tenets:

¹st *Denial of Fundamentality*. The fundamental field of philosophy is a formal semantics (a “logic,” as he says) that describes the atomic structure of concepts and the

⁹ *Idem*, p. 339.

¹⁰ *Idem*, p. 341.

¹¹ *Idem*, p. 331.

relation between the meaning content and the objectivity referred to via that content, without taking a stand about the essential problem of knowledge, and without referring to the life of a conscious subjectivity. In the author's own words, the fundamental philosophical discipline is logic and not phenomenology.

2nd *Report of a mistake*. The phenomenological description of knowledge closes itself within the transcendental field and within the relationship between intentional act and intended object. Therefore, for that very same reason, phenomenology cannot be an answer to the essential gnoseological problem.

3rd *Attribution of an incapacity*. Given its methodological orientation, phenomenology does not allow for the formulation of the fundamental problem about the real existence of the object of knowledge; for this reason, phenomenology, at the very moment it believes it has described the essential laws of knowledge, is really only describing what knowledge *seems to be* and not what it *actually is*, a question for which phenomenology has no answer at all.

Eighteen years after the publication of Barbosa's essay, Abrantes de Soveral (1927–2003) wrote the following regarding the Essential Problem of Knowledge: "These considerations aim at a determination of the philosophical value of the phenomenological method in light of this problematic [i.e. the essential problem of knowledge]."¹² It couldn't be any clearer that his dialogue with phenomenology is entirely determined by the questions previously raised by Barbosa. Those are precisely the questions which give meaning—and, we should say, a *non-phenomenological* meaning—to Soveral's attempt to reformulate the Essential Problem of Knowledge within phenomenology. This reformulation is apparently accomplished through the use of some core phenomenological concepts. It appears as follows: "The essential problem of knowledge ... consists in knowing whether the intentional object to which all knowledge refers to is immanent or not to the subject who thinks it."¹³

In comparing this formulation with Barbosa's, one could think that everything is now characterized using phenomenological concepts, namely, through "being immanent" and "transcendent reality," although Barbosa had already used them, while in a strictly ontological sense. However, it is not entirely exact to say that there is here a phenomenological reformulation of the problem, because, as Barbosa had correctly pointed out, the Essential Problem of Knowledge cannot be enunciated within phenomenology. In fact, from the perspective of phenomenology, it is a pseudo-problem, while, from the theoretical perspective of Barbosa, it is the true major problem of all investigation about knowledge. The result was a tension between phenomenology and theory of knowledge, as Barbosa often noted.

Soveral is well aware of this tense relationship between phenomenology and the Essential Problem of Knowledge. He tries to settle it by distinguishing three different "phases" in Husserlian phenomenology: the first where "the essential problem of knowledge is initially not considered," the second where "it is considered that the

¹² *O Método Fenomenológico. Estudo para a Determinação do seu Valor Filosófico, I. Valor do Método para a Filosofia* (Porto, 1965), 156.

¹³ *Idem*, p. 33, note 24, see also p. 47.

essential problem has been overcome and no longer makes sense in the transcendental sphere,” and finally, the third, in which “the transcendental reduction is not practiced,” but in which, on the other hand, “the demands of the essential problem of knowledge are taken into consideration.”¹⁴ The first phase refers to eidetic phenomenology. The second is, for Soveral, the version of phenomenology started in 1907 and developed in *Ideen*. Regarding the third phase, which would be the version of phenomenology most appropriate for a dialogue with Barbosa’s gnoseological questions, Soveral, revealingly, recognizes that while it is a version pertaining to the “early stages” of phenomenology—but not to be confused with eidetic phenomenology—it finds its expression chiefly in the work of Nicolai Hartmann. Therefore, it is as if the Essential Problem of Knowledge did not have another intersection with phenomenology than the work of an author such as Hartmann, who used phenomenology in the wider context of a “metaphysics of knowledge,” which is quite different from transcendental phenomenology *sensu stricto*.

The attempt to bring the Essential Problem of Knowledge to phenomenology demands the task of developing a completely innovative formulation of that problem, first relatively to Barbosa’s own formulation, and second to phenomenology itself.

A brief analysis of Soveral’s reformulation can show where his endeavors brought him. In relation to Barbosa, the focus is no longer placed on *thought* and the relation of thought to its object, as Barbosa had done by using the concept of “thought” not in a psychological sense but in a logical-semantic one. On the contrary, the focus is now placed on the subject and his act, in a broad psychological and real sense. Soveral does not ask, as Barbosa does, if knowledge is what it seems to be, but rather if the object is immanent to the subject who thinks it. This modification is not unimportant because it gives a subjective-psychological accent to a problematic which, for Barbosa, was strictly “logical” and gnoseological. This difference is assumed by Soveral in a long note in which he explains himself in respect to his teacher. He concludes: “we relate the immanence and transcendence of the object to the subject of knowledge; Barbosa refers both to the thought itself.”

Concerning phenomenology, even if dressed with the phenomenological concepts of intentionality, immanence, and transcendence, the Essential Problem of Knowledge can only be formulated when one imposes on phenomenology a questionnaire which is alien or at least peripheral to it. For the transcendental phenomenology of the *Ideen*, there is no place for the question whether, somewhere behind the reality scrutinized by the meaning-intentions of a constituting transcendental life, there is still a reality in itself which would be similar to it. Reality is the object of the consciousness of reality. And the consciousness of reality is described by the phenomenology of reason. A concept such as “absolute reality,” independent of any relation to a constituting intentionality, makes no good sense for the phenomenology of the *Ideen*. The problem here posed to phenomenology is, therefore, an extra-phenomenological one. And it is precisely in this departure from the transcendental and idealist problematic of *Ideen* that Soveral’s thought would later develop at Oporto University, where he was Full Professor.

¹⁴ *Idem*, pp. 37–38.

Alexandre Morujão (1922–2009) was for about four decades professor at the Faculty of Letters at Coimbra. His undergraduate thesis, *A Doutrina da Intencionalidade na Fenomenologia de Husserl*,¹⁵ is characterized by an approach to phenomenology in terms which are not exactly the ones we find in later works by the same author, but which can be placed alongside the—almost contemporary—approaches by Júlio Fragata or Gustavo de Fraga. His thesis is concerned with testing the limits of phenomenology; that is, more than showing where phenomenology has not gone, he is mostly interested in showing where it can never go, given its starting point.

Therefore, in *A Doutrina da Intencionalidade*, phenomenology—as it appears in *Ideen*—is presented as being simultaneously a reflection oriented towards objects, “in order to discover them as a component of lived experiences,” and as a questioning about the nature of subjectivity, which would “represent what in traditional philosophical conceptions corresponds to the Absolute.” Morujão, in his interpretation of Husserl’s 1913 work, finds at least three problematic points in the attempt to raise subjectivity to the Absolute: (i) an ambiguity in the explanation of the relation between the empirical-psychological Ego and the transcendental Ego; (ii) an insufficiency in the explanation of the meaning of reason that lies beneath the notion of intentionality, making phenomenology, contrary to the grand systems of classical rationalism, a philosophy which explains the finite by the finite, integrating the “imperfection” of objects—since they are only given in adumbrations—in the very process of their constitution; and (iii) a refusal of ontology despite the several ontological implications contained in the doctrine of intentionality, thus reducing phenomenology to an egology or, even worse, “to a *Cogito* limited to a subjectivity without exteriority,” due to the absence of a transcendent being that may give to it real density.

In his later work *Mundo e Intencionalidade*,¹⁶ Morujão fully addresses the main themes of the *Ideen*. Among them, the nature and scope of the *epochē*, objects considered only as intentional formations of consciousness, the reductions, the world as phenomenon, the noetic-noematic correlation, and the relationship between noema and object. It is also in this book that the question concerning the relationship between Husserl and Descartes is raised. Morujão emphasizes the instrumental aspect of the Cartesian doubt in order to explain the *epochē*, but he also shows that the Cartesian path is not the best in order to grant access to the phenomenological attitude. Here the author points to well-known passages in Husserl’s *Erste Philosophie II*. As he puts it, If the *epochē* is the ground upon which one can establish philosophy as a rigorous science, if, as uninterested spectator, I can disconnect “from the existence and consistency of the perceived object and from the existence of the world in general,” this is because there is a disinterested Ego who observes the Ego which is engaged in the world, transforming it in a theme for reflection and preserving all the content of it. Therefore, if some texts from the *Ideen* present a

¹⁵ *A Doutrina da Intencionalidade na Fenomenologia de Husserl* (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1955).

¹⁶ *Mundo e Intencionalidade*, Coimbra, Universidade de Coimbra, 1961.

notion of consciousness similar to the Cartesian one, based on an abrupt split between the pure and the natural (psychological) Ego, this is because they belong to an initial stage of Husserl's formulation of the method of *epochē*, where the method of Cartesian doubt was adopted as a guideline.

Numerous texts of Husserl's last phase correct the account of reduction in his *Ideen*. According to Morujão, phenomenology there established itself immediately in the transcendental ego thanks to the *epochē*, through a reinforcement of the Cartesian doubt, but it is difficult to understand how, from a negative definition of consciousness as "phenomenological residue," one can obtain a new kind of fundamental science. This position starts being corrected in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, where the point of departure is a concrete consciousness. The starting point becomes the *cogitatum* rather than the cogito; the former introduces the latter and not the contrary. But it is in *Erfahrung und Urteil* and in §53 of *Die Krisis* that the *cogitatum* can be interpreted not only as a pre-given world, with all its significative structures and intra-mundane sciences, but also as a life-world. Particularly in *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Husserl explains that the *epochē* is performed, in fact, in two separate moments: first as the return from the pre-given world, with all its meaning sedimentations and scientific determinations, to the primordial life-world; and secondly, as a regressive questioning into the subjective operations of consciousness. In this way are clarified the ontological implications of phenomenology, which already concerned Morujão in his first book. In fact, once the *epochē* is performed, phenomenology cannot present itself as a pure method. Phenomenology needs to know something about the ontological structure of what was made an object of reduction, so that it may ensure the validity of the descriptive procedures it is putting in use. However, the intuitionism of phenomenology is characterized by a permanent wavering between a "seeing that gives the object" and a "seeing which constitutes it." What guides the understanding of the subjective functions is the object perceived and it can only appear in the horizon of the world; that means, however, that the constitutive origin of the world, as Husserl understands it, will always escape the phenomenological regard. This conclusion of phenomenology will hence, according to Morujão, demand a speculative reappraisal.

Gustavo de Fraga (1922–2003) was a professor at the University of Coimbra, where he also completed his PhD with a dissertation titled *De Husserl a Heidegger*.¹⁷ The main theme of his investigations concerning Husserl is the relation between phenomenology and metaphysics, and this theme determines the angle of his approach to the problematic of the *Ideen*. Although the author recognizes some justification in the attempt to eliminate any relation between metaphysical idealism and phenomenology, by making the latter a mere method, he also observes that this would mean a change in its effective course. The truth is that phenomenology's metaphysical implications are immediately present in the relation, albeit tense, between the doctrine of intentionality and the teleology of consciousness, that is, in the postulation of an Absolute prior to all evidence. In Husserl, therefore, the theory

¹⁷ *De Husserl a Heidegger. Elementos para uma Problemática da Fenomenologia*, in *Biblos XL* (1954), pp. 1–260.

of reduction does not culminate in a divinization of subjectivity, although at times it does seem his idealism would lead to it, but rather to an opening of the Ego, via reflection, to an unbounded interiority of an Augustinian brand—which is quite clear in the relations between subjectivity and time—, the metaphysical consequences of which Husserl intended to investigate in later manuscripts. Supported by texts from the Manuscripts E III 9 and E III 10, Fraga finds in Husserl the recognition of a universal absolute will living in subjects, which opens them to an irrational only accessible through faith. Subjectivity is, therefore, the path to the Absolute. Suspending not only the thesis of the world, but also of the unity of an empirical-psychological Ego interested in the world, the reduction departs from the factual Ego and reaches a free, boundless Ego.

According to Fraga, the static analysis of the *Ideen* is surpassed by the discovery of immanent temporality. Some interpreters of Husserl, such as Landgrebe, led, since very early, the interpretation of Husserl's philosophy to a point which is common today. The evolution in Husserl's thought can be retraced, globally, in three phases: (1) a first phase marked by the return to acts in which ideal unities of meaning are constituted; (2) a second one characterized by the constitution of those acts as immanent temporal unities; and (3) a third, finally, characterized by the self-constitution of the temporal flow of consciousness.

In this way, the path leads from an “I” conceived as the “phenomenological residue of *Weltvernichtung*” and as transcendence in immanence, to an “I” as a temporal flux of lived experiences and, beyond this last one—and also beyond the problematic of *Ideen*—to a non-temporal *Ur-Ich*, “an originary present that is not a modality of time,” from which the flux of time arises, as well as the transcendencies flowing in it. Supporting his analyses with the Husserlian C-Manuscripts, Fraga notes that this pure I is the origin of time, but is outside time. Time is founded upon a present which is not in time, because it is from it that time comes out. It is a living-present, similar to the *nunc stans* (to the “what always is”) which, according to Augustine, characterizes God's way of being. It is in this fashion, via time, that, according to Fraga, Husserl follows the path of metaphysics towards the absolute.

Mature Readings

Júlio Fragata (1920–1985), an influential teacher at the University of Braga, Portugal, was a Jesuit who studied theology with Karl Rahner S.J. and presented, a few years later (1954), at the Gregorian University, Rome, a Ph. D. Thesis titled *A Fenomenologia de Husserl como Fundamento da Filosofia*, then published in 1959.¹⁸ His philosophical background in all his life-long dialogue with Husserl was Neo-Thomism, with its nonnegotiable realistic stance.

¹⁸ A *Fenomenologia de Husserl como Fundamento da Filosofia* (Braga: Livraria Cruz, 1959).

Since his early works, Fragata critically considered the purpose of phenomenology to be the radical realization of the idea of scientificity, as Husserl aimed for when he presented his philosophy as a “science free of presuppositions.” The phenomenological reduction of *Ideen* is presented by Fragata as a methodological device conveying an idealism which is only “unreal and methodic”; this idealism is appropriate to fulfill the goal of a first philosophy as a science of things as they are known, but, at its core, it is still compatible with an ontological realism: “Husserl’s idealism may be considered methodic,” “The originality of the *epochē* is precisely that it makes an idealism possible without contradicting realism.”¹⁹

In light of this conflation between his own realism and the interpretation of *Ideen*'s idealism as merely methodic, very early in his work Fragata breaks with Husserl's idea that the phenomenological-transcendental questions exhaust the field of philosophical questions. Fragata's reflexive efforts will therefore aim to show that the return to the natural attitude is not only inevitable within philosophy, but also that only in this attitude can one arrive at the absolutely radical philosophical questions.

This break with Husserl's idea of phenomenology as a science free of presuppositions comes to be gradually developed in the course of Fragata's complete philosophical production. It is, however, already announced, in its essential lines, in the work of 1959, namely, in the way in which he attempts to show an insurmountable difficulty in Husserl's doctrine of intentionality.

In fact, the relation between “predicate-noemata” and the determinable X, or “object pure and simple,” is the *vexata quaestio* of the interpretation of paragraphs 129–34 of the *Ideen*. In Husserl's exposition, the noeses are correlated to an objectual content, or ideal unity of meaning, designated by the term “noema.” Intentionality is not, however, referred to noema as an object, but to the object by means of the noema in such a way that the end-point of the intentional relation is described as an “object X,” which is intended by means of one or many noemata.

Fragata highlights this peculiar transcendence in the midst of the noema, as if consciousness surpassed itself not only to what is immanent to it in an intentional way (the noema itself), but also to what is purely and simply transcendent: “This reference [to object X] can only be explained with a new type of ‘transcendence’ within consciousness and so, therefore, as the noema transcends noesis, so should the ‘object’ transcend the noema.” Fragata interprets this object X as a *tertium quid* between the noema, as intentional immanence, and the transcendent object of the natural attitude, in such a way that it would result from the ambiguous fusion of them. In fact, these texts from the *Ideen* give Fragata the opportunity for an interpretative decision which he expresses as follows: “As a consequence of this theoretical position [Husserl's own], it is as if the intentional object wavers between the noema and the peculiar transcendence of the natural attitude.”²⁰ The object thus maintains,

¹⁹ *Idem*, pp. 189 and 187.

²⁰ *Idem*, p. 144.

on the one hand, “the immanent and therefore intrinsic character of the noema and, on the other hand, a type of immanent transcendence arises here, which gives it a character, if we may express it in this way, of a type of transcendental ‘in itself.’”²¹

This supposed obscurity in Husserl’s doctrine leads Fragata to the first formulation of a far-reaching critique to transcendental phenomenology. For him, the ambiguous status of the object X in the Husserlian doctrine of intentionality in the Ideen means that objectivity cannot be entirely reduced to a subjective genesis (relative to the object only as intended). It also means that the natural attitude is not fully absorbed by the transcendental attitude, but rather that, on the contrary, the world of natural experience should be maintained as a sphere to which philosophy (and not only the empirical sciences) should inevitably return, thus abandoning the phenomenological reduction and the identification of being and being-for consciousness. “We do not recognize the possibility of stopping in pure signification, that is, in the object as merely signified, as Husserl proposes. And this means to fall back, inevitably, into the natural attitude.”²²

Based on these theses, Fragata attempts at last a complete overthrow of Husserl’s fundamental position. For Fragata, “the excess of radicalism manifests itself, in fact, as a lack of radicalism,” because “if Husserl wanted to develop his phenomenology as the true foundation of philosophy, he would have to deny the reality of the object as exterior and, in general, the world existing in itself.” Consequently, “a profound analysis of this problem would lead him to the conclusion that, after all, the true radical attitude consists in starting with the object as known, but not in considering it as merely known.” In this way, “the ideal of radical foundation was, as in Descartes, condemned to failure,” because the necessary departure from the transcendental attitude towards the sphere of the natural one “is not, by any means, equivalent to falling to a naïve or pre-scientific stance,” but is imposed “by virtue of the very same demand for radicalism.”²³

In short, for Fragata, if it is correct that the reduction from being to phenomenon is the appropriate strategy for clarifying the how of knowledge, on the other hand, it leaves completely in the dark the question of how the phenomenon in itself is even possible or, to use his expression, what is the ontological foundation of the “phenomenality of the phenomenon.” This is the reason why the transcendental attitude leads back to the natural attitude. The demand for the conditions of phenomenality imposes a regressive question about the very possibility of givenness, and this is no less than a return to natural attitude. This is the very path which allows Fragata to return, beyond Husserl, to realism and to metaphysical speculation, both so important for his Thomistic education.

Fernando Gil (1937–2006) was an original Portuguese philosopher. Until his death, he taught simultaneously at the New University of Lisbon, Portugal, and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris. He was not a phenomenologist by formation. His life-long intellectual interests were concentrated chiefly in problems

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 249.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 259 and 261.

pertaining to epistemology. Nonetheless, he received continuous inspiration from some authors of the phenomenological tradition, in particular Husserl. As he put it in *La Conviction*, “the epistemological analysis continues itself through the phenomenology of the act of knowing.”²⁴ Reading Husserl, he addressed many questions, like those concerning time-consciousness, the transcendental ego, passive genesis, and, most importantly of all, the phenomenological theory of evidence.

As a matter of fact, as an epistemologist, Gil was concerned by the problems of proof, on the one hand, and by the subjective experience of conviction, on the other. He wrote two books about it: *Preuves* and *La Conviction*.²⁵ Nevertheless, both the objective procedures of proof-making and the subjective growth of conviction, point together to a kind of proto-experience where truth imposes itself without proof, as the compulsive, immediate and direct presence of the thing itself. This proto-experience is called *evidence*. In his book about it, *Traité de l'évidence*, Gil considers Husserl as “the unique thinker who has *deeply* developed a doctrine about evidence.”²⁶ Indeed, Husserl presents a genealogy of evidence in works such as *Erfahrung und Urteil*, and both a description and an epistemic qualification of evidence in works like the *Ideen* and *Cartesianische Meditationen*. Since Gil intends to bring about what he calls an “archeology of evidence,” Husserl’s approach is, then, “the major reference” in his entire book, among so many other authors he discusses at length, such as Duns Scott, Ockham, Descartes, Arnauld, Malebranche, or Moritz Schlick.

Gil starts from the assumption that evidence is entrenched in the perception-language system. Evidence is not the bare intuition of a thing, nor a simple linguistic representation of it. It is rather the settling of a tension going from thing-anticipation through meaning-representation to thing-givenness through intuition; evidence is, then, the outcome of a complete satisfaction of an expectation. Husserl’s fundamental conceptual pair intention/fulfillment is, then, for Gil, a strong insight into the deepest structures of evidence. Husserl refused any affective character of evidence, as Gil remembers, quoting a text from *Ideen* about a supposed “feeling of evidence.” Nonetheless, for Gil, Husserl’s correct refusal of a kind of “mystical” feeling as a mark of evidence is one-sided, after all, because, to begin with, the pair intention/fulfillment is a kind of “theoretical refinement” of a deeper psychic structure based on the pair desire/satisfaction, and, despite his refusal, Husserl himself talks about a “contentment in knowledge,” or a “satisfaction in fulfillment,” or an “endeavor to the possession of the thing itself,” recognizing rightly that “there is a contentment proper to evidence.”²⁷ The other conceptual pair that Gil acknowledges as fundamental for a theory of evidence is Husserl’s related concepts of “adequacy” and “apodicticity,” which Gil puts on the side of the sign in the pairs language/perception, intention/fulfillment (and eventually desire/satisfaction): “adequacy emphasizes the fulfilling presence of the *being* intentioned, while

²⁴ *La Conviction* (Flammarion: Paris, 2000), 182.

²⁵ *Preuves* (Aubier: Paris, 1988); *La Conviction* (Flammarion: Paris, 2000).

²⁶ *Traité de l'évidence* (Jérôme Millon: Grenoble, 1993), 8.

²⁷ *Idem*, pp. 10–11.

apodicticity is like another name for the evident *knowledge*. Apodicticity—peak of the *Richtigkeit*—points to the epistemological side of evidence, whereas adequacy points to its ontological root.”²⁸

Gil’s theory of evidence is developed in two stages. First, he proceeds to the deduction of the concepts of evidence. Second, he identifies the operator of evidence. Regarding the first stage, he presents the concepts of attention (with its roots in orientation), ostention (rooting in contact), intuition (founded in vision), and injunction (arising from voice), as the cornerstones of evidence. The discussion with Husserl’s conceptions is very significant concerning the phenomenological analysis of orientation, attention, contact, and most of all intuition (mainly in the *Ideen* and *Erfahrung und Urteil*). Concerning the second stage, the after all not so surprising thesis of Gil is that *hallucination* is the operator of evidence. The close relation between evidence and hallucination is to a certain extent concealed due to the dominance of the pathological approach to hallucination. Yet the concealment is not so complete, given that “evidence is wholly fashioned by a hallucinatory language, … and the homology—unexpected and non-trivial—between the description of evidence and the description of hallucination.”²⁹

Gil identifies a threefold operation.³⁰ First, what he calls the X-operation (Freud’s “primitive hallucination” of the baby hallucinating his mother’s breast), connecting desire and an aesthesical feeling of satisfaction; second, a H-operation, intellectualizing the aesthesical feeling in the experience of a compulsive presence, which metaphorically express itself as “awaking,” “capture,” “light,” and “voice,” and conceptually through the full Husserlian concepts of “attention,” “ostention,” and “intuition”; finally, an E-operation transforms presence into adequacy, and satisfaction into apodicticity. These two last operators (not considering the metaphorical dimensions) constitute, for Gil, the core of Husserl’s phenomenological analysis. They are rooted, however, in the efficacy of an X-operation hallucinating aesthesia from desire, which is beyond the reach of Husserl’s phenomenological methods of description.

The object of evidence is something existent, and all existents are individual, says Gil in the final chapter of his *Traité de l’évidence*. Husserl’s dictum in *Erfahrung und Urteil*—“experience is the evidence of individual objects”—is, then, for Gil, a truth that points back to unsuspected depths of our psychic life. They explain, we could say at last, following Gil’s analyses, why experience of a surrounding world of individual objects is, for us, something so interesting and so unavoidable.

João Paisana (1945–2001) was a professor at the Faculty of Letters of University of Lisbon, Portugal. His main work *Fenomenologia e Hermenêutica*³¹ studies the difference between Husserl’s and Heidegger’s phenomenologies. He characterizes the first as reflexive and explicative, and the second as hermeneutical. According to Paisana, both authors would agree that only a meaning-structure could capture a being as such, disagreeing, however, about its nature. For Husserl, this structure has

²⁸ *Idem*, p. 11.

²⁹ *Idem*, p. 220.

³⁰ *Idem*, pp. 218–252.

³¹ *Fenomenologia e Hermenêutica* (Lisboa, Editorial Presença, 1992).

an apophantic character and is revealed through an analysis of the intentional content of the acts of consciousness, while, for Heidegger, this structure is revealed in an “encounter” which grounds the possibility of predication and the constitution of being as an object for a theoretical stance. The core of Paisana’s argument is to claim that, not only do the modalities of this “encounter,” established by Heidegger, arise from a development of the *als Struktur*, as Husserl presented it in *Logische Untersuchungen*, but also that the hermeneutical reinterpretation of the *als Struktur* allows for the overcoming of some difficulties in the explicative phenomenology.

Trying to describe the intentional content of a lived experience in *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl draws a distinction between three senses in which such content can be understood: either as an intentional object, or as the act matter in opposition to its quality, or as an intentional essence. Within the first sense, however, Husserl still makes a further distinction: between the object as such and that same object according to how—*als was*—it is intended. Husserl defends, therefore, that in any intentional act an object can only be intended insofar as it is determined in a certain way: for example, the Emperor of Germany *as the Emperor of Germany* and not, for instance, as the grandson of Queen Victoria. The intentions are not, however, strictly nominal. A full intentional act has a syntactic structure, conveying categorical elements that are not given in sensible intuition. Thus the well-known question of “categorical intuition”: it seems that it pervades already the putative more simple and fundamental sphere of sensible intuition.

In his work, Paisana analyses Heidegger’s position regarding the theory of categorical intuition, which the latter considered the *Brennpunkt* of *Logische Untersuchungen*. If, as Husserl proposes, the perceived is in fact an object, the objectuality of the object is not itself perceived in sensible intuition, but depends of a previous understanding of the sense of being. According to Heidegger, this paradox was not sufficiently taken into account by Husserl given that, when referring to the sensible object, Husserl never thinks of the *thing* perceived as such, but always of it already determined as an object. Being, for Husserl, is being an object, as Heidegger will say, and this purported evidence will allow Husserl to defend that between categorical and sensible intuition there is a relation of grounding where-upon the first is grounded upon the latter. Husserl could not, therefore, notice the limits of his explicative phenomenology, that is, the impossibility of accounting for the modalities of the pre-objective “encounter” with being as such. For Heidegger, for the intuition of a being to be possible, as well as predication, a previous understanding of the sense of being is already presupposed. Heideggerian phenomenology will thus adopt the figure of a hermeneutics of factual existence where the understanding of being originally takes place.

Paisana argues that Husserl, after the *Logische Untersuchungen*, and particularly after the *Ideen*, only intended to determine the possibilities of explicative phenomenology, grounding it on the fact that consciousness, through reflection, comes to an explicit experience of what it objectifies. It is the *epochē*, then, which will allow phenomenology the exclusive concentration on the transcendental field. In order for phenomenology to be able to present itself as a universal science and not as a particular science of the psychic realm, it would be necessary that it could present consciousness as an autonomous reality from which all other kinds of reality are constituted. However,

the author interprets Husserl's position after the publication of the *Ideen* as consisting also in a partial self-criticism in relation to the positions defended in this work, in particular, regarding the manner in which the intentional analysis was conducted. Husserl becomes aware that the world is more than a fluid and changing field of perceived things, but also implies a horizon which surrounds the perceived and refers to a bundle of possibilities of penetrating it. In other words, Husserl recognizes the need to abandon the primacy of intentional objectifying acts. They presuppose a more fundamental kind of "intentionality" or, to speak Heidegger's language, they are based in a previous encounter and in a previous comprehension of the sense of beingness.

Will this final turn of Husserl's thought allow for reconciliation between explicative phenomenology and hermeneutical phenomenology? That possibility will be denied by Paisana.

For Husserl, the pre-given world will not let itself be studied in the natural attitude of everyday life. The access to it requires the practice of an *epochē*, even if of a different kind than the one developed in *Ideen*. This new *epochē*—as an *epochē* of the objective sciences—is required by the new orientation of intentional analysis that does not start from the objectifying consciousness, as it happened in the work from 1913. As Paisana recognizes, remembering Husserl's own words in *Krisis*, it has its starting point in the universal constitutive life in which the world appears as continuously pre-given. But this is, nonetheless, a new orientation still within explicative phenomenology; it is not a severing from it and an approach to the theses of the hermeneutics of facticity. The point is that, as the author defends, now referring to *Erfahrung und Urteil*, this pre-given world, albeit it is ante-predicative, is not pre-objective, it is a world of individual objects perceptively constituted that passes continuously to the theoretical stance through the spontaneity of judgment. Even departing from intentionality as an objectifying act and reaching the pre-given world of the *Lebenswelt*, the question about the "objectuality of objects" (or about the sense of being in Heidegger's idiom) remains a silent and dark point in Husserl's explicative phenomenology. This is why, for Paisana, explicative phenomenology must be overturned by hermeneutic phenomenology.

At last, it is worth noting the work of Maria Manuela Saraiva about Husserl's concept of imagination. Her research was about the several Husserlian concepts of imagination (*Phantasie*, *Bildvorstellung*, *Neutralitätsmodifikation*) chiefly in *Logische Untersuchungen* and *Ideen*. The work was presented as a PhD thesis to the *Institut Supérieur de Philosophie de l'Université de Louvain* in 1963 and published in 1970 in the *Phaenomenologica* collection.³²

Some Glimpses Beyond

The interest in Husserl's *Ideen* continues today. In Brazil, Creusa Capalbo, at the University of Rio de Janeiro, and Carlos Alberto Ribeiro de Moura, at the University of São Paulo, have a strong interest in Husserl's works and have written several

³² *L'imagination selon Husserl*. *Phaenomenologica* 34 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970).

essays about the phenomenology of the *Ideen*. In Portugal, Carlos Aurélio Morujão, at the Catholic University of Lisbon, and Pedro M. S. Alves, at the University of Lisbon, are as well fully committed to Husserl studies. A Portuguese phenomenological journal, named *Phainomenon*, has been edited since 2002.

A first Portuguese translation of *Ideen*, by Márcio Suzuki, was published in Brazil in 2006, with an introduction by Carlos Moura. A second Portuguese translation, by Alves and Fidalgo, will be published in 2013, in the centenary of the celebrated *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*.

Chapter 19

Alfred Schutz and the Problem of Empathy

Michael Barber

But all of these things are questions of detail, which are of a subordinate kind and say nothing against the deep admiration, which the repeated reading of this wonderful book elicits in me.
(Schutz to Kaufmann, August 27, 1930)

The Influence of the *Ideen* on Schutz

Though Schutz criticized Husserl's treatment of intersubjectivity in the *Ideen* (1913), he also recognized its achievements. Phenomenological reduction, developed in *Ideen I*, yields many "profound insights relating to the foundation of the social sciences,"¹ and Schutz employs it in *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (1932), but "only so far as this is necessary for acquiring a clear understanding of internal time-consciousness."² The reduction makes focal not objects but their meanings, and these objects appear as the unities of meanings that constitute reality (as opposed to the ontological structure of objects). Consequently, at precisely the point where Schutz in his later "On Multiple Realities" contrasts his finite provinces of *meaning* with William James' (*ontological*) sub-universes of reality, it is not surprising that

¹ Alfred Schutz, "Edmund Husserl's Ideas, Volume II," *Collected Papers*, vol. 3: *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, ed. I Schutz (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 39.

² Alfred Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt: Eine Einleitung in die verstehende Soziologie*, ed. M. Endress and J. Renn, vol. 2: *Alfred Schütz Werkausgabe*, ed. R. Grathoff, H-G. Soeffner, and I. Srubar, redaction, M. Endress (Konstanz: UVK, 2004), 129, 129n.59, translated as *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, trans. G. Walsh and F. Lehnert (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 43, 43n.82.

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he cites *Ideen I*, thereby showing its methodological influence on his later work.³ Parts III and IV of *Der sinnhafte Aufbau* depends upon Husserl's "Nachwort zu meinen 'Ideen,'" (1931) which provides for a "constitutive phenomenology of the natural standpoint."⁴ Such a phenomenology, which avoids the transcendental reduction and the nest of problems with intersubjectivity that accompany its deployment, yields a phenomenological psychology consisting of an eidetic analysis of the inner experience of a society of living minds.⁵

In the *Aufbau*, Schutz regularly acknowledges his indebtedness to Husserl for his insightful accounts in *Ideen I* on: the intentional animation of hyletic data in perceptual experience⁶; the flow of consciousness, including retention, recollection, reflective anticipation, and memory⁷; the noetic and noematic sides of experience⁸; and the recovery of the constituting processes that lie behind science's fully formed propositions and that can be insightfully reactivated.⁹ Schutz contrasts the different kinds of potentiality opened up when a thetic act is able to pass into doubt, probability, or questioning and when conscious processes themselves can be neutralized (e.g., in phenomenological reflection), and he relates these kinds of potentiality to objective and subjectivity probability respectively.¹⁰ In his later works, Schutz cites *Ideen I* for the "consciousness of" nature of experience¹¹; the description of experience "exploding" objects (e.g., the tree in the distance turns out to be human)¹²; the neutralizing of thetic consciousness through imagining (though neutralizing differs from phantasy)¹³; and the fringes or horizons of the

³ Alfred Schutz, "On Multiple Realities," *The Problem of Social Reality*, vol. 1 of *Collected Papers*, ed. M. Natanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 230; German translation: "Über die manigfaltigen Wirklichkeiten," *Theorie der Lebenswelt 1: Die pragmatische Schichtung der Lebenswelt*, ed. M. Endress and I. Srubar, vol. 5.1 *Alfred Schütz Werkausgabe*, 206; Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, 1: *Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Karl Schumann, *Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, III/1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 1210–11 [henceforth *Hua III*], translated as *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book: *General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1983), 128–29.

⁴ Edmund, Husserl, "Nachwort," *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, 3: *Die Phänomenologie und die Fundamente der Wissenschaften*, ed. Marly Biemel, *Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 5 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), 158, translated as "Epilogue," *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, 2: *Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, *Collected Works*, vol. 3 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989), 426.

⁵ Husserl, "Nachwort," 144/Epilogue, 426.

⁶ Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, 119 /*Phenomenology of the Social World*, 35.

⁷ Ibid., 152–54/57–58, 162/64, 169/67, 219/97.

⁸ Ibid., 175–76/71.

⁹ Ibid., 189n.80/83n.82.

¹⁰ Ibid., 425–426/238.

¹¹ Alfred Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, vol. 3: *Collected Papers*, ed. I Schutz (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 5.

¹² Schutz, *The Problem of Social Reality*, 235.

¹³ Ibid.

past and future experiences accompanying each actual experienced present.¹⁴ Even when not explicit, Schutz borrows from *Ideen I*, as, for instance, when he uses the same example, a table, which for Husserl maintains its identity across multiple intra-psychic perspectives, to explain how an object retains its identity across multiple interpersonal perspectives.¹⁵

The *Ideen* also underlies Schutz's appreciation of the uniqueness of each individual's consciousness. He describes "the possibility of synthetic unity as the central viewpoint in phenomenology"¹⁶; and just as separate, polythetic acts are gathered into higher syntheses, yielding a monothetically given object, so the total configuration of one's experience, lived out step by step throughout one's duration, makes one's experience "mine."¹⁷ Therefore, no one's consciousness could coincide with anyone else's since one would have had to live through the other's experiences in the order and intensity in which they were experienced, as Husserl himself observed.¹⁸ By the way, the polythetic/monothetic distinction in *Ideen I* plays a foundational role in Schutz's theory of music, the meaning of which "is essentially of a polythetical structure."¹⁹

Another aspect of the *Ideen* that Schutz engages is "essential insight."²⁰ Despite his criticism that *Wesensschau* often proved to be a stumbling block, he draws on Husserl's treatment of essences in *Ideen I* when he considers the "pure form" of Thou-orientation, which is only an "ideal limit" since in real life we always meet real people with concrete personal characteristics, just as ideal essences (e.g., in mathematics) set an ideal limit that descriptive, morphological essences can only approach.²¹ In explaining our familiarity with musical pieces on the basis of the socially derived, everyday types, Schutz explicitly refers to *Ideen I* and *III* when he discusses how one can obtain from such types via eidetic method an understanding of pure universals.²²

Finally, in "Symbol, Reality, and Society," Schutz explains how the later Husserl concentrated on "pairing," a form of passive synthesis, in which consciousness constitutes two or more distinct phenomena as a unity. Though Schutz was not satisfied with *Ideen II*'s use of instant, unreflective "pairing" (and not self-conscious inference) to explain how the other's material body appresents her conscious life, he admitted that Husserl rightly saw in *Ideen I* that all signitive relations are special cases of appresentation based on pairing (e.g., words appresenting meanings).²³

¹⁴ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 11.

¹⁵ Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, 323/170–71; Husserl, *Hua III*: 84/86–87.

¹⁶ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 10.

¹⁷ Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, 179–80/75.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Alfred Schutz, *Studies in Social Theory*, vol. 2: *Collected Papers*, ed. A. Brodersen (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 172; *Hua 5*: 274–77/284–87.

²⁰ Schutz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau*, 887–92/8–11.

²¹ Ibid., 324–25/164; Alfred Schutz, *Collected Papers 4*, ed. H. Wagner, G. Psathas, and F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1996), 194.

²² Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 107; *Hua 5*: 154–85/167–96.

²³ Alfred Schutz, "Symbol, Reality, and Society," *The Problem of Social Reality*, 294–96, 314.

Despite this rather massive reliance on the volumes of Husserl's *Ideen*, Schutz takes issue with Husserl on intersubjectivity, particularly within *Ideen II*, which he and Maurice Natanson had paraphrased but never published.²⁴ Schutz's critical comments appear in "Edmund Husserl's Ideas, Volume II" (1953) and "Das Problem der transzendentalen Intersubjektivität bei Husserl."²⁵

First of all, Schutz contests Husserl's identification of the "optimal" or "true" appearance of an object in the solipsistic sphere with the "normal" appearance since the latter depends on the intersubjective acceptance of objective nature. Secondly, he raises questions about the relationship of the various I's introduced by Husserl in *Ideen II* (the I-man, the psychological I, the spiritual I, and the transcendental ego) and about how I-subjects relate to I-objects (the I and Me). Thirdly, he inquires about the relationship between the I-can motivations of the spiritual personalistic sphere and idea-psychical dependences (e.g., attractions to object) as causal dependencies on environmental circumstances.²⁶

Fourthly, Schutz finds Husserl's account of empathy inadequate, particularly the idea that the material thing appearing as another's body "of the same type" as my own, triggers a transfer of sensations localized in my body to another human being. Schutz objects that perhaps other thinkable bodies (e.g., of animals) might appear as the same type as my own, that Husserl's argument does not take sufficient account of the difference between the body for me and the body for the other, that the localization of sensations belongs to the sphere of vitality and is incapable of transference by empathy (presumably understood as more a matter of a spiritual level), and that specific localizations become problematic if the other is a female and I am a male.²⁷

Schutz declares, fifthly, that Husserl's analysis of sociality and social groups is "the least satisfactory part" of *Ideen II* since he overlooks how communication presupposes a social relationship based, one might presume, on the mutual "tuning-in" relationship between communicator and addressee of communication that Schutz explains in "Making Music Together."²⁸ Finally, Schutz rejects Husserl's idea of social personalities of a higher order (collectivities), and he suggests that the effort of Georg Simmel, Max Weber, and Max Scheler to reduce social collectivities to interactions between individuals is closer to the spirit of phenomenology.²⁹

²⁴ Michael Barber, *The Participating Citizen: A Biography of Alfred Schutz* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 175.

²⁵ Alfred, Schutz, "Das Problem der transzendentalen Intersubjektivität bei Husserl" 5 (1957): 81–107; translated as "The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl," *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 51–91; a recent translation with comments by Dorion Cairns appears in *Schutzian Research* 2 (2010): 9–52.

²⁶ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 36–37.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 38; Alfred Schutz, "Making Music Together," *Studies in Social Theory*, 177.

²⁹ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 38–39.

In “Das Problem der transzendentalen Intersubjektivität bei Husserl,” after presenting Husserl’s views on empathy in *Ideen I*, particularly about how the other is never originally given, and after presenting and criticizing the three stages of Husserl’s argument for the transcendental constitution of the other in the Fifth Cartesian Meditation (i.e., the second *epochē*, the apperceptive transfer of the sense “lived body” to the other, and the appresentation of the full concretization of the other),³⁰ Schutz turns to the discussion of intersubjectivity in *Ideen II*. He questions the possibility of the empathic transfer of localizations and insists that reciprocal understanding is presupposed by a community of knowledge and communication.³¹ Finally, he rejects again personal unities of a higher order, which involve an “excessive metaphorical usage of inadequate terms”³² that shows a “regrettable ignorance of the concrete sciences of society”³³ on Husserl’s part.

The Problem of Empathy

Introduction: Genetic Phenomenology

Husserl holds that an apperceptive transfer of the sense “animate organism” from myself to another takes place in empathy (*Einfühlung*), here meaning a practical recognizing of the other being as engaged with me as an interactive and conscious counterpart, as opposed to the “sympathizing with another” signified in common parlance. However, Schutz in his critique of Husserl’s *Ideen II* and *Cartesianische Meditationen* asserts that the differences between myself and the other are so fundamental that the transfer of “animate organism” from myself to another becomes problematic. Schutz asks, for instance, how I could carry out the transfer of localization of sensations to the other if I am a man and the other a woman.³⁴ Furthermore, the difference deepens insofar as I experience my own consciousness originally, from within, and I never have such an experience of the other.³⁵ I will argue that these criticisms fail because they overlook key issues regarding *Einfühlung*: (1) the genetic character of the discussion of empathy; (2) the basic and widespread tendency of mental life to identify and assimilate; (3) the level beneath thought at which empathy occurs; (4) the massive similarities present between animate organisms; (5) the pervasive practice of consciousness to project itself beyond itself; and (6) the massiveness and constancy of the unique kind of validation involved in such sense transfers.

³⁰ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 51–53, 57–69.

³¹ Ibid., 57–59.

³² Ibid., 73.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Schutz, *Studies in Phenomenological Philosophy*, 38.

³⁵ Ibid., 63.

The discussion of empathy is best understood, first of all, as an example of “genetic phenomenology” attempting to return to the genesis of the experience, that is, to a “primal instituting”³⁶ in which “an object with a similar sense (animate organism) became constituted for the first time.”³⁷ How is it, Husserl asks, that something grasped as an animate organism “must have derived this sense”?³⁸ What must have gone on in order for me to be able to recognize another as an animate organism? The meditating ego can penetrate into the intentional constituents of experience and discover intentional references leading back to a “history.”³⁹ Although Husserl in the Fifth Meditation seems to conceive the transcendental constitution of the other, of which the transfer of the sense “animate organism” to another is a stage, as an example of “static phenomenology,” many prominent commentators suggest that he is methodologically confused and that this transfer is a matter of genetic phenomenology.⁴⁰ If one considers the transfer of sense as instancing static phenomenology, as a stage in the constitution of the Other undertaken by a deliberate, meditating phenomenologist within the constraints of phenomenological reduction, then Schutz’s objection that however similar the other may be to me, the glaring difference, that I do not have originary access to the other’s consciousness the way I do to my own, would block the sense-transfer. Furthermore, Husserl would have seemed to contradict himself in arguing both for the similarity between my body and the other’s (a similarity that warrants the sense-transfer “animate organism”) and yet affirming that my body stands out since it is given to me originally, as the other’s never is. By contrast, if the transfer of sense has to do with genetic phenomenology, which returns to the moment when one first recognizes another, one could be talking about how a child recognizes “scissors” and transfers that sense to other scissors-likenesses, automatically and immediately. In such cases, there may not be much concern over the evidence contradicting the transfer (e.g., the lack of originary experience of the other) or much noticing even that one is contradicting oneself.

³⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, ed. Dr. S. Strasser, *Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke 1* (henceforth *Hua 1*) (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), 141; translated as *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), 111.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 140/110.

³⁹ Ibid., 113/79.

⁴⁰ Julia Iribarne, *Husserls Theorie der Intersubjektivität* (Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Aber, 1994), 29, 30, 42, 43, 44, 46–47, 52; Iso Kern, “Einleitung des Herausgebers,” Zur *Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität, Texte aus dem Nachlass, Dritter Teil: 1905–1920*, ed. Iso Kern, *Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 15 (henceforth *Hua 15*) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973) xxi; Nam-In Lee, “Static-Phenomenological and Genetic-Phenomenological Concept of Primordiality in Husserl’s Fifth ‘Cartesian Meditation,’” *Husserl Studies* 18 (2002): 165–83; Klaus Held, “Das Problem der Intersubjektivität und die Idee einer phänomenologischen Transzendentalphilosophie” in *Perspektiven transzentalphänomenologischer Forschung*, ed. U. Claesges and Klaus Held (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), 25.

This lack of concern corresponds to the fact that genetically conceived apperceptive transfers on the basis of analogy or similarity are passive associations taking place beneath the level of conscious control, as we shall see.

Similarities

In our everyday, extroverted relationship to objects, we are inevitable typifiers. In experiencing anything for the first time, the experience sets up an abiding, more or less strong expectation that anything like it will be experienced as it was. We “apperceive,” that is, bring to perception the set of meaning-predicates that we have acquired in our history and that we apperceptively transfer to whatever is like what we have experienced before assimilating the new to the already experienced.⁴¹ As Dorian Cairns remarked, “the fundamental tendencies of mental life are tendencies to identify and to assimilate.”⁴² Similar data congeal with other similar data forming lower level unities and building up gradually into higher level unities. Bodies covered with fur remind us of other bodies with fur, and gradually we build up the idea of a “dog” by conjoining furriness with other conglomerates of features (e.g., sharp teeth, barking, etc.) to form the higher idea of “dog,” a unity of already united features.

Likewise empathy needs to be understood as part of this being led to assimilate or associate similar with similar, a fundamental law of consciousness. For instance, in encountering something external that bears any similarity to ourselves, it immediately reminds us of that in us to which it is similar. Hence to see a hand shaped like my hand, I am immediately reminded of my own hand. And of course, the experience my hand has of its own inner feeling, that is, what it feels like from within that hand, I immediately associate with the other’s hand opposite to me. That is, I assume that this other’s hand which is shaped like mine and externally resembles it, also has its inner experience the way I do. There is a transfer back and forth, the similarity of the other’s hand to mine reminds me of my own hand, and my hand’s internal experience is associated with the hand of the other that is external and similar to my own. So when Schutz objects that accounts of empathy emphasize similarities and pass over differences, he overlooks this fundamental tendency of consciousness to notice similarities, whether in the perception of objects or empathy.

⁴¹ Edmund Husserl, *Die Lebenswelt: Auslegungen der vorgegebenen Welt und ihrer Konstitution, Texte aus dem Nachlass (1916–1937)*, ed. Rochus Sowa, *Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 39 (henceforth *Hua* 39) (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 443, 517.

⁴² Dorian Cairns, “Some Applications of Husserl’s Theory of Sense-Transfer,” ed. L. Embree, F. Kersten, R. M. Zaner, *The New Yearbook for Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy* 7 (2007): [309–35] 315.

An Objection and “Beneath the Controlling I”

Of course one might object with Schutz that when I transfer the inner experience of my hand to the other’s hand externally comparable to my own, I still overstep what is rationally legitimate since I lack any inner experience of the other’s hand. In raising this question, Schutz thinks like a philosopher, much as one would expect of someone engaging in the transcendental constitution of another under phenomenological reduction. However, such assimilative syntheses, or apperceptive transfers, take place through passive associations that happen on a lower level of conscious activity,⁴³ beneath the threshold of the control of the I and certainly of higher level philosophical deduction. These transfers are “motivated,” not physically caused, on the basis of the relationship of similarity between what we have experienced (in the past, e.g., my hand) and what we are now encountering (another’s hand). Hence the other’s hand “reminds” me, instantly, of my hand, and the internal experience of it is immediately imputed to the other’s hand, similar to mine. Again as Cairns observed, these kinds of assimilative syntheses happen on a level of believing that is more fundamental than thinking.⁴⁴ It is no wonder then that Husserl himself repeatedly insists that the apperceptive transfer of inner conscious experience to the other on the basis of an analogy (or similarity) between my body and the other’s, is not a matter of any deductive conclusion of analogy.⁴⁵

In apperceptive transfers, however, the basis is similarity, not identity. Hence, the objects passively associated with each other could be similar in some respects and different in others. The linkage between my hand and the other’s would hold even though the other’s hand were brown-skinned and mine white-skinned. Differences, though, do not preclude the transfer. Here the automatic, passive nature of the assimilative syntheses, taking place beneath the level of the controlling I, on the basis of similarities that do not preclude differences being present, seems not to be taken account of sufficiently by Schutz who reflectively points out differences, even basic differences, that he thinks should prohibit the transfer of sense “animate organism.”

Multiple Similarities

Another factor that Schutz seems to overlook is the extensive similarities present between animate organisms. Beyond the similarity existing between my hand and another human being’s hand, various species possess other features that passively

⁴³ Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität, Texte aus dem Nachlass, Erster Teil: 1905–1920*, ed. Iso Kern, *Husserliana, Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. XIII (henceforth *Hua* 13) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 431.

⁴⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität, Texte aus dem Nachlass, Zweiter Teil: 1905–1920*, ed. Iso Kern, *Husserliana, Husserliana*, vol. XIV (henceforth *Hua* 14) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 498; Cairns, “Some Applications of Husserl’s Theory of Sense-Transfer,” 312–14, 323, 335.

⁴⁵ *Hua* 15: 14; *Hua* 13: 431.

evoke the transfer, such as the hands or feet of primates, similar to my own; organs used for grasping things, as crabs' claws; and the sensitivity of skin and correlative reaction-movements, as when a worm withdraws from being pricked or an animal's forehead wrinkles when it is pained. The assorted behaviors of another lived body can elicit the transfer insofar as I am reminded of my lived body by the other's: valuing; striving; acting; grasping according to right or left, before or after; shoving; bumping up against; touching; carrying; doing; suffering; being pained by bright sunlight; acting; reacting; retreating before an object of fear; being attracted to food; eating; producing the agitated movements and shrieking voice indicative of anger; achieving ends; seeing; and judging or speaking out (the latter two being particularly human).⁴⁶

However, it is not merely the having of organs similar to mine or the sharing of many similar features, though, that evokes the transfer of "animate organism" to the other. One can imagine a decapitated head with its eyes frozen open, and one might not make the transfer—in fact such an experience can be extremely uncomfortable insofar as one notices eyes, ears, and a mouth like one's own, but no motion at all. The head does not exhibit animation, and this strangeness or even eeriness upsets the usually immediate transfer of the sense "animate organism" to which I would be inclined on the basis of physical features similar to my own. What is further necessary is that body resembling mine in its eyes, ears, mouth, or mien also appear as single, unified, whole organism in which another subject governs or holds sway (*walten*). As examples of animals holding sway in their animate organism, one might think of the dog playing with the newspaper in coordination with my extending the paper toward it or the fish softly waving its fins and a tail in such a way as to maintain a stable position in the water so that it might be able to look at me.

Before scientific reflection might set in to criticize the ideas that dogs play games or fish purposively stabilize themselves to look at us, in everyday life we transfer the sense "animate organism" on the basis of a wide variety of analogical organs and behaviors, feet, hands, heads, eyes, wrinkled brows, retreating from invasive touching, governing in an organism, governing in correlation with one's own governing in one's organism, and so on. Perhaps Husserl emphasized that the transfer of this sense takes place across a wide variety of beings, from humans to dogs to gorillas to fish to worms to accentuate how the smallest similarities evoke the transfer despite much larger differences than those that Schutz points out. Hence, the differences between myself and a worm or between myself and a fish are much more profound than the differences between a male or female human being or even between someone who has originary experience of his or her consciousness and someone to whose consciousness he or she does not have originary access. It is as if Husserl is suggesting that the multiple and varied possible similarities that evoke the transfer far outweigh even major differences.

The very functioning of empathy across species on the least analogical basis supports Cairns's claim that the tendency to identify and assimilate is a fundamental tendency of mental life and the wide extent of empathy reinforces the view that

⁴⁶Hua 14: 240.

these transfers occur through passive association beneath the level of rationality and beyond the “I’s” control. It is telling in this regard that Schutz faults Husserl for seeming to attribute consciousness to non-human beings; it is as though Schutz does not recognize the pervasiveness and uncontrolledness of pre-rational assimilative processes. Furthermore, the widespread anthropomorphism that characterizes even the most critical of humans who in non-scientific everyday life readily attribute purposes or feelings to animals (e.g., the dog is saddened or the mouse wants the cheese on the trap) may be residua from the prior, more fundamental strata that involves the empathic transfer of the sense “animate organism.” Indeed, Cairns points to residua of pervasive animistic transfers even to inanimate objects in the fact that we do such things as think of violent weather as indicative of nature’s anger even though our scientifically sophisticated culture might discredit such anthropomorphism as irrational. Such anthropomorphism further suggests that transfers have always already taken place since the adult critical examination of such anthropomorphism always comes later with respect to strata of experience that have already left their mark upon us, that point to past assimilations that we may not even recall, and that require genetic rather than static phenomenology for their recovery.

Pervasively Transposing the Self

The tendency on the preconceptual level to impute inner experience, for example, to the other’s hand similar to mine has the effect of doubling myself, as if there were another I, like mine, “over there,” whose experience is similar to my own, and one moves on to suppose that “other I” experiences things similarly to the way I would if I were there.⁴⁷ These anticipated similarities, which take place beneath the control of the rational I, all have the character of a self-transposition, a placing of myself or experience like mine into another spatial position that I could potentially occupy and that is other than the one I currently occupy. Because consciousness continually engages in the varied forms of self-transposition to be discussed below and does so in extensive and intricate ways, I will argue here that empathy, the transference of the sense “animate organism” to another, is but one variant of such self-transposition, analogously bound to the others. By association with these assorted forms of self-transposition, empathy acquires their unreflective, automatic, and habitual character. It is as if empathy, the transference of the sense “animate organism” to another, belongs to a range of interconnected patterns of self-transposition that are so readily and constantly enacted that the Schutzian objection, namely that I do not experience the other originally as I do myself, strikes one as strange if it is meant to imply that one should hesitate to enact empathic transference.

The beginning of this tendency to self-transpose can be traced to one of the fundamental features of consciousness observed by Husserl, namely its inclination to

⁴⁷ Hua 13: 263; Hua 14: 489, 499, 500, 514.

“intend-beyond-itself,” an inclination implicit in any consciousness and an essential moment of it.⁴⁸ Hence, in perceiving an object, one is aware that that the object is surrounded by horizons, possibilities to be explored or uncovered, potentialities which conscious life could realize, different points of view that one might take up on the object at hand, were one to venture into such horizons. In envisioning such possibilities, one would think of one’s body as if it were over there and that “there” would become a new “here” analogous to the spatial position one now occupies, and one anticipates having in that new “here” a conscious experience of the object at hand analogous to the experience one has from the here one now occupies.⁴⁹

Although imagining my body as over there and looking upon it as if it were (completely) external to myself is impossible since my I has its center, or *Nullpunkt*, of orientation within my body, nevertheless, I could consistently see the body of the other over there, external to me, and, conversely, the other could consistently see my body as appearing completely exterior to itself. However, I can transpose a consciousness *like* mine over there in that body of the other *like* mine, and that transposed consciousness can be taken to be looking at my body as external to itself—and I can do this all consistently as long as this other I is not identical with mine, but only *similar* to it. If one transfers the sense “animate organism” to another by reason of his or likeness to me, the potential positions one might take upon an object at hand as one penetrates the horizon of an object at hand can be easily assimilated to the bodily position *another* might assume in relation to the same object at hand. In so doing it is as if the other’s viewpoint would be another version of one’s own on the object at hand, as if one’s own potential point of view on object at hand would also be a version of the other’s, and as if the other were another self like one’s own self, only in a different position.⁵⁰

As I watch another deal with an object similarly as I do, as the dog, for instance, with the newspaper when we play together, our similar reactions indicate that we are dealing with the same thing. When an animal walks to the left to avoid bumping into a table, as I would, this fact leads me to believe that it is the same table to which both of us are relating. Just as the thing retains an identity across the various perspectives I take upon it, through time, so the identical thing retains its identity across the different perspectives that I and the other conscious animal are taking upon it. The newspaper which is experienced by me is also being experienced by the dog: we are experiencing the same object. The sense of a common world, then, depends upon the recognition of another who is conscious like me and seeing what I am seeing, and, conversely, the continued common experience of the same object reinforces the belief that the other consciousness “there” is like mine. The massively common experience of our world, then, confirms the empathetic transfer of “animate organism” to the other.⁵¹

⁴⁸ *Hua* 1: 84/46.

⁴⁹ *Hua* 13: 277.

⁵⁰ *Hua* 15: 571.

⁵¹ *Hua* 14: 241, 376.

Although we transpose ourselves or experience like ours into another at a spatial distance from ourselves, such self-transposition can happen across temporal boundaries also. If we think that we have access to our predecessors, who do not share our time, through the documents or artifacts they leave behind, do not these higher level activities (leaving documents or artifacts) build upon and presuppose that I have transferred the sense “animate” organism to this predecessor on some level or would have if he or she were present? Is not such a transference of sense dependent upon transfers of such sense that take place in the present and are then transferred into the past? Similarly, if we seek to explain the mass migration of animals in the past by looking for some cataclysmic event or loss of food sources, are we not presupposing our experience of the way animals in the present flee dangers or hunt for food? To attribute such fleeing or hunting to another in the present depends upon a prior transference of the sense “animate organism” to such animals, and, as it we have seen above, it could be that behaviors like fleeing danger or hunting for food as we do might underlie the sense-transference itself. Even though history may illuminate our erroneous suppositions about how others, including animals, are like us, the writing of history itself presupposes and extends the fundamental experience of empathy in the present.

This tendency to transpose oneself into the other that lies at the root of empathy involves, as we have seen on the philosophical plane, an overstepping of what philosophers might claim is rationally legitimate since we lack any access to the other’s inner experience. Despite the fact that this tendency to transpose oneself is to be found in the “intending-beyond” basic to all intentionality (accompanied by horizons), to apperceptive transfers (e.g., of the sense “animate organism” to another) on the basis of similarity, and to the multiple perspectives that can be adopted on the perceived objects in our common world—it is part of a constant tendency to realize potentialities by going beyond what is given in the now—the philosophical critics have a point: the other is never originally given to me. The other is never *present* to me, but only *re-presented*. Empathy always involves realizing possibilities beyond what is given originally to me. But, in fact, we transpose ourselves repeatedly within our own consciousness in “re-presentations” beyond presentations—empathy can be seen as analogous to all such processes.

The first example of re-presentations (*Ve-rgegenwärtigungen*) that move beyond presentations appears in perception in which the non-accessible sides of an object are appresented, or represented, beyond the core of what is perceived; the edge of the house announces the side of the house I do not see. The announced, but not yet accessed, side of the house is available to me without being present in the way the side of the house that I face is. In a like way, we can say that through the other’s body which is similar to mine, the other’s consciousness is available to me, not directly, not originally, but rather as re-presented or appresented. However, this type of re-presentation of the other’s conscious processes on the basis of his or her body’s similarity with my own, which evokes the transfer animate organism to the other, differs in one significant way (difference is not identity) from the representation of the appresented sides of a material object present to me from one side: I can

always walk around the house and the re-presented side of the house will be presented to me. However, in empathy, my representations of the other's consciousness processes will never be able to be converted in to presentations.⁵²

Similarly, in memory, an act which the present I engages in, I have in mind an earlier, past I, which is now not present, but re-presented, and this I's conscious processes with their intentional objects are represented, but not originally present to me anymore. It is as if I transposed (*versetzt*)⁵³ my present self into the past, into a past self which is a modification of my present self.⁵⁴ It is as if I were there, with an "as-if" character also found in phantasy, but I am not actually there⁵⁵—a kind of doubling of the I takes place in much the way that the I in empathy doubles itself by projecting an(other) I in the body confronting me. In each case we have a present act (of empathy or memory) that represents what is not actually present, the other's conscious processes or a bygone self with its bygone conscious processes. Here again, though, a fundamental difference appears insofar as reflection discloses that the I that I remember is the same I as the I that is remembering, but the I re-presented in empathy is another's, not my own.⁵⁶

In fiction, too, I represent another I, a modification of myself, as endowed with conscious processes and their correlative intentional objects in a way similar to empathic representation, and in neither case is another originally present to me. However, empathy differs fundamentally from phantasy in that empathy involves the other's living body (*Leib*) being actually present whereas fiction involves no actual community with the other. Empathy does involve an "as-if" feature, as does memory, but in it one deals with an actual being whose body is perceptually given, providing the basis for apperceptive transfers.⁵⁷

What emerges from these examples is that *Einfühlung* resembles but differs from perception, memory, and phantasy. Like all of them it involves an element of re-presenting what is not originally given, but empathy is also a unique manner of re-presenting, differing from all others.⁵⁸ All these acts taken together reveal a fundamental tendency of consciousness to re-present beyond what is presented, to recover what is absent, even though it might not even be able to be fully recovered, to reach out beyond what is given, to realize new possibilities beyond the given, creatively not to allow itself to be limited by what is perceptually, originally there—and this tendency is active beneath higher level thought processes. By thinking that the lack of originary experience impedes empathic transference, Schutz overlooks

⁵² *Hua* 15: 354.

⁵³ *Hua* 13: 3128–29; *Hua* 14: 317.

⁵⁴ *Hua* 13: 52, 85–86, 318.

⁵⁵ *Hua* 15: 516.

⁵⁶ *Hua* 15: 358, 516, 586.

⁵⁷ *Hua* 13: 318; *Hua* 15: 359, 418, 642.

⁵⁸ *Hua* 13: 374; *Hua* 15: 354.

the force that self-transposing empathy acquires by its pre-reflective association with the pervasive self-transposing dynamism of consciousness to move beyond itself by at least re-presenting what is not or cannot be presented.

Validation and Conclusion

The kind of verification ordinarily used in phenomenology, the intuitive having of a state-of-affairs, whether through empirical or categorical intuition, is not available for empathy since we lack originary experience of the other. Husserl, though, argues that appresentation of the other's consciousness has its “own style of verification.”⁵⁹ Every experience points to further experiences that fulfill and verify one’s transfer of the sense “animate organism,” that is, if the animate organism of another continues to prove itself as an animate organism throughout the course of experience.⁶⁰ Indeed, if it is similarity that prompts the transfer of the sense “animate organism” to another, if that organism continues to behave in a way that one would expect of such an organism, in other words, if the organism continues to behave similarly to the way other organisms behave, the transferred sense continues to be validated. Sometimes the very behaviors that evoke the transfer, e.g., grasping objects, clawing, wrinkling a brow, withdrawing from invasive touch, are also the ones, one could imagine, that would continue to validate the transfer. It is the coherence of the entirety of experience—a coherence which we anticipate by *any* transference on the base of similarity since we expect reality will unfold coherently with what it was—that validates sense-transfers. Again the massiveness of our experience that similars behave similarly perhaps explains why “the fundamental tendencies of mental life are tendencies to identify and to assimilate.”⁶¹ This massive experience also explains why Schutz’s objection that the recognition of a major difference (e.g., the lack of originary experience of another) between organisms that are otherwise extensively similar would impede the sense-transfer of “animate organism” to another is offered on an intellectual plane, far distant from the undertow of conscious dynamics at work long before one begins to theorize.

In brief, Schutz’s argument against the sense-transfer of “animate organism” to another ignores the genetic nature of the discussion on empathy, the basic and widespread tendency of mental life to identify and assimilate, the level beneath thought and the controlling I where the sense-transfer occurs, the massive similarities between animate organisms, the widespread dynamism of consciousness to transpose itself and project beyond the originally given, and the massiveness and constancy of the unique manner in which we validate such sense-transfers.

⁵⁹ Hua 1: 143/113.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 144/114.

⁶¹ Cairns, “Some Applications of Husserl’s Theory of Sense-Transfer,” 315.

Chapter 20

Jean-Paul Sartre and Phenomenological Ontology

Matthew C. Eshleman

The Influence of the *Ideen* on Sartre

According to Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre's "introduction" to Husserl and phenomenology appropriately took place in a café:

Raymond Aron was spending a year at the French Institute in Berlin and studying Husserl simultaneously while preparing a historical thesis. When he came to Paris he spoke of Husserl to Sartre. We spent an evening together at Bec de Gaz in the Rue Montparnasse. We ordered the specialty of the house, apricot cocktails; Aron said, pointing to his glass: "You see, my dear fellow, if you are a phenomenologist, you can talk about this cocktail and make philosophy out of it! Sartre turned pale with emotion ... here was just the thing he had been longing to achieve for years—to describe objects just as he saw and touched them, and extract philosophy from the process.¹

As is well known, Sartre follows Aron's lead and spends a year at the Institut Français in Berlin (and briefly at the University of Freiburg) from 1933 to 1934.² Even though Sartre claims (very late in his life) to have read only "*Ideen*, and nothing but *Ideen*," we might infer from his few references to Husserl's other works that he may have read more extensively.³ Sartre, however, provides only rather cursory

¹ *La Force de l'âge* (Paris Gallimard 1989, 157); English translation, *The Prime of Life*, trans. P. Green (New York: Lancer Books, 1966), 162.

² Sartre may have discussed Husserl (and Hegel) with Ferdinand Gerassi (a student of Husserl's) as early as 1929, the year Husserl lectured at the Sorbonne, which lectures Sartre did not attend; see John Gerassi's *Sartre: Hated Conscience of the Century*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 113.

³ Sartre makes this claim in a filmed interview *Sartre par lui-même* (shot mostly in 1972 but not released to the public until 1976) conducted by friends and later transcribed and published. See English translation, *Sartre by Himself*, trans. R. Seaver (New York: Urizen, 1978), 29.

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remarks when citing these other works, and one could plausibly argue that they are derived from secondary materials.⁴ It remains clear, nonetheless, putting disagreements over how much Husserl Sartre read aside, that *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* not only had the greatest impact on Sartre's philosophy, but also that Sartre saw it as a landmark moment in the history of philosophy.⁵ The *Ideen* was, according to Sartre, “‘the great event of pre-World-War-I philosophy’ which ‘was destined to revolutionize psychology no less than philosophy.’”⁶

Five years after studying Husserl in Germany – while serving in the French military – Sartre reflects in his *Les carnets de la drôle de guerre* that “to exhaust a philosophy is to reflect within its perspectives, and create my own private ideas at its expense, until I plunge into a blind alley. It took me four years to exhaust Husserl.”⁷ While considerable debate can be raised over the weight of “at its expense,” it seems safe to say that Sartre accepted the “methodological thrust” but not the “doctrinal detail” of Husserl.⁸ To be sure, Sartre’s relationship to Husserl’s method changes over the course his early period, here somewhat arbitrarily defined as running from 1933 to 1943, after which Husserl’s influence trails off.

⁴ In *La Transcendance de l'égo* (Library Philosophique: J Vrin, 1992 [1936]), hereafter cited TE, Sartre adopts Husserl’s early non-egocentric account of consciousness from *Logische Untersuchungen* (TE 20) and employs *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (TE 22) to account for the temporal unity and continuity of personal identity without positing a transcendental ego, contra Husserl’s position in *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Sartre also mentions *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, and *Méditations cartésiennes* in both *La Transcendance de l'égo* (85) and *L'Etre et le Néant: Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), hereafter cited EN, 288. Whenever there has been a question of any problems with the French text, I have checked it with reference to the “Édition Corrigée” (1976).

With that said, all of Sartre references to these texts are rather cursory, and they could plausibly have been derived from secondary sources, e.g., Eugen Fink’s essay “Die Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik.” Sartre refers to this essay twice in TE 36, 83. Fink’s essay was first published in *Kant-Studien*, Band XXXVIII, Heft 3–4, 319–84, and it was reprinted in Eugen Fink’s *Studien zur Phänomenologie 1930–1939*, *Phaenomenologica* 21 (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 79–156.

⁵ *Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie, Husserliana, Gesammelte Werke*, III/1, ed. Karl Schumann, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), translated as *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book: *General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1983), henceforth cited as I followed by § number.

⁶ See the concluding Chapter IX of *L’Imagination* (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1936); *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*, trans. F. Williams (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), 127, hereafter cited IP.

⁷ *Les carnets de la drôle de guerre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); *War Diaries: Notebooks from a Phony War*, trans. Q. Hoare (London: Verso, 1999), 183–84.

⁸ See Lester Embree, “The Natural-Scientific Constitutive Phenomenological Psychology of Humans in the Earliest Sartre,” *Research in Phenomenology* 11 (1981): 41–60.

During the earliest part of the early period, 1933–1939, Sartre stands in closer methodological proximity to Husserl than during the composition and publication of *L’Etre et le néant* (1943).⁹ Whereas Sartre arguably employs the existence bracketing portion of the phenomenological reduction in “La Transcendance de l’égó” (1936) and *L’Imaginaire: Psychologie Phénoménologique de l’Imagination* (published in 1940 but worked on during the mid to late 1930s), Sartre abandons this component in *L’Etre et le Néant*, though he accepts a modified version *vis-à-vis* what he calls *réflexion purifiante*.¹⁰

Sartre’s first “essay” on Husserl, “Une idée fondamentale de la phénoménologie de Husserl: l’intentionnalité,” was (likely) written in 1933, first published in 1939, and reprinted in 1947.¹¹ Brief and poetic, this essay develops several central themes that reoccur throughout Sartre’s early period and covered in greater detail in Chap. IX of *L’Imagination*. In the latter, Sartre clarifies Husserl’s method (the transcendental and eidetic reductions) and what Sartre thinks are the most important lessons to be learned from Husserl. These lessons, with a few additions, may be summarized in five points, and they provide a good outline of Husserl’s impact on Sartre’s early philosophical thought.

First, in Chap. IX of *L’Imagination* (1936), Sartre accepts the primacy of phenomenology over all of the empirical sciences, and, consequently, that phenomenology can ground a radical, non-empirical kind of psychology. Relevant here is also Sartre’s Introduction to *Esquisse d’une théorie des emotions* (1939).¹² While Sartre

⁹Hereafter, all references will be to both *L’Etre et le néant: Essai d’ontologie phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971 [1943]), cited EN followed by page reference, and *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. H. Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), cited as BN.

¹⁰Sartre’s relationship to the phenomenological reduction(s) is something of a debate. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, vol. 2 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960), 478, claims, “the phenomenological reduction is not very prominent in *L’Etre et le Néant*.” Joseph Catalano, *Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre’s Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 8, claims Sartre does not employ the reduction at all. Thomas Busch offers a much more nuanced set of considerations in “Sartre’s Use of the Reduction: *Being and Nothingness* Reconsidered,” *Jean-Paul Sartre: Contemporary Approaches to His Philosophy*, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1980), 17–30, when he persuasively argues that Sartre rejects the transcendental reduction but employs a variation of it tied up in an unelaborated concept of purifying reflection. Eric James Morelli’s “Pure Reflection and Intentional Process,” *Sartre Studies International* 14/1 (2008): 61–77, offers a variation on Busch and argues that purifying reflection plays a central role in establishing Sartre’s ontology, but he maintains that purifying reflection should not be understood at all in terms of the transcendental reduction but rather in terms of Husserl’s notion of transcendental reflection. The details of this debate cannot be entered into here but the flatfooted claim that Sartre entirely abandoned the reduction is, at best, misleading.

¹¹First published in *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 304 (January, 1939): 129–31, and reprinted in *Situations I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 30–33, hereafter IFF.

¹²*L’Imagination* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1936); *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*, trans. F. Williams (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), hereafter cited IP. Sartre maintains the priority of phenomenology over empirical psychology and natural science in several ways. First, before experimentation, one must know “as exactly as possible what one is going to experiment upon” (IP 129). Second, without argument, Sartre follows Husserl’s thesis that only purely formal science can coherently ground material science (*ibid*). Third, later in EN, Sartre holds that only a first person methodology can give an adequate (non-falsifying) account of consciousness’s grasp of the world.

accepts that the achievement of this new phenomenological psychology requires suspending the natural attitude, Sartre interprets the natural attitude in a normative way that Husserl would have rejected. Whereas Husserl claims that the natural attitude is internally coherent (I §55), Sartre roughly equates the “natural attitude” with consciousness’ effort to escape from itself by reifying itself into a psyche (TE 83; EN 212–18). Since this flight requires thinking about oneself in a temporally durable, thing-like fashion, it involves an internal contradiction. In this way, Sartre aligns the “natural attitude” with bad faith.¹³

Second, a proper account of intentionality reveals, on the one hand, that it is an activity and not a substance, and, on the other, that consciousness enjoys unmediated contact with its intentional objects, while these objects exist, in some sense, independently of this contact.¹⁴ This unmediated relation entails Sartre’s rejection of all forms of indirect realism and representational views of cognition. And, he accepts (plausibly contra Husserl) what will (in our longer critical essay) be labeled “anomalous direct realism”—anomalous since Sartre’s view requires that consciousness plays an active role in cognition in a way that would be rejected by traditional empiricist views. Care, however, must be taken here. In holding some version of realism, Sartre claims to reject Husserl’s transcendental idealism, where this rejection amounts to Sartre’s limiting the active role consciousness plays to mere synthesis and negation. Whether Sartre misunderstood Husserl on this point shall also be addressed below. For the moment, suffice it to say, consciousness does not add anything in the activity of cognition to our knowledge of objects, contra Kant. Rather, it only takes away, via negation.

Third, the denial of representational models of cognition entails rejecting what Sartre labels “the illusion of immanence,” i.e., the suppositions that ideas, images, or representations are, in any way, contained within or are internal to consciousness (FIP 30–33, IP 15). Sartre, however, initially accepts Husserl’s notion of *hylē*, with some qualifications, in *L’Imaginaire*, which could be taken as a form of immanentism. Sartre later sees *hylē* as an unnecessary theoretical posit that overloads consciousness by implanting it with quasi-matter (EN 26; BN lix). In expunging hyletic (sense) data from consciousness, Sartre achieves what perhaps may be the most parsimonious account of consciousness to date.

Fourth, Sartre takes inspiration from Husserl’s few scant remarks on imagination (I §23, §111) and freedom (I §49), and Sartre comes to see these two ideas as fundamentally related. In his most important book on imagination, *L’Imaginaire: Psychologie Phénoménologique de l’Imagination* (written in the mid to late 1930s

¹³ Otherwise put, Husserl claims that only the theoretical natural attitude, which mistakenly interprets the material world as absolute, leads to countersense (I §55). In contrast, for Sartre, both the natural attitude and the theoretical attitude conceal an underlying incoherence. However, and this is crucial, the underlying theoretical incoherence is motivated by a deeper existential matter, namely to escape anxiety; whereas, for Husserl, it is just a theoretical confusion.

¹⁴ See especially, “Une idée fondamentale de la phénoménologie de Husserl: l’intentionnalité” (op. cit.).

and published in 1940), Sartre delivers a positive and wholly phenomenological account.¹⁵ Crucially, in the conclusion to *L'Imaginaire*, which Sartre arguably wrote later than the main body of the text, Sartre offers two transcendental arguments that conclude, first, that imagination is essential to human consciousness and, second, that one necessary condition for the possibility of imagination is freedom from material causation.

While the details of this argument cannot be given here, Sartre arrives at this conclusion by characterizing imagination as a negation of factual reality. Since imaging consciousness posits nothing real, Sartre argues that reality cannot cause imagination. Sartre extends this position in *L'Etre et le néant* and argues that negative facts like "Pierre is not here" do not, strictly speaking, exist in the world and cannot therefore cause consciousness to produce them. Sartre, as will be seen below, comes to see the negating feature of imagination as the essential feature of consciousness as such. Consciousness exists as a negation of itself and the world. Sartre characterizes consciousness's negation of itself in idiosyncratically ontological terms, as a being internally distended by nothingness. This characterization puzzles many commentators and clarification of this puzzle motivates, what follows.

What Is a Phenomenological Ontology? Introduction

The rest of this essay addresses the following question: "According to Sartre, what is a phenomenological ontology?" Now this may be a deceptively simple question, since, after all, the subtitle of *L'Etre et le néant*, "Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique," suggests the easy answer is that Sartre develops some kind of descriptive ontology. However, anyone who reads *L'Etre et le néant* must suffer through very long stretches of abstract desert, punctuated only occasionally by oases of description, where much of that desert acreage simply does not look descriptive, at least not in any ordinary sense of the word. Thus, one may reasonably puzzle over just what kinds of ontological claims Sartre makes and in what relation they stand to his phenomenology.

Otherwise put, one may wonder whether Sartre's ontology is purely descriptive and if it is not, then in what sense it goes beyond description. To the extent that Sartre's ontology goes beyond pure description, it may be said to differ from Husserl's ontology (as characterized primarily in *Ideen I*). Since this essay argues that Sartre's ontology goes beyond pure description, albeit with important qualifications, a comparison with Husserl proves fruitful, though, perhaps, with some surprising conclusions. While Husserl can be interpreted as employing

¹⁵ Paris: Gallimard, 1940; *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*, trans. J. Webber (London: Routledge, 2004).

a purely descriptive method that suspends all claims constitutive of ontology (understood in the robust and not merely formal sense), this essay argues that we do better to understand Husserl as paving the road to a revolution in ontology. This revolution results from Husserl's efforts to revise or collapse (depending upon your view) what can reasonably be called "*the cardinal philosophical distinction*" between being (reality) and appearance, and without falling into either metaphysical idealism or metaphysical realism.

This interpretation complicates Sartre's proximity to Husserl and raises a number of thorny questions, only one of which can be addressed here: if one successfully collapses the being/appearance distinction, with the above caveat, what links phenomenology to ontology? Does this collapse entail that one can straightforwardly read ontology off of phenomenological descriptions via free variation and eidetic intuition or does it merely prepare the way to a new approach to ontology? This essay argues that Husserl and Sartre approach the linkage question in crucially different ways. Whereas Husserl can be plausibly read to characterize linkage straightforwardly in terms of intuition, Sartre views Husserl in a preparatory light that allows him to employ transcendental arguments to link phenomenological descriptions directly to ontological conclusions. If correct, a great deal of secondary literature misunderstands the fiber of Sartre's ontology, in both its strengths and weaknesses.

Preliminary Remarks

While different people mean different things by "ontology," those who study ontology generally find it fruitful to address one or more of the following five *kinds* of questions. (Q1) What exists? (Q2) What is the most general nature (or meaning) of that which exists qua its existing? (Q3) What do existents depend on, if anything, in order to exist? (Q4) What are the most general, and, hence, exhaustive categories and regions (Genus, Species, Differentia etc.) under which everything that exists (or possibly exists) falls? And (Q5) what are the (logical) relationships between parts of existents (or possible existents) understood as wholes and between existents taken as wholes to other wholes? Putting matters this way potentially expands and deflates what Ancient philosophers accepted as ontology proper.

Husserl may be said to have expanded ontology with the 'invention' of purely formal ontology in *Logische Untersuchungen*, with refinements in (Part One of) *Ideen I* and *Formale und transzendentale Logik*.¹⁶ So understood, Husserl addresses a version of questions 4 and 5 and studies the categories and regions under which all possible "meanings" and "objects" fall, including the logical relations and forms of judgment

¹⁶For the claim that "the concept of formal ontology was first developed by Husserl," see Robert Poli, "Husserl's Conception of Formal Ontology," *History and Philosophy of Logic* 14/1 (1993): 1–14.

applicable to all possible “meanings” and “objects,” without any commitment to whether any such “objects” actually exist and/or what they actually are.¹⁷ Then, during Husserl’s transcendental idealist stage, he may seem to permanently deflate ontology via a purely descriptive method that describes consciousness’s essential structures and its active role in constituting universal objects (*eidē*). On this reading, Husserl suspends questions 1 and 2, and goes beyond pure formality merely to address question 3.

While epistemological concerns (construed broadly as a “critique of reason”) motivate both stages, considerable debate centers on whether Husserl avoids all robust ontological and/or metaphysical claims during his transcendental stage.¹⁸ If robustness requires going beyond formal claims and saying something about what the “nature” or ‘essence’ of the furniture of reality *actually* is (and not just how it *appears*), then, at first glance, Husserl’s phenomenological method seems to forbid all robust ontological claims. After all, Husserl not only puts judgments of existence out of play but he also limits analysis to reflection upon how phenomena are given to consciousness and not how things really are.

For reasons like this, commentators frequently locate Sartre’s (and Heidegger’s) departure from Husserl on the question of robustness, since Sartre clearly develops some kind of robust ontology, even if it turns out to be difficult to say precisely in what way. Consequently Sartre either revises and/or abandons some parts of Husserl’s method, or so the standard story goes. However, matters are more complex than they might initially appear. Husserl argues that bracketing does not mean disregarding claims about reality but rather changing our attitude towards them. “Figuratively speaking, that which is parenthesized is not erased from the phenomenological blackboard but only parenthesized, and thereby provided with an index. As having the latter it is, however, part of the major theme of inquiry” (I, §76).

¹⁷ In “Phenomenology and Metaphysics,” *Metaphysics, Facticity, Interpretation: Phenomenology in the Nordic Countries* (Dordrecht/Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), ed. D. Zahavi, S. Heinämaa & H. Ruin, 5–6, Dan Zahavi argues that one can *appraise* Husserl’s metaphysical neutrality in *Logische Untersuchungen* over the way in which things really are in three ways. (1) This neutrality liberates us from a series of pseudo-metaphysical problems. (2) It prepares the way to address (appropriately posed) metaphysical questions. (3) It operates as an unnecessary and undesirable straightjacket. It should be noted that (1) and (2) are not mutually exclusive and that while Zahavi calls these “appraisals,” Husserl is more explicit in his preference for (1) and (2) than Zahavi indicates. Though these details cannot be worked out here, see Lee Nam-In’s essay “Husserl’s View of Metaphysics: The Role of Genuine Metaphysics in Phenomenological Philosophy,” *Phenomenology 2005, Vol. 1: Selected Essays from Asia*, ed. Cheung Chan-Fai & Yu Chung-Chi, (Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2007).

¹⁸ Those who argue Husserl makes robust ontological and/or metaphysical claims frequently claim that Husserl does so *malgré lui*. See for example, Stephen Priest who claims, “Husserl deploys an ontological, even fundamental ontological, vocabulary and may be read as a metaphysician *malgré lui*,” in “Husserl’s Concept of Being: from Phenomenology to Metaphysics,” *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*, 44, ed. A. O’Hear (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 209. See also M. M. van de Pitte, “Husserl: The Idealist *Malgré Lui*,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 37/1 (Sep., 1976): 70–78. Many of the claims attributed to Husserl “in spite of himself” frequently turn on textual ambiguities, and, perhaps, a failure to fully appreciate Husserl’s efforts to revolutionize philosophy”.

Additionally, Husserl arguably makes at least a few robust ontological claims, in which case robustness alone fails to distinguish Husserl's ontology from Sartre's.¹⁹ Thus, the following discussion not only addresses possible areas of robustness in Husserl's ontology in *Ideen I*, but it also develops several additional criteria (Linkage, Dependency, and Priority) with which to more accurately distinguish their respective views. These criteria can be summarized as follows: (a) robustness refers to the degree to which ontology goes beyond pure formality; (b) linkage refers to how one establishes robust ontological claims; (c) dependency refers to whether and in what sense the world depends upon consciousness or vice-versa; and, (d) priority refers to that which comes methodologically first, epistemology or ontology. We shall now examine these criteria.

Robustness

While Husserl claims (in *Ideen III*) that “all ontologies become subject to reduction” (§13), he frequently makes claims in *Ideen I* that sound ontologically committed and in ways that go beyond pure formality. Husserl occasionally distinguishes between the “absolute being” of consciousness and/or *eidos* and the “relative being” of matters of fact. Problematically, Husserl says “absolute” in many ways and this fact alone generates much of the disagreement over whether Husserl establishes genuinely robust ontological claims.²⁰ For the purposes here, Husserl’s uses of “absolute” fall into one of three categories: those with (a) purely epistemic meanings, those with (b) epistemic meanings that plausibly denote robust ontological meanings and those with (c) purely robust ontological meanings, a few of which are implausible.

¹⁹ Steven Galt Crowell’s essay “Ontology and Transcendental Phenomenology Between Husserl and Heidegger,” *Husserl in Contemporary Context*, ed. Burt Hopkins (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 13–36, hereafter cited OTP, weighs in on the proximity question between Husserl and Heidegger. It clarifies complexities frequently ignored in terms of Heidegger’s proximity to Husserl, and it helped me to see that the same holds true with regards to Sartre. Crowell carefully argues that Husserl holds a more robust ontology than traditionally supposed, and, consequently, there is greater continuity between Husserl and Heidegger. This gist of Crowell’s case is that Heidegger’s critique of Husserl’s *Ideen I* does not primarily turn on a rejection of the transcendental reduction. Rather, Heidegger’s critique concerns Husserl’s prioritization of theoretical epistemology over ontology. Unsurprisingly, Sartre (it will be seen) follows the *spirit* of this critical line, though not its letter. While Heidegger’s ontology remains beyond the scope of this essay, Crowell’s discussion of Husserl’s ontology will be drawn upon below.

²⁰ For a good survey of this debate’s contours, see Dan Zahavi, ‘The ‘absolute’ in Husserl’s transcendental project: A question of method, metaphysics or manifestation?’, *Edmund Husserl 150 Years: Philosophy, Phenomenology, Sciences*, ed. C. Ierna, H. Jacobs, and F. Mattens (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 281–302.

Most frequently Husserl uses “absolute” in various clearly epistemic senses (see, e.g., I §10, §33, §41, §59, §67, §76).²¹ The most central and relevant purely epistemic use distinguishes between how “physical things” and consciousness are given in fundamentally different ways and with fundamentally different kinds of evidence. Husserl sometimes characterizes this as a distinction between that which is *perceived* (“physical things”) and *perception* of them (grasped reflectively), where Husserl takes *perception* to be an inherent moment (or dependent part) of consciousness itself (I, §41). Since “physical things” are given only in adumbrations, they are always given as extending beyond any one particular facet. In contrast, the perspectives themselves (qua inherent moments of consciousness) are not given in (spatial) perspectives (*ibid.*). Husserl characterizes consciousness’ grasp of (this moment of) itself as absolute, insofar as it captures everything about this moment “all at once.”

Husserl correlates these modes of givenness with a distinction between kinds of evidence. Since perceptions of “physical things” are given incompletely, they are given inadequately. As Husserl puts it, “no perception of the physical thing is definitively closed; there is always room for new perceptions, for determining more precisely the indeterminatenesses, for fulfilling the unfulfilled” (I, §149). Hence, claims about them are corrigible. In contrast to the incomplete way in which corrigible objects are given, consciousness grasps the inherent moments of itself completely. Consequently, consciousness cannot be mistaken about its inherent moments, insofar as its claims are constrained to the inherent moments themselves.

Less frequently, Husserl extends this epistemic sense of “absolute” to denote what are plausibly robust ontological meanings. We see this when Husserl concludes, “thus there emerges a fundamentally essential difference between *being as mental process* and *being as a physical thing*” (I, §42, *emphasis added*). Husserl claims of the being of physical things that “a being of that kind can only be given in perception through an adumbration” (*ibid.*) and he goes so far as to argue that even God must necessarily perceive such spatial objects in an adumbrated way (I, §43, §150). Steven Crowell interprets Husserl to mean that “modes of being are defined in terms of different modes of givenness” (OTP, 21).²² When understood in this way, Husserl plausibly arrives at ontological claims through epistemological claims about evidence, grounded in phenomenological descriptions.

Crowell, however, raises a puzzle, namely that “it is extremely difficult to decide whether the epistemological status of things is a result of their ontological status (determined independently of all epistemological considerations) or whether

²¹ Here are a couple of other epistemic uses. First, “absolute” refers to the exactness of formal science like pure mathematics (I, §10). Second, after performing the phenomenological reduction, we have (cognitive) access to essences, such that essences have “absolute” (epistemic/cognitive) independence from all spatio-temporal matters of fact (I, §33). In this way, essences are relative to consciousness, which Husserl’s characterizes as an absolute point of reference (I, §76).

²² OTP, 36.

ontological status is determined by a certain kind of commitment rightly called epistemological" (OTP, 21). Crowell weighs passages that point in both directions and argues for the latter, namely that Husserl prioritizes epistemological concerns and in a way that constrain ontological claims to what we can rationally say. The limits reason imposes come to this. Since Husserl cannot intuitively conceive that "physical things" are given in any way other than adumbrated, any claims that go beyond this extend beyond the limits of reason.

Linkage

Supposing this were true, one may nonetheless reasonably wonder whether Husserl's epistemological grounding of ontological (sounding) claims really achieves full robustness. This requires answering a more basic question: "What warrants linkage from phenomenology to ontology?" Problematically, the linkage question presupposes an answer to how robust one takes Husserl's ontology to be, and so a few more details need to be worked out.

Husserl says (in the quote above) that physical things are necessarily grasped "in perception through adumbrations." So does Husserl grasp the way in which physical things really are or merely how they appear? Otherwise put, are physical things (in themselves) adumbrated, whatever exactly that may mean, or is it rather the case that they necessarily cannot appear but through adumbrations (or in an adumbrated way)? This question turns out to be difficult to answer. Husserl warns his reader that while his descriptions "may sound like statements about *actuality*" they "have undergone a *radical modification of sense*" (I, §89). One can read this warning in two ways. First, even though Husserl employs "being" talk, e.g., in §42, he has not ventured outside of phenomenology *per se* into the realm of ontology proper. Otherwise put, Husserl does not establish the essence of *being qua being* but rather more judiciously establishes the essence of "*the perceived as perceived*" (I, §88). Call this the deflationary reading.

While the deflationary reading finds no motivation to answer the linkage question, a stronger second option remains. On the robust reading, in some novel sense, Husserl, via eidetic intuition and free variation, collapses the distinction between "being *qua being*" and "*perceived qua perceived*." The essence of physical thing *qua perceived* just is its essence *qua being*, namely being *qua* given in adumbrations. We "know" this insofar as we cannot coherently imagine its falseness, e.g., by imagining that God grasps physical things in some supra-adumbrative way. So understood, the linkage question—what warrants the link from phenomenology to ontology—dissolves. The essence of the phenomenon of physical thing *qua perceived* just is its essence *qua being*. To ask any further questions must necessarily go beyond intuition, and, hence, they cannot reasonably be entertained (I, §24).

Now were the robust reading both correct as an interpretation and true, then Husserl seems to have defused a skeptical atomic bomb. The traditional skeptic argues that since the same thing appears differently to different people and since

there is no uncontroversial way to decide amongst which of the different perceptions are veridical, we cannot know how things really are. We can only “know” how they appear to us.²³ However, on the robust reading, Husserl effectively shows that the skeptic cannot reasonably assert that the nature of physical thing *qua being* differs from its nature *qua appearing*, once this relation is properly construed. No rational being, including a God, could apprehend physical things in any other way.

While the skeptic may rejoinder that Husserl overestimates the power of his ability to imagine counter-factual worlds, another avenue for skepticism goes like this. While Husserl consistently holds both (1) that the adumbrated (physical thing) *can* exist independently of any adumbration and (2) that one cannot rationally entertain that it could be *given* in any way other than *qua adumbrated*. However, neither claim entails that in order for there to be adumbrations there must be something adumbrated. In other words, Husserl nowhere establishes that physical things actually exist and have the quality he ascribes *qua factual existence*. Rather, he only establishes that *if* physical things actually exist, they must necessarily appear (to any consciousness whatsoever) in adumbrations. So understood, Husserl merely shows *how* physical things must necessarily be/appear but not *that* they actually exist.²⁴

Otherwise put, it remains unclear whether Husserl escapes from a version of what Kant called the “problematic idealism of Descartes” (B274), in never satisfactorily answering the skeptic who denies the existence of the factual world.²⁵

Thus, *even if* we grant that Husserl successfully collapses *how* things are *qua appearance* with *how* things are *qua being*, he still has not shown *that* things factually exist. It will be this small space for the skeptic to reinsert her wedge that Sartre may be said to attempt to close. He does so in answering the linkage question by employing transcendental inferences, as opposed to merely reading essences off of eidetic intuition and free variation.

Dependence

For the moment, another kind of worry may arise in consequence of collapsing the *being qua being/appearing qua appearing* distinction. It may look like reality falls entirely to the side of appearances. In other words, when considering how Husserl answers the dependency question (Q3), it can look as if he ends up in

²³ See, e.g., Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Skepticism*, trans. Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁴ I read Husserl’s notion that the actual world lacks self-sufficiency “in virtue of its essence” (I, §50) to establish only this point and nothing more.

²⁵ As is well known, Kant claims that it is “a scandal of philosophy and universal human reason that the existence of things outside us (from which we after all get the whole matter for our cognitions, even for our inner sense) should have to be assumed merely *on faith*, and that if it occurs to anyone to doubt it, we should be unable to answer him with a satisfactory proof” (KrV/CPR Bxxxix note).

metaphysical idealism (a metaphysical thesis about the dependence of being on consciousness), as opposed to transcendental idealism (an epistemological thesis about the dependency of knowledge on consciousness).

We see this when Herman Philipse interprets Husserl as follows:

Whereas naturalism holds that consciousness is a subordinate reality which depends for its existence on certain physical structures, transcendental idealism contends that the entire natural world, including human minds, is *nothing but* an intentional structure of transcendental consciousness. According to transcendental idealism, the world *ontologically depends* on transcendental consciousness, which itself exists in *absolute independence* (TI, 244, *emphasis added*, see also 250).²⁶

Call this the robustly “ontological independence-dependence thesis,” namely the view that consciousness *can or would* exist were the material world to vanish but that “the entire natural world is *nothing but* an intentional structure” and, hence, that it *cannot* exist without consciousness’ intending it.²⁷ If correct, it would be appropriate to label Husserl a metaphysical idealist.

²⁶ See his essay “Transcendental Idealism,” *Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, ed. B. Smith and D. W. Smith (Cambridge UP, 1995), 239–322, hereafter cited TI followed by page reference. There is some ambiguity in Philipse’s discussion, see also fn. 12 below. Philipse admits Husserl recognizes that, in a factual psychological sense, consciousness depends on the world (TI, 250). For example, drinking alcohol changes our experience. Philipse, however, also claims that “the existence of the material world depends on consciousness” (TI, 256). A great deal rides on how we read “material world” and in what sense the dependence holds. Arguably the factual dependence of psychological consciousness on the actually existing material world (I, §76) entails that only the bracketed [world] depends upon on transcendental consciousness? If so, this dependence is not best described in ontological terms. Rather, the dependence should be construed broadly as epistemological. To be fair, Philipse correctly opposes the claim that “transcendental idealism is *merely* an epistemological doctrine, and not an ontological doctrine” (TI, 245 *emphasis added*). However, the question concerns just how, where and what kinds of ontological claims Husserl establishes—see below. The “independence-dependence” thesis is too strong. Even if we grant that Husserl maintains that consciousness has absolute ontological independence from the world, i.e., could exist without the world, and I think that we should not accept this, see fn. 28 below, this does not entail that the world (or the being of the world, if one prefers), could not exist without consciousness. This latter claim obviously goes too far.

²⁷ Philipse heavily weights Husserl’s annihilation of the world thought experiment in establishing the independence thesis. In I, §49 Husserl argues that we *can* “imagine” consciousness existing after having annihilated the world, where annihilation can be read in various ways, e.g., complete vaporization of material being or just a chaotic disordering. Philipse, at times, seems to interpret Husserl as arguing from the conceptual possibility (that consciousness could exist without a world) to the conclusion that consciousness *would* actually exist were the material world actually annihilated. This would be truly amazing and amplifying of our knowledge, were it true. (For amplification, see below). Philipse equivocates between the claim that consciousness “may” or ‘might’ exist without the world (TI, 256–58) and the claim that consciousness has *ontological* independence (TI, 244, 250). In *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1993), Rudolf Bernet et. al, 68 suggest that Husserl’s annihilation of the world thought experiment (I, §49) was “probably expounded … in a particularly misleading manner.” Probably? The conclusion to the thought experiment revolves around a (modal) ambiguity of the meaning of “can,” though clarifying this ambiguity takes some work.

On the face of it, the robust ontological independence-dependence reading goes too far. Husserl seems to maintain that the actual world (qua its being) has *ontic* independence of any factually existing consciousness and that every factual consciousness exhibits ontic dependence upon the factual world (I, §76). The reduction, once more, does not prevent intransigent judgments about factual being, it only puts them out of play (I, §90). So, even if we only judge ontic relations “naively” from a non-phenomenological viewpoint, i.e., in a non-skeptic defeating kind of way, we can hardly escape making them. This warrants our understanding the essential dependence of the bracketed [world] on transcendental consciousness in primarily epistemological terms of constitution. The world (qua constitution of meanings and *eidos*) “depends” upon “transcendental consciousness” but the actual world (qua factual being) does not depend upon any actual consciousness (I, §55). (Husserl stands closer to Kant than Berkeley.²⁸)

Enter Sartre

Commentators sometimes suppose that Sartre also criticizes Husserl for holding the ontological independence-dependence thesis. Clarifying why Sartre *might* make this criticism helps clarify an especially abstruse feature of his ontology. Sartre

On the basis of imagined annihilation, Husserl says, “consequently no real being … is *necessary* to the being of consciousness itself” (emphasis added) and when he employs the Latin phrase, “*nulla ‘re’ indigit ad existendum*” (roughly, [consciousness] needs no extra-mental [thing] to exist), Husserl puts scare marks around the “‘re’” [thing]. But if the unnecessary being is bracketed being, then it seems that what we can infer only pertains to bracketed [consciousness], i.e., transcendently reduced consciousness. This strongly suggests that only the *eidos* of consciousness remains after annihilation but not any factual or actually existing consciousness. This motivates what one might call the softer, methodological reading of the annihilation thought experiment. From the essential possibility of annihilation we can conceptualize consciousness in transcendental terms, and, Husserl thinks that doing so helps to not simply grasp the non-material essence of consciousness but also that it shows how phenomenology opens up a “new” field inaccessible to empirical psychology. In §54, Husserl may be thought to tip his hand when he restates the annihilation argument conditionally. What follows from the imaginative annihilation of the world is a merely an imaginative view of what a post apocalyptic consciousness would look like. Namely, our imagined surviving consciousness would, in imaginative terms, be entirely un-empirical, e.g., it would have no body or gender. It would not even be human. In this way, we can read the thought-experiment as an aid to clarify more precisely what the phenomenological reduction achieves, namely a transcendental grasp of consciousness qua consciousness purified of all factuality. If correct, we should not read it as an argument for the ontological independence of actual consciousness from the world, pace Philipse. So understood, the modal ambiguity of “can” turns on the fact that what we see after the annihilation is not factual consciousness (can exist factually) but its *eidos* (can exist ideally).

²⁸ For a more sophisticated and detailed account of Husserl’s realist commitments, which entails rejecting the ontological independence-dependence thesis, see Karl Ameriks’ “Husserl’s Realism,” *The Philosophical Review* 86/4 (Oct., 1977): 498–519.

wrote in his diary that Husserl's "philosophy evolved towards idealism, which I could not accept" (WD, 185). And, Hazel Barnes claims that "[Sartre's] philosophy is not idealism, not even Husserl's brand of idealism, as he points out, because Being in no way creates consciousness or is in any way dependent on consciousness for its existence" (BN, xx). While Barnes claims that Sartre interprets Husserl as holding that being *as such* depends upon consciousness, Sartre never actually says this and his worry is likely more nuanced.

Two separate but related worries characterize Sartre's worry. First, Husserl treats consciousness' relationship to the world as an abstraction (EN 37–38; BN 3–4), which, at the end of the long philosophical day, does not escape the so-called "problematic idealism of Descartes." Second, Husserl overloads consciousness with too much work when he claims that the being of the noema is being perceived (EN 16; BN 1). Painted in broad brush strokes, these two concerns boil down to this. In prioritizing epistemology over ontology and simultaneously bracketing all factual being, Husserl not only fails to give an adequate *ontological* account of the actual connection between consciousness and the world, but he also fails to escape subjectivity and deliver objective knowledge anchored in the factual world.

Sartre initially states the central thrust of his worry like this: "Why not push the idea to its limit and say that the being of the appearance is its appearing? This is simply a way of choosing new words to clothe the old 'Esse est percipi' of Berkeley. And it is in fact just what Husserl and his followers are doing when after having effected the phenomenological reduction, they treat the noema as unreal and declare that its esse is percipi" (EN 16, 27–8; BN 1, lxi). Although this quote can be plausibly read that Sartre mistakenly attributes metaphysical idealism to Husserl, however, left at that, we would misunderstand Sartre's deeper underlying concern, namely that Husserl makes consciousness do too much work and in a way that cannot escape from subjectivity and achieve objectivity. Although Sartre does not put matters quite in this way, the robust reading of Husserl's ontology (given above) does not defuse the skeptic's bomb (cf. EN 270–71; BN 218), and, perhaps, this parallels post-Kantian German Idealists who found Kant's noumena susceptible to skeptical threats.²⁹

To be sure, Sartre's reading of Husserl's noema preys on a conceptually abstruse point. Husserl claims, "its essence [the noema] consists exclusively in its 'percipi'—except that this proposition does not have the Berkeleyian sense because here the essence does not include the percipi as a really inherent piece" (I, §98). While Sartre only mentions the first Berkeley-sounding half of the quote, Husserl splits a thin theoretical hair with the second half. On one thin hair-half, Husserl claims that the noema does not depend upon the stream of consciousness (I, §97). Hence, Husserl believes himself to escape metaphysical idealism. On the other thin half, Husserl argues that the noema (qua illuminated meaning-unities after reduction) is not self-sufficient,

²⁹ For an exceptional account of post-Kantian German Idealism and this kind of concern, see Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1987).

i.e., it cannot exist independently of consciousness (I, §98). Thus, it appears that Husserl holds a transcendental notion of constitution, insofar as consciousness must actively do something in order to illuminate the noema as meaningful.³⁰

Problematically, nothing warrants Husserl's claim that the noema exhibits robust ontological independence from consciousness. Given Husserl's claims that the "stuffs" or "hyletic-Data" that compose noema are "animated" by consciousness (noesis) with "sense-bestowals" (I, §97, see also §85 and §88), Sartre sees Husserl as teetering precariously on the edge of metaphysical idealism, and this explains why Sartre designates Husserl a "phenomenalist" who "*borders on* Kantianism" (BN, 71, *emphasis added*).³¹ In Sartre's view, Husserl delivers knowledge of bracketed [things] only as they essentially and/or phenomenally are but not as they *factually* are. So understood, Husserl looks as if he makes consciousness the measure of all being (known) in some Kantian sense (EN 23–4; BN lvii), while putting reality permanently out of play. Consequently, Sartre argues that Husserl fails to escape subjectivity in the Kantian sense, by making consciousness do too much cognitive work in detaching our knowledge from noumenal reality (EN 27–34; BN lx–lxvii).

To be sure, Sartre accepts that Husserl came very close to solving the perennial puzzle of cognition (crudely put, how do subjects know objects or how does subjectivity lead to objectivity), but that he ended up, for a lack of better words, reefed on Kantian rocks. According to Sartre, the problem of cognition cannot be solved without first taking "the ontological exigencies of the percipi" into primary consideration (EN 24; BN lvii) and these "exigencies" cannot be properly grasped if one prioritizes epistemology.

Ontological Priority

Like Descartes, Kant and pretty much all modern philosophers, Sartre claims that Husserl succumbs to "the illusion of the theoretical primacy of knowledge" (EN 21; BN liv). The illusion of the primacy of knowledge comes into vogue when the defeat

³⁰ To be fair, Husserl offers only rudimentary remarks on the details of constitution in *Ideen I*. Husserl spells out constitution in greater detail in *Ideen II*; however, Sartre did not have access to this text. So although Sartre may overreach in reading Husserl as overly Kantian, given the textual ambiguities surrounding the ontological status of noema, Sartre's reading of *Ideen I* is understandable, if not plausible.

³¹ It might be noted that phenomeenalism does not (necessarily) deny the existence of an independent world. Rather it claims that our access to the world is always mediated by something like sense data. Phenomenalists are, in other words, sometimes indirect realists but not necessarily whole hog metaphysical idealists. Now the claim that Husserl holds anything like indirect (representational) realism surely goes wrong and Sartre knows this. Husserl denies everything like (pictorial) mental representations that would need to be matched onto the world qua represented (I, §43, §52 and §90) and Sartre accepts Husserl as having made philosophical progress in abandoning this kind of embarrassing dualism (BN xlvi). So Sartre is either just confused or his worry lies elsewhere.

of skepticism is, pace Descartes, taken to be philosophy's first task. Instead of focusing on actual factual relationships, *pace* ontology, which seems vulnerable to skeptical attack, Husserl focuses on ideal epistemic relations amongst meaning unities and essences. Consequently, Husserl makes knowledge depend upon transcendental consciousness in a way that (at least appears to) overemphasize consciousness's role in the constitution of objectivity. However, if the reduction reveals our unmediated contact with factual being, then the priority of epistemology is unnecessary.

Sartre, in other words, supposes that Husserl's phenomenological method delivers a revolutionary insight that forces us to abandon part of the very method that led to such insights in the first place. If the phenomenological reduction puts us in unmediated contact with intentional objects, which, in turn, motivates the collapse of the appearance/reality distinction (and its noumena/phenomena sibling), then we need not put existence claims out of play. This collapse *entails* what we might call “anomalous direct realism,” namely the view that we enjoy a direct, pre-cognitive experience of things that exist independently of our apprehension. What makes Sartre's direct realism “anomalous” is that while he agrees with the transcendental idealist that consciousness must necessarily do something, cognitively speaking, this activity cannot add anything (like forms of intuition, categories, or meanings) to the object grasped.

Four theses summarize Sartre's solution to the problem of cognition. First, only upon the basis of a non-cognitive apprehension of being (in-itself) can we render our epistemic relationship to the world intelligible. Second, our ontological explanation of the pre-cognitive apprehension must *necessarily* employ an account of non-being and negation. Third, negation enters the world through the activity of consciousness, which does not add anything to the disclosed world, qua unmediated grasp. Fourth, Sartre arrives at these three theses via transcendental arguments.

Sartre's Phenomenological Ontology

Thesis One

Sartre *argues* that “by considering being as the *condition of disclosure* but not as an appearance which can be determined in concepts, we have understood that knowledge cannot by itself give an account of being, i.e., the being of the phenomena cannot be reduced to the phenomena of being” (BN xlix, emphasis added, translation modified).³² Three observations should be made here:

First, in saying that being cannot be grasped in concepts, Sartre, in part, means our basic relationship to the world occurs before predicative judgments in the form

³² As Sartre argues earlier, “we ... have apprehended a being which is not subject to knowledge and which founds knowledge, a thought which is definitely not given as a representation or a signification of expressed thoughts, but which is directly apprehended such as it is and this mode of apprehension is not a phenomenon of knowledge but is the structure of being ... Thus we have attained the ontological foundation of knowledge...” (lvii).

of “S is P” arise. The most we can say about being grasped in a non-epistemic way, is simply that it is.³³ Simply put, we grasp “that it is” (or being’s that-ness) before we come to know “what it is” that we grasp.

Second, Sartre, like Husserl, splits a theoretical hair. This distinction between the being of the phenomena (BP) and the phenomena of being (PB) roughly breaks down along the same lines as Husserl’s analysis of the noema. Qua condition for disclosure, BP exhibits ontological independence; however, qua disclosed as differentiated phenomena, it exhibits ontological dependence. However, and this is crucial, while PB qua differentiation requires the activity of consciousness, this activity does not add anything to the being disclosed, otherwise objective knowledge cannot be secured. If consciousness adds anything in the process of cognition, we can only say that we know the way in which things appear “to us” but not how they really are.

Third, Sartre’s characterization of BP as a “condition for disclosure” amounts to a transcendental argument that consciousness would be impossible were there no mind-independent being to support its existence (EN 27–29), though the details of this particular argument cannot be given here. However, while consciousness depends upon being and not the other way round, the independent being of phenomena delivers only one necessary (and, hence, non-phenomenal) condition for the disclosure of a differentiated world. The second necessary condition concerns the activity of consciousness that merely negates being and introduces non-being as a transcendentally ideal but objective structure of differentiated reality.

Thesis Two

Sartre argues that any coherent account of embodied consciousness’ ontological inter-relationship with being qua differentiated world must necessarily employ negation and non-being. While the theoretical temptation to understand negation in merely epistemic and/or semantic terms has been historically overwhelming, Sartre argues that negation must be understood, first, in ontological terms, as a non-substantial activity, and, second, in epistemic terms qua condition for the possibility of knowledge. The activity of negation constitutes four kinds of transcendentally ideal but objectively real structures of reality. First, it provides the condition for the possibility of concrete experiences of non-being, e.g., discovering a friend’s absence upon an expected meeting or that a slice of my freshly baked pie is missing. Second, it makes possible imagining non-existent objects. Third, it carves out negative space that outlines any figure on its background. Fourth, it makes negative judgments possible.

³³ Of course, Sartre actually says more than just that being is. He also says that, ontologically speaking, being (in the mode in-itself) is self-identical and contingent. These other claims cannot be here discussed.

Thesis Three

While consciousness necessarily plays an active role in disclosure, it cannot do too much work. Objectivity must be anchored in objects and not in transcendental subjectivity. As seen, transcendental idealism theoretically overburdens consciousness and severs any hope of anchoring objectivity in independent objects. For this reason, the activity of consciousness must be wholly negative. It does not add anything to cognition, e.g., work up sense data into cognitive objects, pace Kant and perhaps Husserl. Rather, it constitutes non-being as a transcendently ideal but objectively real part of reality. To put matters somewhat oxymoronically, the existence of non-being is to be perceived.

Thesis Four

Sartre arrives at these three theses via transcendental arguments grounded in phenomenological descriptions of pre-judicative lived experience. The conclusions of these transcendental arguments sometimes establish (purportedly) robust ontological claims about the structure of embodied consciousness's interrelationship with the world. To establish this controversial point, a few words on what a transcendental argument is are necessary.

TAs exhibit two distinctive features. Robert Stern characterizes "the first, and perhaps most definitive feature," namely, "that [transcendental] arguments involve a claim of a distinctive form: namely that one thing (X) is a necessary condition for the possibility of something else (Y), so that (it is said) the latter cannot obtain without the former."³⁴ While necessary conditions come in different kinds, e.g., epistemic, logical, ontological, causal etc., since empirical claims cannot establish genuinely necessary truths, transcendental conclusions must go beyond the content of perception. So understood, conclusions to transcendental arguments are *a priori*. The second distinctive feature is that the necessary conditions amplify our knowledge. This means that the relationship between (X) and (Y) cannot be true merely by definition, since analytic truths do not amplify our knowledge. For this reason, the conclusion must not only be *a priori* but also *synthetic*.³⁵

³⁴ See his introduction to his edited volume, *Transcendental Arguments: Problems and Prospects* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 3.

³⁵ For example, the necessary condition for a man's being a bachelor is a man's being unmarried. This necessity, however, involves no transcendental inference, since the necessary condition "being unmarried" follows merely by definition, and, therefore, it does not amplify our knowledge of bachelors.

With this in mind, Sartre poses what might be aptly labeled “the fundamental question” (FQ) of *L'Être et le néant* in transcendental terms, namely “what must man and the world be in order for a relation between them to be possible” (EN 38; BN 4). Sartre then asks whether some practical activity can help us characterize “the very structure of these beings” (*ibid.*³⁶) As is well known, FQ itself provides the conduct that reveals our basic relationship to the world, namely the activity of asking questions.³⁷ Sartre rapidly draws his first transcendental conclusion. Namely, the necessary condition for the possibility of asking pre-predicative questions is “the permanent possibility of [experiencing] non-being,” i.e., not finding an answer to one’s question (EN 38–9; BN 5). If every time someone asked a question, they necessarily arrived at an answer, then there would be no such thing as inquiry as such.

While this might not seem to amplify knowledge in a properly transcendental way, Sartre argues for three further clearly amplifying claims. First, nothingness must ontologically structure the mode of being of consciousness internally and not externally. Second, this internal structure makes the disclosure of (external) non-being possible. Third, these two claims together supply the ontologically necessary conditions for the possibility for consciousness’s ability to disclose a differentiated world, and, hence, to know it. Before turning to the details of Sartre’s transcendental inferences, a general characterization of Sartre’s basic ontological “insight” might help frame this matter more clearly.

If our most primitive ontological ‘building blocks’ include only being and nothingness, there are only two logically possible ways to account for consciousness and its relationship to the world. The first way of atomistic materialism locates nothingness external to being and it explains “consciousness” in terms of a complex whole made up of *independent* material parts, where empty space separates the parts, e.g., atoms that compose a brain. So understood, everything that exists does so in exactly the same way, where the only difference between any two things, e.g., a brain and any other non-conscious entity, comes down to degrees in complexity but not ultimately to a difference in kind. In contrast, the second way of modal dualism characterizes consciousness as complex whole composed of *dependent* temporal moments. While both views accept ontological monism, namely that there exists only one kind of being, unlike atomism that distinguishes between wholes merely in terms of complexity, modal dualism holds that being exists in essentially different kinds of ways.

³⁶ Sartre explicitly rejects Kant’s formalistic approach (TE 13–16; EN 38; BN 3), which asks after the conditions necessary for the possibility of any experience whatsoever. For this reason, it seems, Sartre begins with particular concrete experiences like pre-judicative question asking; see fn. 37. Saying precisely how Sartre and Kant differ goes beyond the scope of this essay.

³⁷ While Sartre begins with abstract theoretical questions (like the FQ), he emphasize practical questions (like why does my car not start) and he concentrates on pre-predicative questions, for reasons given above, i.e., pre-cognitive questions that arise before explicit predicative judgment. E.g., upon hearing a sound outside the door, I spontaneously look but see that nobody is there. On the basis of this spontaneous questioning, I may form the predicative judgment, “S. Richmond has not arrived.”

Sartre's distinction between kinds of "modes of being" does not refer to modality in the logical sense of necessity and contingency. Rather, ontological modality refers to the most basic ways in which being relates to nothingness. Nothingness stands in either an internal or external relationship to being. That is it. These two basic options exhaust all of the logically possible combinations. Whereas the mode of being of material reality (the *in-itself*) exists solely in external relationships; the mode of being of embodied consciousness (*for-itself*) exists as an internally distended being by nothingness. When understood this way, Sartre's most general criticism of atomistic materialism is that (ontologically speaking) it reduces everything to external relationships, and, hence, leaves out one possible relationship between being and nothingness.

Sartre ties non-reductive materialism to modal pluralism and works out a view in advance of its time. On the one hand, Sartre rejects Cartesian substance dualism, and, on the other, he accepts a non-reductive materialism that attempts to explain for the emergence of consciousness in ontological terms. With that said, while consciousness both depends upon and is irreducible to matter, this does not mean that consciousness should be identified with nothingness. While commentators commonly interpret Sartre as holding the mysterious view that "consciousness is nothingness," Sartre never literally says this. Embodied consciousness is an internally mixed mode of being, temporally distended by nothingness that, ontologically speaking, is not what it is and is what it is not. Otherwise put, the title of *L'Etre et le néant neither could nor should have been La Matière et la conscience*.

The gist of Sartre's transcendental argument goes like this: Only an account of being qua internally distended by nothingness *can* adequately explain (in ontological terms) embodied consciousness-in-the-world and (in epistemic terms) the possibility of negative facts and judgments about them. The crux of Sartre's transcendental argument is as simple as it is elegant. "The *necessary condition* for our saying 'not' is that non-being be a perpetual presence *in us and outside of us...*" (EN 46–7; BN 11, emphasis added). Given that the necessary condition for the possibility of our interrogation of the world is the possible disclosure of negative facts (e.g., "it's not the carburetor," "there are not sixteen-hundred francs in my pocket," and "Pierre is not here") and given that there is nothing real about negative facts, i.e., no actual feature of the material world can cause us to apprehend them. They must, necessarily, find their source in the activity of consciousness.

Sartre invents a word *néantisation* (translated as *nihilation*) to characterize the necessary X condition for the possibility of (Y) consciousness's ability to negate and transcend what it is conscious of and disclose *négatités* (negative facts). His risky argument, simplified, is as follows.

- i. Being can only generate being.
- ii. Non-being qua *négativité* cannot be generated by being.
- iii. Hence, consciousness must be their source qua negating activity.

Now this conclusion is genuinely amplifying. The concept of a (pre-judicative) negative fact does not analytically imply the claim that only the activity of consciousness can be its source. As their source, the mode of being of consciousness must somehow contain nothingness internally. This follows according to premise 1.

If consciousness were characterized merely in terms of being, we could not explain the constitution of negative facts. As Sartre put it, “nothingness lies coiled in the heart of being,” to which he should have added *in the heart of the being* of “consciousness” (EN 57; BN 21).

In turn, this ontological account of negation qua *néantisation* grounds Sartre’s epistemology. To know what anything is, requires, first, that consciousness distinguish itself from that which it knows, and, second, that it distinguishes the objects which it grasps from other objects. To know that P, e.g., that my car is red, this requires knowing \sim P, e.g., that red is not blue. And so too with all knowledge; each bit implies negation. For this reason, Sartre reverses Spinoza’s scholastic claim that all determination is negation (*omnis determinatio est negatio*) and argues that negation is necessary for any determination (EN 51–52; BN 16). Sartre expresses the tightly-knit relationship between ontology and epistemology when he argues, “‘non-being’ is implied *a priori* in every theory of knowledge. It is impossible to conceive the notion of [a determinate] object if we do not originally have a negative relation designating the object as that which is not consciousness” (EN 222; BN 173, emphasis added). Consequently, the inferred ontological description of the structure of consciousness as *néantisation* (of itself and the world) provides a transcendently necessary ontological condition that explains the possibility of knowledge but it does so in a way that the activity of consciousness adds nothing to the being of what it knows.

Expository Conclusion

If one overestimates Sartre’s phenomenological commitments, as a great number of able commentators do, then, as Sebastian Gardner argues, “the ontology talk in *Being and Nothingness* would then be either a rhetorical shadow … or the result of a simple, non-transcendental inference from the appearances.”³⁸ To be sure, more than a few commentators have found Sartre’s inference from a mundane description of our pre-judicative experiences (of interrogation and negative facts) to ontological conclusions about the nature of consciousness puzzling.³⁹ However, my efforts here have not been meant to defend Sartre *per se*, but rather to champion the transcendental reading over what we might call “strongly phenomenological readings” (SPR). David Detmer indicates something like SPR when he claims Sartre’s ontology “attempts to describe the fundamental categories of being and their interrelations,” but it is not “about what kind of entity consciousness might be.”⁴⁰ See also A. R. Manser who

³⁸ “The Transcendental Dimension of Sartre’s Philosophy,” *Reading Sartre*, ed. Jonathan Webber (London: Routledge: 2010), 51.

³⁹ See for examples, Alvin Plantinga’s impressive but hasty essay, “An Existentialist’s Ethics,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 12/2 (Dec., 1958), 235–56 and Sarah Richmond’s eloquent “Sartre and Bergson: A Disagreement about Nothingness,” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 15/1 (2007): 77–95.

⁴⁰ Detmer, *Sartre Explained* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 2008), 63–64.

argues that Sartre's ontology "is concerned with a phenomenological description of experience," i.e., "of appearance rather than reality."⁴¹ Sartre, however, does not arrive at the ontological structure of (embodied) consciousness as a kind of being distended internally by nothingness via pure description, pace Husserl sans the reduction. Rather, he deduces such claim transcendentally.

This helps to explain why Sartre's twisted, ontological characterization of embodied consciousness as '*a being which is what it is not and which is not what it is*' should not be understood as straightforwardly descriptive. Sartre does not simply read this phrase off of experience; rather he deduces it on the basis a transitive series of transcendental inferences. These inferences supply the ontologically necessary conditions that make bad faith possible. Perhaps considerations like these motivate Thomas Flynn's qualification of SPR when he claims that Sartre's 'ontology is primarily descriptive and classificatory'.⁴² My efforts here can be summarized as showing why Sartre's ontology is not entirely descriptive.

With that said, while Jeffery Wilson correctly observes that "Sartre gives no detailed indications of the method of his ontology," his claim that "the line between description and explanation in *Being and Nothingness* is difficult if not impossible to draw" over relies on descriptive expectations.⁴³ If we suspend such expectations and pay close attention to the text, the transcendental dimension shows itself clearly, as Gardner has convincingly shown. On this reading, Sartre's ontological characterization of consciousness as a being distended by "*néantisation*" is at once descriptive and explanatory. It describes what consciousness is, contra Detmer, and it explains how it is possible for consciousness to relate to the world and know it. Thus, the line between description and explanation is difficult but not impossible to draw, because Sartre's transcendental inferences are simultaneously ontological characterizations and amplifying explanations.

Historical Conclusion

If Aristotle placed ontology first and Descartes placed it second, one can read Kant as eliminating ontology altogether in favor of epistemology.⁴⁴ Descartes' failure to overcome skepticism motivates Kant to throw the skeptic a rather large bone. Even if we cannot know reality as it is in itself (the bone), Kant believed himself to have limited knowledge to a sphere purportedly unassailable to skepticism, namely to the transcendental conditions for knowing how things appear. Thus, Kant rejected traditional

⁴¹ A.R. Manser, "Sartre and '*Le Néant*'" *Philosophy* 36/137 (1961): 177–87.

⁴² This quote comes from Flynn's *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on Sartre.

⁴³ See his essay "Metaphysical Questions in Sartre's Phenomenological Ontology," *Sartre Studies International* 6/2 (2000): 52–53.

⁴⁴ Reading Kant in this way is not uncontroversial. Alternatively, Kant may be said transform the relationship between ontology and epistemology and set the debate upon new grounds.

ontological claims (as inaccessible and entirely susceptible to skepticism), and he replaces it with transcendental epistemology, namely the necessary epistemic condition for the possibility of knowledge. In this way, Kant may be said to reject the study of being qua being but accept the study of being qua how it appears and is known “by us.” However, in rejecting traditional ontology by ruling out constitutive claims about noumena, Kant reintroduced a rather large theoretical gap for skeptical worries.

Husserl arguably narrows this gap. From an eidetic analysis of phenomena qua phenomena, he can be plausibly read as reaching being qua being in a historically novel fashion. This conceptual revolution melds phenomenology with ontology; however, it does so, according to Sartre, at the cost of giving any illuminating ontological account of our factual relationship to the world. Even if Sartre overreaches in his interpretation of Husserl, perhaps matters can be put like this. If Kant’s noumenal realm amounts to large fissure for skeptical wedges, Husserl narrowed but did not entirely close the gap. In contrast, attempts to more seamlessly wed ontology to epistemology, by locating transcendental inferences at the level of situated descriptions. Crucially, Husserl made Sartre’s effort possible when he argued that “it is fundamentally erroneous to believe that perception (and, after its own fashion, any other kind of intuition of a physical thing) does not reach the physical thing itself” (I §43).

However, if one must bracket transcendent being in order to realize that we have been in contact with it all along, Sartre argues that the physical thing no longer needs to be bracketed. In accepting the collapse of what has been a cardinal philosophical distinction between being and appearances, Sartre employs transcendental arguments in a way that plausibly do more labor than Kant would allow and in a way that brings phenomenology down to factual earth. Unlike Kant, for whom transcendental arguments establish *merely* epistemic conditions necessary for the possibility of knowledge (of how things appear); and unlike Husserl, for whom we can read these epistemic conditions descriptively off of phenomena via eidetic intuition, Sartre employs transcendental arguments that establish the ontological conditions that render our relationship to the world intelligible.

To the skeptic who raises her doubting eyes, Sartre replies that the negation required for doubt itself presupposes that which the skeptic wishes to deny, namely the negating activity of consciousness and its factually necessary intentional grasp of an independent world.⁴⁵

⁴⁵I would like to thank Lester Embree and Tom Nenon for all of their helpful suggestions and also for their work putting such a fine collection of essays together. I would also like to thank a blind referee for critical remarks. While the revisions motivated by these critical remarks will not be fully satisfying, hopefully they have improved the essay.

Chapter 21

Simone de Beauvoir and Life

Ulrika Björk

Beauvoir and the *Ideen*

Unlike other major figures in the French phenomenological movement, Simone de Beauvoir makes few explicit references to Husserl, and not one single reference to the *Ideen*. However, Husserl's influence—while indirect—is clear both thematically and, to a degree, methodologically. Beauvoir's familiarity with Husserlian phenomenology can be summarized in three textual moments: her reading of his lectures on internal time consciousness; her autobiographical commentaries on Jean-Paul Sartre's position on the transcendental ego; and her review of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *La phénoménologie de la perception*. While the two first indicate an awareness of Husserl's early analyses of intentionality and transcendental subjectivity, the third testifies to a profound understanding of the central themes of genetic phenomenology. One of Beauvoir's most original contributions to phenomenological research is based on this understanding. Her analysis of the meaning of sexual difference for individual and cultural constitution of subjectivity in *Le deuxième sexe* presuppose a Husserl's distinction between functioning and objectifying intentionality, as well as his anti-naturalist conceptualization of the lived body (*Leib*).

In the autobiographical volume covering the years 1929 to 1944, *La force de l'âge*, Beauvoir makes one of her few explicit references to specific texts by Husserl:

I also dipped into Husserl for the first time. Sartre had told me all he knew about Husserl: now he presented me with the German text of *Leçons sur la conscience interne du temps*, which I stumbled through without too much difficulty. Every time we met we would discuss

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various passages in it. The novelty and richness of phenomenology filled me with enthusiasm; I felt I had never come so close to the real truth.¹

The relation between temporality and selfhood is a central theme in Beauvoir's ethical essays from the 1940s.² It is given a historical and political dimension in *Le deuxième sexe*, and—as will become clear in the following essay—is particularly evident in her five volume autobiography as well as in her late study of aging.³ Preceded by a discussion of narrating one's own past, Beauvoir's last autobiographical volume, *Tout compte fait*, sketches an analysis of “life” as an intentional object.⁴

Even more direct evidence of Beauvoir's familiarity with phenomenology is found in a statement about the being and knowledge of transcendental subjectivity:

[T]o this day I still believe in the theory of “the transcendental Ego” (*l'Ego transcendantal*); the ego (*moi*) is only a probable object, and anyone saying “I” knows it only in profiles; another can have a clearer and more correct picture.⁵

Here Beauvoir makes a distinction between the transcendental ego (*l'Ego*), the ego as an object (*moi*) and I (*Je*). She further suggests that from the perspective of the speaking subject—that is, for the one who says “I”—the knowledge of the ego referred to as a worldly object is only probable. Someone else can have a more certain knowledge of me (*moi*).

Most scholars have interpreted this passage in line with Sartre's critique of Husserl's transcendental ego in *La transcendance de l'ego*, originally published in 1936.⁶ This interpretation is questionable, however, since it is not clear from the brief autobiographical evidence what, exactly, Beauvoir means by the transcendental

¹ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Prime of Life*, trans. Peter Green (New York: Lancer Books, 1962), 241; *La force de l'âge* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1969), 231. The text referred to is the original 1928 publication of a series of lectures that Husserl gave in 1905, republished and supplemented in 1969 as *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893–1917)*, ed. Rudolf Boehm. *Husserliana X* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff).

² Simone de Beauvoir, *Pyrrhus et Cinéas* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1944); *Pour une morale de l'ambiguïté* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard 1947).

³ Simone de Beauvoir, *La vieillesse* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1970).

⁴ Simone de Beauvoir, *Tout compte fait* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1972).

⁵ Beauvoir, *The Prime of Life*, 444 (trans. modified); *La force de l'âge*, 419: “Je crois encore aujourd’hui à la théorie de ‘l’Ego transcendantal’; le moi n’est qu’un objet probable, et celui qui dit *je* n’en saisit que des profils; autrui peut en avoir une vision plus nette ou plus juste.” The context of this statement is a discussion of the motivation to write autobiography. The exposition of her life, Beauvoir says, is based on her conviction that one cannot know oneself (*se connaître*), only tell about oneself (*se raconter*).

⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *La transcendance de l'ego. Esquisse d'une description phénoménologique* (Paris: Vrin 1978). In this essay, Sartre offers a critique of the Husserlian notion of a supposed transcendental ego or subject, and presents his own non-egological theory of consciousness. What he aims to show is that there is no “I” or ego behind our conscious experiences, neither as a formal condition of possibility, nor as a real or material inhabitant of consciousness (*conscience*), but that the ego is outside consciousness. As he writes; the ego “is a being of the world, like the ego of another.” *The Transcendence of the Ego: An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness*, trans. Forrest Williams & Robert Kirkpatrick (New York: Hill & Wang, 1960), 31; *La transcendance de l'ego*, 13.

ego. Is it identical with the ego considered as an object, with the one who says “I,” or distinguished from both? Beauvoir’s understanding of Sartre’s ontology is, moreover, far more nuanced than the view he presents in this early text. In a commentary on Sartre’s later thought, she questions the dualist interpretation of his ontology, according to which consciousness as pure transcendence is distinguished from concrete, transcendent being. On de Beauvoir’s alternative interpretation, the transcendental subject is understood as a genetic and affective meaning-giving structure, one which underlies all empirical and reflective experience.

Husserl publicly introduced genetic phenomenology to the French audience in two lectures given in Paris in 1929.⁷ There is no evidence that Beauvoir attended Husserl’s lectures.⁸ The knowledge we have of Beauvoir’s familiarity with this stage of Husserl’s thought comes from her review of *La phénoménologie de la perception* in 1945 and from her employment, via Merleau-Ponty, of Husserl’s concept of the lived body in *Le deuxième sexe*, published in 1949.⁹

In her very positive review of Merleau-Ponty’s study, Beauvoir cites phenomenology’s discovery of a pre-scientific and pre-ethical perceptual field—a field that precedes both science and ethics, and which relativizes the separation between both self and other and self and the world—as one of its most important contributions. What Beauvoir recognizes in Merleau-Ponty’s work is an “intentional network” on the level of sense-experience, which has a founding role in the constitution of perceptual experience and its objects.¹⁰ Phenomenology, she writes, restores to us the spontaneous movement of life and returns our right to an authentic existence.¹¹ She also draws attention to how phenomenology makes it possible to investigate this existence (as it is present in naïve or non-thematized experience) by means of an attitude that differs from, and therefore can be directed towards, “natural” experience. She refers to this particular reflective attitude as the phenomenological attitude (*l’attitude phénoménologique*). It is primarily as a novelist that Beauvoir investigates “authentic existence.” Her novels, she explains, are attempts to recapture

⁷ The lectures given in Paris form the basic structure of *Cartesian Meditations*, which appeared originally in French in 1931 and in the first *Husserliana* volume in 1950. Edmund Husserl, *Méditations cartésiennes. Introduction à la phénoménologie*, trans. Gabrielle Peiffer Emmanuel Levinas (Paris: A. Colin); *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, ed. S. Strasser (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950).

⁸ Cf. Simone de Beauvoir, *Mémoires d’une jeune fille rangée* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard 1958); *Les écrits de Simone de Beauvoir. La vie – l’écriture*, eds. Claude Francis & Fernande Gontier (Paris: Éditions Gallimard 1977), 33–34. In the spring of 1929, Beauvoir was completing her studies at Sorbonne and École normale supérieure, working on a thesis on the meaning of the concept in Leibniz’ philosophy, and preparing her teaching diploma, the French “agrégation de philosophie.”

⁹ Simone de Beauvoir, “*La phénoménologie de la perception* de Merleau-Ponty,” *Les temps modernes* 1/2 (novembre): 363–67; *Le deuxième sexe I & II* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard 1949).

¹⁰ Beauvoir, “A Review of *Phenomenology of Perception*,” 162; “*La phénoménologie de la perception* de Merleau-Ponty,” 365.

¹¹ Beauvoir, “A Review of *Phenomenology of Perception*,” 159–60; “*La phénoménologie de la perception* de Merleau-Ponty,” 363.

a pre-ethical level of experience, driven by life's contradictions, nuances and ambiguities.¹² The writer does not express the lived meaning of subjectivity under the form of knowledge (*savoir*), but rather under the form of the intimate and singularly lived experiences themselves.¹³

Whereas subjectivity on the level of functioning intentionality is a sensuous, affective, driven and—in this sense—*passive* becoming, subjectivity on the level of act intentionality is an *active* becoming, one in which a personal self constitutes itself in relation to the world and to others. In *Le deuxième sexe*, Beauvoir develops this central Husserlian idea by studying how subjective becoming as a singularly lived yet intersubjective reality is necessarily sexed.¹⁴

The references to phenomenology in *Le deuxième sexe* are not unambiguous, but they are explicit and convincing, and appear throughout the original two volumes. To give just one example, the “enormous advance” of psychoanalysis over psychophysiology, Beauvoir claims, is that “no factor intervenes in psychic life without having taken on human meaning.”¹⁵ With an indirect but clear reference to phenomenology, she adds that it is not the “body-object (*corps-objet*) described by scientists” that exists, but the “body lived by the subject” (*corps vécu par le sujet*). In other words, what is crucial for femininity and masculinity is the lived experience, rather than objective biological features that may not be part of this experience.

Beauvoir’s studies of biology, psychoanalysis and historical materialism in the first volume of *Le deuxième sexe* lead her to the anti-naturalist conclusion that none of these theoretical frameworks, taken by themselves, can explain how the hierarchy

¹² Simone de Beauvoir, *La force des choses II* (Paris: Gallimard 1963), 62.

¹³ Simone de Beauvoir, “Mon expérience d’écrivain,” *Les écrits de Simone de Beauvoir. La vie – l’écriture*, eds. Claude Francis & Fernande Gontier (Paris: Éditions Gallimard 1977), 446. Beauvoir’s “poetics” explicitly draws on Kierkegaard’s distinction between direct and indirect communication, but her intuition about the philosophical value of literature echoes Husserl’s in *Ideen I*, §70: “Extraordinary profit can be drawn from the offerings of history, in even more abundant measure from those of art, and especially from poetry, which are, to be sure, imaginary, but which ... tower high above the products of our own phantasy.” *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten. *Collected Works II* (Dordrecht, Boston & London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1982), 160; *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Walter Biemel. *Husserliana III* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1950), 132.

¹⁴ *Le deuxième sexe* is thus a significant contribution to what Husserl himself calls “the problem of the sexes,” a problem he viewed as an area for future phenomenological research. See Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 188; *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel, *Husserliana VI* (The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954), 191–92.

¹⁵ Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde & Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 49; *Le deuxième sexe I. Les faits et les mythes* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1949), 80.

between the sexes has been established. Rather, the facts provided by the sciences need to be understood from the perspective of the individual's total existential situation. To be sure, sexual difference has to be studied objectively, from the perspectives of science, history and a cultural imaginary, but—Beauvoir maintains—it also has to be studied subjectively, from the perspective of women's lived experience (*expérience vécue*).

“What Is This Curious Object?” Some Reflections on Life

For an experienced event is finite—at any rate, confined to one sphere of experience; a remembered event is infinite, because it is only a key to everything that happened before it and after it.

—Walter Benjamin, “The Image of Proust”¹⁶

In the first part of *Homo Sacer*, Giorgio Agamben writes that “the Greeks had no single term to express what we mean by the word ‘life.’”¹⁷ He then famously draws attention to two different Greek terms for life: *zoē* and *bios*. Whereas *zoē* “expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods),” he claims *bios* “indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group.”¹⁸ The difference for the Greeks, in other words, was between natural or “bare life,” and a qualified life, or a way of life, like that of a politician or a philosopher. Agamben’s inquiry does not concern this distinction as such, but rather its constitutive role for Western definitions of politics.¹⁹ His initial remark concerning our understanding of the word “life” is therefore left undeveloped.

My question here does not concern the distinction between *zoē* and *bios*, but the contemporary meaning of the word “life.” In my view this meaning is far from clear. Does “life” have, as Agamben implies, a single, unified meaning? Etymologically, the English word “life” has Indo-European roots and can be traced back to the word

¹⁶ *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 202; *Illuminationen: ausgewählte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1961), 336. “Denn ein erlebtes Ereignis ist endlich, zumindest in der einen Sphäre des Erlebens beschlossen, ein erinnertes shrankenlos, weil nur Schlüssel zu allem was vor ihm und zu allem was nach ihm kam.”

¹⁷ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1; *Homo sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita* (Turino: Giulio Einaudi, 1995), 3. “Life” is a translation of the Italian word *vita*.

¹⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 1; *Homo sacer* (original), 3.

¹⁹ In response to Michel Foucault’s claim that the politicization of bare life, or the entry of *zoē* into politics, constitutes “the decisive event of modernity” (when natural life is included in the mechanisms and calculations of State power, politics turns into “biopolitics”), Agamben argues that Western politics as such is founded on the exclusion of bare life, or on the exceptional status of *homo sacer* (4); *Homo sacer* (original), 7. What characterizes modern politics is the gradual coincidence of *zoē* and *bios*; through modern democracy (and subsequently totalitarianism) bare life is not only liberated, but turned into a way of life.

lib, meaning to remain, persevere and continue.²⁰ It is also related to the German words *Leib* (body) and *bleiben* (to remain). Used in a generic sense, “life” thus comes close to ancient Greek meanings of *zoē* (life) as well as *zoön* (living being, animal).²¹ But what do we mean by the more modern idea of an individual human life, my life or your life? What are the conditions for describing life as personally lived? The aim of this essay is to offer a reflection on the meaning of a singular human life. This reflection is inspired by Simone de Beauvoir’s autobiographical descriptions of her life as a “curious” temporal object, and by more general phenomenological and existential analyses of the meaning of the past for the becoming of a person. The temporal frame evokes questions about memory and the relation between the present and the past. What does it mean to have a past? Can the past be clearly distinguished from the present? Is the past fixed or changing? Does the past determine the present (and indeed the future), or is the past rather determined by the way one understands one’s present life? What is the relation between the past and remembering? Are there different ways of remembering? Is it possible to retrieve one’s life through memory?

There is one modern conception of “life” that is not covered by the distinction between *zoē* and *bios*. I am thinking of *élan vital*, coined by Henri Bergson in 1907. In *L'évolution créatrice*, Bergson defines *élan vital* as an “original impetus of life” (*élan originel de la vie*), passing from one generation of seeds to the next, through the developed organisms which bridge the interval between the generations, or “an internal push that has carried life, by more and more complex forms, to higher and higher destinies.”²² As carried by this *élan* or impetus, life does not proceed by the association and addition of elements, but by “dissociation and division” (*dissociation et dédoublement*).²³ Bergson describes life in terms of a “tendency,” the essence of which is “to develop in the form of a sheaf, creating, by its very growth, divergent directions among which its impetus is divided.”²⁴

What is interesting with regard to our understanding of an individual human life is Bergson’s claim that this force of “dissociation and division” is not limited to nature, but is operative in the development of a personality as well. We can observe this change in ourselves, according to him, if we consider the evolution of the tendency

²⁰ *The Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories*, ed. Glynnis Chantrell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 301. Cf. *The Bernhard Concise Dictionary of Etymology*, ed. Robert K. Bernhart (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 432.

²¹ The definition Aristotle, for instance, gives of *zoē* is the capacity for self-nutrition, growth and decay: “Of natural bodies some have life (*zoē*) in them, others not; by life we mean self-nutrition and growth and decay” (*On the Soul*, II 412a). *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 656.

²² Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983), 87, 102; *L'évolution créatrice* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948), 95, 111.

²³ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 89 (italics in original); *L'évolution créatrice*, 97.

²⁴ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 99; *L'évolution créatrice*, 108.

we call our character.²⁵ In Bergson's view, our "child-personality," though indivisible, unifies in itself diverse "persons." These persons can remain blended in childhood because they are in their nascent state, or in a state of indecision. However, in the course of growth, they become incompatible, and as each of us can only live one life, we are forced to make a choice. In reality, Bergson admits, this choice is not one: we choose continuously, and continuously abandon many things. The lives we come to live are therefore scattered with "the remains of all that we began to be, of all that we might have become (*devenir*)."²⁶

As an example, I think of the diverse personas that were unified in my own "child-personality": the piano-player, the singer in girl's choirs, the school girl, the traveller to summer camps, the reader, the diary-writer. Some of these personas have remained; I read, I write, I travel to conferences. I occasionally sing, but I no longer play the piano. Were the piano-player and the singer forever lost as I abandoned their development?

In the last volume of her autobiography, *Tout compte fait*, Simone de Beauvoir questions Bergson's understanding of life as a movement of differentiation and division, and instead gives her own description of the becoming of a distinct personality. According to her, Bergson's view implies that "in realizing ourselves we lose most of our possibilities."²⁷ Considering her own life as a concrete example, she presents a different view:

Certainly when I was twelve I was tempted by paleontology, astronomy, history, and every fresh branch of learning I chanced upon; but they all formed part of the larger project of discovering the world, a project that I followed steadily.²⁸

From the beginning she was "amorphous" (*informes*) rather than "manifold" (*multiple*), Beauvoir concludes. The development of a personality, in other words, is in her view a continuous shaping or forming of something formless, rather than a process of differentiation and division. The original character is not lost in this becoming, but defined: the little girl of three years she once was, Beauvoir illustrates, lived on, grew calmer, in the girl of 10, that child in the woman of 20, and so on, and she also recognizes herself through life's changes.²⁹ Following this line of thinking, my childhood piano lessons are clearly part of a more general project of definition—of

²⁵ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 100; *L'évolution créatrice*, 109. For a detailed discussion of the ambiguous meaning of *élan vital*, see, e.g., John Mullarkey, *Bergson and Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999). According to Mullarkey, *élan vital* is often used as an equivalent of life, spirit, and consciousness (80). For a critique of Bergson's concept *élan vital*, and the philosophy of life associated with it, see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago & Oxford: Chicago University Press, 1998), 117, 311–13.

²⁶ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 100; *L'évolution créatrice*, 109.

²⁷ Simone de Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, trans. Patrick O'Brian (New York: Paragon House, 1993), 2 (trans. modified); *Tout compte fait*, 46. "...qu'en nous réalisant nous perdons la plupart de nos possibilités."

²⁸ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 29; *Tout compte fait*, 46.

²⁹ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 29–30; *Tout compte fait*, 46–47.

my original character, to be sure, but also of what, in the course of time, formed itself into a specific life of education and self-expression. But how is it possible to recognize oneself—one's original character—throughout life's changes?

In his phenomenological analyses of the consciousness of time, Edmund Husserl insists that the identity of one's individual life is dependent on memory and, more precisely, on the different modes of remembering he calls *recollection* and *retention*. Husserl's analyses, which are abstract in the sense that they concern the form of time and not the concrete "I," were presented in a series of lectures from 1905.³⁰ In a summary of his main insights in *Ideen I* (1913), he distinguishes the subjectively lived time from cosmic or objective time, but also underlines their interdependence.³¹ Without the subjective experience of time, the objective time of the world—and by implication the sharing of ideas through communication—would not be possible. As Rudolf Bernet writes in a comparison of memory in Husserl, Proust, and Barthes, "for Husserl, the act of recollection ... assures not only the identity of the object and thereby the possibility of science, but also the personal identity of the subject."³² What does recollection and retention mean and why does Husserl find it necessary to distinguish these different forms of memory?

Recollection is what we ordinarily think of as remembering. As an intentional act—that is, an act directing itself towards an object (the past experience)—recollection *re-presents* the past, it makes something that was once given or perceived present again, but in the form of a "past present."³³ In *Confessions*, Augustine gives an illuminative concrete description of this experience of remembering:

I distinguish the odor of lilies from that of violets without smelling anything at all. I prefer honey to a sweet wine, a smooth taste to a rough one, not actually tasting or touching at the moment, but by recollection.³⁴

Contra Augustine's theory of memory, it is crucial for Husserl that the re-presented past is not present as mental images.³⁵ Recollection gives the past experience originally. In the present act of remembering, I voluntarily "live through" the experience again, while being aware that it is past. This is also what distinguishes recollection from

³⁰ Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (1893–1917), ed. Rudolf Boehm, *Husserliana X* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969).

³¹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Walter Biemel, *Husserliana III* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1950), 161–62.

³² Bernet, Rudolf, "Framing the Past: Memory in Husserl, Proust and Barthes," *The Husserlian Foundations of Phenomenological Psychology* (Pittsburgh: The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center, Duquesne University Press, 1993), 5.

³³ Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (1893–1917), trans. John Barnet Brough *Collected Works IV* (Dordrecht, Boston & London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 43, 47; *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, 41, 45.

³⁴ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 186.

³⁵ According to Augustine, we experience objects through perception, but what remains available to memory are the images of the perceived objects (*Confessions*, 186).

retention, which is an “immediate” functioning or operative memory that accounts for the possibility of the “double presence” of recollection, that is, the presence of the remembered past as well as my (present) awareness of remembering.³⁶ Retention accounts for the continuity between the past and the present and is what makes recollecting memory, and the identity of one’s life, possible.

In retention, I am passively aware of the present that has just past, and (ideally) of the whole chain of elapsed “now moments.” As an immediate or primary memory, retention belongs to the consciousness of the present, which is consequently not fully present, but only present in a blending of presence and non-presence—of what is “now” and what is “not now.” The present, in other words, is a temporal fringe or horizon, consisting not only of the “now” and the “just-past,” but also of the “just-coming.”³⁷ Husserl even considers the “now” of the living present an ideal limit where the “new” or “not yet” moments of the present passes into the “just past.”³⁸ The proper place for present awareness, as Bernet concludes on the basis of Husserl’s analysis of the living present, is in-between the present and the past. Consciousness “apprehends itself as being what it has already ceased to be.”³⁹ Thanks to the living present and the chain of retentions that assures the continuity between the present and the past, however, nothing that has been present to consciousness can ever be lost by it. Keeping in mind that memory, for Husserl, is not a “storehouse” of images, he would agree with Augustine that the “vast fields and palaces of memory” preserve everything that we have perceived “to be recalled when needed and reconsidered.”⁴⁰ In Husserl’s epistemologically motivated theory of memory “the past of a person will always remain accessible and does not require any operation of deciphering or decoding in order to be re-appropriated.”⁴¹

Amongst the phenomena preserved by memory in Augustine’s early Christian theory of memory is his own past self. With the exception of infancy—which is lost in the “darkness” of forgetfulness—Augustine assures that in memory he meets himself and recalls what he is, what he has done, and when and where and how he was affected when he did it.⁴² In contrast to Augustine’s religious perspective—as well as to Husserl’s epistemological—Beauvoir’s existential study of ageing, *La vieillesse*, presents a more melancholic (and skeptical) view about the possibilities

³⁶ Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, 44–51; *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, 42–49; cf. Bernet, “Framing the Past,” 3–4.

³⁷ Husserl, *Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, 27, 41; *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, 25–26, 39.

³⁸ Cf. Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, 42; *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, 40.

³⁹ Bernet, “Framing the Past,” 4.

⁴⁰ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, 185–86.

⁴¹ Bernet, “Framing the Past,” 5.

⁴² Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, 10, 186–87. Infancy, for Augustine, is on the level of life lived in his mother’s womb and he feels no responsibility for a time he cannot recall (10).

to remember. The past can hardly be recalled, Beauvoir writes, she does not meet herself there and in memory the living meaning of what was once present is lost:

The past is not a peaceful landscape lying there behind me, a country in which I can stroll wherever I please, and which will gradually show me all its secret hills and dales. As I was moving forward, so it was crumbling. Most of the wreckage that can still be seen is colorless, distorted, frozen: its meaning escapes me. Here and there, I see occasional pieces whose melancholy beauty enchant me. They do not suffice to populate this emptiness that Chateaubriand calls “the desert of the past.”⁴³

This experience of an evasive and fragmentary past motivates Beauvoir to ask how far memory allows us to retrieve our lives. Her brief summary of the French psychiatrist Jean Delay’s conception of recognition through memory draws attention to other forms of remembering, alongside recollection and retention.

In *Les dissolutions de la mémoire*, a philosophical dissertation from 1942, Delay distinguishes three different modes of recovering the past.⁴⁴ The first is what he calls the sensor-motor memory. Here, memory is “a matter of action and not of thought”; remembering is made up of “series of montages and automatic forms of behavior that obey the laws of habit” (my ability to play the piano might still be preserved in this kind of memory). The second form of remembering is so-called autistic memory. This kind of memory is governed by the dynamics of the unconscious and activates the past “in dreams and deliriums in a paralogical and affective mode.”⁴⁵ In autistic memory, the subject is unaware of remembering, but still relives past impressions in the present in the form of neuroses. Contrary to sensor-motor memory, through which the past cannot be consciously retrieved, it is possible to use autistic memory for the aim of re-knowing or recognizing the past. This, Beauvoir observes, is what psychoanalysts attempts to do. She thus identifies autistic memory with the kind of remembering Sigmund Freud in 1914 introduced as *repetition*.⁴⁶

The frame of Freud’s discussion of remembering (and of forgetting) is psychoanalytic treatment, where the aim is to fill in gaps in memory and overcome resistances due to repression. As distinguished from conscious remembering of something that was forgotten or disguised, Freud defines repetition as a kind of memory by which the patient acts out what he or she has forgotten, rather than remembers it. The past is (unknowingly) reproduced as an action rather than as a memory. In repetition, the patient acts out the symptoms of the illness, but also inhibitions, attitudes and character-trait that have made their way “from the sources of

⁴³ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, trans. Patrick O’Brian (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), 407; *La vieillesse*, 388.

⁴⁴ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, 404; *La vieillesse*, 385.

⁴⁵ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, 404; *La vieillesse*, 385.

⁴⁶ Sigmund Freud, “Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through,” *The Case of Schreber, Papers on Technique and Other Works. Standard Edition*, vol. XII (1911–1913), trans. James Strachey with Anna Freud (London: The Hogarth Press, 1958), 147–56; “Erinnern, Widerholen und Durcharbeiten,” *Gesammelte Werke. Zehnter Band: Werke aus den Jahren 1913–1917* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1966), 126–36.

the repressed into his manifest personality.”⁴⁷ The compulsion to repeat convinces Freud that the psychic illness must be treated as a “present-day force,” rather than an “event of the past.”⁴⁸ In comparison to Husserlian recollection, where recognition takes place when a conscious “I” directs itself to, and relives, an experience from the past, repetition is a “memory in the present,” which needs deciphering in order to be recognized.

Turning back to Beauvoir’s summary of Delay’s theory, the third form of remembering is so-called social memory. As distinguished from sensor-motor memory and autistic memory, social memory is an intellectual operation that—not unlike recollection—“reconstructs and localizes past facts, basing itself upon physiological data, images and a certain knowledge, and making use of logical categories.”⁴⁹ As Beauvoir remarks, social memory is the remembering that enables us, to some degree, to tell ourselves our own history.

Like recollection or repetition, telling ourselves our own history as an intellectual operation necessarily has a certain frame.⁵⁰ In the case of autobiography, this frame is a literary creation in which although it is not completely fictional experiences pass through artistic configuration of time in the form of a narrative.⁵¹ Less worried by the influence of imagination on remembering, Beauvoir understands autobiographical writing as the activity of recreating past events in the form of memory, or of “reanimating” the vague images of the past.⁵² If a faithful recreation of one’s life in the form of autobiography is still impossible, this is not only due to the failure of memory, according to her, but also to the nature of the object that is to be described. The past, as well as the life one has lived, cannot be possessed or known in the way one possesses or knows a thing. Life is a “detotalized totality” (*totalité-détotalisée*), which—in the frame of French existential philosophy—implies that it *is* not, or has no being.⁵³

⁴⁷ Freud, “Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through,” 151; “Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten,” 131.

⁴⁸ Freud, “Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through,” 151; “Erinnern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten,” 131.

⁴⁹ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, 404; *La vieillesse*, 385.

⁵⁰ This is Bernet’s main claim in his essay on memory in Husserl, Proust and Barthes; every memory, and indeed every analysis of memory, is in need of being framed (8).

⁵¹ For a discussion of the experience of time and fictional narrative, see Paul Ricoeur, *Temps et récit II. L’expérience temporelle fictive* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1984), especially 150–255; cf. Bernet, “Framing the Past,” 7–13.

⁵² Beauvoir, “Mon expérience d’écrivain,” 452.

⁵³ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2; *Tout compte fait*, 12; cf. “Mon expérience d’écrivain,” 443. In *La force des choses* Beauvoir is more specific about the “totality” that a life constitutes. It is diverse and fluid, and its most characteristic aspect is that it changes with time and implies “transformations, ripening and irreversible deteriorations.” *After the War: Force of Circumstance I*, 276; *La force des choses I*, 375–76. See also *La vieillesse*: “[L]ife is an unstable system in which the balance is continually lost and continually recovered … Change is the law of life” (*Old Age*, 17; *La vieillesse*, 17).

As distinguished from earlier volumes, where memories are chronologically reproduced and related, Beauvoir's aim in the last volume of her autobiography is to examine her history through certain given concepts and notions.⁵⁴ Once again, she considers her childhood and youth, her friendships and love relations, and the deaths that have moved her—this time, however, from the perspective of the play between chance, circumstance and choice. The possibility of these reflections depends on the temporal remoteness in which her life can appear as a totality: “[t]he nearer I come towards the end of my existence, the more I am enabled to see that strange thing, a life, and to see it whole.”⁵⁵

In what has been viewed as a Proustian opening scene of *Tout compte fait*, Beauvoir depicts a childlike surprise at waking up in her own room, after having fallen asleep during the day.⁵⁶ What surprises the subject of the autobiography, however, is not primarily the possibility of being unexpectedly reminded of places where she once lived, or the temporary forgetting of her identity between being asleep and being fully awake, but to find herself deeply embedded in this life, at this time, and not in any other life. “Why am I myself?” the narrator asks.⁵⁷ This question motivates a deliberate will to remember:

At present I am concerned with recovering my life—reviving forgotten memories, re-reading, re-seeing, rounding off incomplete pieces of knowledge, filling gaps, clarifying obscurities, gathering scattered elements together.⁵⁸

While her own birth and sex seem unlikely in the first place, subject to chance and contingency, her own existence is at the same time not contingent. “If I had not been born no question would have arisen: I have to take the fact that I do exist as my starting point.”⁵⁹ She continues her inquiry in two directions. First, she studies the ambiguity of her individual life: “My life: it is both intimately known and remote; it defines me and yet I stand outside it. Just what, precisely, is this curious object (*bizarre objet*)?”⁶⁰ Second, she investigates her life with regard to the mode in which it was formed. The two lines of inquiry intersect, since in the latter case life is considered a particular kind of temporal object.

⁵⁴ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 3; *Tout compte fait*, 13. In addition to this initial investigation, Beauvoir continues in the last autobiographical volume to recount her primary occupations during the most recent past: reading, writing, travelling, and, more than ever between 1962 and 1972, engaging herself in the political events of her time.

⁵⁵ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, “Prologue” (trans. modified); *Tout compte fait*, 9. “Plus je me rapproche du terme de mon existence, plus il me devient possible d’embrasser dans son ensemble cet étrange objet qu’est une vie.”

⁵⁶ Leah Hewitt draws attention to the intertextual connection between *Tout compte fait* and the first volume of Marcel Proust’s *À la recherche du temps perdu*, *Du côté de chez Swann*, in *Autobiographical Tightropes: Simone de Beauvoir, Nathalie Sarraute, Marguerite Duras, Monique Wittig, and Maryse Condé* (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

⁵⁷ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 1; *Tout compte fait*, 11.

⁵⁸ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 39; *Tout compte fait*, 60.

⁵⁹ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 1; *Tout compte fait*, 11.

⁶⁰ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 1–2; *Tout compte fait*, 12.

In her attempt to describe this “object,” Beauvoir begins by stating that it is at once boundless (*illimité*) and finite (*fini*).⁶¹ A singular life is boundless, first in the sense that it runs back to the beginnings of the world and to its utmost limits. “In my being,” she writes, “I sum up the earthly inheritance and the state of the world at this moment.”⁶² In an earlier passage, she makes a similar claim about the “mirroring” of her individual history, and of her surrounding world. Every moment of her life reflects her own past, her body, her relations with others, the task she has undertaken, the society and world in which she lives.⁶³ For a biographer, the “inexhaustible multiplicity of relationships” that each element in an existence maintains with the whole of being is therefore impossible to reproduce. This is even more so, as each of these elements has a meaning that differs with the perspective from which it is viewed. “The fact ‘I was born in Paris,’ ” Beauvoir illustrates, “does not represent the same thing to a Parisian, to a person from the provinces, and to a foreigner.”⁶⁴ Even if the city has an objective or intersubjective reality, the apparent simplicity of the statement is scattered among the millions of individuals who have a relation to Paris.

However, a life is also a finite reality (*réalité finie*) in the sense it has a center of interiorization, and this center is an “I” (*je*) which poses itself as identical through all moments.⁶⁵ As finite, furthermore, a life inscribes itself in a certain endurance (*durée*) and is located; it has a beginning and an end, evolves in given places, retains the same roots and constitutes an unchanging past, whose opening towards the future is limited.⁶⁶ The idea of a frozen past thus returns in the autobiography. But is the past really fixed?

While Beauvoir uses metaphorical figures related to death in order to describe the past—“desert,” “skeleton,” “a butterfly pinned in a glass case”—she also claims that it is the future that decides whether the past is living or not.⁶⁷ Drawing on Jean-Paul Sartre’s analyses in *L’être et le néant* and *Critique de la raison dialectique*, she understands the past in terms of the *in-itself* that the *for-itself* leaves behind, and, more precisely, as a whole formed by all that one has done, and by the way one has defined oneself in relation to it.⁶⁸ The past, in other words, is reified praxis, or what

⁶¹ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2; *Tout compte fait*, 12.

⁶² Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2; *Tout compte fait*, 12.

⁶³ Beauvoir, *After the War: Force of Circumstance I*, 275–76; *La force des choses I*, 374.

⁶⁴ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2 (trans. modified); *Tout compte fait*, 12. “Ce fait: ‘Je suis née à Paris’ ne représente pas la même chose aux yeux d’un Parisien, d’un provincial, d’un étranger.”

⁶⁵ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2; *Tout compte fait*, 12; cf. *La force de l’âge*, 419.

⁶⁶ Beauvoir, *All Said and Done*, 2; *Tout compte fait*, 12.

⁶⁷ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, 407; *La vieillesse*, 388.

⁶⁸ Beauvoir, *Old Age*, 415; *La vieillesse*, 395; cf. Sartre, *L’être et le néant. Essai d’ontologie phénoménologique* (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1943), 150–74; *Critique de la raison dialectique*, I (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1960), e.g., 154, 231–32 and Livre I: “De la ‘praxis’ individuelle au pratico-inerte.”

Sartre calls the “practico-inert.” The past in this sense is an imperative or “calling.” It possesses us in that it objectively or publicly defines our present and ourselves; it sets the subject up as Another (as the author of these books or the player of these piano concerts). Remembering, from this perspective, is an attempt to attain the impossible synthesis of the *in-itself* and the *for-itself*. As such, it will not bring the past back to life, or ourselves as we existed then. The only way in which we can retrieve the past, and in some sense possess it, is by binding the past to a project that transcends it.

Returning to my initial reflections, if being a child means either being in a nascent state of indecision (Bergson) or being formless (Beauvoir), being an adult means having become defined by the “calling” of one’s own past, and to actively respond to that calling. This does not imply any teleology or determinism. Beauvoir’s point is precisely that the persons we become, and the lives we come to live, are not given, but are the result of a development that acquires a certain pattern in the course of time. To take my life as an example, musical practice forms part of that pattern but it does not possess me in the sense of a personal “calling.” I can remember, and even sense, what it was like singing Christmas Carols in a candlelight procession, or performing a piano piece during a concert at the end of the school year. But these experiences remain subjective memories, even “melancholic islands” in a past I cannot totally grasp. My “living past” (the practices that transcend the past into the present) is the intersubjective reality that teaching, writing and publishing—in short, the academic life—has become. This reality now defines me from the “outside” and gives meaning to my individual life as a way of life, or a *bios*.

Chapter 22

Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Lifeworldly Naturalism

Ted Toadvine

The *Ideen* and Merleau-Ponty

While a student at the École Normale Supérieure, Merleau-Ponty attended Edmund Husserl's lectures at the Sorbonne in February of 1929, though nothing suggests that the two men ever met. Nonetheless, Husserl exerted a more profound and continuous influence on Merleau-Ponty's thought, from his first writings to his final unpublished work, than any other single thinker.¹ The majority of Husserl's students and followers take their starting point in a critique of specific aspects of his method, but Merleau-Ponty's approach is distinctive. He recognizes in Husserl's thought many of the same tensions, ambiguities, and contradictions noted by other readers, yet for Merleau-Ponty these are indications of the success of Husserl's descriptions; the tensions and contradictions in Husserl's thought are evidence less of methodological flaws than of genuine insights into the matters themselves, the ambiguities inherent in reflecting on our historical and embodied existence. Merleau-Ponty's distinctive contribution to phenomenology rests in his willingness to take such tensions seriously in their own terms, a project that he understands to be profoundly faithful to Husserl's guiding intentions and better lights. That the paradoxes which Merleau-Ponty's investigations take as their perennial themes—embodiment, intersubjectivity, time, expression, nature—often find their original formulation in Husserl's texts, to which Merleau-Ponty constantly

¹ For a detailed summary of Merleau-Ponty's reading of Husserl throughout his career, see my “Merleau-Ponty's Reading of Husserl: A Chronological Overview,” *Merleau-Ponty's Reading of Husserl*, ed. Ted Toadvine and Lester Embree (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002), 227–86.

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returns for inspiration, is a measure of the master's abiding influence. For Merleau-Ponty, Husserl work deserves our enduring attention precisely because it holds no pretension to reach definitive conclusions but rather confronts us with the most profound philosophical conundrums without recoiling from or attempting to sever their Gordian core. Even when Merleau-Ponty expresses reservations about Husserl's approach, as he does from the outset and increasingly in later years, his assessments focus on Husserl's resistance to the implications of his own descriptions, so that underlying these criticisms we can still read an act of faithfulness. In an interview in the last year of his life, when Merleau-Ponty notes that he has long been influenced by Husserl, the interviewer asks when he broke with this philosophy: "Oh, it started from the beginning," he answers, but then adds: "For that matter, is it a break?"²

Merleau-Ponty demonstrates an awareness of *Ideen I* at the outset of his career, citing this text in several of his first publications from the mid 1930s.³ He first mentions *Ideen I* in his 1934 application to the Caisse National des Sciences for renewal of a grant to study the nature of perception, where he describes Husserl's phenomenology as "doubly interesting," since, thanks to the reduction and the shift to a transcendental perspective, it offers an entirely new philosophy distinct from Kantian critical thought and definitively distinguishes psychological from phenomenological approaches to perception.⁴ Citing *Ideen I* explicitly, Merleau-Ponty attributes to Husserl's work the potential for a "renewal of the principles of psychology," and he echoes Aron Gurwitsch's claim that Husserl's analyses "lead to the threshold of *Gestaltpsychologie*."⁵ This theme of the convergence or mutual complementarity of phenomenology and Gestalt theory guides Merleau-Ponty's thinking in his first thesis in 1938, *La structure du comportement*. Although Husserl receives no explicit discussion in this text, several of his works, especially *Ideen I*, are cited as key sources, especially the description of perceptual form as an intentional rather than a physical object, its perspectival presentation by way of profiles, and its implication in relations of motivation rather than causality.⁶ When, in the conclusion of *Structure*,

² Merleau-Ponty, "La philosophie et la politique sont solidaires," *Parcours deux 1951–1961* (Lagrasse: Verdier, 2000), 303 (my translation).

³ *Ideen I* is cited in Merleau-Ponty's 1935 review of Scheler's *Ressentiment* ("Christianisme et ressentiment," *Parcours 1935–1951* [Lagrasse: Verdier, 1997], 18, 19; "Christianity and *Ressentiment* (1935)," trans. Gerald Wening, *Texts and Dialogues*, eds. Hugh Silverman and James Barry Jr. [Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1992], 90, 91), and themes from *Ideen I* are also discussed in Merleau-Ponty's 1936 review of Sartre's *Imagination* ("L'Imagination," *Parcours 1935–1951*, 51–54; "On Sartre's *Imagination* (1936)," trans. Michael B. Smith, *Texts and Dialogues*, 112–13).

⁴ Merleau-Ponty, "La Nature de la perception," *Vers une nouvelle philosophie transcendentale*, ed. Theodore Geraets (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), 190–91; "The Nature of Perception: Two Proposals (1933)," trans. Forrest Williams, *Texts and Dialogues*, 77.

⁵ "La Nature de la perception," 191; "The Nature of Perception," 77, 78.

⁶ For references to *Ideen I*, see *La Structure du comportement* (Paris: PUF, 1942), 155, 175, 186, 201, & 235; *The Structure of Behavior*, trans. Alden Fisher (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1963), 143, 162, 172, 186, & 218. Other texts by Husserl cited here include *Méditations cartésiennes*, *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, and *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*.

Merleau-Ponty defines the “phenomenological reduction” as a “return to perception as to a type of originary experience in which the real world is constituted in its specificity,” he presents this as concordant with the definition of the reduction in Husserl’s later work.⁷

In April of 1939, Merleau-Ponty visited the newly established Husserl Archive in Louvain, as its first international guest, to consult the unpublished typescript of *Ideen II* and other manuscripts.⁸ Although his visit lasted only five days, Merleau-Ponty’s brief study of this text—which he would later describe as “*une expérience presque voluptueuse*”—clearly informs *Phénoménologie de la perception*’s analyses of embodiment and perceptual experience.⁹ *Ideen II* is cited only once, concerning the body’s incomplete constitution, but the manuscript’s descriptions also inform Merleau-Ponty’s accounts of the body as an “I can” and as the zero-point of spatial orientation, the self-forgetfulness of the perceiving subject in the natural attitude, and the constitution of optimal norms of perception, to name only a few examples.¹⁰ The *Phénoménologie* also introduces Merleau-Ponty’s interpretation of the development of Husserl’s thought as having started with a “logicism” or “philosophy of essences” and turning later toward an “existentialism” engaged in describing the *Lebenswelt*, with the *Ideen* occupying a transitional middle period characterized by a “classical conception” of intentionality and emphasis on the *Sinngebung* of consciousness.¹¹

After the *Phénoménologie*, Merleau-Ponty devoted several courses partially or entirely to Husserl, of which the 1950–1951 Sorbonne course, “Les sciences de l’homme et la Phénoménologie,” and the 1956–1957 Collège de France course, “The Concept of Nature,” discuss *Ideen* in the most detail. “Les sciences de l’homme et la Phénoménologie” traces the development of Husserl’s account of the relation between philosophy and the human sciences of psychology, linguistics, and history, providing Merleau-Ponty’s most straightforward and sympathetic exposition of Husserlian intentionality, eidetic intuition, and phenomenological reduction. For Merleau-Ponty, the transcendental approach of *Ideen I* is a sophisticated effort to negotiate between logicism and psychologism and points the later Husserl toward

⁷ See *La Structure du comportement*, 236; *The Structure of Behavior*, 220, 249n56.

⁸ For a detailed account of Merleau-Ponty’s visit and the texts consulted, see H. L. Van Breda, “Maurice Merleau-Ponty et les Archives-Husserl à Louvain,” *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 67/4 (1962): 410–30; “Merleau-Ponty and the Husserl Archives at Louvain,” trans. Stephen Michelman, *Texts and Dialogues*, 150–61. Merleau-Ponty mentions *Ideen II* as the primary reason for his visit in his first letter to the Archive, and emphasizes again his plans to concentrate on this text in his reply to Van Breda’s invitation (412, 413 [French]; 151, 152 [English]). During his visit, he consulted Ludwig Landgrebe’s 1925 typed transcription, which would later become the basis for the 1952 Husserliana volume.

⁹ Merleau-Ponty’s remark is reported in the “Translators’ Introduction” to Husserl, *Ideas II*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), xvi.

¹⁰ For the explicit references to *Ideen II*, see *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 108, 465; *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 105, 472.

¹¹ *Phénoménologie de la perception*, 281n, 317n, 419n, 490; *Phenomenology of Perception*, 283n1, 320n46, 425n8, 498.

an increasing recognition of the “reciprocal intertwining [*entrelacement*] or envelopment” of philosophy and psychology.¹²

The course on “The Concept of Nature” locates in Husserl an oscillation between, first, the reduction of nature to a noematic correlate of consciousness, characteristic of *Ideen I* and required to overcome the naïveté of the natural attitude; and, second, the rehabilitation of the perceived in later writings as the pre-given universe that reflection presupposes. The mutually enveloping relation between the naturalistic *blosse Sachen* and the personalistic *Umwelt* in *Ideen II* is a privileged example of this oscillation, whose turning point is the body as subject-object, organ of an “I can,” that occupies the zero-point of orientation and founds intersubjective relations.¹³ Husserl does not overcome the duality of his approach, on Merleau-Ponty’s interpretation, although he increasingly recognizes the two paths as complementary and even identical.

Merleau-Ponty extends this reading of *Ideen II* in the last and most significant essay he devotes to Husserl, “*Le philosophe et son ombre*,” composed for the centennial of the latter’s birth in 1959 and laying the groundwork for several key concepts in Merleau-Ponty’s final writings. The essay again traces the dual direction of Husserl’s descriptions: breaking with nature by effecting the return to transcendental consciousness, yet simultaneously rediscovering nature as the *Weltthesis* that can never be undone and that the phenomenological reduction must therefore also presuppose. This reciprocal envelopment of the natural and transcendental attitudes finds its corporeal parallel in the self-sensing of the body, which, when touching itself touching, blurs the distinction between subject and object. Such corporeal “reflection” correlatively blurs the subject/object distinction within things, entailing an “ontological rehabilitation of the sensible,” so that Husserl’s description of the givenness of things “in the flesh [*leibhaft*]” can literally be taken as referring to a “flesh of the sensible,” a notion that will become a central tenet of the ontology Merleau-Ponty develops in his posthumously published *Le Visible et l’invisible*.¹⁴ Tracing the oscillations that he finds in Husserl’s notion of constitution, Merleau-Ponty concludes that phenomenology must make thematic its own dependence on non-phenomenology, thereby becoming “the means of unveiling a back side of things that we have not constituted.”¹⁵ As he puts it in his 1958–1959 course on “*La Philosophie aujourd’hui*,” the reduction requires a

¹² *Les Sciences de l’homme et la phénoménologie* (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1975), 45; “Phenomenology and the Sciences of Man,” trans. John Wild, in *The Primacy of Perception* (Evanston: Northwestern, 1964), 73. Paul Ricoeur’s French translation of *Ideas I* appeared in 1950 and is cited in this course.

¹³ *La Nature, notes, cours du Collège de France* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 102–113; *Nature: Course Notes from the Collège de France*, trans. Robert Vallier (Evanston: Northwestern, 2003), 70–79. See also “Husserl et la notion de nature,” *Parcours deux 1951–1961*, 215–234; Xavier Tilliette, “Husserl’s Concept of Nature (Merleau-Ponty’s 1957–58 Lectures),” trans. Drew Leder, *Texts and Dialogues*, 162–168.

¹⁴ “*Le Philosophe et son ombre*,” *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), 210–11; “The Philosopher and his Shadow,” *Signs*, trans. Richard McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 166–67.

¹⁵ “*Le Philosophe et son ombre*,” 227; “The Philosopher and his Shadow,” 180.

“fresh mutation” by which it becomes “coextensive with phenomenology,” whereas phenomenology must adopt the task of describing the *Lebenswelt* as “the universe of living paradoxes.”¹⁶ In drawing this conclusion, and indeed throughout his readings of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty is clear that his aim is not faithfulness to the letter of Husserl’s texts but rather to the unthought that they harbor and that brings them perennially to life for us, on the condition that we take as our task thinking and expressing this thought anew.

Lifeworldly Naturalism

It is a commonplace today that humans are part of nature. This truism seems to require no further elaboration or justification. Yet this claim is often presented as announcing a radical break with past assumptions about human transcendence and exceptionalism, in all of their philosophical and theological variations. If, as humans, our being is a part of and continuous with the rest of nature, if we possess no otherworldly soul or essence that escapes the natural order, then everything that we are and do, everything that we experience and create, is explicable in the same terms as all other worldly beings and events, notwithstanding any distinctive characteristics that we may possess as a species. It follows that even our ability to think, to reflect on ourselves and the world, to engage in philosophy—including the very act of reflection on our own naturalness—is itself situated within and emergent from this same nature, so that we are inescapably caught up *within* what we are reflecting *from* and reflecting *on*. To be a being that reflects on nature, it would appear, is to be a bit of nature reflecting on itself.

Now, the claim that we are part of nature, and that everything that we are and do is, in a broad sense, natural, is neither as obvious nor as unequivocal as it first appears, as the long and continuing debate over conflicting interpretations of “naturalism” attests. To agree that humans are a part of nature settles nothing, since at issue then is what we *mean* by nature. The philosophical challenge of naturalism is typically interpreted as requiring a causal account in physical terms of all aspects of reality, including the biological, the social, the mental, and so on. Yet the metaphysical naturalist’s contention that “nature is all there is” can be accepted without also granting the ontology of the natural sciences or their methods as nature’s definitive and exclusive oracle. The physicalist and scientific realist versions of naturalism are not the only—nor, arguably, the most philosophically compelling—ways of understanding human continuity with nature.

¹⁶ “Possibilité de la philosophie,” *Résumés de cours, Collège de France 1952–1960* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968), 151–52; “Philosophy as Interrogation,” trans. John O’Neill, *In Praise of Philosophy and Other Essays* (Evanston: Northwestern, 1988), 175–76. Merleau-Ponty’s detailed notes from these lectures are published as “La Philosophie aujourd’hui, Cours de 1958–1959,” *Notes de cours 1959–1961* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996).

Alternatively, as phenomenology has long argued, this continuity might be understood as requiring an enrichment of our ontology, an expansion of our sense of nature to include meaning, value, life, subjectivity, community, and so on. This is one way to read the progressive complication of the concept of nature in Husserl's *Ideen II*, for example, in which the initial definition of nature as the sphere of "mere things" embedded within the spatio-temporal causal nexus, i.e., nature in the naturalistic sense, is revealed to be derivative from the nature of the surrounding world, the "common nature given in intuitive experience," i.e., a nature that encompasses animal life, other persons, cultural values, historical traditions, social community, and so on.¹⁷ If we understand this project as an alternative interpretation of what it means for humans to be part of nature, starting from a fundamentally distinct and richer conception of nature, then we might call phenomenology's approach a "lifeworldly naturalism."

This phrase will seem paradoxical, of course, for those who know that phenomenology has, from the beginning, defined itself in opposition to naturalism. Lester Embree opens his entry on "Naturalism" in *The Encyclopedia of Phenomenology* with the claim that "naturalism has been and remains the main opponent of phenomenology."¹⁸ For Husserl, the "naturalist" who "sees only nature, and primarily physical nature," mistakenly extends the (entirely appropriate) methodological naturalism of the sciences into a self-contradictory metaphysical position.¹⁹ The contradiction stems from naturalism's presupposition of consciousness as the condition for any meaningful disclosure of the world, while, at the same time, adopting a metaphysics within which consciousness can receive no adequate account.²⁰ What Husserl objects to in naturalism, in other words, is the naturalization of consciousness, values, and ideas, and his rejection of such naturalization is methodologically essential to transcendental phenomenology.²¹

If what we mean by nature is a "unity of spatio-temporal being subject to exact laws,"²² then we must reject the metaphysical claim that this is all there is, precisely because this definition of nature *fails* to encompass we who are reflecting on it. In other words, while claiming to think the human being as a part of nature, the naturalist has forgotten to leave any room within nature for the possibility of reflection on it, so that the naturalist's philosophizing about nature remains essentially external to this nature. If we understand the failure of naturalism in these terms, phenomenology could take as its starting point for rejuvenating the concept of nature Husserl's own investigations of

¹⁷ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen II*, Husserliana IV (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), 207; *Ideas II*, trans. R. Rojcewicz and Andre Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 218.

¹⁸ Lester Embree, "Naturalism," *The Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*, eds. Lester Embree et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 480.

¹⁹ Husserl, "Philosophy as Rigorous Science," *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 79.

²⁰ Husserl, *Ideen I*, Husserliana III.1 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), §55; *Ideas I*, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), §55; "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science," 80–81.

²¹ See Dermot Moran's concise summary of Husserl's criticisms of naturalism in *Introduction to Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2000), 142–46.

²² "Philosophy as a Rigorous Science," 79.

the relationship between living body, soul, and spiritual Ego, insofar as they disclose a profound interweaving of consciousness with nature, an interweaving that demands a recasting of both its terms in the interest of offering the first genuine means of thinking their continuity.²³ This is precisely the reading of Husserl that Merleau-Ponty proposes in his late essay, “*Le philosophe et son ombre*,” where he suggests that Husserl’s *Ideen II* leads us into that *entre-deux* “between transcendent Nature, naturalism’s being in itself, and the immanence of spirit.”²⁴

Now, whatever we might think about the faithfulness of this reading of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty’s own recuperation of the concept of nature must certainly be understood along these lines. From one angle, his approach is resolutely anti-naturalistic insofar as he maintains Husserl’s insistence on the irreducibility of the transcendental perspective; consciousness cannot be derived from the universe of *blosse Sachen*. From another angle, however, Merleau-Ponty is actually pursuing the very project of naturalism insofar as he takes seriously the inherence of consciousness in the nature from which it emerges; but his manner of describing this inherence pushes naturalism beyond itself, since thinking nature from within explodes traditional metaphysical categories. And so, when David Wood identifies the fundamental project of “ecophenomenology” as the development of a “middle ground between phenomenology and naturalism”—while appreciating that “a certain naturalization of consciousness would require, at the same time, an expansion of our sense of the natural”—he is returning to a path of thinking already anticipated and developed most fully by Merleau-Ponty.²⁵ We can see that Merleau-Ponty is on this path as early as *La structure du comportement*, where he aims to “understand the relations of consciousness and nature” by giving naturalism, properly understood and “transposed,” its due place *within* transcendental philosophy, and thereby to “define transcendental philosophy anew in such a way as to integrate it with the very phenomenon of the real.”²⁶ And his final writings, in their pursuit of the “Becoming-nature of man which is the becoming-man of nature,” are a continuation of this same philosophical effort, albeit with transformed concepts and strategies.²⁷

What distinguishes Merleau-Ponty’s account of our inherence in nature from the naturalist’s approach is that the former takes seriously the problem of thinking nature from within. The causal account of the world proposed by traditional naturalism

²³ See, for example, *Ideen II/Ideas II*, §62.

²⁴ Merleau-Ponty, *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), 166; *Signs*, trans. Richard McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern, 1964), 210. Hereafter, cited textually as S, with French preceding English pagination.

²⁵ David Wood, “What is Eco-Phenomenology?” *Eco-Phenomenology: Back to the Earth Itself*, eds. Charles Brown and Ted Toadvine (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), 231, 224.

²⁶ Merleau-Ponty, *La structure du comportement* (Paris: PUF, 1942), 3, 4, 224; *The Structure of Behavior*, trans. Alden Fisher (Pittsburgh: Duquesne, 1983), 1, 2, 241. Hereafter cited textually as SB with French preceding English pagination.

²⁷ Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l’invisible* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), 239; *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern, 1968), 185. Hereafter cited textually as VI with French preceding English pagination. As I hope the foregoing makes clear, I do not see Merleau-Ponty’s response to naturalism as fitting neatly into either the mundane or the transcendental approaches sketched by Embree, op. cit., 484.

excludes the perspective and position of the one offering the account, who stands above this causal world to survey it from a station that is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere. Rejecting this disembodied panorama for tacitly affirming what it openly denies, Merleau-Ponty proposes an account of philosophical reflection as emergent from the nature on which it reflects, developing this account across each of his major works and in a progressively more sophisticated fashion. If philosophical reflection is to emerge from nature, it can only do so literally as a re-flexion, a folding of the sensible onto itself. In other words, philosophical thought is, like all thought, an intensification or redoubling by which nature meets up with itself as an iterative fold of natural sense. In *La structure du comportement*, this iterative fold of nature is presented as the “structure of structures,” an all-encompassing Gestalt by which human subjectivity gains access to objectivity and one sole universe, beyond the interest-bound environments of other organisms. In *Phénoménologie de la perception*, nature’s intensification takes the form of a “reflection on the unreflective,” a radical or second-order reflection that takes into account its relation, as reflection, with the situation that precedes and conditions it. And in his final working notes, Merleau-Ponty characterizes philosophy as a “chiasm of chiasms,” a doubled reversal by which the self-interrogation of Being, as the encroachment of the sensible and the intelligible, becomes explicit as a question.

At stake in this series of recursive figures is the effort to think philosophy immanently, as emergent from nature. But what comes progressively to the fore for Merleau-Ponty is that an ineliminable gap between philosophical reflection and nature is constitutive of both. Since reflection can never equal the pre-reflective moment from which it emerges, this moment haunts reflection as an immemorial and constitutive silence. Insofar as philosophy is incapable of thematizing its own emergence, insofar as it remains conditioned by a nature that escapes its reflective recuperation, nature is disclosed indirectly as a silent resistance internal to philosophy’s own movement. Nature in this deepest, archi-factual sense remains invisible to naturalism insofar as the latter adopts a position external to the world on which it reflects. But this immemorial sense of nature also transforms the method of phenomenology, since it requires a recognition of what can appear only in its withdrawal, only by keeping silent. The genuine homology of philosophy and nature is disclosed only at the level of this withdrawal. To see why this is so, we begin by retracing Merleau-Ponty’s efforts to understand philosophical reflection from within as the recursive doubling of structure, reflection, and chiasm.

Nature as Immemorial Past

The structure of “mind” that characterizes the human order in Merleau-Ponty’s *La structure du comportement* is the highest and most complex of the Gestalts that compose reality, incorporating within itself the lower-order Gestalts of matter and life and, in so doing, conserving and integrating them while eliminating them as independent moments (SB 224/208). What Merleau-Ponty finds philosophically

compelling about the concept of Gestalt, as the irreducibly basic element of his ontology, is that it reveals “intelligibility in the nascent state,” the autochthonous emergence of an idea within a material configuration from which it remain inseparable (SB 223/206-7). In other words, already at the level of matter, we start not with the pure thing but with a configuration that is inherently holistic, relational, and meaningful, and as this configuration develops new levels of complexity, it passes through percolation points at which new qualities and meaningful relations obtain. Life is such a new level corresponding to the formation of a mutually constitutive relation between an organism and its environment. And mind, characterized by symbolic behavior, is the highest such level, responsible for the human ability to bracket our vital norms, engage in creative and virtual acts, and comport ourselves toward one true and objective world shared by all.

Now, the achievement of symbolic behavior through the integration of matter and life into a more complex structure is, on the one hand, simply the continuation of a single process that conserves and reconfigures. Yet it is distinct from the earlier re-configurations of structure, such as the transition from matter into life, in that it is recursive or self-referential. More precisely, the symbolic level is achieved when a Gestalt takes as its theme the structure of other Gestalts, when it takes up the transposable relations between structures to achieve a virtual or second-order configuration. Merleau-Ponty illustrates this second-order Gestalt with the example of playing a musical instrument, which involves transposing a single melody from its written form on the score, to a series of kinaesthetic movements, to a pattern on the keyboard, to an audible distribution of notes. Through these transpositions, the very structure, the musical essence, of the melody animates entirely different bodies. It is this capacity to extract such essences, the structures of structures, and to transpose them into different expressive forms that defines symbolic behavior, for Merleau-Ponty.

If symbolic behavior is a kind of melody in its own right, then it is a melody that sings the distilled essence of other melodies in a recursively nested structure. This recursive melody opens us onto the virtual, since it allows us to transpose structures in unlimited ways: to locate ourselves on a map, or to create tools with open-ended uses, or to spontaneously improvise on a musical instrument. In short, while the melody of the non-human organism is constrained by the norms of its species, the human is defined by its capacity “of going beyond created structures in order to create others” (SB 189/175). It is this ability to break with the constraints of our organic norms that allows us to treat our own bodies as one thing among many, to adopt a disinterested perspective, and therefore to describe the universe in objective terms. In short, truth is made possible by the recursivity of structures, by the transposability of the ideas that they embody. Reflection is thus, for the Merleau-Ponty of *La Structure*, the iterative intensification of nature as a complex of Gestalts.

Merleau-Ponty presents this shift into the symbolic as a further stage in the integration of the forms that constitute reality. Just as life introduces a level of structural complexity that incorporates physical matter while going beyond it, so does symbolic thought integrate within itself both matter and life. Nature, therefore, consists of a hierarchy of nested Gestalts of ever-increasing complexity, and we can conceive of this complex structure as a symphony of nested melodies. Symbolic

thought, as a recursive melody of melodies, is the perspective from which this symphony is comprehended. Yet as elegant as this system may seem, it leaves us with two difficulties: First, part of what attracts Merleau-Ponty to the Gestalt is that it is irreducible to physical components. A Gestalt is not a thing but rather a meaningful form, that is, a perceived reality, so that Merleau-Ponty's account of nature as a hierarchy of nested Gestalts has an ambiguous ontological status. On the one hand, this is exactly the point that Merleau-Ponty wishes to press against naturalism, including the naturalistic biases of the Gestalt theorists themselves, who in the end always try to translate the higher levels of structure into physicalist terms.

But, on the other hand, what does it mean to describe the fundamental elements of reality as “perceptual?” Does it mean that they are ultimately correlates of subjectivity, so that nature is ultimately to be re-interpreted as “consciousness of” nature? Certain of Merleau-Ponty's formulations in *La structure du comportement* point in precisely this direction.²⁸ As Renaud Barbares compellingly argues, it is only in Merleau-Ponty's later work that he is willing to embrace the possibility that being is fundamentally perceptual without reference to a subject that would perceive it.²⁹ To the extent that our symphony of melodies is ultimately the noema of some subjective intending, then Gestalts would not provide nature's ultimate ontological foundation. But if we embrace the perceptual quality of being without a subject, then subjectivity can be an emergent property of the symphony itself, just as Merleau-Ponty's account of symbolic thought as recursive structure suggests.

But the second difficulty concerns the integration of matter and life into mind, which would still treat mind, albeit an emergent and immanent mind, as the *telos* of nature's development. What we need to remember concerning this integration of Gestalts is that it is an historical process. When physical matter takes on the new structure that transforms it into a living body, the physical matter, even though integrated into a more complex whole, retains its historical density and inertia. This means that every integration is partial and fragile, obtaining only in degrees and constantly subject to fragmentation. As Merleau-Ponty admits, “There is always a duality which reappears at one level or another,” since “integration is never absolute and it always fails” (SB 226/210). In other words, while Merleau-Ponty will claim that the human being integrates its own biological life into a higher and more complex unity, so that, in his words, “‘life’ does not have the same meaning in animality and humanity” (SB 188/174), and furthermore, that “Man can never be an animal: his life is always more or less integrated than that of an animal” (SB 196/181), it remains the case that our biological life can and does assert its own autonomous rights.

Since integration is an historical process, our more-or-less composed human selves carry with them, in kernel, the sedimented stages through which we have passed, so that, even to the extent that we do sublimate our animal natures, we never leave them behind. More generally, this inertia and historical density of incorporated

²⁸ As when he writes that “what we call nature is already consciousness of nature, what we call life is already consciousness of life and what we call mental is still an object vis-à-vis consciousness” (SB 199/184).

²⁹ Renaud Barbares, “Merleau-Ponty and Nature,” *Research in Phenomenology* 31 (2001): 37.

structures, insofar as they limit the recursivity of mind, is for Merleau-Ponty the truth of naturalism: “it is not a question of an inherence in material apparatuses, which as a matter of fact can be only *objects* for consciousness, but of a presence to consciousness of its proper history and of the dialectical stages which it has traversed” (SB 224–25/208).

We can illustrate this by returning to the figure of melody. If the melody of life integrates the melody of matter, and mind consists of recursive relations between such melodies, then at every stage of integration, there is a condensation of the entire history of lines of song into denser phrasings. This follows from Merleau-Ponty’s recognition that physical Gestalts bear within themselves a reference to the entire history of the universe as their emergent condition, while, at the vital level, the contrapuntal melody of every organism folds into itself, as an organic memory, its entire evolutionary history. Every phrase and every note of each organic melody is therefore rich with the micromelodies of this accumulated history, an immemorial past that could never be entirely unpacked. Think of the phrase of a melody as having a structure like Mandelbrot’s fractal coastline, such that, as you zoom in closer, you find the same degree of intricately enfolded structure at every scale.

Furthermore, since each integration and transposition is only partial, the synthesis by which the past is folded into the present will always be selective and creative, that is, expressive: it will simplify along one dimension, creatively improvise along another, and leave remainders throughout. So, the fact that integration always fails at one point or another is just the obverse of the fact that this symphony of Gestalts is incessantly recreating its past as well as itself, carrying along its immemorial history while constantly recomposing it. And it is precisely within this ongoing folding of the entire history of nature’s symphony into the very next line of every behavioral melody—and the iterative turn by which one melody tries to reflect on this process of becoming as such—that we can locate the moment of nature’s self-concealment. Nature’s secret withdrawal is precisely the immemorial past enfolded within the intervals and silences of its interwoven melodic lines.³⁰

Nature as Archi-Factical Resistance

Merleau-Ponty already recognizes, at the end of *La structure du comportement*, that it would be necessary to take the historical density of Gestalts more seriously, particularly with respect to reflection’s own identity as a recursive Gestalt. Ultimately, the problem that confronts this ontology of Gestalts is that its construction is carried out from a point of view external to it, from the perspective, as Merleau-Ponty himself says, of an “outside spectator” (SB 175/162). By describing reflection as itself a Gestalt, so that we are, ultimately, Gestalts thinking Gestalts, Merleau-Ponty takes us a long

³⁰I expand on Merleau-Ponty’s musical ontology of nature in “*Musica Universalis* and the Memory of Nature,” forthcoming in *MonoKL*.

way toward reinstating reflection within the nature from which it emerges. But in so doing, he also calls attention to the blind spot of reflection with respect to its own emergence, the problem in principle of thinking nature from within it. When Merleau-Ponty returns to this problem in *Phénoménologie de la perception*, it is posed in terms of reflection's relationship with the unreflective. On the one hand, reflection does not fail to make contact with the pre-reflective moment from which it opens, as our very ability to indicate and describe that pre-reflective moment attests. Yet, on the other hand, reflection never coincides with the pre-reflective or presents it transparently, since it necessarily transforms the structure of the pre-reflective in opening it to reflection. To define reflection properly, Merleau-Ponty argues, we must take this entire structure into account; as he puts it, we must “reflect on reflection” and thereby “understand the natural situation which it is conscious of succeeding and which is therefore part of its definition.”³¹ What Merleau-Ponty calls “second-order” or “radical” reflection in *Phénoménologie de la perception* and “hyper-reflection” in *Le Visible et l'invisible* is this effort of reflection to account for its own foundation in a nature from which it emerges but that remains for it an unthematizable past, a past that “has never been a present” (PP 280/282). This immemorial past appears within our experience as the resistance that the unreflective offers to reflection, as the remainder that resists thematization even as it conditions reflection and makes it possible.

It is our very inheritance within nature, the fact that we can only open onto it from a situation within it, and that we can never fully thematize our own emergence from it, that necessitates this immemorial remainder. In other words, nature in its primordial autonomy appears precisely as the resistance that the unreflective offers to reflection. A phenomenology of reflection thus rediscovers the ancient truth that nature loves to hide, but now in such a way that the hidden depths of its withdrawal constitute the very act of philosophy from within. I take it that Merleau-Ponty was aiming to disclose this sense of nature, which strains the very limits of phenomenology, when he calls for phenomenology to become a means of “unveiling a back side of things that we have not constituted,” since “What resists phenomenology within us—natural being, the ‘barbarous’ source Schelling spoke of—cannot remain outside phenomenology and should have its place within it” (S 227/180, 225/178).

We have seen that, in *La Structure du comportement*, reflection was posed as the “structure of structures,” while, in *Phénoménologie de la perception*, it becomes “reflection on reflection,” and, in each version, the effort of thought to grasp its debt to its own unthinkable origins is at stake. Nature’s resistance and autonomy appears here as the archi-factical withdrawal around which reflection secretes itself. As Merleau-Ponty’s work develops, and as he increasingly appreciates nature’s resistance to reflection, the language of reflection as a “structure of structures” vanishes. As we have seen, this is first replaced by another iterative structure, that of second-order reflection. But as Merleau-Ponty comes to understand reflection as

³¹ Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 75; *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge Classics, 2002), 72. Hereafter cited textually as PP with French preceding English pagination.

modeled on the reversibility of the body, on the touching-touched relation, radical reflection is gradually displaced by the figure of chiasm.³² Merleau-Ponty's use of this term plays on both its rhetorical and its physiological senses. In English, the term *chiasm* is a shortened form of two words with apparently distinct meanings, one biological (*chiasma*, and the same in French, *chiasma* with an “a”) and one rhetorical (*chiasmus* in English, *chiasme* with an “e” in French). Within physiology, a *chiasma* [*chiasma*] is the point where anatomical structures, such as nerves or ligaments, cross—where they form an X, a *chi*. A paradigmatic example would be the optic chiasma, where the fibers of the optic nerves cross at the base of the brain, which has long been thought to play a major role in synthesizing monocular images into stereoscopic vision. In rhetoric, on the other hand, a *chiasmus* [*chiasme*] is a figure of speech formed by a repetition of structure in reverse order: “Beauty is truth, truth beauty” (as Keats says). If the two phrases are placed on two lines and the parallel elements connected, first to fourth and second to third, the X of the *chi* is formed. Merleau-Ponty's use of the concept intentionally borrows from both of these meanings, joining together the reversal and circularity of the chiasmus (“there is a body of the mind and a mind of the body and a chiasmus [*chiasme*] between them,” [VI 313/259]) as well as the unity-in-difference of the chiasma (“like the chiasma [*chiasma*] of the eyes, this one is also what makes us belong to the same world” [VI 268/215]).

Such chiastic structures come to replace Gestalt wholes for Merleau-Ponty as the fundamental ontological reality, so that now, rather than a hierarchy of nested Gestalts, as we saw in *La Structure du comportement*, Merleau-Ponty's last writings propose to us that the world is fundamentally a nested structure of chiasms. In the words of Renaud Barbares, “It is necessary...to picture the universe as intuited by Merleau-Ponty as a proliferation of chiasms that integrate themselves according to different levels of generality.”³³ The structure of the chiasm also serves as a new figure for reflection. Philosophical questions, Merleau-Ponty tells us, are those wherein the questioner is “implicated by the question” (VI 47/27), so that philosophical questions manifest a sort of “diplopia”:

[A]t the same time that they aim at a state of things, they aim at themselves as questions, the same time that they aim at the signification ‘being,’ they aim at the being of signification and the place of signification within Being. It is characteristic of the philosophical questioning that it return upon itself, that it ask itself also what to question is and what to respond is. Once this question to the second power is raised, it cannot be effaced. (VI 160/119–20)

Merleau-Ponty's use of chiastic rhetorical structure here already alludes to the fact that philosophy will be, for him, a chiasm. The chiasm of philosophical questioning has its ontological basis in the self-differentiation of flesh. In *Le Visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty famously described the experience of one hand touching another as

³² I expand on the following description of Merleau-Ponty's use of “chiasm” in “The Chiasm,” in *Routledge Companion to Phenomenology*, ed. Sebastian Luft and Søren Overgaard, 336–47 (London: Routledge, 2011).

³³ Renaud Barbares, *The Being of the Phenomenon*, trans. Ted Toadvine and Leonard Lawlor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 307.

the primordial event of reflection. The auto-affective self-differentiation of the body demonstrates a “sort of reflection” (S 210/166) that is paradigmatic of self-reflection in other registers, as in the self-experience of thought. But the body’s self-reflection is only an exemplary or intensified version of a kind of reflection already at work within every being, in its folding or doubling into an outside (its visible or sensible aspect) and an inside (its invisible or intelligible aspect). Merleau-Ponty’s term for this fundamental ontological self-differentiation is “interrogation,” i.e., questioning. The philosophical act of questioning is therefore the culmination of an operation of questioning that underlies and expresses itself through every chiasmic structure. The self-questioning of the philosopher is therefore “borne by an infrastructure of being” (VI 160/120). It follows that the various nested levels of the chiasm are manifestations of Being’s self-questioning. Philosophy makes the self-questioning of Being explicit as a question; it is an interrogation of being about the being of interrogation. This iteration of the chiastic structure therefore becomes Merleau-Ponty’s new definition of philosophical thinking, which he calls in his working notes a “chiasm of chiasms [*chiasme des chiasmes*]”³⁴.

Now, it is significant that, for every chiasm, there is a turning point or hinge that remains, within the terms opened by that chiasm, invisible or archi-factual. I borrow this term “archi-factual” from Jacob Rogozinski, who uses it to characterize the “remainder” that always escapes in the body’s auto-affection, that is, in the inevitable slippage between the touching and the touched.³⁵ It is well-known that, in Merleau-Ponty’s famous descriptions of one hand touching the other, the coincidence of the two hands is “always immanent and never realized in fact” (VI 194/147). The remainder left behind from this non-coincidence, as Rogozinski points out, is “untouchable for my touch, but also invisible for my vision, inaudible for my hearing; we will never meet up with it in the world, as one element among others in our daily experience;” nevertheless, it is revealed indirectly by intraworldly phenomena that are not to be confused with it (Rogozinski, 238). The remainder that the effort to touch ourselves touching always misses is “archi-factual” in the sense that it conditions the very possibility of touch itself even while remaining absent from the world of touch.

While Rogozinski is only concerned with the remainder of corporeal auto-affection, we know from Merleau-Ponty that the body’s self-touching is only one salient example of an ontologically ubiquitous chiasm, that of the body with the world, or of humanity and nature. This means that when my hand touches an object, there is a “sort of reflection,” a subtle form of auto-affection, that eventuates in the touch. The thing touches me as I touch it; it becomes me as I become it. Yet in the moment that this chiasmus crosses over, where self switches into other, there is always a slippage. In the case of the body’s self-touching, this slippage gives rise to a remainder or a precipitate, as Rogozinski describes. But in the exchange of the body with the world, the slippage

³⁴ Emmanuel de Saint Aubert cites several variants of this formulation from Merleau-Ponty’s unpublished notes in *Le scénario cartésien* (Paris: Vrin, 2005), 164.

³⁵ Jacob Rogozinski, “The Chiasm and the Remainder (How does Touching Touch Itself?),” *Rethinking Facticity*, eds. François Raffoul and Eric Sean Nelson (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008).

is a consequence of the body's situatedness within the world that it touches, that is, the fact that it is *of* the world. This is what we have above referred to as our inherence in the world. But now we are recognizing that this inherence always splits apart from within. When the world touches me as I touch it, the two touches can never be reciprocal. Nature always has, so to speak, the upper hand. My incapacity to see myself seeing or touch myself touching, what Rogozinski calls the remainder, is precisely a consequence of the situatedness of my efforts to reflect on the nature that encompasses me.

I am suggesting that the *écart* of the touching-touched, the resistance of the unreflective to reflection, and the slippage in the integration of Gestalts are all variations on nature's withdrawal, its presentation of its own unrepresentability. In each case, reflection comes up against what cannot appear to it directly, what it can only encounter as a resistance at the limits of its compass. Such resistance is precisely nature's indirect, archi-factical disclosure of its autonomy. The reason why nature can never simply be the correlate of experience is because our experience emerges from within nature and remains conditioned by it. This emergence cannot be thematized as such by the experience that it conditions. That the emergence cannot be thematized as such does not mean that it leaves no impression on or in experience. But that from which experience emerges can become an object of experience only indirectly, only as a withdrawal from or resistance to experience. What we have called the archi-factical resistance of nature is therefore a consequence of experience's emergence from what it cannot thematize and occupies the obverse of what that experience discloses. Here we reach the limit of what phenomenological description can clarify, the very ground and compass of reflection. It is this resistant ground that both conditions and makes possible phenomenological reflection, and that can be disclosed only through phenomenology, that deserves the name "nature" in the most fundamental sense.

With this deeper sense of nature, phenomenology runs up against a fundamental paradox, namely, that the very task of reflecting on and describing nature harbors within it a resistance that cannot be directly thematized and that would itself be nature in the most primordial sense.³⁶ But the fundamental paradox of a phenomenology of nature does not render phenomenology mute or bring it to a close. The paradox is not something that phenomenology must overcome or get beyond, since it is constitutive of our very experience of nature. It does however, require us to reconsider our everyday understanding of what it means to be a "part of" nature and to be estranged from it. If our descriptions are correct, then we can never be a "part of" nature in the sense of one thing among many in an assemblage that collects them all. The nature in which we are involved and inhere is not a collection of determinate things but a horizon that we open onto from within and that we find ourselves already having emerged from. To experience a world is precisely to open onto it from within in this way. But to open onto nature from within is also necessarily to be estranged from it and from ourselves, insofar as our own

³⁶I have developed this line of thinking more fully in "The Fundamental Paradox of a Phenomenology of Nature," in *Ontology of Nature: Continental Readings of Nature*, ed. Gerard Kuperus and Marjolein Oele (Berlin: Springer, forthcoming). See also my "Ecophenomenology and the Resistance of Nature," *Advancing Phenomenology: Essays in Honor of Lester Embree*, eds. Philip Blosser and Thomas Nenon, 343–55 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010).

emergence is a blind spot that we can never fill. This blind spot is the remainder that always slips in between our reflection and the situation on which we reflect.

Consequently, our estrangement from nature is already implied by our situatedness within it, by the partiality and temporality of our embodiment. Because of this essential estrangement, the goal of becoming one with nature, of coinciding with it in an antelapsarian unity, is misguided.³⁷ On the other hand, since the fission of our bodies into reflecting and reflected on, into subject and object, is itself a fission of *nature*, we might say that our estrangement, our ontological lateness, is in fact the way that we coincide with nature, as an intensification through us of its own effort of coming-to-self.³⁸ This would be another way of interpreting Cézanne's famous remark that "the landscape thinks itself in me ... and I am its consciousness."³⁹

³⁷ This essential estrangement is not, however, without its own ethical implications, even though I do not attempt to unpack them here.

³⁸ As Merleau-Ponty suggests in some late writings, such as his remarks in the lectures on nature concerning reflection as the *Selbstung* of Being. See *La Nature* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 335, 340; *Nature*, trans. Robert Vallier (Evanston: Northwestern, 2003), 268, 273.

³⁹ Cited in Merleau-Ponty, "Le doute de Cézanne," *Signes*, 23; "Cézanne's Doubt," in *The Merleau-Ponty Reader*, ed. Ted Toadvine and Leonard Lawlor (Evanston: Northwestern, 2007), 77.

Part III

After World War II

Chapter 23

Paul Ricoeur and the *Praxis* of Phenomenology

Natalie Depraz

***Ideen I* and French Phenomenology**

Experiential-Descriptive and Hermeneutical Phenomenology: Ricoeur's Courageous But Ambiguous Gesture

The first book of the *Ideen* was translated into French by Paul Ricoeur in a prison camp during World War II and published soon after (1950). It contains many fruitful interpretative footnotes by the translator, which were initially marginal comments he wrote in the German copy while carefully studying the text. In addition, this translation includes an important introduction by Ricoeur, which is both “internal” and “genetic”: “The goal of this introduction is, therefore, quite modest. There is first the question of drawing together several themes issuing from the internal examination of *Ideas I* developed in our commentary, then there is the matter of outlining the history of Husserl’s thought from the *Logische Untersuchungen* to the *Ideen* with the aid of the most important manuscripts from the period 1901–11.”¹

Ricoeur considers Husserl’s text an allusive text, full of “holes,” the meaning of which is “hidden” or outside itself. Such an observation indicates that he is looking

For more details see N. Depraz, *Plus sur Husserl. Une phénoménologie expérimentuelle* (Paris: Atlande, 2009), 122–131.

¹ E. Husserl, *Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie* (I) (Paris: Gallimard, coll. Tel, 1950); French trans. P. Ricoeur, translator’s Introduction, p. XII; English translation, Edmund Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. Fred Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983). Translation of Ricoeur’s Introduction in Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology*, trans. Edward G. Ballard and Lester E. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 13, hereafter cited as “ET.”

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for information, contents of knowledge, whereas he says himself that the core is not there, but in the ability “to impart a new vision of the world and of consciousness, rather than to say something definitive about the world and about consciousness, something which perhaps could not be understood without the acquisition of this new vision.”² Ricœur therefore hesitates between his interest in the historical reception of phenomenology as transcendental idealism (together with the room for logic and the status of essence in the first part³) and naïve general questions related to the very meaning of the phenomenological reduction: “What is reduction? What is constitution? ... These things cannot be directly told but must be achieved by the spiritual discipline [*l'ascèse*] of the phenomenological method. Also it is difficult to say at what point within *Ideen I* one is actually using the famous phenomenological reduction, a fact which is quite disconcerting to the reader.”⁴ In fact, the phenomena are each time re-read through their historical objectivity, never re-invested from their inner lived singular quality, from our ability to re-do the particular experience and to check their validity. When an experiential dimension comes to the fore, it reveals itself through a religious vocabulary (“*mouvement spirituel*,” “*ascèse*,” “*conversion*”), which only “dresses,” i.e., recovers or even hides, the phenomenon.

In favor of the reading by Ricœur, however, who publishes a book the same year, 1950, that deals with such a non-hermeneutical claim of descriptive psychology,⁵ it must be said that he sometimes lets experiential indications emerge, namely these moments when he brilliantly writes in the first person: “... I believe Husserl would be understood if one could understand that the constitution of the world is not a formal legislation but the very giving of seeing by the transcendental subject.”⁶ He goes so far as to produce himself such a putting to work of the reduction, which he then calls “existential,” while inviting the reader to do it him or herself:

I think that each of us is invited to discover in himself this act of transcendence. Thus, I will risk an outline of the “existential” sense of the thesis of the world. Initially I am lost and forgotten in the world, lost in the things, lost in the ideas, lost in the plants and animals, lost in others, lost in mathematics. Presence (which can never be disavowed) is the occasion of temptation; in seeing there is a trap, the trap of my alienation; there I am external, diverted. Now it is evident how naturalism is the lowest stage of the natural attitude, the level that leads to its re-engagement. For if I lose myself in the world, I am then ready to treat myself as a thing of the world. The thesis of the world is a sort of blindness in the very heart of seeing. What I call living is hiding myself as naïve consciousness within the existence of all things.⁷

² Op. cit., p. XIII; ET, p. 14.

³ “Let us set this complex relationship of logic and phenomenology aside for the moment, since the third part of this introduction will be devoted to the historical problem of the passage from the *Logical Investigations* to the *Ideen*” (xv; ET, p. 16). Cf. “III. Naissance des *Ideen*,” xxxi–xxxix; ET, 28–34.

⁴ Op. cit., x; ET, 16.

⁵ P. Ricœur, *Philosophie de la volonté*, t. 1: Le volontaire et l'involontaire (Paris: Seuil, 1950).

⁶ xix; ET, 19

⁷ xx; ET, 20.

Ricoeur's thrust is here full of "vaillance," all the more than we know that he will set aside later such a direct contact with the vivid quality of inner concrete existential meaning *in statu nascendi* because of its intrinsic philosophical impossibility, and will choose a hermeneutical turning point, namely in *La métaphore vive*,⁸ and then in his "Essais d'herméneutique" entitled *Du texte à l'action*.⁹ Such an existential courage requires in turn a critical examination: in the same way as the religious dressing may produce misunderstandings, an existential contention is naïve—therefore lyrical: sentimental, "psychic"—as is the private testimony. Of course, Ricoeur is not blind to such a possibility in 1950: many psycho-phenomenological descriptions of the attentional, emotional, and habitual lived experiences unfolded in *Le volontaire et l'involontaire* attest to it; he also mentions the virtue of the "the psychological method of initiating,"¹⁰ but immediately relativizes it while indicating how much logic has trouble "grafting on" to it ("s'y 'greffe' mal").

So Ricoeur's reading is already mainly hermeneutical: if some phenomenological "exercises" are identified (in the third part), they are immediately limited in their scope and with regard to the time-thematic, which will be dealt with later, in the Bernau Manuscripts (1917–1918); or with regard to the I-problem, which remains "undecided" ("indécis") and less radically identified than in the *Logische Untersuchungen*; or, again, with regard to the relationship to the object, which the fourth part deals with while emphasizing the tension at work between the meaning of the object for me and its ontic reality independently of my aiming at it, as well as its problematic teleological regulation.

The Main French Critics of Phenomenology as Transcendental Idealism

In contrast with Ricoeur's early original (though ambiguous) contention, but in accordance with his later critical stance, some major post-Husserlian phenomenologists share the identification of Husserl's turning point to transcendental idealism in *Ideen I* with a return to a subjectivist metaphysics. Needless to say, such a critique of a residual metaphysics within phenomenology will lead the whole set of critical arguments against the text of 1913 and will nourish alternative phenomenological possibilities, either toward the conquest of a new ontology (Merleau-Ponty, Sartre) or toward a radical renewal of ethics (Levinas, Derrida). In short, the critical reaction against transcendental phenomenological idealism *qua* metaphysics is led by the promotion of an existential phenomenology in the broad sense of the word.

⁸ P. Ricoeur, *La métaphore vive*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1975.

⁹ P. Ricoeur, *Du texte à l'action*, Essais d'herméneutique II (Paris: Le Seuil, 1968).

¹⁰ P. XXI, XXXI; ET, 21.

The quest for a renewed ontology leads Sartre and Merleau-Ponty to refuse (in general accord with Heidegger) the formal structure of intentionality and the subjectivist stance of egology. The former proceeds backwards from *Ideen I* to the *Logische Untersuchungen* in order to uncover a non-egological phenomenology, whereas the latter, who had read Gabriel Marcel, will eagerly read *Ideen II* in order to discover the embodied subject he could not find in the first book of the *Ideen*. Both therefore produce a shifting from a transcendental phenomenology (associated with idealism and metaphysics) to an ontological one.

Sartre's ontophenomenology creates a dissociation in Husserl's contention between the method of intentionality, which is kept, and the theory of the ego, which is rejected as a useless hypothesis; as for Merleau-Ponty, he will deepen Husserl's theory of kinesthetic perception while endowing it with an originary fleshly embodiment, so as to unfold what he calls an ontology of flesh.

The transition from phenomenology to ethics corresponds to a change of methodological interest from intentionality to the very reduction. The criticisms therefore do not concern the subject (too psychological or egological) any longer, but rather the primacy given to the object and to objectivation. In order to undo such a tendency to objectifying theorization, Levinas and Derrida suggest different ways of radicalizing the reduction, either as an absolute alterity opposed to any form of objectivity or as a de-construction of theory. On the one hand, Levinas tends to consider the principle of intuition (*Ideen I*, §24) as something fruitful for the concreteness of the truth as lived experience in his *Théorie de l'intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl* (1930), but in the 1960s, namely, in *Totalité et infini* (1968), he sees in phenomenology as a transcendental idealism a “theoretically objectifying” turning point.

On the other hand, Derrida is clearly indebted to Husserl's genetic phenomenology, for example in “Genèse et structure” in *L'écriture et la différence* (1967) and in *Le problème de la genèse dans la phénoménologie de Husserl* (1990). He therefore sees in *Ideen I* the eminent structural place for analyses oriented by the thread of static constitution, in contrast (but also in complementarity) with the analyses devoted to passive genesis, which are to be found in the passive synthesis manuscripts of the 1920s. Derrida's reading of the Husserl of *Ideen I* is therefore less critical than limited: the methodology unfolds in distinctive phases, static and genetic, with complementary results.

Current French Readings Dissociating Idealism, Transcendentality, and Metaphysics Within Phenomenology

The core of the most contemporary ongoing French research concerning *Ideen I* deals with the relevance of its phenomenological stance as a rigorous methodological

transcendental stance, thus freeing it from any uncontrolled speculative metaphysics. Such a recent interpretative French step does not come from nowhere: it is prepared by a bundle of readings, either German or American in the 1960s and 1970s¹¹ or in the 1980s and 1990s,¹² that focus on the way from descriptive phenomenological psychology (1901) to transcendental phenomenological idealism (1913), with a special stress on the reductive method, the process of constitution, the status of the “I,” the noema, the intentional stance and the empirist/realist component of experience, along with comparatives perspectives coming from analytical philosophy (Frege, Quine, Perry, Shoemaker, Wittgenstein).

One of the major French voices in this framework is Jean-François Lavigne’s thorough interpretation of this Husserlian decade.¹³ Lavigne’s thrust lies in a meticulous genealogical exploration of the transcendental idealistic stance in Husserl’s phenomenology, thus showing how the latter very early (as early as 1901) identified itself as idealism and consequently dissociating phenomenological idealism from its transcendental turning point in 1913. Furthermore, Lavigne’s interest goes to the method of the reduction as the crucial operation that paves the way to the transcendental dimension of phenomenology.¹⁴ This is also Depraz’s contention in a recent step by step reading of Husserl’s *Ideen I*, where the focus is less historical-genealogical than practical-experiential: the hypothesis is to unveil the operativity of the reductive method as an effective exercise and, furthermore, of every act of consciousness or lived experience in order to show how much phenomenology is a scientific doing, an experiential praxis. The goal is to underline the deep epistemological meaning of Husserl’s transcendental stance.¹⁵

Both interpretations share a concern for rehabilitating the validity of *Ideen I* as a rigorous and coherent phenomenology, either as a methodological transcendental idealism or as a methodic epistemological experiential praxis.

¹¹ I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant* (Den Haag, M. Nijhoff, 1964); J. M. Broekman, *Phänomenologie und Egotogie* (Den Haag, M. Nijhoff, 1965); E. Marbach, *Das Problem des Ichs* (Den Haag, M. Nijhoff, 1974); R. Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1964).

¹² K. Schuhmann & B. Smith, “Against Idealism: J. Daubert vs. Husserl’s *Ideas I*,” *20th Century Philosophy*, online, 1985; E. Ströker, *Husserls transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Frankfurt (Klostermann, 1987); J. Drummond & L. Embree, *The Phenomenology of the Noema* (Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992).

¹³ J.-F. Lavigne, *Husserl et la naissance de la phénoménologie. La genèse de l’idéalisme transcendental phénoménologique dans la recherche et l’enseignement de Husserl (1900–1913)* (Paris: PUF, coll. Epiméthée, 2005).

¹⁴ See also J.-F. Lavigne, *Accéder au transcendental ? Réductions phénoménologiques et idéalisme transcendental dans les Idées directrices...I de Husserl* (Paris: Vrin, 2009).

¹⁵ N. Depraz, *Husserl: lire en phénoménologue les Idées directrices...I* (Paris: P.U.F./CNED, 2008); *Plus sur Husserl: une phénoménologie expérimentuelle* (Paris: éditions Atlande, 2009).

Working Through a Few Exemplary Sections

Introduction

I wish to suggest here such a different way of reading: not *what* Husserl writes, but *how* he writes it. That is, I am not looking for his concepts, his analysis, his argumentation, his thesis, but I am observing how he proceeds in order to create his concepts and, furthermore, his way of relating to the concepts he promotes, the modalities of his demonstrations, his use of examples and their status, his own involvement as a first person subject (or not) in his analysis.¹⁶

Reading differently involves looking differently at Husserl's writing, that is, discovering in it another kind of writing, based on a way of livingly referring to concrete acts and experiences, rather than to a formal logic and to a rational a priori mode of argumentation.

Such a change of attitude toward the text has a consequence upon the potential author to be found in every reader: it generates another way of writing; more precisely, it gives way to a kind of phenomenological production based on detailed specified individuated examples, which is referred to in a first person manner and which is worked out a great number of times in a repeated way during a long period of time in order to obtain an intra-subjective deepening of the example.¹⁷

Both requirements (reading and writing differently, both mutually generating each other) are the conditions for the possibility of a genuine “first-person phenomenology,” which will not only be generally wished or claimed (often amounting to a “*vœu pieux*”), but will be truly *done*, that is, concretely achieved.¹⁸ Having set the theoretical framework of my investigation, I would like to show now, “*sans attendre*” (with no further delay), *how* this can be done on the basis of the practical working out of a few paragraphs in *Ideen I*, given that we find rich proofs in this text of such a “claim” in Husserl himself, furthermore, a few indications of how to do it, even though he never achieved such a claim in a systematic way. That is what I aim at beginning to do here. I will provide just a few examples of it, here, given the short amount of space, of course.

¹⁶ On this matter, see N. Depraz, “Lire et écrire en phénoménologue: Sartre et l'accès au vécu ‘en première personne,’” in: *L'écriture et la lecture: des phénomènes-miroir. L'exemple de Sartre*, ed. N. Parant et N. Depraz (PURH, forthcoming).

¹⁷ On this matter, P. Vermersch, *L'entretien d'explicitation* (Paris: ESF, 1994 (2008)), and Cl. Petitmengin ed., *Ten Years of Viewing from Within: The Legacy of Francisco Varela, Journal of Consciousness Studies* Imprint Academic, 2009); more specifically, N. Depraz, “The ‘Failing’ of Meaning. A few Steps into a First-person Phenomenological Practice,” *op. cit.*, 90–117.

¹⁸ N. Depraz, “Husserl and the Idea of a ‘First-person Phenomenology’: Self-givenness, First-person Givenness and First-person Method,” (The article was first presented as a talk in the framework of a Conference organized by Dan Zahavi for the 150th Anniversary of Husserl’s death at Copenhagen, Institute for Subjectivity Research, October, 9–10, 2009; it is currently submitted to *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*).

A Few Examples of Phenomenological Practice

In order to change our way of looking at the Husserlian text, we need to create a first distinction between two modes of discursivity: on the one side, we find different modes of argumentation: the presentation of a concept (for example: the “transcendental epochē” in §31), the working out of a thesis (for example the putting forward of intuition, presented as the “principle of principles” in §24), the delivering of a doctrine (for example the functional point of view as the point of view of phenomenology in §86), or a critical argumentation (for example the dismantling of introspection as a psychologist view of phenomenology in §79), or again, the exhibition of a theoretical framework (the phenomenology of reason in §135). Such a discursive mode is typically philosophical in the sense of the unfolding of a rational critical way of arguing and explaining; Husserl himself is not adverse to such a way of philosophizing: he clearly puts aside the rational explanation (*Erklärung*) of the causes of a phenomenon and favors a descriptive eliciting (*Aufklärung*) of its immanent meaning. In contrast with the “doctrine,” a closer look at Husserl’s texts reveals us the “praxis” of the doctrine, that is, (1) the procedure of eidetic variation and the extraction of the invariant as the phenomenological practice of the mathematician (§25), (2) the natural attitude of the human being and her modes of being present to the world in a first person manner (§27), (3) the experience of attention as the exemplary praxis of the phenomenological psychologist (§92), (4) the concrete practical ethics of the phenomenologist (§96) and finally (5) the experiential work of the phenomenological experimentalist (§108). I will go through each of these practices while reading each of the above mentioned paragraph with the suggested new look.

The Practice of the Mathematician (§25)

“entrer vitalement dans l’activité” (“lebendig vollziehen und auf Grund direkter Analyse bestimmen”)¹⁹ Husserl is interested here in the practice of the scientist considered as an experimental researcher. His challenge in this paragraph lies in stressing the relevance of the practice of the mathematician rather than that of the empirist philosopher. Why? The latter sticks so much to the sensory facts and so exclusively defines experience as a sensory experience that it amounts to giving way to another metaphysical contention (the taken-for-granted power of facts). On the contrary, the researcher in mathematics is trained in a genuine, that is, living practice: he proceeds carefully while allowing the emergence of new possibilities, he is not immersed in facts but he opens the way for unknown realities which are effective possibilities. In that respect, he is the true “positivist” because he relies in a heuristic way on the potential inventivity of new phenomena.²⁰

¹⁹ *Hua III*, 45; fr. trans., 81.

²⁰ See N. Depraz, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue, Idées directrices pour une phenomenology I* (Paris: CNED/PUF, 2008), 53–54.

Let us take a striking example: if you look at the §35 in the text called *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*,²¹ which describes the flow of lights in the Loretto valley during Husserl's daily walk in the surroundings of Freiburg, you can observe how such an example is carefully worked out, it is not a vague hint (like: "Look at this brown table!") and it is not merely illustrating an apriori thesis. However, the suggested reiterated going back to the example is not "experiential" in the sense of a "self-elicitation" process, which corresponds to a working out through numerous intra-individual reiterations where you immerse each time in your own personal experience in a renewed way and discover each time new unknown aspects of it. Here the reliance on the "empirist" component of experience plays a driving and innovating role; in Husserl's case on the contrary, such an unfolding of the same very example in its different variations is directly linked to the opening of possibilities inherent in the mathematical fictional level of exploration, which is rich of a creativity based on imaginative potentialities. Here is an experimental way, the modality of which is imaginary (and not factual), which is very similar to the creative strategy in literature (exemplarily in poetry). In such a frame, the empirical experience is a mere beginning leading thread, which is reworked step by step and transformed through imaginative options, thus finally becoming contingent.²²

The "First-Person" Practice of the Natural Human Being (§27): Three Main Modes of Self-conscious Being: Presence, Attention, Vigilance

Let us look now at another kind of practice, the kind each of us performs. At the very outset, Husserl indicates that he is not going to talk or write *about* the "natural attitude" as a theme: he is going to talk while *living* such a natural attitude, adopting the point of view of the human being as he lives it in the first person enunciation: "*in der Ichrede*."²³ The whole paragraph is therefore written using the first personal pronoun "I," thus livingly performing for the reader a genuine experiential discursivity and inviting her to immediately resonate with it.

The first-person description which is produced results quite minimal in the sense of trivial: "*Für mich da sind wirkliche Objekte ... Ich kann meine Aufmerksamkeit wandern lassen von dem eben gesehenen und beachteten Schreibtisch aus durch die*

²¹ *Hua XI*, Fr. trans., 221.

²² Cf. my manuscript about attention, Section I, V. B. "Un contrepoint phénoménologique: l'exemplarité, une universalité située," which describes the operativity of the eidetic variation, as much as the alternative way suggested by Pierre Vermersch, where the empiricist dimension *a contrario* is able to create new dimensions ad plays a motor role in the categorical process. See P. Vermersch, "Describing the practice of introspection," *Ten Years of Viewing from Within*, *op. cit.*, 20–58.

²³ *Hua III*, 48.

ungesehenen Teile des Zimmers hinter meinem Rücken zur Veranda, in den Garten, zu den Kindern in der Laube usw, zu all den Objekten, von denen ich gerade ‘weiß’, als da und dort in meiner unmittelbar mitbewußten Umgebung seiend ...”²⁴ This “ich kann” (“I can”) is here particularly interesting: it is not a formal empty possibility, it is my embodied power of moving and acting, it is my freedom to initiate different actions, which indicates that I am not trapped while acting in one only possibility. The very meaning of a truly embodied action lies in this opening of multifarious potentialities. Here action and mathematician activity therefore deeply resonate, due to their common emphasis on the free co-possibilities of acting in the world.

This sober description offers two different modes of conscious presence to the objects of the world²⁵: (1) the first one, which I merely named “presence,” corresponds to my mere presence to the things which are immediately given to myself, be they visible (my table) or invisible (my garden, the children playing); (2) the second one corresponds to my ability to *change* the direction of my presence to these objects, thus producing a *modification* of this mere co-presence. Such a light modification (which I also named after the contemporary scientific research in psychology and neurology: “modulation”)²⁶ is the very meaning of the attentional activity: “*Ich kann meine Aufmerksamkeit wandern lassen ...*” (“I can let my attention wander...”). I will come back to this key-feature of the natural first-person attitude in the next section ; (3) the third one is developed a bit later in this paragraph thanks to the word “vigilance”: “*ich finde mich im wachen Bewußtsein, allzeit und ohne es ändern zu können ... Unmittelbar stehen Dinge als Gebrauchsobjekte da, der ‘Tisch’ mit seinen Büchern, das ‘Trinkglas’, die ‘Vase’, das ‘Klavier’ usw.*”²⁷ This third mode of being present is more global, less focal than attention, it corresponds to the very entire life of my being consciously present to the things in the world: “[*Die Welt*] ist immerfort für mich vorhanden, und ich selbst bin ihr Mitglied.”²⁸

²⁴ *Hua III*, 48–49; English trans., 51: “Along with the ones now perceived, other actual objects are there for me.... I can let my attention wander away from the writing table which was just now seen and noticed, out through the unseen parts of the room which are behind my back, to the veranda, into the garden, to the children in the arbor, etc., to all the Objects I directly ‘know of’ as being there and here in the surroundings of which there is also consciousness.”

²⁵ N. Depraz, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue*, op. cit., 59–61.

²⁶ N. Depraz, “Where is the Phenomenology of Attention Husserl intended to Perform: A Transcendental-Pragmatic Description,” *Continental Philosophy Review*, Special Issue “Attention Between Theory and Practice,” ed. N. Depraz and A. Steinbock (2004); fr. Trans, *Husserl*, ed. J. Benoist (Paris: Cerf, 2008).

²⁷ *Hua III*, 50, English trans., 53: “In my waking consciousness I find myself in this manner at all times, and without ever being able to alter the fact. ... Immediately, physical things stand there as Objects of use, the ‘table’ with its ‘books,’ the ‘drinking glass,’ the ‘vase,’ the ‘piano,’ etc.”

²⁸ Ibid. “[The world] is contingently ‘on hand’ for me and I myself am a member of it.”

The Practice of the Phenomenologist: Attention, the Exemplary Operative “Support” (Point d’appui) of Experiential Phenomenology (§92)

With “attention,” which I just mentioned as the most focal mode of presence to the objects of the world, we actually have to do to the most acute practical method of phenomenology. I showed elsewhere how the attentional activity is the concrete name of epochē as an embodied activity.²⁹ More precisely, it corresponds to the experiential key-gesture of my inner organic relationship to myself.

In that respect, the §92 offers an incredible “précis” of operative methodology.³⁰ Husserl describes here what he calls the “*attentionale Abwandlungen*” of the intentional (here perceptual) activity of the subject. The word “*Abwandlung*” (translated in French by Ricœur with the term “*mutation*”) stresses the transformative and creative aspect of the “modification,” more accurately than what the sheer term “modification” lets surge, which may only underline the modal aspect of the activity, its “how” component. With “*Abwandlung*” Husserl insists on the fact that attention generates a change into the activity itself that may change the latter as a whole, instead of modifying only one aspect of it.

The peculiar structural property of attentionality amounts to combining (*kreuzen*) and mixing (*mischen*) with other phenomena. In short, it is never given alone in a isolated way, but it structurally accompanies and fosters a given activity (may it be perceptual, imaginative, symbolic or empathetic). Furthermore, the attentional act is not described by Husserl as a mental invisible act (like in some classical psychological works), but as an organic inner move of a conscious subject: “*Wir sprechen im Gleichnis vom ‘geistigen Blick’ oder ‘Blickstrahl’ des reinen Ich, von seinen Zuwendungen und Absendungen.*”³¹ Now, Husserl’s very expressions reveal the exact inner move of the reductive method, which is precisely described as a turning of the look (a “*conversion*,” from the Latin verb “*vertere*,” or again, in German “*sich wenden*”). The organicity of the attentional move thus amounts to describing the very move of the reduction.³² Furthermore, Husserl describes this organic inner move as a selective and focalized direction going through a whole field of different layers of phenomena (either spatial or temporal): “*Der Blickstrahl des reinen Ich geht bald durch diese, bald durch jene noetische Schicht oder (wie z.B. bei Erinnerungen in Erinnerungen) ... durch diese oder jene Schachtelungsstufe (...) Innerhalb des gegebenen Gesamtfeldes ... blicken wir bald auf ein Ganzes hin, den*

²⁹ N. Depraz, “The Phenomenological Reduction as Praxis,” *The View from Within: First-person Approaches to the Study of Consciousness. Journal of Consciousness Studies*, Special Issue, ed. F. J. Varela & J. Shear (1999).

³⁰ For more details, see my article mentioned above, “Where is the Phenomenology of Attention Husserl Intended to Perform?”

³¹ Hua III, 198–190; English trans., 222: “We spoke metaphorically of the pure Ego’s ‘mental regard’ or the ‘rays of its regard,’ of its adverting toward and turning away from.”

³² N. Depraz, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue*, op. cit., 159–161.

*Baum etwa, der perzeptiv gegenwärtig ... Plötzlich wenden wir den Blick einem uns ‘einfallenden’ Erinnerungsobjekt zu: statt durch die Wahrnehmungsnoese ..., geht der Blick durch eine Erinnerungsnoese in eine Erinnerunswelt hinein, bewegt sich wandernd in dieser, geht in Erinnerungen anderer Stufen über oder in bloße Phantasiewelten*³³

In short, attention accounts for the concretely inner lived activity of the phenomenologist as a self-conscious subject.

The Practice of the Ethical Phenomenologist: A Lived Practical Ethics (§96)

From such a lived attentional practice to the first-person concrete ethics which is described in §96, there is quite a small step, the one which goes from one “leg” of attention, more cognitive and focused (§92) to its other “leg,” more ethical and open to the world and the others (§96). Actually, attention is the common root of both legs, which both go “hand in hand,” besides! The French language shows this very well, insofar as the substantive “attention” gives way to two lightly different adjectives, “*attentionnel*” and “*attentionné*,” which translate two different components of attention, its cognitive side and its ethical side.

§96 suggests some directions of a concrete practical ethics, which leads to understand the descriptive activity as a practice to be cultivated rather than as a sheer technics in order to obtain results. It can be summarized according to five features: (1) the leading thread of such a research ethics is faithfulness (*Treue*) to what is given and accuracy towards it, along with a being careful with what is given (*Sorgfalt*) (2). This leading feature is typical of the experimental attitude in science; it goes hand in hand with an ability to effort and concentration (*Anstrengung*) (3), and with the sense of the precariousness and the finitude of descriptions, which provide the phenomenologist with the wisdom and the caution linked to the irreducible relativity of knowledge (4); finally, freedom is the whole spirit of the way of the philosopher, together with openness and the sense for discovering new territories (5). In that respect, the leading image/example of the traveler, who is always in quest of new areas, is highly telling for Husserl’s way of researching: “... eins ... müssen wir anstreben, daß wir in jedem Schritte getreu beschreiben, was wir von unseren Augenpunkte aus und nach ernstestem Studium wirklich sehen. Unser

³³ *Hua III*, 190; English trans., 223: “The ray of the pure Ego’s regard sometimes goes through one noetic stratum and sometimes through another. Or (as, e.g., in the case of remembering within remembering through one encasement-level or another ...) Within the total field ... we sometimes look at a whole, a tree, perhaps, which is perceptually present ... Suddenly we turn our regard to an object of memory which ‘comes to mind’: Instead of going through the perceptual noesis, ... the regard goes through a remembering noesis into a word of memory; it wanders about in this world, passes over into memories of other degrees or into worlds of phantasy, and so forth.”

Verfahren ist da seines Forschungsreisenden in einem unbekannten Weltteile, der sorgsam beschreibt, was sich ihm ... darbietet. Ihm darf das sichere Bewußtsein erfüllen, zur Aussage zu bringen ..., was, weil es treuer Ausdruck von Gesehenem ist, immerfort seinen Wert behält. In gleicher Gesinnung wollen wir ... treue Darsteller der phänomenologischen Gestaltungen sein”³⁴

In short, caution and patience are key-words in order to enter a true phenomenological ethics: they may serve as a general epistemological background in order to better understand the experimental character of phenomenology.³⁵

The Practice of the Phenomenological Experimentalist: §108

Such a stress on experimentation may lead us astray: we may believe that phenomenology has to become an experimental science with formal and focalized laboratory experiments. Not at all. Even though the need for experimenting is crucial, it is also crucial to keep, as Husserl says, the testimony, account and evidence of the natural language (*die natürliche Zeugnis*).³⁶ It actually belongs to the ethics just mentioned above and re-asserted at the end of the paragraph: “*Man muß hier nur wie überall in der Phänomenologie den Mut haben, daß im Phänomen wirklich zu Erschauende, statt es umzudeuten, eben hinzunehmen, wie es sich selbst gibt, und es ehrlich zu beschreiben. Alle Theorien haben sich darnach zu richten.*”³⁷

The experimental example that is chosen by Husserl here, the “stereoscope,” is telling about his general hypothesis of the continuity between perception and imagination on the one side, and his structural will to bring together and articulate scientific experiments and daily life on the other side: “*Ins Stereoskop blickend, sagen wir, diese erscheinende Pyramide ist ‘nichts’, ist bloßer ‘Schein’: Das Erscheinende als solches ist das offbare Subjekt der Prädikation und ihm (da sein Dingnoema aber nichts weniger als ein Ding ist) schreiben wir das zu, was wir an ihm selbst als Charakter vorfinden: eben die Nichtigkeit.*” (“Looking into the stereoscope, we say: this appearing as appearing is obviously the subject of predication

³⁴ Hua III, 201, English trans., 235: “... that at each step we faithfully describe what we, from our point of view and after the most serious study, actually see. Our procedure is that of an explorer journeying through an unknown part of the world, and carefully describing what is presented ... Such an explorer can rightfully be filled with the sure confidence that he gives utterance to what, ... because it is the faithful expression of something seen, will always retain its value ... With a like conviction, in the sequel we propose to be faithful describers of phenomenological structures ...” Let us also mention that Ricoeur translates quite interestingly “*treuer Darsteller*” (“faithful describers”) with the expression “*témoin fidèle*.”

³⁵ N. Depraz, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue*, op. cit., 164–166.

³⁶ Hua III, 221, fr. Trans., 366.

³⁷ Ibid. English trans., 257: “Here, as throughout phenomenology, one must have the courage to accept what is really to be seen in the phenomenon precisely as it presents itself rather than interpreting it away, and to honestly describe it. All theories must be directed accordingly.”

and we ascribe to it (which is the thing-noema but not a physical thing) what we find present in it as a characteristic—precisely nullity.”) Such an interest for depth perceptive phenomena is not an exception. It occurs very early 1901,³⁸ and re-appears in a structural way in the twenties in the course of Husserl’s description of the imaginative act.³⁹ Such an example generates a care for the genuineness of the appearing as appearing. As such it is exemplary of Husserl’s concrete and genuine way of proceeding.⁴⁰

From Reading to Writing: Producing a Detailed Individuated Example on the Basis of Husserl’s Generic One

My second step is the following: on the basis of such a practical and procedural reading I would like to suggest a mirror-practical writing.

An Experiential Method from Reading to Writing

The phenomenological practical writing I wish to present here both relies on Husserl’s way of providing us with experiential examples *and* invents a more individuated way of doing so, namely while using the contemporary self-elicitation method suggested by P. Vermersch and more recently unfolded and developed by Claire Petitmengin.

I myself endeavored to adjust such a method to the philosophical work in my Research Seminar at the University of Rouen since last year while working together reading and writing as mirror-phenomena. I used my step-by-step practical reading of *Ideen I*, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue*, and immersed the students in the third part of the *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*, “Association.” I had four different steps: *first* I showed them concretely the difference between a critical reading (looking for concepts, argumentation, etc.) and a practical reading (looking for procedures, ways of doing) (as I showed above); *second* I asked them to notice and to write down the examples Husserl uses in this part (as I did above with a few paragraphs in *Ideen I*); *third* (and that is what we are going to do now with one of the paragraphs here), I asked them to identify the structural features of a given example (it is an example, the sensory modality of which is the vision, the framework/set is mainly spatial and not time-embedded, it is an individual example (the others are not co-present), it is described in the first person of the plural, etc., the emotional component is not put forward, etc.). So we have a certain amount of features that we can use in order to

³⁸ LUV, §40, 491.

³⁹ Hua XXIII, n°20: “Phantasie-Neutralität,” 574, 580, 583–584. See also pp. 75 and 135.

⁴⁰ N. Depraz, *Lire Husserl en phénoménologue*, *op. cit.*, 180–182.

create (*fourth step*) our own experiential setting. The advantage of such a method lies in the structural proximity with Husserl's setting (which serves as a structural phenomenological guidance) and in the ability to discover from Husserl onward a personal experiential immersion.

Identifying the Structural Features of One Example in Husserl

Let us focus now again (for example) on our second paragraph (and on the example which is given in it). The §27 offers quite a daily experiential setting. I quote again: “*Für mich da sind wirkliche Objekte ... Ich kann meine Aufmerksamkeit wandern lassen von dem eben gesehenen und beachteten Schreibtisch aus durch die ungesesehenen Teile des Zimmers hinter meinem Rücken zur Veranda, in den Garten, zu den Kindern in der Laube usw., zu all den Objekten, von denen ich gerade ‘weiß’, als da und dort in meiner unmittelbar mitbewußten Umgebung seiend ...*”⁴¹

What are the structural features of this experiential setting? 1. It is a visual setting (sensory modality: “*eben gesehenen... ungesesehenen*”); 2. It is at first sight a focused vision (“*dem beachteten Schreibtisch*”); 3. It is a moving (technically said: “kinaesthetic”) perceptive activity, the sensory modality of which is not mentioned: we only know that it is not visual any more (“*ungesehenen Teile ... hinter meinem Rücken*”), what is sometimes called in contemporary neurosciences an “ambient vision,” quite akin to the Husserlian “co-perceived” and “horizontal-perceptive activity”; 4. Even though it is not mentioned by Husserl we may think of the presence of the auditory modality (given the presence of the children in the garden, probably speaking aloud, laughing, etc.). 5. Husserl names “attention” such an inner ability, supported by a sensory modality but also freeing itself from it.

Let us produce now a first-person description that will conform to such structural features.

Putting to Work the Interview/Self-elicitation Method

Now, in order for a description to be truly a first-person description, we need to check that we follow some clear instructions: the first key-instruction, which is a standard common rule of every elicitation method is to refer to an experience which

⁴¹ *Hua III*, 48–49; English trans., 51: “Along with the ones now perceived, other actual objects are there for me.... I can let my attention wander away from the writing table which was just now seen and noticed, out through the unseen parts of the room which are behind my back, to the veranda, into the garden, to the children in the arbor, etc., to all the Objects I directly ‘know of’ as being there and here in the surroundings of which there is also consciousness.”

is clearly individuated as a *nunc/hic* experience. It has to be a unique experience and not a typical one, starting for example like: "I remember *usually* sitting ...," which will only evoke the genericity of such an experience. The other key-instruction is to come back to this experience while re-living it, putting oneself again in the very concrete setting. Here you need to ask yourself the following questions, in order to check that you are embodying again the very situated moment: "When was it exactly? Where? With whom? In which emotional state was I?"; you also need to provide the most concrete and numerous details of the scene you may recall: it will be a good indication of the embodied and situated character of the experience. Third you need to come back a great number of times to this very singular experience in order to be able to unfold it in a deeper way and discover each time aspects that you first did not recall. We do not have enough space here to engage in the third instruction, but it really needs to be done in a standard work in the sense that it provides the methodology with a quality of intra-subjective objectivity.

Here is the first-person description which came back to my mind when I decided to do it last Monday, 20/09 (9.15–9.30 am): "I am sitting in a Brasserie in Paris next to the City Hall in the 17th Arrondissement. It is in June of this year. I just went to the City Hall to get information to have my passport renewed in order to be able to travel to the States in September. I brought some work to do and sit down in this coffee-shop in order to achieve the writing of my article about attention for the coming *Alter* volume about this theme. I am nearly alone in the coffee-shop, sitting on the left side near the comptoir. I order a big coffee with milk and a bread and butter and begin to type on my computer. I am eager at writing and glad to observe that I succeed in providing clear examples of the distinction between attention and consciousness in phenomenology and in neuroscientific experiments. I have a feeling of satisfaction, of ease, nearly of enthusiasm. The man who served me the coffee is talking with somebody else, but I nearly do not care about their discussion; he jokes with me a couple of times (bringing me the coffee, then a glass of water I asked him for, finally the bill) and each times creates a small rupture of my attention directed towards the writing. He compels me to change my attentional direction towards him, but I lightly notice that it does not really disturb me, it is only a small attentional change and I spontaneously immerse myself again into my own writing activity."

Once this first experiential unfolding is produced, the next step is to come back to the experience and its writing, either with the help of a guide (who asks non-inductive questions) or alone, re-reading one's own text and asking oneself questions according to the different sequences of the event and relying on certain intriguing expressions: "and when I write (you say) that I (you) am eager at writing, what do I (you) do?" Or: "and when I (you) notice that it does not really disturb me (you), what do I (you) do?" Etc. While doing so, you are able to dig further into your own experience and discover tiny first unseen aspects of it in a very disciplined scientific way.

Of course what I indicate here is the very first thrust of a first-person methodological phenomenology. It needs to be developed and taught further.

A Concluding Suggestion for Experimenting in a First-Person Way

In order to really “do” phenomenology I suggest to use the last example provided by Husserl, the stereogram, as a support for unfolding such a methodology.

Here are the steps to be walked:

1. Read §108 again.
2. Identify the structural features of the depth-perception example.
3. Recall one singular experience supported by such structural features but concretely “indexicalysed.”
4. Unfold this experience with as many details as possible always keeping this embodied way of recalling/reliving it.
5. Come back to one’s own first-person description and dig further through self-questions (this has to be done as much as possible in terms of number of times, but we won’t do it here/today because of our lack of time).

Conclusion

What is the benefit of such an experiential reading of Husserl’s phenomenology in *Ideen I*, for philosophy on the one hand, for phenomenology on the other hand, for our contemporary world finally? First, it helps better understand what phenomenology is as a science of experience, namely, better see the meaning of Husserl’s stress on coming back to the things themselves. Second, it provides a rigorous method in order to convince non-philosophers that philosophy is talking about concrete and universal problems and phenomena, and that it has a meaning for our life, which is the least one is entitled to expect from a wisdom tracing back from Socrates’s *gnôthi seauton*. Third, it opens the way for a revolutionary epistemology based on singularity (in contrast with the usual motto according to which there is only science of the general) and unfolding objectivation from the very singular, thus providing us with an embodied scientificity, which is what needs to be achieved for epistemology today if we want to develop our reflection in deep contact with the concrete reality of our life and keep in mind the urgent necessity of ethics within scientific work.

Chapter 24

The Post-War Reception of *Ideen I* and Reflection

Saulius Geniusas

The Post-War Reception of *Ideen I* in Germany

The post-war years marked the collapse of the political opposition to Husserl's phenomenology and gave rise to the emergence of a new interest in phenomenology. The difference between the years of silence that preceded the war and the years that followed it was so startling, that some were led to speak of the possibility of a kind of "Husserl-Renaissance."¹ The political changes could not by themselves give rise to such a renaissance. The philosophical landscape in Germany had changed. A new task was to evaluate Husserl's phenomenology in the context of the current philosophical problems.

Due to the almost complete silence that embraced Husserl's phenomenology during the years of the war, it was not possible to transform Husserl's phenomenology into a once-again living philosophical tradition in Germany without first appropriating the phenomenological work that had been pursued elsewhere. Thus, during the first few decades that followed the war, phenomenology in Germany was under the guidance of French and Dutch phenomenologists. Jean-Paul Sartre's and Merleau-Ponty's influence was particularly strong. According to Ernst Wolfgang Orth and Thomas Seeböhm, this influence was vital throughout the first phase of post-War phenomenology in Germany, which began with the publication of *Husserliana* in 1950 and

¹ See Hans Wagner, "Kritische Bemerkungen zu Husserls Nachlass," *Philosophische Rundschau* I (1953/54): 2. For the English translation, see Hans Wagner, "Critical Observations Concerning Husserl's Posthumous Writings," *The Phenomenology of Husserl*, ed. R.O. Elveton (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 204.

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which ended with the founding of the German Society for Phenomenological Research in 1970.²

The possibility of a “Husserl Renaissance” in Germany was first and foremost associated with two factors: the opening of the Husserl Archives in Freiburg (1949) and Cologne (1951) as well as the edition of Husserl’s collected works, *Husserliana*. The Husserl Archives in Freiburg and Cologne invited a plethora of philosophers from abroad, who had either continued working in the phenomenological tradition, or were heavily influenced by this tradition, during the years when virtually no such work had been conducted in Germany.³ Frederik Buytendijk, Eric Weil, Hendrik Pos, Wladislaw Tatarkiewicz, Jean Beaufret, Gabriel Marcel, Hannah Arendt, Hans Jonas, Aron Gurwitsch, Jan Patocka, Jean Hyppolite, and Alphonse De Waelhens delivered lectures at the newly opened Husserl Archives in Germany.⁴

1950 marked the publication of the first three volumes of *Husserliana. Ideen I* was published as the third volume in this series. *Ideen II* and *III* appeared in print a few years later. This was the fourth edition of *Ideen I* to appear in German. In the only review of *Ideen I* that was published in 1950s, L.O. Kattsoff lauds Walter Biemel’s edition, especially for including supplementary texts from the *Nachlass*.⁵ In the mid 1960s, Gerhard Maschke was already working on a new edition of *Ideen I* that was supposed to revise and correct the supplementary material found in Biemel’s edition. Karl Schuhmann’s newly edited volume of *Ideen I* (as well as *Ideen II*) was published in 1976.

The new studies in phenomenology to emerge in post-war Germany grew out of the Husserl Archives in Louvain, Freiburg, and Cologne. These studies were primarily

² See the entry on Germany, compiled by Ernst Wolfgang Orth and Thomas M. Seeböhm, *Encyclopedia of Phenomenology*, ed. Lester Embree, et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 274.

³ Friedrich Kreis’s *Phänomenologie und Kritizismus* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1930) and Rudolf Zocher’s *Husserl’s Phänomenologie und Schuppes Logik* (München: Reinhardt, 1932) were the first published critical discussions of Husserl’s thought in Germany. In 1933, Eugen Fink had responded to this critique in his famous “Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik,” *Kant Studien XXXVIII* (1933). This debate between Zocher and Fink was the last published critical discussion of Husserl in Germany until the end of the war. The last German reviews of Husserl’s work before the war were also published in 1933. Roman Ingarden published a relatively brief review of *Formal and Transcendental Logic* and Helmut Kuhn published a rather detailed review of the *Cartesian Meditations* (both appeared in *Kant Studien XXXVIII*, 1933). Of course, one cannot overlook Ludwig Landgrebe’s edition of *Erfahrung und Urteil* (Prague: Academia-Verlag, 1938). Yet this highly important contribution to Husserl’s phenomenology, which appeared in print briefly after Husserl’s death, was not published in Germany, and the meager 200 printed copies were available only in Great Britain and the United States, not in Germany. Eugen Fink’s “Das Problem der Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls” (1938) is another noteworthy exception. Yet just as with Landgrebe’s work, this text also did not make any impact on German philosophy at the time of its publication.

⁴ See in this regard T. Vongehr, “A Short History of the Husserl-Archives,” *Geschichte des Husserl-Archivs/History of the Husserl-Archives* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 111.

⁵ L. O. Kattsoff, “Husserls Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie, Erstes Buch,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 12 (1951).

concerned with Husserl's so far unpublished manuscripts. Although references to *Ideen I* in these works appear only in passing, such a situation is not to be seen as a sign of indifference to *Ideen I*. On the contrary, it springs from the assumption that the philosophical community remains familiar with *Ideen I* and that this work retains its unsurpassed role in phenomenology.⁶

One could roughly divide phenomenological research conducted in post-war Germany into three groups. The first entails careful studies of particular subject matters in Husserl's phenomenology (such as the constitution of space, time and intersubjectivity) on the basis of the so-far unpublished manuscripts. The works by Hermann Ulrich Asemissen⁷ and Klaus Hartmann⁸ serve as examples of such research in 1950s. The studies undertaken by Alois Roth,⁹ Klaus Held,¹⁰ and Ulrich Claesges¹¹ are representative of such research being undertaken a decade later. The second group of works incorporates new attempts to give a comprehensive account of Husserl's phenomenology on the basis of the new literature that has become available since the opening of the Husserl-Archives. Alwin Diemer's,¹² Helmuth Plessner's,¹³ Walter Biemel's,¹⁴ Wilhelm Szilasi's,¹⁵ and Wolfgang-Herrmann Müller's¹⁶ studies represent this second group. The third group embraces those works whose principal goal was to bring Husserl's phenomenology into dialogue with other philosophical traditions. This third group of works could be further divided into two sub-groups. Gerhard Brand's,¹⁷ Ludwig Landgrebe's¹⁸ and Eugen Fink's¹⁹ late works as well as Gadamer's shorter pieces²⁰ exemplify phenomenology's

⁶ E.g., "I may surely assume knowledge of the first volume of the *Ideas*" (Hans Wagner, *op. cit.*, 8); or, "to this day *Ideen I* has not lost its preeminent role in the phenomenological discussions" (Jan Broekman, *op. cit.*, 20).

⁷ Hermann Ulrich Asemissen, "Strukturanalytische Probleme der Wahrnehmung in der Phänomenologie Husserl," *Kant-Studien* 73 (1957).

⁸ Klaus Hartmann, *Husserls Einführungstheorie auf monadologischer Grundlage* (Diss.: Bonn 1953).

⁹ Alois Roth, *Edmund Husserls ethische Untersuchungen* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960).

¹⁰ Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart: Die Frage nach der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966).

¹¹ Ulrich Claesges, *Edmund Husserl's Theorie der Raumkonstitution* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964).

¹² Alwin Diemer *Edmund Husserl. Versuch einer systematischen Darstellung seiner Phänomenologie* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1956).

¹³ Helmuth Plessner, *Husserl in Göttingen* (Diss.: Vandehoeck & Ruprecht, 1959).

¹⁴ Walter Biemel, "Die entscheidenden Phasen in Husserls Philosophie," *Zeitschrift* 13 (1959).

¹⁵ Wilhelm Szilasi, *Einführung in die Phänomenologie Edmund Husserls* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1959).

¹⁶ Wolfgang-Herrmann Müller, *Die Philosophie E. Husserls nach den Grundzügen ihrer Entstehung und ihrem systematischen Gehalt* (Bonn, 1956).

¹⁷ Gerhard Brand, *Welt, Ich und Zeit* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1955).

¹⁸ Ludwig Landgrebe, *Philosophie der Gegenwart*, *op. cit.*, and *Der Weg der Phänomenologie* (Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1963).

¹⁹ Eugen Fink, *Welt und Endlichkeit* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 1990).

²⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Die Phänomenologische Bewegung," *op. cit.*

aim to open a dialogue with hermeneutics. The works by Gerhard Funke,²¹ Iso Kern,²² Thomas Seebohm²³ and Hans-Ulrich Hoche²⁴ are representative of the aim to continue the dialogue with Kant and Neo-Kantianism. The interest in the intersections of Husserl's phenomenology and transcendental idealism was especially strong among the representatives of the “Mainz School of Phenomenology.”

Theodor Adorno's critique of Husserl's phenomenology appeared in print in 1956.²⁵ This critique significantly influenced the negative reception of Husserl's phenomenology by the Frankfurt school in general. For instance, Habermas' critique of Husserl in *Erkenntnis und Interesse* was heavily indebted to Adorno's work.²⁶ This critique did not provoke post-war German phenomenologists to formulate a full-fledged response, arguably because it was viewed as too distant from what Husserl actually had to say. In Jan Broekman's *Phänomenologie und Egologie*²⁷ one finds a set of responses to Adorno scattered over different pages, which emphasize the remoteness of Adorno's critique from Husserl's phenomenological program.

The Concept of Reflection

It is only to be expected that a philosophy that calls itself transcendental will sooner or later confront questions concerning the relation between the two separate domains, the *mundane* and the *transcendental*. In the case of phenomenology, this issue is as old as Husserl's identification of phenomenology as transcendental philosophy. This problem gained special importance after the publication of *Ideen I*—Husserl's first work in print to announce the transcendental standpoint of phenomenology. The relation between the transcendental and the mundane once again became an issue of considerable importance in Germany after *Ideen I* was published in the *Husserliana* series in 1950. His transcendentalism became a cause of deep concern for reasons that have to do not so much with his own phenomenology, but rather with Heidegger's fundamental ontology and Kant's transcendental philosophy.²⁸

²¹ Gerhard Funke, *Zur transzendentalen Philosophie* (Bonn 1957).

²² Iso Kern, *Husserl und Kant: Eine Untersuchung über Husserls Verhältnis zu Kant und zum Neukantianismus* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964).

²³ Thomas Seebohm, *Die Bedingungen der Möglichkeit der Transzental-Philosophie* (Bonn, 1962).

²⁴ Hans-Ulrich Hoche, *Nichtempirische Erkenntnis. Analytische und synthetische Urteile a priori bei Kant und bei Husserl* (Meinsheim am Glan, 1964).

²⁵ Theodor Adorno, *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie. Studien über Husserl und die phänomenologische Antinomien* (Stuttgart, 1956).

²⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *Erkenntnis und Interesse* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1968).

²⁷ See Jan Broekman, *Phänomenologie und Egologie: Faktisches und transzendentales Ego bei Edmund Husserl*, (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), 28–43.

²⁸ On the one hand, in the specifically phenomenological framework, it was not clear how one could still maintain the separation of the transcendental and the mundane domains in light of Heidegger's fundamental ontology, which increasingly grew to be viewed as a radicalization of Husserl's phenomenology. On the other hand, in the context of transcendental philosophy, a worry arose that Husserl's alternative to Kant might lead to a philosophically infeasible position.

I will limit myself to one illustration of such a reaction.²⁹ F.H. Heinemann writes:

If he doubted the existence of the world with its mountains and rivers, trees, plants, and animals, how could he help doubting his own existence in this specific body? He therefore went on from human loneliness to transcendental loneliness. “I have become,” he said, “the transcendental Ego”; and this was true. He did not talk as his own natural self, but as an anonymous transcendental Ego, as a consciousness in general, as *Bewusstsein überhaupt*, in Kant’s sense. Here we have reached the central point, *Husserl’s philosophy is the philosophy of the lonely transcendental Self*. We have simultaneously reached the point where we can fix Husserl’s position in the history of modern self-estrangement ... Husserl’s method is of interest to us as an expression of self-estrangement.³⁰

This split between the transcendental and the mundane ego is allegedly a philosophical invention. What this invention gives rise to is by no means just a set of innocent problems. The phenomenological reduction places subjectivity within the shell of its transcendentality, from within which it can no longer escape. The ego, as soon as it recognizes itself as transcendental, sets ablaze all the bridges that could lead it back to actuality. To borrow a metaphor from Jan Broekman, if one could liken the transcendental ego to a house, then one would have to say that this house has no windows, no walls, no doors, i.e., that it is a “pure” house.³¹

Why would Husserl insist that subjectivity is given to itself as both mundane and transcendental? Arguably, such a twofold self-apperception is grounded in *reflection*. To support such a view, I will start with the analysis of reflection in *Ideen I*. In broad strokes, I will paint a picture of phenomenological reflection conceived as a radicalization of mundane and psychological reflection.

Reflection as a Modification

Ideen I has been often accused for leaping over into the transcendental domain without sufficient preparation: supposedly, the sudden transcendental turn leaves phenomenology empty of content.³² However, if one focuses on reflection, the transcendental

²⁹ The first chapter of Jan Broekman’s *Phänomenologie und Egologie*, significantly titled “Das Verhältnis vom faktischen und transzendentalen ego in der Kritik an Edmund Husserl,” provides an extensive list of different works, where such a critical reaction can be found. We find it in the works written by A. Schutz, H. Wagner, J. König, H. Plessner, H. Assemissen, L. Landgrebe, L. Binswanger, and F. Heinemann. The Kantian and hermeneutical influence is strongly visible not only in such a reaction, but even in Broekman’s own presentation of this reaction, as can already be seen in the title of his work: the operative distinction between the factual and the transcendental, while common in Kantian and hermeneutical literature, is rarely, if ever, found in Husserl’s works. Husserl replaces this distinction with a twofold opposition: factual vs. eidetic and mundane vs. transcendental. So as not to obscure this distinction, in the present context I will speak of the mundane and transcendental ego.

³⁰ F.H. Heinemann, *Existenz-philosophie lebendig oder tot?* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954), p. 53. For the English translation, see F. H. Heinemann, *Existentialism and the Modern Predicament* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), 53.

³¹ Jan Broekman, *op. cit.*, 30.

³² Husserl himself refers to this critique in Hua VI, §43. For a forceful account of this critique, see Iso Kern, “Die drei Wege zur transzental-phänomenologischen Reduktion in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls,” *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 24/1.

turn no longer appears so startling. In §38 and §45 we find the account of how reflection functions in the natural attitude, while §§77–79 deepen these preliminary deliberations with an inquiry into what makes reflection specifically phenomenological. Husserl hardly considers these “reflections on reflection” peripheral. As he remarks, “the theme of a leading chapter of phenomenology … is to distinguish the different ‘reflections’ and to analyze them completely in systematic order.”³³

In mundane experience, reflection emerges as a *modification*.³⁴ Reflection signals the turning of regard from the *object* of experience to *experience*, e.g., from the perceived to the perceiving, from the remembered to remembering, etc. Moreover, reflection brings it to light that the *ego* of straightforward experience is initially given as self-opaque and anonymous. *Reflection thereby signals a twofold modification (1) in the givenness of experience and (2) in the givenness of the ego*: the initially latent, non-thematic ego is now given as an intentional object.

However, the constant conversion of latency into patency does not erase the split between the reflecting ego and the ego-reflected-upon. *The performing ego is always latent*, no matter if the performance in question is a straightforward or a reflective experience. The performing ego can be rendered thematic only if a new *latent* ego transforms it into an intentional object.

Does this realization not force one to acknowledge significant limits of reflection? Moreover, if the task of phenomenology is that of providing an account of subjectivity on the basis of reflection, then are we not to conclude that this account can never be carried through to its end?

From *Ideen I*, one can extract three answers to this question.³⁵ First, experience hardly supports the suspicion that reflection always remains cut-off from unreflected experience. If such were the case, you would be maintaining too much if you were now to observe that you were just reading an essay on reflection and that you are still reading it. Secondly, the outlined worry is an instance of a performative contradiction. After all, if the suspicion in question is not to remain an empty concern, it must find some support in reflection. That is, *reflection itself* must ground the cognitive value that this skeptical worry about reflection expresses. Thirdly, this suspicion presupposes the givenness of both reflective and pre-reflective experience as two separate data of experience. Yet how can pre-reflective experience be given if not through reflection?

³³ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950), 147–48. Hereafter, Hua III. For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983).

³⁴ Originary experiences, which Husserl calls impressions, cannot be reflective. Something must be first given so that it can be reflected upon. This “something in question” is unreflective experience.

³⁵ Husserl addresses this very problem in the context of his critique of H. J. Watt’s methodological skepticism, which is explicitly directed against empirical psychology, but which Husserl also presumes to be directed against his phenomenology (See Hua III, §79). According to Watt, what is given in reflection is not experience pure and simple, but rather experience-as-given-to-reflection. On such a view, the supposition that reflection can generate knowledge valid for all experience is an ungrounded assumption.

Thus even though the gap between the latent and the patent ego is irremovable, it does not justify the skeptical concern because the reflecting ego recognizes itself as the ego-reflected-upon. Even though one can always reflect on the act of reflection *ad infinitum*, such an infinite projection of reflections does not force one to give up the legitimacy of reflective self-givenness.

Mundane and Psychological Reflection

What motivates reflection? Clearly, the reasons are numerous; less clearly, different reasons give rise to different *types* of reflection. I will begin by distinguishing mundane and psychological reflection.

What is specific about mundane reflection? At all times, it is guided by the interest in the *object* of experience. This interest constitutes the horizon of mundane reflection. In the case of perception, I can turn my attention from the seen object to the seeing of it for the sole purpose of assuring myself that the object in question is indeed what I thought it was. I can ask myself, is it really true that the melody I hear is Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2? When doubt arises, reflection comes to the rescue. When I run through the melody in my still fresh memory, I either obtain more evidence to support my earlier judgment, or reflection forces me to abandon the earlier verdict: what I hear is Eric Carmen's "All By Myself," which in many regards is all-too-close to Rachmaninov's second movement. Thus in the case of mundane reflection, the shaking of the certainty of experience and the striving to ascertain new certainty is the motivating force that gives rise to reflection.

Yet reflection need not be conceived as merely a useful interruption in the objectively oriented flow of experience. While the relation to objects and the world constitutes the horizon of mundane reflection, psychological reflection aims to set such a mundane horizon out of play. Psychological reflection enables one to redirect one's interest from objects to experience *with the sole interest in thematizing the subject of this experience*.

Above I spoke of reflection as a turning of regard from objects to experience and as the thematization of the initially latent ego of experience. This distinction allows one to pinpoint a limit of mundane reflection. *This type of reflection knows nothing of the ego.* When mundane reflection awakens an interest in experience, it does so without any concern for the subject of this experience. By contrast, for psychological reflection the thematization of experience is not just a detour that one takes so as to secure the meaning of a particular objectivity. Psychological reflection is directed solely at subjectivity.

Psychological and Phenomenological Reflection

Yet such exclusive interest in subjectivity remains ambiguous. As Husserl has it, the world thesis, "the world is always already there," underlies every act of natural consciousness, even though this thesis is not articulated in an explicit judgment.

But if the world-thesis underlies all acts, then clearly, by merely orienting reflection exclusively at subjectivity one does not put this thesis out of play: the thematization of subjectivity is still under the spell of the world-thesis.

This becomes clear when one asks: what exactly is given to reflection when it directs itself to subjectivity? The answer seems to be obvious: it is I, this human being, living in this natural world. If we further ask, what exactly are we to understand by the term “human being,” the answer leads back to some kind of a unity of body and soul. Yet clearly, the meaning of these terms, “a human being,” “body,” and “soul,” derives from mundane consciousness. This means that the alleged turn from the objective to the subjective is still inundated with non-reflective dimensions of sense: the reflective turn is not as radical as it meant to be.

Husserl calls such a turn to subjectivity *psychological*; the reflection peculiar to it he calls “inner sense.” *This type of reflection generates the first notion of the mundane ego in Husserl’s phenomenology.* This notion refers to the ego after reflection is set in place, yet before the reduction of the world-thesis is carried through. Husserl’s refusal to restrict subjectivity to such a mundane ego issues from the realization that the psychological self-apperception rests on unquestioned presuppositions. What remains unquestioned is the natural world, conceived as the ultimate horizon of all possible sense. Only within such a horizon can subjectivity be seen as a mundane ego, conceived as a unity of body and soul.

Phenomenological reflection is meant to be a radicalization of both mundane and psychological reflection. Along with mundane reflection, phenomenological reflection enacts a turn of regard from the objects of experience to experience. However, realizing that such a reflective move, when it remains guided by the objectively oriented interests, does not give rise to an understanding of subjectivity, phenomenological reflection follows in the footsteps of psychological reflection and directs its *exclusive* interest to the ego of experience. Finally, in contrast to psychological reflection, phenomenological reflection puts in brackets the horizon of positing consciousness. And if we now ask, what is it that is truly given to such a phenomenological reflection, then Husserl’s answer points in the direction of *transcendental* consciousness.

Why would Husserl refer to this “residual” consciousness as transcendental? This consciousness manifests itself as a correlate of all possible objects of experience. Such a correlational framework opens a new sphere of research: it now becomes necessary to account for how any unity of sense can be correlated with consciousness. To address this issue, one must turn to the transcendental structure of consciousness. Husserl’s analyses of hyletic, noetic and noematic structures of consciousness are the answer he provides to this very question.

Phenomenological Reflection as Eidetic Description

Husserl calls transcendental consciousness *pure consciousness*, which suggests that it has “lifted” itself out of the mundane horizon and thereby has been purified of the naturalistic presuppositions. Yet even when phenomenological reflection is

conceived as pure reflection, its sense still remains indeterminate. To make it more precise, Husserl qualifies it as *eidetic reflection* (e.g., *Ideen I*, §78 and §86).

When phenomenological reflection thematizes consciousness as a correlate of objective unities of sense, it does not concern itself with the idiosyncrasies of any particular consciousness. What interests phenomenology is consciousness *as such*, conceived as a correlate of sense-unities. So as to arrive at an understanding of such a consciousness, it proves necessary to transform one's own conscious acts into mere instances of any consciousness. Moreover, I must subject my particular conscious experience to an eidetic variation (*Ideen I*, §70), which enables phenomenology to accomplish one of its fundamental goals, viz., identify the invariant structures of transcendental consciousness.

Yet the characterization of phenomenology as an eidetic science gives rise to new ambiguities. We become aware of them when we question phenomenology's relation to other eidetic sciences. One can read §§71–75 of *Ideen I* as Husserl's search for an example of the kind of eidetic science phenomenology is. However, this search leads to the realization that there is no such example to be found: phenomenology is a *unique* eidetic science primarily because it proceeds on the basis of *eidetic descriptions*.

First, the comparison of phenomenology with arithmetic brings to light the distinction between *formal* and *material* eidetic sciences. Since phenomenology is concerned with living experiences, it cannot be a formal science, and thus must be material. Secondly, within the domain of material eidetic sciences, the comparison with geometry gives rise to a further distinction between *concrete* and *abstract* eidetic sciences. Unlike geometry, which proceeds non-intuitively and deductively, phenomenology limits itself to what is given in intuition and in this regard it is a concrete material eidetic science.

These distinctions between phenomenology and mathematical sciences bring phenomenology into proximity with the natural sciences. Thus thirdly, one needs to clarify the difference between them. Unlike natural sciences, phenomenology cannot proceed on the basis of induction, if only because it has already placed both deductive and inductive logic within the *epochē*. Then how does phenomenology as a material and concrete eidetic science unfold? It unfolds on the basis of eidetic descriptions; and when it does rely on mediate inferences, this reliance has only the methodological meaning of leading to eidetic descriptions: “in the end the conjectures must be redeemed by the real vision of the essential connections” (Hua III, 193).

Allow me to briefly turn to a passage in *Ideen I*, which I believe is quite often misinterpreted. In §78, Husserl remarks that reflection brings out the meaning of experiences in their reduced form and that the reflecting consciousness can in a universal way grasp the right of such experiences. Husserl writes: “we grasp the *absolute right* of immanent *perceiving reflection* ... likewise, the *absolute right of immanent retention* We likewise grasp the *relative right* of immanent *recollection*” (Hua III, 150). Sometimes this distinction between the absolute and relative right of different experiences is understood as indicative of certain limits of “static” phenomenology in general, and of *Ideen I* in particular. Supposedly, the methodological framework that Husserl presents in this work restricts phenomenology

only to what is given in the present; experiences of the past and of the future lie beyond its reach.³⁶

I do not want to challenge the claim that genetic phenomenology provides an alternative access to the phenomenological field. Yet in the passage above, Husserl's point is far removed from what this critique finds objectionable. Here the question is not that of how phenomenology must temporally circumscribe phenomenological "data." Rather, what we find in this passage are illustrations of the invariant structures of consciousness. All that Husserl is saying here is this: we grasp, with *universal insight*, that immanent perception and immanent retention are indubitable, while immanent recollection is dubitable. This distinction does not refer to a peculiarity of *my own* consciousness; having its basis in descriptive eidetics, it is an invariant structure of consciousness as such.

The Mundane and the Transcendental Ego

Husserl's thought experiment regarding the annihilation of the world (*Ideen I*, §49) constitutes one of the most contestable issues in Husserl's phenomenology as a whole.³⁷ This hypothesis has been attacked for the lack of phenomenological evidence to support it as well as for distorting the sense of our facticity.

Does the notion of absolute consciousness, conceived as a residuum left unaffected by the annihilation of the world, not resemble a house with no windows and no walls? In a way, it does; *yet precisely therefore such a consciousness hardly plays a significant role in Husserl's phenomenology*. For Husserl, the experiment of the annihilation of the world is not meant to open the door to the analysis of absolute consciousness as it manifests itself *after* the world-annihilation. On the contrary, this section is meant to convince us that the being of the world is *relative* to consciousness—an insight that leads phenomenology to raise the question of the world's constitution.

If one places §49 back in the context within which it appears, it becomes clear that the question regarding the relation between the transcendental and the mundane ego does not lie beyond the reach of phenomenological reflection. The experiment of the world's annihilation, far from signaling, as Heinemann has it, a type of self-alienation, in fact gives rise to a new and enriched understanding of the mundane ego. In the sections that follow this thought experiment, Husserl shows that the constitution of the world is possible only if it goes hand-in-hand with a self-constitution, understood

³⁶ See Iso Kern, *op. cit.*, and Sebastian Luft, "Husserl's Theory of the Phenomenological Reduction: Between Life-World and Cartesianism," *Research in Phenomenology* 34/1 (2004): 210.

³⁷ As Husserl has it, while the being of transcendent objects and the world itself is relative to consciousness, consciousness itself *nulla 're' indiget ad existendum*. On Husserl's view, it suffices to subtract the objectivating function from lived experiences to render conceivable the non-being of the world; yet such a subtraction would nonetheless leave consciousness itself intact.

as a kind of self-objectification, due to which one always already finds oneself in the midst of the world. For instance, in §53 Husserl turns to an explicit analysis of how the mundane ego relates to the transcendental ego—a theme with which the notorious §49 ends. What we find in this section is the very same paradox of subjectivity that we also encounter in many of Husserl’s other writings.³⁸ As Husserl puts it, “on the one hand consciousness should be the Absolute, within which everything transcendent is constituted, and in the last resort the whole psychological world; and on the other hand consciousness should be a subordinate real event within this world. How does this tally?” (Hua III, 103)

That this equivocation is not accidental becomes clear when one asks, how is it possible for consciousness to be given to itself as mundane and transcendental? What underlies this paradox is a particular type of self-apperception: according to Husserl’s sketchy remarks, through an empirical relation to the body, consciousness puts on the character of transcendence and “enters” the real world. Through an intimate link to the body, “a distinctive *transcendence* shapes itself: a *state* of consciousness appears which is the state of a self-identical *real* ego-subject” (*Ideen I*, §53).

Admittedly, Husserl’s curtailed account of this paradox in *Ideen I* is only a blueprint. Yet from this blueprint one could derive a significantly different notion of the mundane ego from the one that I have sketched while addressing psychological reflection. According to the first conception, our understanding of the mundane ego derives from the psychological self-apperception, conceived as a type of self-objectification. The second conception springs from reflection upon the pure apprehending consciousness, in which the aforementioned self-objectification takes shape. According to the second conception, the mundane ego is no longer conceived as a naïve ego; it is rather an ego that *recognizes itself as a constituted ego*.

Of what significance is such a conception for our understanding of the mundane ego? With this question in mind, consider the following passage from Nietzsche’s *Also sprach Zarathustra*. In the section “On Redemption,” Zarathustra finds himself in a crowd of cripples and beggars. He is confronted by a hunchback who wonders whether Zarathustra could cure the blind, make the lame walk again, and take the hump away from the hunchback. Zarathustra initially responds by saying that “if one takes the hump away from the hunchback, one also takes away his spirit,” thereby suggesting that the finite life is the only life that is given. Yet realizing that such an assertion directly leads to nihilistic consequences, Zarathustra supplements

³⁸ This paradox can also be found in *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*—a lecture course Husserl delivered in 1910–1911 (See Hua XIII, 174). For the English translation, see Edmund Husserl, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. I. Farin and J. Hart (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006). In many regards, *Ideen I* is based on these lectures. For another illustration of this paradox, see also *Erste Philosophie II* (Hua VIII, 71). Husserl’s best-known exposition of this paradox can be found in *The Crisis* (Hua VI), §53.

his initial response with the following observation: “to redeem that which has passed away and to re-create all ‘It was’ into a ‘Thus I willed it!’—that alone should I call redemption.”³⁹

The differences between Nietzsche’s doctrine of the eternal return and Husserl’s notion of self-constitution notwithstanding, I would suggest that the second notion of the mundane ego in Husserl’s phenomenology arises out of a similar philosophical gesture. By insisting that the mundane ego is itself an accomplishment of subjectivity, Husserl suggests that *to recreate all facticity as a transcendental accomplishment—that alone is a meaningful philosophical response to self-estrangement*. Setting any naturalistic interpretation of self-constitution aside, one can speak of facticity as one’s own accomplishment in that facticity is a sense-structure (*Gebilde*) that is brought about (*gebildet*) by subjectivity.

To render my reference to Zarathustra’s concept of redemption more determinate, I would like to offer a rather free interpretation of Husserl’s hypothesis of the annihilation of the world. I see within this hypothesis rich and intriguing resources to rethink the possibility of a number of experiences, with which all of us are familiar.

In Praise of the “Annihilation of the World”

What is this world that is allegedly capable of being annihilated? One could begin by saying that the world is the *spatio-temporal extension* within which each and every object finds its place. Yet such a notion of the world would remain too restrictive. The world also embraces objects that have taken on *value characteristics*. Moreover, the world is also a *practical horizon*, which incorporates not only *inanimate objects* but also *animate beings*. Consciousness of the world as horizon is consciousness of the unanimity of experience, which embraces not only actual, but also potential objects of experiences. Yet arguably, consciousness is capable of intending phenomena that escape the boundaries of the unanimous world-horizon. I would like to turn to three different types of common experiences, which are possible only on the basis of the annihilation of the world.

Consider *dreamless sleep* and *fainting*. For them to be possible, consciousness must be capable of keeping the world-horizon in suspense; consciousness must be capable of neutralizing the world-horizon. In dreamless sleep and fainting, consciousness asserts its own independence from the world, it discharges itself from the pre-given horizon of sense; in short, it brings the world to ruin. Yet this annihilation of the world comes at a hefty price: the suspension of the world-horizon here amounts to the collapse of any sense in general. Dreamless sleep and fainting

³⁹Also sprach Zarathustra, in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Gesammelte Werke* (Gondrom Verlag, 2005), 696. For the English translation, see Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. by Graham Parkes (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

are the most radical forms of the world's annihilation, which one could liken to *transcendental escapism*: by bringing the world to annihilation, consciousness asserts its own independence. Yet this independency is empty; in the most direct way, it is "the night in which all cows are black."

Is the price to be paid for the annihilation of the world always so high? Let us briefly turn to *dreams* and *daydreaming*. As seen from the transcendental standpoint, these experiences attest to the possibility of keeping the world-horizon in suspense, yet without sacrificing the appearance of meaningful sense-unities. In dreams and daydreaming, appearances are still given to consciousness and they still form unified wholes. Yet what is given in these experiences is completely cut off from the world-horizon, which means that I can face the objects of my dreams only insofar as I annihilate the world-horizon.

This type of the annihilation of the world also calls for significant sacrifices: phenomena given in dreams and daydreaming are stamped by the mark of irreality. These phenomena lack the solidity of real objects, they lack the density and massive presence characteristic of those objects that appear within the world-horizon. One could therefore characterize dreams and daydreaming as types of the annihilation of the world that culminate in *transcendental irrationalism*.

Must the annihilation of the world always terminate either in transcendental escapism or transcendental irrationalism? With this question in mind, consider the third group of common experiences that fall under the heading of phantasy and imagination. These experiences, whether they take the form of a physical image or a pure phantasy, whether they are personal, social or cultural, also belong to the group of common experiences, which are possible on the basis of the annihilation of the world. I can see the image as an image only insofar as I no longer see a perceptual object. In his early works on imagination, Jean-Paul Sartre has addressed these structural gaps between the imaginative and the perceptual attitudes most forcefully.⁴⁰ Between the perceptual and the imaginative attitudes I can only choose, between their respective "worlds" I can only alternate, which further means that the "world" of imagination arises only when the actual world is brought to ruin. This radical gap that separates the actual world from imagination is just as strong in the case of pure phantasy.

In the present context, I want to emphasize those aspects of imagination that were suppressed in Sartre's early analysis. Imagination has the means to trespass the shortcomings of transcendental escapism and transcendental irrationalism. Although the objects of imagination are unreal, *imagination has the means to draw from the resources of irreality the building blocks of a novel world-constitution*. My capacity to envision a different world derives from my capacity to put the actual world in suspense. The paradox of imagination is that by bringing the actual world to annihilation, imagination generates new dimensions of the world-horizon. There is a tacit

⁴⁰ See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Imagination* (Paris: Alcan, 1936); *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*, trans. F. William (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1962) and especially *L'Imaginaire: psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination; The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*, trans. J. Webber (London: Routledge, 2006).

utopian element inscribed in each imaginative act, even though clearly, not each of these acts brings out its full constitutive force.

The common experiences I have just addressed call for a more elaborate examination. In the present context, my task is not to subject phenomena under scrutiny to an exhaustive analysis but only to suggest that Husserl's notorious hypothesis of the annihilation of the world provides novel resources to rethink their possibility. Such an inquiry leads to the realization that *our facticity is such that we can always escape it*. What is more, we escape facticity not only by falling into transcendental escapism or taking refuge in irreality. The distance from the world that is inscribed in the paradox of subjectivity is exactly what enables subjectivity to reconstitute the world; and arguably, the power of imagination enables us to do just that.

But if the world itself can undergo continuous modifications and transformations of sense, then arguably the natural world in which we always already find ourselves is itself a symbolic structure of constitutive accomplishments. This is precisely the way in which Zarathustra's concept of redemption can be of help in understanding the relation between the mundane and transcendental egos. We live in the world of man-made objects, which for the most part we subject to functional use. Usually we assume that this human world has an unchangeable natural character; and when we resist this assumption, we do so by turning to the sciences and their promise, as Descartes would have it, to take the clothes off the cultural worlds and to consider the universe in its naked objectivity. To recreate all "it was" into "thus I willed it" would allow one to resist both alternatives; it would amount to the possibility of clarifying the meaning of the world's pre-givenness by tracing the constitutive accomplishments that render this world possible, meaningful, and significant.

The Paradox of Reflection

In place of a conclusion, I would like to recapitulate the path I have followed by turning from Husserl's texts to descriptive eidetics. Such an "eidetic recapitulation" will generate a new insight: the paradox of subjectivity is not a "final figure" built on the otherwise non-paradoxical structures of reflection; rather, this paradox itself is rooted in a much more basic enigma, which could be called the *paradox of reflection*.

Straightforward experience runs its course by being absorbed in the objects of experience. Being immersed in objects that trigger its interest, experience unfolds in a state of remarkable self-opaqueness. Even to say that straightforward experience is self-forgetful would be to grant experience what it in fact lacks, for we can only forget what we once knew. However, *straightforward experience knows nothing of the ego*. Due to its absorption in the objects of experience, it remains without any kind of translucency.

Yet straightforward experience is capable of numerous modifications, and reflection is one of them. Reflection interrupts the objectively oriented flow of experience;

it liberates experience from the absorption in the objects of experience; *it provides access to the subject of experience.*⁴¹

Yet curiously enough—and this is what allows one to speak of the paradox of reflection—as soon as reflection renders the ego thematic, it tears the ego apart into two poles: the reflecting ego and the ego-reflected-upon. This means that while reflection is the only access I have to render the ego thematic, as soon as I find myself, I immediately lose myself. Thus the birth of reflection, the thematization of the ego, distances the ego from itself. Let this be the first thesis: *reflection, our only available access to the ego, discovers the ego at the price of splitting it into two—the reflecting ego and the ego-reflected-upon.*

Of what philosophical significance is this reflective self-distanciation? At the end of the first section, I indicated one possible misunderstanding: this self-distanciation is not to be conceived as a reason that grounds a skeptical worry regarding the validity of reflective insight. Yet even though there are good reasons to dismiss such a concern, nonetheless, the split between the patent and the latent egos remains irremovable. The reflecting ego recognizes itself in the ego-reflected-upon, yet it does not sacrifice the distance that separates them. Let this be the second thesis: *the ego given in reflection is a split ego, yet despite this split, it recognizes itself as one and the same ego.* Thus the ego is given to itself as an identity in difference.

To make more sense of such a paradoxical self-givenness, let us ask: how exactly is the ego given in reflection? The ego-reflected-upon is given to the reflecting ego as a certain *unity of sense*. Any unity of sense is a meaning that consciousness intends. Moreover, any kind of meaning lends itself to the question of its own possibilities. One can therefore ask: what syntheses does the givenness of the patent ego presuppose? If the self in reflection emerges as a psychological unity of sense, then it presupposes temporal syntheses, spatial syntheses, as well as syntheses of association. And if one further asks, “who is it that performs these syntheses?” then sooner or later one is led to the realization that only one answer is possible: I myself am the one who performs the syntheses in question.⁴² Thus I myself am the sense that I intend; I myself am a synthetic unity of sense that I constitute. Such, then, is the third thesis: *I myself am my own accomplishment.*

Such a blueprint of an eidetic description of the structures of reflection allows one to say that the split between what Husserl calls the transcendental and the mundane ego is rooted in a more basic split between the reflecting ego and the ego-reflected-upon. This means that the paradox of subjectivity, which Husserl has addressed in a number of his works, is rooted in the paradox of reflection.

Yet is this eidetic description of any significance when it comes to our understanding of facticity? With this issue in mind, let us ask: what is the ego? Does this term refer to

⁴¹ In the present context, I have left pre-reflective self-consciousness aside, since at any rate, it does not offer a *thematic* conception of the ego. For an account of the relation between self-consciousness and reflection, see Hermann Asemissen, “Egologische Reflexion,” *Kant-Studien* 50 (1958/59).

⁴² No other answer is possible, since if one offered an anonymous origin of these syntheses, a new question would emerge: how is the ego conscious of this anonymous origin, and so *ad infinitum*.

the mundane ego or the transcendental ego? The three theses I have just singled out suggest that this last question is an instance of a false dichotomy. Assuming that the answer to this question must be rooted in reflection, one would have to say that the ego is both a transcendental and a mundane ego. *The transcendental and the mundane egos are two moments of the egoic structure of experience.* But if so, then a patient and detailed description of those syntheses which enable the givenness of the mundane ego would in a significant way enrich our conception of facticity. The self-distanciation that underlies the givenness of the mundane ego can be covered up, but it cannot be eliminated.

Chapter 25

***Ideen I* Confronting Its Critics**

Rosemary R.P. Lerner

Introduction

Husserl's 1913 *Ideen I* had a cold reception and was marked since its publication by a general misunderstanding that distanced him from generations of phenomenologists. Some critical reviews of *Ideen I* are examined here (Heidegger, Ricoeur, Boehm) and briefly confronted against the background of manuscripts that remained unpublished during several decades. On this basis, the attempt is made to show that *Ideen I*'s basic intuitions—in spite of its undeniably misleading terminology—still prove to be relevant for the practice of phenomenology.

Short Historical Survey

The following contribution deals with what we believe affected the continuing impact of *Ideen I*¹ on the “practice of phenomenology” during most of the twentieth century, both in Continental Europe and world-wide, following the steps of Heidegger's early 1925 critical assessment of that text.² The disavowal of Husserl's

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, First Book *General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1983). We will also quote from the German official edition, *Husserliana: Edmund Husserl-Gesammelte Werke* in which case *Ideen I* is Hua III.

² Martin Heidegger, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 20 (Frankfurt a. M.: Vittorio Klostermann, 1979), henceforth GA 20; *History of the Concept of Time, Prolegomena*, trans. T. Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), henceforth HCT.

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“transcendental phenomenology” by the most relevant philosophical debates for most of the last century under the aegis of Heidegger’s influence was first made public in 1929 with Georg Misch’s *Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie*,³ spread world-wide before and after the Second World War, and later radicalized by the renowned postmodern deconstructionist movement. Jacques Taminiaux remarks that “for phenomenological reasons,” important thinkers of the Continental Tradition “judged it necessary to explain themselves with Heidegger.”⁴ This is the case already with Husserl’s former student and later assistant Ludwig Landgrebe.⁵ Already before the Second World War, the genetic and generative elements that were recognized in Husserl’s later works were even interpreted as fragmentary and not really integrated with the methodological program of *Ideen I*’s transcendental phenomenology.⁶ In that respect, Taminiaux observed that for Merleau-Ponty “to interpret Husserl’s evolution means to underscore the contrast between the clear program of transcendental phenomenology and the obscure and infinite patience of the manuscripts and to recognize in them an at least tacit rupture with the logicism of the philosophy of essences and the growing awareness that the phenomena resist any return to the classical effort at intellectual adequation.”⁷

It is symptomatic that Paul Ricoeur’s 1950 introduction to his French translation of *Ideen I*⁸ and Rudolf Boehm’s 1959 paper on the “ambiguities” of Husserl’s concepts of immanence and transcendence⁹ both return to the same passages of *Ideen I*’s Second Part interpreted by Heidegger, consolidating a rapidly widespread critical view of Husserl’s notion of immanence as fostering a “solipsistic idealism.” This post-war reading was radicalized during the 1960s and 1970s especially with French structuralism and postmodern deconstructionism, spurred on by Jacques

³ Georg Misch, *Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie-Eine Auseinandersetzung der Dilthey’schen Richtung mit Heidegger und Husserl* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1929).

⁴ Jacques Taminiaux, *Sillages phénoménologiques, Auditeurs et lecteurs de Heidegger* (Bruxelles: Éditions Ousia, 2002), 7.

⁵ Ludwig Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phänomenologie. Das Problem einer ursprünglichen Erfahrung* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1963). See especially Chapter I, §3, where he comments on Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* critiques of Husserl’s phenomenological method (the reduction and constitutive analyses), in favor of radicalizing the “natural concept of the world” manifest to an “originary experience.”

⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, Chapter VIII, entitled “Husserl and his withdrawal from Cartesianism.”

⁷ Jacques Taminiaux, *Dialectic and Difference: Finitude in Modern Thought*, ed. and trans. R. Crease and J. T. Decker (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press Inc., 1985), 117–18.

⁸ Paul Ricoeur, “Introduction à *Ideen I* de E. Husserl par le traducteur,” *Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie et une philosophie phénoménologique pure*, Tome premier, *Introduction générale à la phénoménologie pure*, trans. P. Ricoeur (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1950), henceforth, *Introd. Idées I*. See also P. Ricoeur, *Husserl, An Analysis of his Phenomenology*, trans. E.G. Ballard and L. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 13–34.

⁹ Rudolf Boehm, “Les ambiguïtés des concepts husserliens d’ ‘immanence’ et de ‘transcendance,’” *Revue philosophique de la France et de l’étranger* CXLIX/4 (1959): 481–526.

Derrida's 1967 influential text *La voix et le phénomène*,¹⁰ and Gérard Granel's 1968 *Le sens du temps et de la perception chez Edmund Husserl*.¹¹ Both refer to Ricoeur's translation and reading of *Ideen I*, while Granel acknowledges only Ricoeur and Boehm as "authoritative" interpreters.¹²

Furthermore, both pay allegiance to their Heideggerian influence. Although Granel has not been so widely known outside French-speaking countries as Derrida, especially in America, he is a representative of a line of interpretation that marked the reception of Husserl's philosophy as a whole. Derrida's views concerning Husserl's "metaphysics of presence," stemming from an alleged erroneous notion of "ideality" that attempts to ascertain its "presence" in a pure un-mediated and solipsistic intuition, whereas the difference and "repetition" of a mediated symbolic *Vorstellung* is putatively its real source, is well known.¹³ Derrida's interpretation goes from the *Logische Untersuchungen*, all the way through the *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, *Ideen I*, and "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem." Husserl's "living present" in the sense of the primacy of "punctuality" and the "actual now" in the context of the latter's time-analyses, and the bearing of this primacy on the phenomenological notion of "evidence" and "truth," puts Husserl at odds—so Derrida—with the only decisive concept that could have broken the tradition of the "Greek metaphysics of presence" and its inheritance by the "Modern metaphysics of presence as self-consciousness"—"the concept of time."¹⁴ Granel advances a similar critical view on Husserl's deficient concept of time and its "*Wesensschau*," and dedicates extensive parts of his text to a critical assessment of *Ideen I*, concretely of "The Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology" (Part II) examined previously by the aforementioned texts of Heidegger, Ricoeur, and Boehm.¹⁵

Our concern here is not directed to the French and European reception of the three books of *Ideen* after the Second World War, but rather to a certain reading of the 1913 text—originated in Heidegger's interpretation—that has not only contributed to darken and even marginalize its methodological proposal but also supported a widespread critical interpretation of transcendental phenomenology.¹⁶ Even philosophers who putatively share a community of ideas and themes with their

¹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *La voix et le phénomène, Introduction au problème du signe dans la phénoménologie de Husserl* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); "Speech and Phenomena" and *Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, trans. David B. Allison (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

¹¹ Gérard Granel, *Le sens du temps et de la perception chez E. Husserl* (Paris: Gallimard, 1968).

¹² See his controversial "Note on the question of Bibliography," *op. cit.*, 271.

¹³ Jacques Derrida, *op. cit.*, 55 ff.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁵ Gérard Granel, *op. cit.*, 72–180, 240–47, *passim*.

¹⁶ I not only refer, following R. Wolin, to *Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (California: University Presses of California, 2003), but also to hermeneutic and existential phenomenologists, all the way to Husserl's deconstructivist, analytic, and social critical interpreters.

master's phenomenology have rejected the alleged Cartesian "philosophy of subjectivity."¹⁷ They surprisingly converge in characterizing Husserl's philosophy as an un-historical idealism or essentialism; an epigonic form of solipsism and un-worldly egology established by the *epochē* and reduction that consecrates the *ego*'s self-transparency *versus* the unconsciousness's or "false consciousness's" opacity, leading to the failure of its intersubjectivity theory; a logocentric, scientific, intellectualistic, and foundationalist philosophy that is unable to overcome the prejudices of modern philosophy; a metaphysics of presence that fails in its analyses of temporality; a centripetal philosophy of an autarchic, self-sufficient, and self-contained immanence that excludes and reduces all dependency regarding a centrifugal, decentralized, and surplus transcendence; in sum, a philosophy of *identity* (of sameness, ipseity, or autonomy) that by means of an objectifying and constitutive intentionality attempts to subjugate and overcome all *difference* (otherness, alterity, or heteronomy), among other things.¹⁸

Husserl himself introduces endless critical commentaries, amendments, and additions to his three exemplars of *Ideen I* from 1913 to approximately 1929.¹⁹ His own later characterization of *Ideen I*'s reduction as a "Cartesian way"²⁰ paved the way for the critical readings proposed by his own disciples, starting with Heidegger's, followed by Ricoeur's, and Boehm's among others. Their assessment concerning the ambiguities of *Ideen I*'s notions of *immanence* and *transcendence* will be reevaluated with the methodological insights of "first philosophy," at this "static stage" of development. We believe that Husserl's genetic and generative analyses *do not contradict* his initial transcendental project, focused on "active *constitution*" or "genesis." Although *Ideen I* is silent with regard to the "passive *genesis*" later developed by "genetic phenomenology," and in that sense—as Bruzina contends in this collection—it "does not take us there yet," it offers powerful tools for the practice

¹⁷ They demand "not to use the Cartesian-Husserlian philosophy of subjectivity that cannot provide as foundation but suspicious evidences, since they are finally solipsistic, isolated." Jean-François Lyotard, "Argumentation et présentation: La crise des fondements," *Encyclopédie Philosophique Universelle*, vol. I, *L'Univers Philosophique*, ed. A. Jacob (Paris: PUF, 1989), 740. Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl. The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 1, adds that the contrast between the interpretation of analytic philosophers seriously interested in Husserl and the overt disavowal of the latter's work by deconstructionist thinkers is surprising. David Carr remarks that most of these Continental critics seem to ignore the difference between the *metaphysical* and *transcendental* sources of the distinction between an empirical and a transcendental subjectivity, expressed in the "paradox of human subjectivity" of being simultaneously "an object in the world and a subject *for* the world." See *The Paradox of Subjectivity. The Self in the Transcendental Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), especially 1–4.

¹⁸ In this sense, Richard J. Bernstein comments that Husserl is one of those philosophers that suffer from "Cartesian anxiety." See his *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 16–20.

¹⁹ See Karl Schuhmann's "Introduction," *Hua III/1*, xli–lvi.

²⁰ *Hua VII*, lecture 46, 126 *passim*.

of phenomenology, further enhanced when seen against the background of books II and III and the general scope of Husserl's initial project.²¹

Our imaginary confrontation of *Ideen I* with some of its conspicuous “critics” aims to highlight the possibility of its continuing relevance for the practice of phenomenology.

Eidetics and the Being of Consciousness

Heidegger's 1925 Marburg lecture is a remarkable piece for two fundamental reasons. First,²² because it brilliantly expounds and interprets the main phenomenological theses²³ that “fascinated” him since his first encounter with Husserl's 1900–1901 *Logische Untersuchungen*.²⁴ Second, because its “Main Part”²⁵ may be considered a “purely phenomenological draft” of his 1927 *Sein und Zeit*.²⁶ The “Preliminary Part” contains a critical third chapter whereby an ample section develops an “immanent critique” of *Ideen I*'s transcendental phenomenology. We will only refer to some aspects of this section, where Heidegger examines the second chapter of *Ideen I*'s second part (“The Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology”).²⁷ He argues that the original field of Husserlian phenomenological analyses is an “independent” region of real being,²⁸ emulating Cartesian dualism. Intentionality is “first given” in

²¹ The massive publication of Husserl's unpublished manuscripts has changed the scope of the traditional interpretation of transcendental phenomenology. *Ideen I*, as other published works, is viewed as a mere “condensation” of a thought-process that continues to broaden and reformulate itself, from a *static-descriptive* dimension to a *genetic-explanatory* one, from 1915–17 onwards. See Bernet, R., I. Kern and E. Marbach, *Edmund Husserl. Darstellung seines Denkens* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1989), 1.

²² This he undertakes in its first and preparatory extensive part (“The sense and task of phenomenological research”). See *GA 20*, 13–182; *HCT*, 11–131.

²³ These are: intentionality (*GA 20*, 34–63; *HCT*, 27–47), categorial intuition (*Ibid.*, 63–99; *Ibid.*, 47–72), and “the original sense of the *a priori*” (*Ibid.*, 99–103; *Ibid.*, 72–75). He also comments the main “principle of phenomenology” (in relation to the maxim “to the matters themselves” and to the understanding of phenomenology as an “analytic description of intentionality in its *a priori*”) (*Ibid.*, 103–110; *Ibid.*, 75–80), and clarifies “the name ‘phenomenology’” through the analysis of its both components: φαίνομενον and λόγος (*Ibid.*, 110–22; *Ibid.*, 81–89). He deals again with this latter analysis and improves it in *Sein und Zeit*, so I will not refer to it here.

²⁴ Martin Heidegger, “Mein Weg in die Phänomenologie,” *Zur Sache des Denkens* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1969), 82.

²⁵ “Analysis of the Phenomenon of Time and Derivation of the Concept of Time,” *GA 20*, 183–442; *HCT*, 133–320.

²⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1972), henceforth, *SZ*.

²⁷ “Consciousness and Natural Actuality,” *Ideen I*, §§33–46, 63–104 (*Hua XIX/1*, 66–99).

²⁸ *GA 20*, 129–39; *HCT*, 94–101.

the “*natural attitude*” whence emerges the “new scientific field” of “*pure lived experiences*” and of “*pure consciousness with its pure correlates*.²⁹ Heidegger believes that the phenomenological reduction is already introduced in §39, and although for Husserl both regions are articulated in the double sense of the psychophysical unity and of the intentional relation, there remains an “abyss of meaning” between immanence and transcendence. Thus Heidegger asks: “how can it still be said that consciousness has ... an essence particular to it?”³⁰ The sense of the ἐποχή in the former chapter, had “the sole function of making the entity present in regard to its being.” Now, there are two reductions: *transcendental reduction* (securing the sphere of acts and their objects),³¹ and *eidetic* reduction. Hence, the eidetic (“though by no means exhaustive”) analyses³² of this chapter, starting from §39, *develop within the pure transcendental-phenomenological sphere*. Consciousness in these analyses is “no longer concrete and individual.”³³ Furthermore, §§44–46 oppose the “merely phenomenal being of something transcendent” to the “absolute being of something immanent” based on two radically different types of intuition: “immanent” perception that constitutes a sphere of “absolute positing,” and “transcendent” perception that preserves the possibility of the non-being of the perceived. Since §46 asserts that those considerations finally “do justice” “to a core of Descartes’ *Meditations* (directed to entirely different ends),”³⁴ he concludes that Husserl *ontologically* characterizes the region of consciousness as a *res*.³⁵

But, what is the sense of *absolute being*, and of “this absolute region of consciousness”? This *question* is the most *fundamental* and “must precede any phenomenological deliberation.”³⁶ Accordingly, Heidegger examines four Husserlian *determinations* of consciousness’s *being*.

Since *immanence* is a “relation of real inclusion” between “what is reflected and reflection,” Heidegger concludes that the *first determination* of the *being* of consciousness as “immanent” has failed. According to the *second determination*, immanent consciousness is pure and simple *absolute* being, due to the absolute *givenness* of lived experiences in the former sense of a “real inclusion” between reflection and something reflected upon. However, according to §49’s (third chapter) *third determination*,³⁷ it is *absolute* in a different sense, for *nulla re indiget ad existendum*. This follows Descartes’ definition of “substance” for “in principle the possibility

²⁹ *Ideen I*, *Hua* III/1, §33.

³⁰ See *ibid.*, §39, “Consciousness and Natural Actuality. The ‘Naïve’ Human Being’s Conception.” *GA* 20, 134–35; *HCT*, 98.

³¹ *Loc. cit.*; *Ibid.*, 100.

³² *Ideen I*, 65; *Hua* III/1, 68.

³³ *GA* 20, 137; *loc. cit.*

³⁴ *Ideas I*, 104; *Hua* III/1, 99.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 124–27; *ibid.*, 116–18.

³⁶ *GA* 20, 140–42; *HCT*, 102.

³⁷ Entitled “The Region of Pure Consciousness.”

exists that consciousness itself is ‘not affected in its own existence’ by an ‘annihilation of the world of things.’”³⁸ Consciousness “is the presupposition of being,” only “on the basis of which reality can manifest itself at all.”³⁹ “Constituting being is absolute” for “in constituting itself, it constitutes every possible reality” as a wholly autarchic independent being. Hence, “consciousness is the ... *a priori* in Descartes and Kant’s sense,” the priority of subjectivity regarding objectivity. Yet this third determination “does not determine *the entity itself* in its being.”⁴⁰ Finally, according to the *fourth determination*, if consciousness is *absolute being* because its givenness does not require any reality, it is “pure being,” “pure essence,” the “ideal being” of lived experiences. Since it is an *ideal, not a real* being, Husserl disregards consciousness’s “concrete individuation and its tie to a living being.”⁴¹

Consequently, none of the four determinations of consciousness are drawn from intentional *being* itself. Furthermore, the notions “apprehended being,” “given being,” “constituting being,” and “ideating being” are “perspectives ... alien to consciousness.” Husserl’s only interest is consciousness as the field of an “*absolute science*.” For Heidegger “the genuine determination of the being of lived experience” is found in the “natural attitude,” where one may anticipate the being of that concrete entity, man, whose determinations are consciousness and reason.⁴²

For Husserl, “The sense of the reduction,” both “transcendental and eidetic,” is rather “to make no use of *the reality* of the intentional,”⁴³ and to disregard “any particular individuation of lived experiences. It disregards the fact that they are mine or those of any other individual human being and regards them only in their *what*.” It does not regard “their being *an act* as such.”⁴⁴ Intentional being is detached from the real consciousness of humans existing factually. The question of existence is thus lost with both types of reduction. But “if there were an entity *whose what is precisely to be and nothing but to be*, then this ideative regard of such an entity would be the most fundamental of misunderstandings,” and “this misunderstanding is prevalent in phenomenology.”⁴⁵ Paradoxically, phenomenology is moved by the interest in providing a scientific basis to *reality*.

Hence, in Husserl’s phenomenology “*the question of the being of the intentional is left undiscussed*,”⁴⁶ and the task of phenomenological reduction is to demarcate these two spheres, without interrogating their being,⁴⁷ so that: “*On the one hand, the*

³⁸ Ibid., 143–44, 104–105.

³⁹ Ibid., 144, 105.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 145; *loc. cit.*

⁴¹ Ibid., 146, 106.

⁴² Ibid., 148, 107.

⁴³ Ibid., 150–51, 109.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 151; *loc. cit.*

⁴⁵ Ibid., 152, 110.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 157, 113.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 158; *ibid.*, 114.

question of the being of this specific entity, of the acts, is neglected; on the other, we have the neglect of the question of the sense of being itself.”⁴⁸ The last 30 pages of Heidegger’s 1925 Lecture course’s Preliminary Part all deal with this question, concluding that the neglect of the question of being as such and of intentional being is due to the “falleness of *Dasein* itself.”⁴⁹

The Tension Between Intuition and Constitution

Paul Ricoeur avows that the “Introduction” to his 1950 French version of *Ideen I*⁵⁰ is very modest, for by then the enormous mass of posthumous manuscripts prevents him from giving a “radical and global account of Husserl’s work.”⁵¹

He searches for the keys to his interpretation in later texts belonging to the genetic period, such as *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, and *Cartesianische Meditationen*,⁵² or in Eugen Fink’s 1933 text, “The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism.”⁵³

Based on Fink, Ricoeur correctly remarks that after introducing the ἐποχή in Part Two’s first chapter, Husserl sets it aside and *returns*, in the second chapter, *to the natural attitude*. Hence, against Heidegger, he believes that *all* the analyses here belong to a “phenomenological or intentional psychology”⁵⁴ and that *the intentionality described is not yet transcendental*.⁵⁵ Since the reduction is interpreted in a Cartesian,

⁴⁸ *Loc. cit.*; *ibid.*, 115.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, 160–82, 115–31.

⁵⁰ Ricoeur’s commentary oscillates between an insightful and keen interpretation and certain surprising doubts concerning the real purpose of Husserl’s work. Regarding *Ideen I*’s first part, “Essence and Eidetic Cognition,” he even states that it “initiates with a very difficult chapter of logic that the reader may provisionally omit.” (*Introd. Idées I*, xiv), seemingly ignoring Husserl’s purpose to demarcate a much wider field of possible objectivities than those of the natural world—denied by Naturalism and even neo-Kantianism—also purported to furnish a “guideline” to a retrospective phenomenological inquiry. Nonetheless, Ricoeur adds that this part’s aim “is to show that it is possible to build a non-empirical but eidetic … ‘region’ of consciousness (as opposed to the ‘region’ nature);” and that “phenomenology … will rise to a point of the subject that will be constitutive regarding those same sciences that have given it its first statute.” (*Ibid.*, xiv–xv).

⁵¹ *Introd. Idées I*, xi.

⁵² See Edmund Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, trans. D. Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978), henceforth *FTL* (*Hua XVII*). See also *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. D. Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), henceforth *MC* (*Hua I*).

⁵³ Eugen Fink, “The Phenomenological Philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Contemporary Criticism,” *The Phenomenology of Husserl, Selected Critical Readings*, ed. and trans. R.O. Elveton (Edmonds, WA: Noesis Press Ltd., 2000), 70–139.

⁵⁴ Coinciding with Husserl’s marginal notations to §34 in *Ideas I*’s A and D exemplars (*Hua III/2*, 487).

⁵⁵ *Introd. Idées I*, xv.

“dangerous” way, seeming to “extract something,” and only allowing one “to remain a psychological consciousness, *not a transcendental subject*,”⁵⁶ it is a “preparatory” and “dispensable” chapter.⁵⁷ However, for Ricoeur not even the third chapter—where reality is said to “announce” itself to consciousness as a “unity of a sense” through a “diversity of convergent ‘adumbrations’”—clearly posits the transcendental dimension either, although “it is oriented toward the idea of reduction and constitution.”⁵⁸

The correct comprehension of the transcendental reduction, whereby the “general thesis of the natural attitude” is globally affected, is only given in the context of the first chapter of this part. The “world thesis” is there revealed as product of a *constitution*. But the rest of Part Two leaves the “reduction dangerously associated to the idea of the destruction of the world and the idea of the relativity of the world and the absolute of consciousness.”⁵⁹

The tension between constitution and intuition returns in the rest of Ricoeur’s commentary. Phenomenology is a philosophy of *seeing*, “that will emerge from phenomenological reduction in all of its glory.”⁶⁰ Intuition is *originally giving*, so that the “world constitution is not a formal legislation but the givenness of seeing itself by the transcendental subject.”⁶¹ In the natural attitude we *see* without being aware that we *bestow sense*. Only the phenomenological attitude reveals the transcendental I as the key of constitution. Intentionality, seen by the transcendental I, is a *constitution*.⁶²

Thus, the “difficulties of an integral interpretation of *Ideen I*” amount to the following: “Every transcendental phenomenology is suspended in this double possibility: to ascertain, on one hand, the primacy of intuition over every construction; on the other, to allow the point of view of transcendental constitution to triumph over the naïveté of natural man. In his *Epilogue* to the *Ideen ...*, Husserl underscores the conjunction of both demands.”⁶³ “Transcendental idealism”—a term that does not appear in *Ideen I* but does in unedited manuscripts of that period—expresses the difficulty of this double demand. This idealism is such that “it does not rebuke intuition but finds it.”⁶⁴ It does not deal with the Kantian problem, but with the question of the “world’s origin”—as Fink pointed out—an incomprehensible question before

⁵⁶ Introd. *Idées I*, xv.

⁵⁷ Husserl remarks at the end of §46: “In a preliminary way we draw our consequences within the bounds of a restricted application” (*Ideas I*, 104; *Hua III/1*, 99).

⁵⁸ Ibid., xvi–xvii.

⁵⁹ Ibid., xix.

⁶⁰ Ibid., xvii–xviii.

⁶¹ Ibid., xix–xx.

⁶² Influenced by Fink, Ricoeur believes that even Part III (“Methods and Problems of Pure Phenomenology”)—that deals with the constitutional problems—is situated “between an intentional psychology and a transcendental ... phenomenology” (*ibid.*, xxv).

⁶³ *Loc. cit.*

⁶⁴ Ibid., xxvi–xxvii.

executing the reduction. Thus the Cartesian and Kantian reasons brandished *before* the reduction's execution are equivocal. Furthermore, "... the transcendental subject is absolutely not absent of this world; on the contrary, it is its foundation Every new dimension of the I is a new dimension of the world. In this sense, intentionality is still the common theme of intentional psychology and phenomenological philosophy. But each time that the attempt is made to limit the reduction ... to the psychological consciousness, the sense of the I is reduced to a simple ... mental for-itself that leaves outside the in-itself. ... On the contrary, the phenomenological method consists in doing the exegesis of the *ego* taking the world-phenomenon as guideline."⁶⁵

Be all this as it may, Ricoeur concludes that: "Maybe ... the ultimate sense of phenomenology may not be approached except by definitely equivocal attempts."⁶⁶

The Ambiguities of Immanence and Transcendence

Boehm, in his long 1959 work,⁶⁷ draws attention to the different meaning levels that the terms *immanence* and *transcendence* have for Husserl, intertwined in an ambiguous way precisely in the second chapter of "The Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology."

He deems that there is no ambiguity in the use of said notions in the Fifth of the 1901 *Logische Untersuchungen*. Phenomenological immanence is there reduced to the "descriptive," "real" (*reellen*) contents of lived experiences, whereas the *real* intentional object in the sense of the worldly thing is absolutely transcendent.⁶⁸ Thus the "phenomenological I" "is reduced to effective data."

The ambiguity first begins with the 1907 five lectures on *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*.⁶⁹ The abstract of "The Train of Thoughts in the Lectures" divides these in three levels. To the "first step in the phenomenological consideration" (in the second lecture) corresponds the *first sense* of immanence and transcendence—the same as in 1901—namely, a distinction between two orders of *realities*. To the "second level" (in lectures three and four) corresponds a *second sense*, "authentically phenomenological," rendered possible by the *phenomenological reduction*. Understood as a "merely intuitive reflection" the reduction renders an "absolute givenness that no longer offers anything transcendent," but rather "the immanent essence" of psychic phenomena.⁷⁰ The new *pure phenomenological immanence* is

⁶⁵ Ibid., xxix–xxx.

⁶⁶ Ibid., xxxviii.

⁶⁷ See footnote 9.

⁶⁸ Boehm falsely assumes that "real immanence" is reduced in that work to "*Stoff*, or sensations." See *Hua XIX/1*, §45, A 470/B, 506.

⁶⁹ See Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology* (Edmund Husserl. *Collected Works*, vol. VIII), trans. L. Hardy (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), henceforth *CW VIII* (*Hua II*).

⁷⁰ Ibid., 33–34; *Hua II*, 44–45.

the *reduced* psychic phenomenon, its *essence*. *Transcendent* is everything pertaining to objective time; lived-experiences as empirical facts belonging to the natural science *psychology* are also *transcendent*. Finally, a “third level” of phenomenological meditation (fifth lecture) studies the problems of “phenomenological constitution.”

In the controversial second chapter of *Ideen I*'s Part Two, several senses of immanence and transcendence appear, none of which properly coincides with the second sense of *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*. Yet the *first sense*⁷¹ in both texts coincides with the *Logische Untersuchungen*, whereby *immanent* is all that pertains to the flow of lived-experiences: the sensuous $\eta\psi\lambda\epsilon$ plus the *cogitationes*' intentional $\mu\sigma\rho\pi\eta\bar{e}$, in sum, the total “really inherent composition” of the flow of consciousness (*noesis* in a wide sense).⁷² Rather, *transcendent* are the intentional objects that do not belong to the same flow of experience (*i.e.*, those of other subjects, ideal or physical objects, and cultural entities).⁷³ “Acts” directed to immanence and transcendence, are thus distinguished. Now, the *second sense* restricts the first sense,⁷⁴ for only the object of an “immanent perception,” being “really included” in the act, is immanent⁷⁵; whereas “the remembered remembering that occurred yesterday does not belong to the present remembering as a really inherent component of its concrete unity.”⁷⁶ Hence, “transcendent” here are not only real physical objects, other *egos*, and ideal essences, but also objects of every other act formerly considered “immanently oriented.” These ambiguities “seem to degenerate … in a total confusion,”⁷⁷ when a *third sense* of these terms appears in §42,⁷⁸ based on an “essentially necessary difference between the modes of intuition,” yet associated to the first, real distinction. The “*really immanent*” (every lived-experience)⁷⁹ is “absolutely” given whereas every other mode of presence is “*really transcendent*.”⁸⁰ Thus, this *third sense* of the terms in *Ideen I* does not wholly coincide with the second sense of *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, for the former develops entirely within “eidetic considerations,” yet *Ideen I*'s §§44 and 46 refer to immanence as a sphere of “absolute presence.”⁸¹ Hence, this chapter “concludes with an ambiguity that brushes misunderstanding and confusion.”⁸²

⁷¹ Ibid., §§36, and 38–41.

⁷² *Ideas I*, §§41 and 97.

⁷³ See *ibid.*, §§38 and 41.

⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, §§38, 41, 42 and 46.

⁷⁵ This is the sense of “immanence” that Heidegger considers corresponds to *Ideas I*'s *first determination* of consciousness.

⁷⁶ *Ideas I*, §38, 80; *Hua III/1*, 79.

⁷⁷ Boehm, R., *op. cit.*, 494–95.

⁷⁸ *Ideas I*, 89; *Hua III/1*, 86.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, §42, 91; *ibid.*, 88.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, §§44 & 46; Boehm, R., *op. cit.*, 502–503.

⁸¹ Yet this latter expression stems from a 1922 Appendix. *Ideen I* only uses expressions such as “given as absolute” (*ibid.*, 502–503).

⁸² *Ibid.*, 504.

Boehm agrees with Ricoeur that Part II's second chapter is developed as a phenomenological psychology within the natural attitude,⁸³ but not that it is merely "preparatory"⁸⁴—even if its complement is first given in the next chapter.⁸⁵ Thus "the considerations fundamental to phenomenology," despite their "Cartesian flair" and ambiguities, *are given in Chapter II's* arguments related to the "essentially necessary difference" between the immanent and transcendent "modes of presence." Hence, these analyses are not "dispensable"; rather phenomenological psychology is meant to anticipate and "found" "the essential possibility of carrying out the phenomenological reduction"⁸⁶ and the *transcendental* distinction between these terms. Reduction is first executed in Chapter III's §50, whereby "we have not lost anything but rather have gained the whole of absolute being which, rightly understood, contains within itself, 'constitutes' within itself, all worldly transcendencies."⁸⁷ The authentic "absolute" is *transcendental* being, whereas Chapter II's "absolute being," unable to "contain" or "constitute" worldly transcendence, merely opposes it. Disagreeing with Fink and Ricoeur, Boehm believes that Part III's and Part IV's descriptions of constitution and the noetic-noematic structures are also transcendental. They raise the descriptions of Part Two's second chapter to the level of "*pure immanence*" (adding the *noema* to the really inherent composition of lived-experiences). In an epistemological sense, if the world did not exist, not only would the temporal nexus of consciousness's experiences still exist, but also a "something" we are conscious of.⁸⁸

Ideen I Facing Its Critics

Recapitulating, according to Heidegger, *Ideen I*'s second chapter, on "The Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology" starts with the "natural attitude" and ascends to eidetic-transcendental considerations from §39 onwards, where it "repeats" the "Cartesian gesture" and abandons facticity. For Ricoeur, the whole section remains in the "natural attitude" though dragging a Cartesian handicap, and is thus "dispensable." For Boehm, this whole second chapter remains within the "natural attitude" but it is not preparatory nor "dispensable" in spite of its ambiguities, for it prepares the transcendental analyses that appear from §52 onwards.

Regarding Heidegger, we offer four comments. The *first* is that, in his reading of Part II's second and third chapters he overlooks *at least* two *radically* different senses of *immanence* and *transcendence*, corresponding to the natural and to the

⁸³ As Husserl himself asserts (see §§33–39, and a footnote to §41).

⁸⁴ Boehm refers to Husserl's commentary at the end of §46. See footnote 57 above.

⁸⁵ See §§52–55, *ibid.*, 105 ff.; *ibid.*, 99 ff.

⁸⁶ Boehm, R., *op. cit.*, 517.

⁸⁷ *Ideas I*, 113; *Hua III/1*, 106–107. Boehm, R., *op. cit.*, 518–19.

⁸⁸ See *ibid.*, 521–26.

transcendental-phenomenological attitudes. Also, being intent in stressing the text's apparent "abysses of sense," he misses in it significant nuances. His ontological horizon of interrogation,⁸⁹ may explain his rather hasty reading. For example, Heidegger interprets §44 as already introducing a *transcendental* distinction between immanence and transcendence—while in fact it is a merely "worldly" one. He disregards Husserl's remark that: "It is the case also of a mental process that it is never perceived completely, that it cannot be adequately seized upon in its full unity. A mental process is, with respect to its essence, in flux which we, directing the reflective regard to it, can swim along after it starting from the Now-point, while the stretches already covered are lost to our perception. Only in the form of retention do we have a consciousness of the phase which has just flowed away, or else in the form of a retrospective recollection." This applies, he adds, to "my whole stream of mental processes." Yet "*this incompleteness or 'imperfection,' ... is radically different from the ... 'imperfection' pertaining to the essence of the perception of something 'transcendent.'*"⁹⁰ Husserl's only contention here is that, despite its *sui generis* "imperfection," immanent perception in this "psychologically-worldly" sense is "absolute" in opposition to transcendent perception for it does not appear in "adumbrations."

Second, regarding §49 (entitled misleadingly "Absolute Consciousness as the Residuum after the Annihilation of the World") Heidegger highlights only this passage: "*Immanent being is therefore indubitably absolute being in the sense that by essential necessity nulla 're' indiget ad existendum.*"⁹¹ He skips the opposed methodological hypothesis that immediately follows, according to which "consciousness, with its *constituent mental processes* and with the *course it runs*, is actually of such a nature that the conscious subject ..., *could* effect all such concatenations" of actual and possible experience in "mutual understanding with other Egos ...; let us assume, furthermore, that ... nothing whatever is lacking which is requisite for the appearance of a unitary world and for the rational theoretical cognition of such a world."⁹² Under these conditions, the question is whether it is "still conceivable and not rather a countercsense that the corresponding transcendent world *does not exist?*"⁹³ In the transcendental context of this section, not merely referred to two opposed regions of natural being, the expressions "annihilation of the world" and "consciousness as residuum" are indeed unfortunate, yet they are merely strategic expressions among other possible ones.⁹⁴ Husserl rebukes them in

⁸⁹ Plato's question in *The Sophist* ("What do you then mean when you use (the word) 'being'?"). See GA 20, 179; HCT, 129.

⁹⁰ *Ideas I*, p. 97; *Hua III/1*, 93–94.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 110; *ibid.*, 104.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 110–11; *ibid.*, 104–105.

⁹³ *Loc. cit.*

⁹⁴ Correctly understood, in §49 Husserl does not oppose two ontic domains, but introduces an *ontological* distinction based upon phenomenological *experience*. Transcendental *consciousness* is *absolute* or pure because it is an "absolutely" insurmountable *experience* in relation to every enunciation referring to the sense or validity of being.

his *Erste Philosophie* (1923/24) as the “objection of madness,”⁹⁵ since the true sense of the ἐποχή and the reduction means the *abstention of every thesis*, “position taking,” or “belief”—such as “negation,” “doubt,” or “annihilation.”

Third, Heidegger objects his “fourth determination” to *pure consciousness*, as detached from reality or from the “factually existing human being’s real consciousness.” In §53 Husserl himself approaches this problem pointing out how consciousness as *constitutive* is absolute, and, as *constituted* is transcendent—as the rest of the psycho-physical world.⁹⁶ The conciliation between both points of view is the fruit of a peculiar apprehending or apperception.⁹⁷ But even as intertwined with a physical entity in the natural attitude, psychological consciousness does *not appear* through sensuous adumbrations.⁹⁸ The *psychologist in the natural attitude*, he says, already makes this distinction. In the phenomenological transcendental attitude we turn to the pure life of transcendental consciousness, which “... ‘lies,’ in a certain sense, *within* what is psychologically apperceived, in the mental process as a human state.”⁹⁹

Finally, relating this commentary to the previous one, transcendental phenomenology is an eidetic discipline, and pure consciousness is related to the mental human processes as an *eidos* to its *factum*. Heidegger is perfectly aware, from his examination of the *a priori* and of *categorial intuition* that every individual, empirical, “this-here” has its *specific character*, essence or “what” shared by other similar individuals.¹⁰⁰ Yet he insists that Husserl introduces a divorce between consciousness’s *eidos* and the psychophysical *factum*, ignoring his contentions on the “Inseparability between Matter of Fact and Essence.”¹⁰¹ Husserl in fact had already started dealing with certain problems irreducible to eidetic reduction,¹⁰² such as given factual reality or the “ultimate problems of being,”¹⁰³ under the heading of “metaphysics in another sense” or “second philosophy.”¹⁰⁴ Phenomenology as “*first philosophy*,” presupposing

⁹⁵ *Hua VIII*, 55. There he adds: “World existence is absolutely indubitable, and this indubitability is implied in the perception of the world itself where we continuously live.”

⁹⁶ *Ideas I*, 124; *Hua III/1*, 116–18.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125; *ibid.*, 117.

⁹⁸ *Loc. cit.*

⁹⁹ *Loc. cit.*; *ibid.*, 118. Our emphasis.

¹⁰⁰ Which is what Husserl contends in *Ideen I*’s Part I (“Essence and Eidetic Cognition”). See *ibid.*, 5 ff.; *ibid.*, 10 ff..

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 7 ff., 15 ff.; *ibid.*, 12–13 ff., 22–23 ff. On the other hand, pure phenomenology is a *sui generis* “descriptive” eidetic science, opposed to other eidetic, “exact sciences,” such as geometry. Indeed, its essences are *morphological*, neither ideal nor exact, (*ibid.*, 169; *ibid.*, 158) their clarity depending on the clarity attained in the corresponding sensuous intuitions (*ibid.*, 156–57; *ibid.*, 145). Heidegger sees a dualistic Cartesian gap between pure consciousness as *eidos* and the reality wherein it “resides,” which is misleading. (See *GA 20*, 145–47; *HCT*, 106–107).

¹⁰² Iso Kern, *Idee und Methode der Philosophie: Leitgedanken für eine Theorie der Vernunft* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1975), 338.

¹⁰³ Also referred to as “supreme and ultimate questions.” *CM*, 156; *Hua I*, 182.

¹⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, 155–56; *Ibid.*, 181–82.

these ultimate “transcendental facts,” orients its meditation based on the constitutive experience of every sense and validity of being.¹⁰⁵

Regarding Ricoeur, it is correct that the “ambiguities” of *Ideen I*’s Part II and its “Cartesian air” puzzle the reader. However, we do not believe—following Boehm—that those analyses are merely “preliminary” and hence dispensable. Husserl himself, in his marginal annotations of the 1923–1924 C Copy, reevaluates Part II’s second chapter as preparing the execution of transcendental reduction starting from psychology. Furthermore, its alleged “Cartesianism” is much more conspicuous in the next chapter’s §49,¹⁰⁶ since it gives the false impression of a relapse into solipsism—as Husserl himself remarked in his 1923–1924 lectures: that pure consciousness is a mundane “residuum” after the world’s destruction.¹⁰⁷ It is only a “fictitious hypothesis” whereby its sense within the phenomenological attitude is to understand how our world belief is forged. Yet this strategy prevents seeing how the world horizon as a *whole* is the correlate of transcendental intersubjectivity. Hence the “indispensability” of Husserl’s previous preliminary sections of intentional psychology becomes understandable.

The “transcendental idealism” outlined between *Ideen I*’s §§44–49 (albeit the expression does not appear there)—causing Ricoeur’s uneasiness in addition to the concept of “constitution”—alienated Husserl from many of his contemporaries and followers. Recently published manuscripts¹⁰⁸ offer new arguments in favor of transcendental idealism in less problematic versions. For example, his strategy in *Transzendentaler Idealismus* (*Hua XXXVI*) is neither “Cartesian” nor rests on an opposition between the apodictic immanent sphere and a presumptive transcendence, but rather “Leibnizian,” based on the difference between an *empty* presumption and a *justified* one of the *possibility of an object*.¹⁰⁹

Regarding Boehm, our *first* comment is that he overlooks a sense of immanence and transcendence introduced by Husserl’s 1910/11 lecture course entitled “Fundamental Problems of Phenomenology.”¹¹⁰ Here the 1907 second concept of “immanence” disappears.¹¹¹ As if anticipating future critiques, Husserl is perfectly

¹⁰⁵ If in *Ideen I* the transcendental *ego* as *eidos* is a “pure possibility” that precedes reality, in later texts Husserl contends that: “the *eidos* of the transcendental *ego* is unthinkable without the transcendental *ego* as factual” (*Hua XV*, 385).

¹⁰⁶ “Absolute Consciousness as the Residuum after the Annihilation of the World” (*Ideas I*, 109; *Hua III/1*, 103).

¹⁰⁷ *Hua VIII*, 432–33, 479–82, 499–500; *Crisis*, 162–63.

¹⁰⁸ See *Hua XXXVI* (manuscripts from 1908 to 1921 on “transcendental idealism”), and *Hua XX/1* (the 1913 draft for the re-edition of the “Sixth Logical Investigation”).

¹⁰⁹ The “modes of being” of the objects *given* in these different “intuitive modes of consciousness” depend on the *intentional correlation*; thus he now avoids the strategic error of arguing in favor of the “independence” of consciousness regarding objects. Husserl’s *phenomenological idealism* consists, in sum, in the assertion that *possible being* is the being that has the *possibility* of being *intuitively given*.

¹¹⁰ *Hua XIII*, 111–94.

¹¹¹ Namely, the phenomenologically “given” as having an alleged absolute character.

aware of the incompatibility between the “absolute givenness” previously defined, and the unending temporal extension of the field of phenomenological experience. Even in phenomenological perception an “enduring being” is given: its “nows” become “recent pasts” while ever new “nows” emerge. “Absolute givenness” in the former sense, and “*this whole enterprise of disconnecting, loses its sense,*”¹¹² for what is *given* is not only the immediate present but duration itself, the “now” being given alongside *retention* and its immediate “has-been.” A certain “transcendence” is admitted *within the phenomenological sphere* as data.¹¹³ Consequently, if absolute certainties are not demanded of the natural researcher and are not necessary to establish strict sciences,¹¹⁴ then the former objections do not hinder the realization “of a science of lived-experiences in phenomenological reduction.”¹¹⁵ Boehm overlooked *this* sense of immanence that includes—beyond what is *actually given*—what is *potentially given* (consciousness’s absent, non-actual, implied components). The transcendent object, in its turn, is here an “*index* of determinate and pure plexuses of consciousness.” It is an implicit 1910–1911 critique of the Cartesian way and *Ideen I* does not ignore these results.¹¹⁶

Second, in *Ideen I* Husserl distinguishes between the eidetic and the transcendental-phenomenological,¹¹⁷ levels that were not distinguished in 1907. Not only do empirical sciences belong to the natural attitude and are thus disconnected, but also the eidetic (material and formal) sciences are. The psychological-intentional analyses of the second chapter of “The Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology” are eidetic but belong to the natural attitude. If Boehm had taken this into consideration, Husserl’s descriptions would not have seemed so “confusing.” In §62 Husserl asks himself whether a “science of facts of the transcendently reduced lived-experiences” could be considered, since “specifically phenomenological disconnections … independently of the eidetic disconnection of individual existence”¹¹⁸ have been given. Although he there rejects this possibility, the effective phenomenological work is given on the basis of the “de facto transcendental ego and particular data given in transcendental experience of the ego” that for the phenomenologist “have the significance merely of examples of pure possibilities.”¹¹⁹

Furthermore, neither in *Ideen I* nor in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*—as many ascertain based on a merely superficial consideration—is the “Cartesian way” exclusively employed. Iso Kern already showed that *Ideen I* employs not only the “psychological way” but also the “ontological way” in its first part.¹²⁰

¹¹² Ibid., 160.

¹¹³ Ibid., 162.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 168.

¹¹⁵ *Loc. cit.*

¹¹⁶ See *Ideen I*, §35.

¹¹⁷ See *Ideen I*, xx; *Hua III/1*, 6.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 143; *ibid.*, 134.

¹¹⁹ That is why “we naturally confine ourselves thenceforth within the limits of a purely eidetic phenomenology” (*CM*, 73; *Hua I*, 107). This commentary also addresses Heidegger’s critique to the “ideal” disincarnate subject.

¹²⁰ Iso Kern, *Husserl und Kant. Eine Untersuchung über Husserls Verhältnis zu Kant und zum Neukantianismus*, *Phaenomenologica* 16 (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), 221–35, 238.

Conclusion

If many of Husserl's breakthrough insights have remained unscathed after being submitted to frequent and relentless "deconstructions" by his alleged followers, it may be due to some lasting methodological tools offered by *Ideen I*'s phenomenological practice. *First* to be mentioned is the radical difference and yet undeniable intertwinement between facts and essences, both their difference and intertwinement clearly accessible through varied and *sui generis* modes of givenness or intuitions. The characterization of *facts* as realities or *actualities* and *essences* as *possibilities*, and the distinction between empirical or ideal possibilities, as well as between *exact* ideal possibilities and *morphological* ideal possibilities is enabled by the repeated practice of "intuition" as the "principle of all principles" and ultimate source of evidence. *Second* to be mentioned is the radical difference between the natural and the transcendental consciousnesses and attitudes, intuitively graspable through a correct approach to the different meanings of immanence and transcendence. Thus consciousness as an *object-in-the-world* opposes two different *regions* of natural reality: an immanent or psychological one, and a transcendent or physical one; whereas consciousness as *subject-for-the-world* faces us with a realm of *transcendental* "immanence" that properly knows no "outside" for every "objective in-itself" can only be understood as *correlative* to it, in the sense of *constituted* by it in an open-ended, temporal, ever modifying horizontal process. This open-ended temporal nature of consciousness takes us finally to the open-ended and perfectible character of phenomenological descriptions¹²¹ that may be taken up time and again, generation after generation, by communities of phenomenologists guided by the idea of an absolutely founded knowledge (in the sense of being ultimately responsible for it),¹²² and by the practical goal of a completely ethical life capable of revolutionizing the ways of life of a new spiritual humanity.

In the manner of true science this path is endless. Accordingly, phenomenology demands that the phenomenologist foreswear the ideal of a philosophic system and yet as a humble worker in community with others, live for a *philosophia perennis*.¹²³

¹²¹ "Our procedure is that of an explorer journeying through an unknown part of the world, and carefully describing what is presented along his unbeaten paths, which will not always be the shortest. Such an explorer can rightfully be filled with the sure confidence that he gives utterance to what, at the time and under the circumstances, *must* be said—something which, because it is the faithful expression of something seen, will always retain its value—even though new explorations will require new descriptions with manifold improvements. With a like conviction, in the sequel we propose to be faithful describers of phenomenological structures and, moreover, to preserve the habit of inner freedom even with respect to our own description" (*Ideas I*, 235; *Hua III/1*, 224).

¹²² "Epilogue," Edmund Husserl, *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Second Book, *Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution* (*Edmund Husserl Collected Works*, vol. III), trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1952), 406; *Hua III*, 139.

¹²³ Edmund Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–1931)*, trans. and ed. T. Sheehan and R. Palmer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997); *Collected Works*, vol. VI, 170.

Chapter 26

Jacques Derrida and the Future

Vernon W. Cisney

Derrida in the Voice of Husserl

And after the earthquake a fire; but Yahweh was not in the fire:
And after the fire a still small voice.
—1 Kings 19:12

Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul,
and written marks symbols of spoken sounds.
—Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*

Language speaks as the peal of stillness.
—Martin Heidegger, “Language”

The impact of *Ideen I*¹—which Derrida called “the most elaborated trace”² of the first phase of phenomenology—upon his early formulation of the project of deconstruction is well-known. It is widely accepted that many of Derrida’s original concepts are direct descendants of Husserl’s work.³ The thrust of Derrida’s criticisms

¹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch. Husserliana Band III* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950); *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1983).

² Jacques Derrida, “‘Genèse et structure’ et la phénoménologie,” *L’écriture et la différence* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1967); “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology,” *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 161.

³ For instance, trace, *différance*, supplementarity, iterability, auto-affection, etc. See Leonard Lawlor, *Derrida and Husserl: The Basic Problem of Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002). The entirety of this text is dedicated to this complex question. I am deeply indebted, personally, professionally, and philosophically, to Leonard Lawlor.

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and appropriations of Husserl will come down to Husserl's theory of language, specifically its relations to the origin and possibility of meaning, and the structure of conscious life itself. *What, then, is at stake?* This question animates the entirety of Derrida's reflections, and his response appears to be *nothing less than phenomenology's announced "principle of all principles"* and therefore, the very foundation of the project: "The stakes of this disentanglement are therefore the phenomenological motif itself."⁴ Despite Husserl's ceaseless efforts to establish an absolute science beyond the trappings of naïve metaphysics, Husserl is nevertheless committed to what Derrida calls, following Heidegger's lead, the "metaphysics of presence."

The "metaphysics of presence" is one of three basic elements that comprise the project of deconstruction. Put briefly, this history, following the Platonic-Aristotelian moment, consists of a *decision*. It begins by establishing binary categories (form/particular, substance/accident, noumenon/phenomenon, mind/body, etc.) in order to think the nature of being. Within each binary, one term is most properly characterized as *present*, the other as *absent*. This presence (or immediacy) is understood in the dual senses of spatial and temporal: what is *closest* as the object of knowledge; and the present *now* as the founding basis of certainty. Then the term of presence is prioritized, marginalizing the term of absence.⁵ Following the *decision*, the next element is the *necessity* of this decision. Derrida never denies the centrality of the founding moment of presence, nor does he suggest that philosophy can ever do away with this privileging.⁶ The final element of deconstruction is the realization of the constitutive role of absence and the irreducible complicity thereof with the founding privilege of presence. Deconstruction is not something done *to* a text. Rather, it is always already at work in the text, constituting, but also undermining, the presumed certainty of meaning therein—the constitutive play of presence and absence, intrinsic to the nature of language itself. In Husserl, the privileging of presence assumes its most virulent form in the *principle of all principles*: "that

⁴ Jacques Derrida, "La Forme et le vouloir-dire: Note sur la phenomenology du langage," *Marges de la philosophie* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972); "Form and Meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language," *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 161. Nearly the whole of Derrida's engagement with Husserl reflects such an urgency: "If the punctuality of the instant is a myth ... then the principle of Husserl's entire argumentation is threatened." Jacques Derrida, *La voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); *Voice and Phenomenon*, trans. Leonard Lawlor (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2011), 52.

⁵ For instance, the priority of the *form* for Plato lies in the fact that it remains *present*, unchanging, through each *present* moment of time, the fluctuation of the material world notwithstanding. This is why only the *form* can serve as the basis of knowledge for Plato.

⁶ Derrida consistently claims that philosophy requires the foundationalist value of presence. This is, in part, the reason for which metaphysics can never be "escaped" in any strong sense of the word: "supposing, which I do not believe, that someday it will be possible *simply* to escape metaphysics..." Jacques Derrida, "Sémiologie et grammautologie. Jacques Derrida," *Positions*, (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972); "Semiology and Grammatology: Interview with Julia Kristeva," *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 17; also, "'the founding value of presence' is a pleonastic expression," Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*, 6.

*every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition,*⁷ along with Husserl's notion of the "living present" as the "stream-form," "which necessarily comprises all mental processes pertaining to a pure Ego."⁸ Despite these traditional commitments to presence, Derrida will locate within Husserl's text a play of absence, an exteriority within interiority.

We begin with Husserl's notion of the *epochē*,⁹ which suspends our faith in the natural attitude, leaving only a "relation between perceiving and perceived," which "becomes given essentially in 'pure immanence,' ..."¹⁰ This relation, Husserl characterizes, respectively, as the relation between the poles of "noesis" and "noema." The noema is the "*something given*"¹¹ of consciousness, as Derrida says, "the objectivity of the object, the meaning and the 'as such' of the thing for consciousness."¹² But the noema does not *belong* to consciousness. The noema is not the *actual* thing (put out of play in the *epochē*), "nor is it a properly subjective moment ... since it is indubitably given as an object for consciousness."¹³ Consciousness does not *create* its noematic correlate—rather the noema is "the world or something of the world *for* consciousness."¹⁴ The noema belongs neither to the world, nor to consciousness. It is *anarchic*, and "this *anarchy* of the noema is the root and very possibility of objectivity and of meaning."¹⁵ Because it belongs neither to the actual world, nor to the *ego*, the noema can serve as an objective foundation for meaning, an ideality, repeatable in the absence of the cognizing subject. This ideality is inseparable from Husserl's employment of the Kantian sense of the *Idee*: "There is no *ideality* unless an Idea in the Kantian sense is at work..."¹⁶

In the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Kant defines an *Idee* as "a concept, made up of notions, which goes beyond the possibility of experience."¹⁷ The *Idee* in the Kantian sense appears very few times in *Ideen I*, yet for Derrida it fulfills two basic roles: (1) A *telos*, directing the phenomenologist in his "infinite theoretical anticipation which simultaneously is given as an infinite practical task."¹⁸ Contrasted with geometric concepts, the *eidē* of phenomenology are necessarily and essentially

⁷ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §24.

⁸ *Ideen I*, §82.

⁹ Of the *epochē*, Derrida claims that it "has been and still is a major indispensable gesture. In everything I try to say and write the *epochē* is implied," Jacques Derrida, "Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida," *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, ed. Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (London: Routledge, 1998), 81.

¹⁰ *Ideen I*, §§88.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Derrida, "Genesis and Structure," 163.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*, 8.

¹⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Riga: Hartknoch, 1787); *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer, Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A 320/B 377.

¹⁸ Derrida, "Genesis and Structure," 167.

“anexact,”¹⁹ *morphological essences*, as Husserl calls them, which “‘approach’ more or less closely without ever reaching” those “ideal essences, as *ideal ‘limits’* which it is essentially impossible to find in any sensuous intuition...”²⁰ This process of examining and articulating these morphological essences is a necessarily infinite task, but an indispensable one without which the stated purpose of phenomenology never gets off the ground; (2) A unification of the disparate series of mental processes. Just after discussing the phenomenological account of time, Husserl goes on to describe the way in which these disparate mental processes must be constituted as a unitary stream: “In the continuous progression from seizing-upon to seizing-upon... we now seize upon the *stream of mental processes as a unity*...in the manner of an *idea in the Kantian sense*.²¹ We recognize the limitless capability of the pure Ego to attend its regard to ever *new* mental processes, but this is possible only on the basis of a unity of the disparate time-flows of the various processes. Furthermore, without this unity, nothing like *knowledge* or *perception* would be possible. Thus, the unity of the stream is not given in such a way that its content can ever be adequately determined; it is not, as it were, *given* to experience as such. Nevertheless, Husserl claims, it is “an absolutely indubitable givensness.”²² Phenomenology strives to be a purely descriptive science, and yet, in these two ways, the *Idee* in the Kantian sense occupies a constitutive role, marking “the irruption of the infinite into consciousness.”²³ The non-presence of the Kantian *Idee* makes possible the realm of phenomenological inquiry.

What more can we say regarding noematic sense? Husserl ascribes to the noetic-noematic structure a layering, specifically a distinction between a “‘pre-expressive’ layer of lived-experience,”²⁴ and “the expressive act-strata,”²⁵ a silent realm of sense (*Sinn*) and its founded expressive acts. Opening §124 of *Ideen I*, Husserl writes, “Interwoven with all the acts considered before are the expressive act-strata...” *All the acts considered before*: that is to say, Husserl’s entire account of phenomenological consciousness, “everything occurs as if transcendental experience were silent, inhabited by no language...”²⁶ Indeed, Husserl’s further comments confirm Derrida’s reading, as Husserl goes on to distinguish “sense” in the case of all intentive mental processes, “from “signification,” which characterizes “the linguistic sphere, that of ‘expressing.’”²⁷ Husserl thus once again demonstrates his traditional commitment to presence. The linguistic sign is traditionally understood as a *stand in*

¹⁹Ibid., 162. Derrida prefers this term to “inexact” because their incapacity for exactness is through no fault of their own, but rather, derives from an essential fact about their nature.

²⁰*Ideen I*, §74.

²¹*Ideen I*, §83.

²²Ibid.

²³Derrida, “Genesis and Structure,” 162.

²⁴Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*, 13.

²⁵*Ideen I*, §124.

²⁶Derrida, “Form and Meaning,” 158.

²⁷*Ideen I*, §124.

for something which is not *here*, not *now*. The sign is thus an *absence*, as opposed to the *living presence* of the thing it represents. At each moment, the tradition has declared the essence of sense to reside in silence: (Yahweh speaks in a silent *voice*, the *spoken sign* is a symbol of affections in the soul, language speaks as the call of silence). In *deciding* then upon a silent, pre-expressive stratum of sense, Husserl thus secures the founding moment of presence, the very same that the tradition in its entirety has secured.

Once this decision is made, Derrida claims, “discourse will be able only to *repeat* or to *reproduce* a content of sense which does not await discourse in order to be what it is … will only transport to the exterior a sense that is constituted before it and without it … *exteriorizing* a content of interior thought.”²⁸ Thus discourse *creates nothing new*, and adds nothing to sense—it is essentially unproductive. Yet, *because* it does nothing to alter sense, merely *ex*-pressing the unadulterated noematic sense, the issuing into expression “raises it to the realm of ‘Logos,’ of the *conceptual*,”²⁹ and hence guarantees the possibility of the perfect *repeatability* of sense, its universality and objectivity.

Furthermore, “anything,” Husserl writes, “meant in the noematic sense (and, more particularly, as the noematic core) pertaining to any act, no matter which, is *expressible by means of ‘significations.’*”³⁰ As Derrida puts it, “everything must be capable of being said…of attaining the conceptual generality which properly constitutes the logic of the logos.”³¹ At the very same moment as discourse *ex*-presses sense, sense *im*-presses, presses itself upon, discourse: “In the noetic respect, a particular act-stratum should be designated under the heading of ‘expressing’ to which, in their own peculiar way, *all other acts are to conform* and with which they are to fuse in a distinctive manner so that every noematic act-sense, and consequently the relationship to objectivity lying in it, is ‘conceptually’ *stamped* on the noematic correlate of the expressing.”³²

This impression, however, cannot be innocent. It impresses itself in a language and in a conceptuality that precede it. “Concepts themselves are always older than sense, and in turn constitute a text.”³³ Even if this were *not* the case, even if we might suppose a *first* welcoming of sense into discourse, the sheer “systematic order of meaning,” the structurality inherent to the very possibility of meaning, “in some way would have had to impose its sense upon sense, dictating the form of sense, obliging it to imprint itself according to a given rule, syntactic or otherwise.”³⁴ Therefore, although discourse may reproduce, without addition, the noematic sense, this sense can and must imprint itself in discourse in accordance with a given conceptuality and/or order, such that, even if discourse is not productive, it nevertheless “*paints something*”³⁵ in sense.

²⁸ Derrida, “Form and Meaning,” 162–63.

²⁹ *Ideen I*, §124.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Derrida, “Form and Meaning,” 164.

³² *Ideen I*, §124, my emphases.

³³ Derrida, “Form and Meaning,” 165.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

This silence is thus contaminated by what it sought to exclude.³⁶ But this brings us to our concluding remarks. Derrida's criticisms of Husserl, and hence the very origins of deconstruction itself, do not derive from a haughty effort on the part of Derrida to "make a name for himself" by opposing or denigrating an orthodoxy *du jour*. They derive rather from a sincere and profound respect for Husserl's discoveries, from over a decade spent working through the myriad texts in which those discoveries lay. To the end of his life, Derrida declared himself a faithful inheritor of the tradition that Husserl established.³⁷ At stake, rather, is the revelation of the "contaminations" endemic to the various *parallelisms* that Husserl relied upon: "And we may ask if some irreducible complicity, between Being as Being-present in the form of meaning (*bedeuten*) and Being as being-present in the so-called pre-expressive form of sense (*Sinn*), has not been operative, welding the strata to each other, as well as permitting them both to be related one to the other and to be articulated within this entire problematic. Is this not the site of the decision for all the problems we have discerned thus far?"³⁸ Deconstruction is, at its core, the meditation on this irreducible complicity. Again, *not* to prove that Husserl is *wrong* in privileging presence, in valorizing silence, in valorizing the now, etc. But rather, to show the contamination of what is valorized by what it seeks to exclude. As he says, "one probably does not have to choose between two lines of thought. Rather, one has to meditate upon the circularity which makes them pass into one another indefinitely. And also, by rigorously repeating this *circle* in its proper historical possibility, perhaps to let some *elliptical* displacement be produced in the difference of repetition..."³⁹ In doing so, we engender an openness for thinking itself, clearing a path "toward the unnamable."⁴⁰

Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future in the Shadow of Husserl

The future can only be anticipated in
the form of an absolute danger.
—Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*

As Merleau-Ponty notes, we stand and think in the shadow of Husserl.⁴¹ A century after the initial publication of Husserl's *Ideen I*, perhaps it is still too soon to fully

³⁶ For the sake of brevity, I shall not here go into the illuminating discussion of the voice as found in *Voice and Phenomenon*. Here, Derrida ties this discussion of silence and the phenomenological voice to his analysis of the other and of time in Husserl's philosophy, in a much richer way than we are able to accomplish here. See also Lawlor's book, *Derrida and Husserl: The Basic Problem of Phenomenology*.

³⁷ See Jacques Derrida, *Voyous: Deux essais sur la raison* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 2003); *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 134.

³⁸ Derrida, "Form and Meaning," 171.

³⁹ Ibid., 173.

⁴⁰ Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*, 66.

⁴¹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Le Philosophe et son ombre," *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960); "The Philosopher and His Shadow," *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 159–81.

take stock of his impact. But if, as Hegel claimed, “the owl of Minerva begins its flight, only with the onset of dusk,”⁴² we can say with confidence that in the waning moments of twilight, immediately preceding dusk, the shadows cast are at their longest. Husserl’s shadow is no different: it encapsulates a broad and diverse group (if we may permit ourselves the use of such a term) of philosophers and of philosophical movements, charting a myriad of problems, schools, and trajectories of thinking. Despite (or perhaps *because of*) his immense impact, philosophy enters the twenty-first century in a fragmented state, and this is true not only of the Anglo-American *division* between the so-called analytic and continental practices of philosophy; it is true even *within* the community of philosophers who consider themselves inheritors of the continental tradition. *Our* task in this paper, then, will be to address, in a propaedeutic manner, that most basic of philosophical questions: in the shadow of Husserl, *what is philosophy?* What *should* it be, and what *can* it be?

The question is perhaps audacious, but its audacity must not overshadow its necessity. This is especially true, given that two of the thinkers who stood most prominently in the shadow cast by Husserl—Derrida and Deleuze—reached (at least ostensibly) wholly incompatible conclusions regarding the nature and task of philosophy,⁴³ with Deleuze affirming Hyppolite’s assertion that, “*Philosophy must be ontology, it cannot be anything else,*”⁴⁴ and Derrida (echoing Heidegger’s call for a *Destruktion* of the history of ontology) claiming that, “the supplement is neither a presence nor an absence. No ontology can think its operation.”⁴⁵ Indeed we see similar disparity, as we trace through the developments of the twentieth century; we see terms scattered, taken up, used, discarded, etc., in various ways at various times by various thinkers. Moreover the senses of the terms themselves are not univocal. “Metaphysics,” to take but one example, has an altogether different meaning for Bergson, for Heidegger, for Levinas, for Derrida, and for Deleuze. Husserl himself was deeply suspicious of what he called “*historically degenerate metaphysics*,”⁴⁶ while, for Bergson, *metaphysics* takes us to the absolute, the very heart

⁴² G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Berlin: Nicolai’schen Buchhandlung, 1821); “Preface,” *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*.

⁴³ In a future paper, I shall address this issue, the apparent Derrida-Deleuze disagreement, head-on.

⁴⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “Jean Hyppolite—*Logique et existence*,” *L’île déserte et autres texts* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2002); “Jean Hyppolite’s Logic and Existence,” *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953–1974)*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004), 15. Hyppolite defines philosophy as “the expression of being in concepts or in discourse.” See Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et existence* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953); *Logic and Existence*, trans. Leonard Lawlor and Amit Sen (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 10.

⁴⁵ Jacques Derrida, *De la Grammatologie* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967); *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 314.

⁴⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge. Husserliana Band I* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960); *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (Dordrecht, Boston, and London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 139.

of the thing itself.⁴⁷ Heidegger and Derrida speak repeatedly of an *overcoming of metaphysics*, while Deleuze and Guattari write that, “the death of metaphysics or the overcoming of philosophy has never been a problem for us: it is just tiresome, idle chatter.”⁴⁸ Thus the question is well worth the asking: what then remains of a philosophy, of philosophy, in the shadow of Husserl?

Given its state of fragmentation, our questioning must begin on the soil in which philosophy took its first breaths, the Greek landscape, as Derrida notes that “the founding concepts of philosophy are primarily Greek, and it would not be possible to philosophize, or to speak philosophically, outside this medium.”⁴⁹ It is Plato who taught us what a philosopher *is* and *does*; it is Plato who first outlined for us the questions with which philosophy grapples; and so it is to Plato that we first turn for insight as to the task before us. What we shall find is that Plato’s philosopher is in a certain sense like Nietzsche’s, a *sounder of idols*, who transgresses and disrupts common opinion in search of the fundamental. Husserl, like Plato, in combating commonplace notions (what he calls the natural attitude), formulates a methodology of phenomenological reduction, which exposes a pure field of immanence, pure temporality. Thus, we must carry out a phenomenological analysis of the experience of time, exposing the fundamental structure of futurity therein, and we shall conclude by showing how this opens onto the positive task of the philosopher, philosophizing in the shadow of Husserl, philosophizing with an eye toward the future.

The Doxa, the Natural Attitude, and the Philosopher

We turn first to Plato. In the *Republic*, Socrates asks of Glaucon, “Must we, therefore, call philosophers rather than lovers of *doxa* [δόξα] those who delight in each thing that is itself?” to which Glaucon responds, “That is entirely certain.”⁵⁰ There are two elements, one positive and one negative, that define the task of the philosopher in this characterization offered by Plato. First, the negative: the philosopher is *not* an adherent to the *doxa* of his day, whatever it may be. In Greek philosophical

⁴⁷ Henri Bergson, “Introduction à la métaphysique,” *La pensée et le mouvant. Essais et conférences* (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1934); “Introduction to Metaphysics,” *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2007), 133–69.

⁴⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1991); *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 9.

⁴⁹ Jacques Derrida, “Violence et métaphysique: Essai sur la pensée d’Emmanuel Levinas,” *L’écriture et la différence* (Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1967); “Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas,” *Writing and Difference*, 81.

⁵⁰ Plato, *The Republic*, 480 a.

parlance,⁵¹ the *doxa* is the common opinion of the masses. Often (even usually) misguided, it is the understood, established code of *givens* that an individual, as a citizen living in a specific historical culture, is inculcated with. The first characteristic, the negative characteristic, of the philosopher according to Plato is that the philosopher will not be swayed by, and (if we may take Socrates as our example), will even positively disrupt, the *doxa*. From this characteristic, the philosopher derives her reputation for attempting to abolish presuppositions—religious, political, cultural, scientific—in short, wherever they may be found. As Deleuze claims, “Where to begin in philosophy has always—rightly—been regarded as a very delicate problem, for beginning means eliminating all presuppositions.”⁵²

The second characteristic, this time positive, of the philosopher: the philosopher will seek *each thing that is itself*. In seeking the *thing that is itself*, the philosopher seeks what I shall call the *fundamental*.⁵³ In Plato’s case, the fundamental is the transcendent form, never given *as such* in particular things, but necessary for thinking them. But we need not accept the transcendent, metaphysical implications of Plato’s philosophy in order to accept his prescribed task for the philosopher. The fundamental, for our purposes, merely indicates *whatever; in whatever sense of the term, “whatever,” grounds, or conditions, whatever is*. We make no presumptions at this time, nor does the term commit us to, an ontological status of the *whatever*, nor does it commit us to the *simple presence or purity of the origin*,⁵⁴ or anything of this nature. But with this understanding, we have our philosophical task in sight: the disruption of the *doxa* in pursuit of the fundamental. This *fundamental*, whatever it may come to be, I shall henceforth refer to as *Being*, and the pursuit thereof, *ontology*. Philosophy is therefore ontology, the pursuit of the fundamental. As Miguel de Beistegui writes, “The essence of philosophy is concerned with one thing, and one thing only—‘being.’”⁵⁵

⁵¹ Parmenides too, though he does not specifically use the term, “philosopher,” distinguishes explicitly between “the steadfast heart of persuasive truth” and the “opinions of mortals” [βροτῶν δόξας], *Fragments*, 1.29–30.

⁵² Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et Répétition*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968); *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 129.

⁵³ I use this term quite consciously aware of the complicated history that accompanies it in the twentieth century, specifically in the works of Heidegger, Levinas, and Derrida. In 1927, Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* outlined a project of “fundamental ontology,” both terms of which Heidegger would later abandon (and Derrida would speak approvingly of this abandonment). See Martin Heidegger, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1953); *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 43–44; and Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 22. See also Emmanuel Levinas, “L’ontologie est-elle fondamentale,” *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 56 (1951), 88–98; “Is Ontology Fundamental?,” trans. Peter Atterton, revised by Simon Critchley and Adriaan Peperzak, *Basic Philosophical Writings*, ed. Adriaan Peperzak, Simon Critchley, and Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 1–10.

⁵⁴ Here I am thinking of Derrida. See, for instance, *Of Grammatology*, 35–37, 65, 74; and Jacques Derrida, *Voice and Phenomenon*, 5, 52, 59, 71, 79, 81.

⁵⁵ Miguel de Beistegui, *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), ix.

If we are to continue considering ourselves inheritors of and participants in the tradition inaugurated by Plato, our thinking must be oriented in this way.

For his part, Husserl also labored arduously against a prevailing *doxa*,⁵⁶ a particularly convincing one, which he called “the natural attitude.” The natural attitude, though implicit in Plato and the tradition generally, reaches its apex only with the inauguration of the Cartesian paradigm. The natural attitude is the non-thematic subjective attitude that takes for granted the factual existence of ‘the’ external world. In the natural attitude, I find a world, a world of objects, consisting of things in pre-established systems of arrangement and value. They just *are*, as they *are*, and they just *mean so and so*, with or without my knowledge of them, or even, with or without *any* knowledge of them, “corporeal physical things with some spatial distribution or other are *simply there for me, ‘on hand’* in the literal or the figurative sense, whether or not I am particularly heedful of them and busied with them in my considering, thinking, feeling, or willing.”⁵⁷ I at the same time find myself, a thinking thing—sometimes active, often passive—an embodied *soul* or *mind*, which *looks out upon the world* of objects. Being, on the natural attitude, is thus divided into two categories: the objects of the world (what we shall call “brute being”), and thought or consciousness, which is conceived as ontologically distinct from brute being; brute being and thought-of-being, my representations of being. Or, as Husserl says, in the mode of the “naïve”⁵⁸ human being, “there emerges a fundamentally essential difference between *being as a mental process and being as a physical thing*.”⁵⁹

Thought, or my representations of being, arise via the intercourse of my sensory faculties with being, and the transmissions they receive, as interpreted and rendered by the brain. Thus in the natural attitude, even the scientific modification thereof, there is an irreducible disconnect between being and thought. Perception is always translation, and translation is always, at least potentially, alteration. This puts our thought of being at the mercy of our sensory faculties, which can render things differently based upon the conditions, and based upon their own (the faculties’) relative strengths or weaknesses. A person with some form of color blindness, for instance, will represent being differently (and on the natural attitude, less *truly*) than a person without. Likewise, the same table may appear blue, red, or even purple, depending upon the intensity and hue of the lighting in the room.

Thus, in the natural attitude, philosophy’s ontological purpose must subordinate itself to the task of epistemology. Even if we grant that the task of the philosopher is primarily to think *Being*, we have already taken it as a given that *Being* is ontologically subdivided into the categories of *brute being* and *thought-of-being*, which more or less closely approximates *brute being*, as it in fact *is*. In order to

⁵⁶ I am here using the word *doxa* in the sense outlined above, as opposed to the precise sense with which Husserl employs the term in later sections of *Ideen I*. See, for instance, §§103–127, §§146–148.

⁵⁷ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §27.

⁵⁸ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §39.

⁵⁹ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §42.

think Being in its entirety then, the philosopher must first make sure his thoughts are true; he must secure for himself a realm of juridicality, a realm where he can be sure that his perceptions and representations are, in fact, justified. In other words, he must formulate a theory wherein he secures for himself: (1) an evaluation, the ability or evaluative criterion, by which he may distinguish between what does and does not count as a true thought or idea, and (2) a method, the means whereby the adequation between her thought of being and being itself is made perfect, the perfection of the faculty of thinking itself.

These two requirements posed by the natural attitude, however, unfortunately present the philosopher with an insuperable paradox: in order to provide an account of Being, I must possess the means or method of thinking, capable of perfecting the adequation between brute being and thought; but in order to validate my method, I must already have at my disposal the ability to distinguish between a true and false idea. The impasse of this paradox can be highlighted by an example. If, for instance, I wish to know if my cleaning solution is properly mixed (if my methodology is sound), I can run a simple test: is the surface on which I have used it, now *clean*? But this test only works because I already know the desired outcome; I already know what *clean* means, as opposed to dirty. To continue with our analogy, in the natural attitude, the philosopher knows neither whether the solution is or is not properly mixed, nor does he possess any concept of *clean*. Thought, on the natural attitude, is forever divorced from being, and ontology on this model is forever damned to vain attempts at reconciliation. It is thus no surprise that the radical certainty afforded by the Cartesian *cogito* in the so-called *way of ideas* terminates in Humean skepticism a mere century later.

Overcoming the Doxa: The *Epochē* and the Transcendental Reduction

In the face of this paradox, thought is born. Husserl's response (and ours as well) is the return to a field of immanence in order to evaluate the given as given. This takes the form of Husserl's famous principle of all principles: "*that everything originally... offered to us in 'intuition' is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, but also only within the limits in which it is presented there.*"⁶⁰ His methodology is the absolute suspension of the natural attitude, in the mode of the phenomenological *epochē*: "*We put out of action the general positing which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude.*"⁶¹ Though sharing methodological similarities with Cartesian doubt, the *epochē* does not negate, deny, or doubt the *real* existence of the world; it simply puts it out of play, suspends the judgment that would either affirm or deny

⁶⁰ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §24.

⁶¹ Husserl, *Ideen I*, §32.

its existence, and along with it, all the propositions and conclusions of the sciences founded thereupon.

The *epochē* thus fundamentally transforms our understanding of the world and of the things in it. But to be a truly phenomenological account, we must not stop there, but rather, the *epochē* must be radicalized, through the *transcendental reduction*, of which the *epochē* serves as the *condition of possibility*.⁶² Through the reduction is discovered the “universal, absolutely self-enclosed and absolutely self-sufficient correlation between the world itself and world-consciousness.”⁶³ The reduction reveals the transcendental ego as correlative to the world, that on the basis of which anything like a “world,” meaningful and endowed with value, can appear at all. The *epochē*, radicalized in the reduction, reduces all *things*, including myself, to their status as “sense.” Thus the sphere of experience opened up takes us to pure immanence, pure phenomenality, to the transcendental, the *origin of the world*, what Zahavi calls the “*expansion* of our field of research.”⁶⁴ It thus reveals a plane of pure experience, the constituted poles of which are my subjectivity and the world. Here we discover what Heidegger refers to in *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* as pure auto-affection,⁶⁵ which is the structure of temporalization. Thus we must carry out an analysis of the consciousness of time.

The Structural Experience of Time: The Phenomenology of the Living Present

Our own analyses of time consciousness will resemble Husserl’s in many ways, but will differ in some very significant ways as well. Husserl’s grapplings with time will occupy him repeatedly throughout his career. What follows will most closely resemble Husserl’s discussion of the *living present*, as discussed in his 1905 Göttingen lectures on

⁶² Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Husserliana Band VI* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962); *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, §41. Most of my account of the *epochē* and the reduction are taken from *The Crisis* text, which differs from the account of the reduction(s) given in *Ideen I*, §§27–34. Husserl himself makes explicit his own criticisms of his earlier formulations (which he refers to as the “Cartesian way” in *The Crisis*, §43). Briefly, by *not* distinguishing between the *epochē* and the reduction, Husserl claims, we encounter the ego, but one that is apparently devoid of any content, as opposed to recognizing the sense-bestowing nature of the ego, which he claims is made possible only by the division between *epochē* and reduction, as explicated in *The Crisis*.

⁶³ Husserl, *The Crisis*, §41.

⁶⁴ Dan Zahavi, *Husserl’s Phenomenology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 46.

⁶⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1973); *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), §34, 132–36.

time-consciousness.⁶⁶ Reduced to pure phenomenality, our experience is always opened, and opening, temporally. Put otherwise, experience is always in passage. More appropriately, experience always *is* passage. The structure of time-consciousness is comprised of three *moments*: primal impression, retention, and protention.

The primal impression is the now-point, the present now—the constantly born, constantly dying, present *now*. Husserl calls it “the ‘source-point’ with which the ‘production’ of the enduring object begins,”⁶⁷ the punctuated center moment, the core of experience. Retention is *primary memory*,⁶⁸ the still *living* consciousness of that which has just passed. Protention is the fundamental structural experience of expectation, endemic to each living present (as when we lead with our heads through a doorway because we *expect* that the door is going to open when we casually tap the handle).

Let us explore this experience further, by way of a relevant example. I sit now, typing at my computer. In each moment of my typing, each keystroke marks a close approximation to what we called our “primal impression.” Each tapping of the keys marks (or seems to mark) an instantaneous, momentary depression of time, akin to the structural element of impression. But this account of the present is not rich enough, and does not capture the present as it is in fact *given*. For in order to cognize the sentence as I type it, in order for me, as thinker and typist, to keep straight in my mind what I am typing, *just so that* I can continue thinking and typing, my memory must continue to hang onto what I have just typed. Moreover, if my argument is to have any hope for coherence, memory must hang on, not only to that which has *just* been typed, but all that I have typed in the recent past. This reveals the structural and essential experience of retention in the living present.

To further elaborate, retention (*primary memory*) must be understood as distinct from another kind of memory, re-production.⁶⁹ Reproduction is what we typically think of when we casually use the term “memory,” the bringing back to consciousness, by way of a willed re-presentation, of a previously *present* impression. In each moment, were it necessary to *re-produce*, by an act of will, recently past impressions, I could never effectively cognize the present, precisely because, in each moment, I would be ever anew summoning back to consciousness the immediately preceding moments so that I could contextualize the present one (which of course has, by now, also passed). Conscious experience would then be a life lived *always too late*. So the memory in the present cannot take the form of reproduction.

But without *some* kind of memory still connected to the present, there would be no comprehensibility of the present, because each and every present moment would *present* itself to consciousness as a discrete, isolated experience, one that dies just

⁶⁶ See Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (1893–1917). *Husserliana Band X* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1992); *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time* (1893–1917), trans. John Barnett Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992), §§7–31.

⁶⁷ Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, §11.

⁶⁸ Ibid., §§11–14.

⁶⁹ Incidentally, the failure to make this distinction is, according to Husserl, the error of Brentano. See Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, §§1–6.

as quickly as it is born. Each keystroke would appear in a self-contained moment of time. Hence, there could be no meaningfully *new* keystroke, because I would never remember which keystrokes had come before. The memory needed must not be *willed* then, but must be endemic to the very structure of conscious life itself, and this form of memory is primary memory, retention. It is still attached to the present; it has never left consciousness, but in its temporalization, *shades off* into the past.

The future is somewhat more difficult, but our typing example will work just as well. As I type this very sentence, begun with a capital letter ‘A’, or rather, as I end the previous sentence, with a ‘.’, I *anticipate* the next sentence, the capital letter that will have to lead it off, necessitating the operation of the ‘shift’ key on the keyboard. Thus, as the ring finger of my right hand hits the ‘.’ button, the pinky of my right hand, in anticipation of the new beginning, moves toward the ‘shift’ key, while the pinky of my left hand moves toward the ‘A.’ Numerous such examples could be adduced. As the bus approaches the stop, I stand, precisely because I *expect* that it is going to stop at the stop. I lead with my head through the doorway because I *expect* that the door, unlocked, will open when I casually tap the handle. Often, we are not fully *aware* of our expectations, unless and until they are ruptured. The shift key may have a crumb of food beneath it that prevents its depression; the bus may pass the stop without stopping; the door may be locked and I may thus hit my head. Nevertheless, the fact that I stood up, the fact that I hit my head, indicates this structural element of *openness to the future* that constitutes my very experience of the present.

What, then, of this primal impression? It is the *Now*. When is the primal impression *given* to consciousness? Presumably, in the very moment, the *living* moment, that it is happening. Indeed, when else could it be given? Yet, if the structure of time consciousness demonstrates anything, it is precisely that this moment, as such, is never given, is never made present. The living present, as we have shown, is only ever given as possessing the structure of retention and protention. It is only upon reflection that we assert the *truth* or *reality* of a specific primal impression. I *hit* such and such a key—that happened *in a moment*. I *will hit* such and such a key—it *will happen* in *some future moment*. But what of this moment? It appears only in retention, reproduction, and protention. In short, the moment, as such, never appears. What then, do we make of it?

The present, in its very nature *as present*, is *passing*. If the present moment, the present *Now*, were a discrete, isolated, self-contained kernel of time, and the future *Nows* were like this as well, the present *Now* would be forever waiting, and the present would never pass. The present, even at its most abstract, must be *contemporaneous* with its past, it must be *passing*. Here we call upon Deleuze: “If the present did not pass of its own accord, if it had to wait for a new present in order to become past, the past in general would never be constituted in time, and this particular present would not pass.”⁷⁰ Or as Kierkegaard (in the voice of

⁷⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962); *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 48.

Haufniensis), says, there is no *foothold* to be found in the passage of time.⁷¹ The present can only become past insofar as the past reaches into the present, as it comes to be, as it becomes. This means that the present can only become past insofar as the past reaches *through* the present, into the future, drawing the future into itself. Likewise, the future can only become past insofar as it at the same time reaches, through the present, into the past. Experience confirms this: though from a reflective standpoint (and, we should add, on the basis of a presupposed traditional, punctilinear model of time), my keystroke *appears* punctuated, momentary, instantaneous, I in fact know that this is not the case. If I, for instance, slow my typing down, and immerse myself in the awareness of my typing, I find that my keystrokes are continuous, fluid. There is a time that passes as my finger presses the key down to the computer, thereby pushing the relevant button underneath, and releases. All of this is to say, the present, as such, is never *given*. To insist upon the necessity, the structural and essential necessity, of the primal impression, as a punctuated now-point or source-point, is to presuppose the very model of time which Husserl's discovery of the living present forbids.⁷²

And yet, in another sense entirely, the present is *all* that is given. I cannot *relive* or *remember* my past, except in the present. I cannot make plans, set goals, etc., for the future, *except* in the present. Reflection and expectation can only *take place* in the context of a living, present, moment. So as we have already established, the present *as such* is never given, and yet, the present is all that *is*. This presents us with an apparent paradox: the present *is not*, and yet, the present *is all that is*. But it appears as paradoxical only because of the extreme difficulty we have with thinking time in a non-linear manner, where *time* is understood as a line, comprised of an infinite amount of discrete points, called *moments*, and the past, present, and future are the dimensions of this line of time. On this model, a *present*, whether *now*, *then*, or *to come*, has a self-contained identity as a *point of time*. If this is the case, the present cannot both *be* and *not be*. The paradox that has arisen thus forces us to rethink the present itself. What has made itself apparent is that the present is not given as a punctuated *instant*, but rather, the present *is* nothing more than the relationality of past to future, future to past.⁷³

This relationality is not the passive, *empirical* relation between two pre-established *identities*, a future that *just is*, and a past that *just is*. Rather, this relationality is itself productive. The past reaches into the future in such a way that, as it reaches, it thereby *gives birth* to the future itself. Let us examine, by eidetic variation, our

⁷¹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Begrebet Angest. En simpel psychologisk-paapegænde Overveielse i Retning af det dogmatiske Problem om Arvesynden af Vigilius Haufniensis* (Copenhagen: Reitzel, 1844); *The Concept of Anxiety*, ed., trans. Reidar Thomte in collaboration with Albert B. Anderson, *Kierkegaard's Writings*, Vol. VIII (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 85.

⁷² I do not here deal with, but am very sensitive to, Derrida's emphasis on the importance of the *presence of the present* for Husserl, as discussed extensively in *Voice and Phenomenon*, and in all of his Husserl writings. I shall deal with this in a future paper.

⁷³ See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 76.

concept of protention. The examples we have used thus far are mundane, everyday examples (awaiting the bus, hitting keys on a keyboard, etc.). But these everyday examples are predicated upon a more basic and fundamental structure of openness, the experience of futurity itself. It is only on the basis of futurity that I can *anticipate* anything at all. But futurity itself is not the expectation of *anything* in particular, but rather the mere expectation of a future, an openness to the new, to the *coming*, that is constituted, lived, indeed birthed, in each present moment, as resulting from its past. The relationality that constitutes the present produces its future, produces this structural experience of openness.

What, then, of the past? On the traditional, punctilinear model of time, the past is comprised of the *presents* that *are no more*. But on our understanding of the living present, nothing could be further from the truth. The past *is*, and *forevermore shall be*. Let us analyze the experience of memory, the death of a loved one, for instance. When someone we love dies, it is wholly inaccurate to say that this event *is no more*. On the contrary, this event *is*, and *will be*, for the duration of the life of the organism. A painful romance, a heartbreak, a divorce, the birth of a child, a wedding day, *the event*, is not *gone*; it is what is *produced* (from the Latin—“*pro*” meaning “bringing forth” and “*ducere*” meaning “guide” or “lead”), brought forth or led forward, by the future in its coming. The past, *from the future*, perpetually meets consciousness in its present. As the future comes to pass, it produces the past, and this past forever runs simultaneously parallel, and intertwined with, the future in its coming. The past relates to the future in such a way that its events make possible the future as such; and in like manner, the future constitutes the past. Both are intertwined in, and constituted by, the present in its productive relationality. “The present alone exists,”⁷⁴ but it exists always and only as the productive relationality constituting simultaneously its dually intertwined dimensions of future and past.

Conclusion: A Philosophy of the Future

Philosophy is and must be ontology; of this there can be no doubt. Philosophy is the attempt to think Being, the fundamental. Even in its myriad forms, it is forever distinguished from the sciences by its pursuit of the fundamental: philosophy of art is *not* art history; philosophy of physics is *not* physics; political philosophy is *not* political science; philosophy of film is *not* film theory. Philosophy’s revelations are, according to Husserl, “metaphysical, if it be true that the ultimate cognitions of being should be called metaphysical.”⁷⁵ The *ultimate cognitions of being* on Husserl’s account overcome the traditional dualistic metaphysics that forever damns philosophy to the backseat with epistemology at the wheel—because Husserl puts thought at the very heart of being. Being, we realize in the shadow of Husserl, is the fundamental

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, §60.

structure of life itself, which we, in agreement with Husserl, identified as essentially temporalizing: Being is productive relationality.

What then does a philosophy of the future in the shadow of Husserl look like? It must be, first and foremost, ontology. But in its ontological pursuits, it must vigilantly avoid the trappings of traditional essentialist metaphysics, metaphysics of identity, of centrality, of presence, which continually tempts the thinker with its promises of the universal. Philosophy must attempt to think Being in its very *sense* as productive relationality, without compromise, as what fundamentally opens thought to the experience of the new, even in its manifestations as *past*. *Without compromise*, that is to say, *as nothing but compromise*, as compromising is a “promising together.” In its productive relationality, its difference, Being promises itself in the dual futurity of past and future. In the shadow of Husserl, a philosophy of the future is a philosophy of the future.

Chapter 27

Gilles Deleuze and Hearing-Oneself-Speak

Leonard Lawlor

Deleuze on *Ideen I*

While Deleuze speaks about phenomenology in virtually all of his books, his 1969 *Logique du sens* contains the most sustained discussion of it.¹ As the title of the book suggests, what is at issue is sense. Sense is at issue in *Logique du sens* because what Deleuze wants to do is depose the old metaphysical essences, replace them with sense. In other words, by depositing the essences, he wants to bring about a reversal of Platonism. Deleuze recognizes that, through the *epochē* and reduction, phenomenology amounts to a version of anti-Platonism. Thus he readily tells us that what *Logique du sens* concerns is what Husserl calls “sense donation” (LS 89/71). Deleuze’s question is: how is sense produced, given over, or generated (without relying on second worldly essences or forms, without relying on God, without being metaphysical)? The logic of sense then is a logic of genesis.² What is “true genesis,” how are we to determine the “transcendental field” (LS 128/105)?

For Deleuze, there are four requirements for a true genesis. What is required for genesis is that sense (or that which generates sense) must generate (or at least account for and condition) the other dimensions of what appears to be the primary

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969); English translation by Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, edited by Constantin Boundas as *Logic of Sense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Hereafter cited with the abbreviation LS, with reference first to the French, then to the English translation.

² Here we are focusing only on what Deleuze calls “static genesis,” that is, the operation by which the definition of the conditions of a problem generates a solution or solutions. See Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 238; English translation by Paul Patton as *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 183.

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element in discourse, the proposition. That is, sense must generate (1) the states of affairs denoted by the proposition (denotation); (2) the signified concepts and classes of the proposition (signification); and (3) the states of the subject manifested by the proposition (manifestation). All of these elements of the proposition are elements of belief, of *doxa*. This comment brings us to the fourth requirement: a genuine or true genesis must not duplicate *doxa* (or opinion) in the genetic source. Thus, the genetic source—sense—must be neutral in regard to all the modes of the proposition, and yet it must be productive.

Deleuze is interested in phenomenology because, as he says “phenomenology [might] be the rigorous science” of sense.³ To determine whether phenomenology is this “rigorous science,” Deleuze focuses on Husserl’s 1913 *Ideen I* and, making use of Paul Ricœur’s 1950 French translation, he cites or alludes to the following specific sections: 88, 89, 90, 98, 99, and 124 (on the noema); 103 and 104 (on *Urdoxa*); 110 and 114 (on neutrality modification); and 129, 135 and 143 (on the Idea in the Kantian sense).⁴ Deleuze sees that Husserl seems to “discover sense” through the idea of the noema.⁵ As the Greek word indicates (from “*noein*,” to think), the noema is the thought-object, which is correlated to what Husserl calls “noesis” (thinking).

³(LS 33/21) By calling phenomenology a “rigorous science,” Deleuze of course is referring to well known essay by Husserl: “Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft” (1911).

⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch. Husserliana Band III* (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950); English translation by Fred Kersten as *Ideas pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983); French translation by Paul Ricœur as *Idées directrices pour une phénoménologie* (Paris: Tel Gallimard, 1950). Kersten’s translation is made from the Husserliana volume, while Ricœur’s is made from the third edition (1928) of the original Max Niemeyer publication. The first English translation (by Boyce Gibson) was also made from the Niemeyer edition. See Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (New York: Collier Books, 1975 [1931]).

⁵(LS 117/96, also LS 45/32) The criticism that Deleuze presents here in *Logique du sens* should be compared to the one Derrida presents at basically the same time. In an early essay, “‘Genesis and Structure,’ and Phenomenology,” Derrida, like Deleuze, recognizes the innovation that the Husserlian idea of noema represents. Yet, Derrida, again like Deleuze, thinks that Husserl retreats from this innovation insofar as Husserl conceives history as teleological (the Idea in the Kantian sense). In *La Voix et le phénomène*, Derrida might appear at first to be at odds with Deleuze since in this book Derrida criticizes the Husserlian idea of expression. Yet, what Derrida criticizes is the restriction that the Husserlian concept of expression seems to impose on sense. In other words, like Deleuze, Derrida conceives sense as an infinite (unlimited becoming), not to be reined in by a *telos* of “the relation to an object” (the idea in the Kantian sense again). Derrida sees the unlimited nature of sense in what Husserl calls indication (*Anzeichen*), rather than in expression. Neither Derrida nor Deleuze are satisfied respectively with Husserl’s difference between and the conception of indication and expression. The lack of satisfaction implies a community of conception between Derrida and Deleuze. Notice in this formula of a “relation to the object,” we see the dative. Derrida’s criticism of “the relation to the object” implies that he does accept the dative relation. He cannot therefore be easily classified among the so-called “philosophers of transcendence.” The other (of any sort) is internal and not a transcendence that puts a break (not a stopping point) on becoming. Both Derrida and Deleuze are thinkers of infinite, continuous variation (multiplicity or dissemination). See Jacques Derrida, “‘Genèse et structure’ et la phénoménologie,” *L’Ecriture et la différence* (Paris: Seuil, 1967), 229–52, especially, 242–44; English translation by Alan Bass as *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago,

At first glance, it seems, according to Deleuze, that the noema satisfies the requirements for a true genesis. Husserl distinguishes the noema from the physical object, from the psychological or lived experience, from mental representations, and from logical concepts. In other words, the noema differs from denotation, manifestation, and signification. It does not seem to resemble what it is supposed to generate; it looks to be “independent” and “neutral” in regard to all the primary elements of the proposition (LS 123/101, also LS 45/32).

Deleuze, however, argues that the Husserlian genesis does not really satisfy the four requirements of true genesis. His criticism of Husserl takes place in *three steps* (across the “Fourteenth Series” and the “Fifteenth Series” in *Logique du sens*). First, Deleuze notices that, when Husserl discusses the noema (in §§90, 99, and especially in §129⁶), he uses the image of a core; the noema or sense has, according to Husserl, a nucleus. The image suggests that the exterior or periphery of the nucleus is only an appearance. As Deleuze says, “Nucleus metaphors are disquieting; they envelope what is in question” (LS 120/98). What Husserl has done, according to Deleuze, is determine the nucleus as a “predicate” (LS 118/97). Determining sense as a predicate (the greenness of the tree in the proposition “the tree is green”), Husserl understands the nucleus as a concept or a generality. Yet, the concept or generality is what is found in the meaning of the proposition. If sense is a generality, then it gives itself, ready-made, the form of signification—rather than generating it. The nucleus of sense, being determined as a generality, is related, for Husserl, to “a something = X,” which is an object in general. But such a general object is also what allows the proposition to refer to something. So, as Deleuze stresses, just as signification is given ahead of time ready-made, denotation is given ahead of time ready-made. In relation to both signification and denotation, the donation of sense remains within a “vicious circle” (LS 128/105).

Second, Deleuze stresses that Husserl determines the something = X as an Idea in the Kantian sense (an approximation to an ideal). By determining the something = X as an idea in the Kantian sense, Husserl maintains reason as the basic form of genesis. More precisely, by maintaining reason, Husserl seems to be presupposing “an originary faculty of common sense”; the originary faculty of common sense accounts for the identity of the object in general (the identity is what is held in common by all the possible objects) (LS 119/97, also LS 141/116, LS 144/119). According to Deleuze, Husserl even seems to be assuming a good sense; good sense (this is the Idea in the Kantian sense as a *telos*) accounts for the process of identification of all the objects in general to infinity (the process is always seeking the identification of

1978) 154–68, especially, 162–63. Jacques Derrida, *La Voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1983 [1967]), Introduction and Chapter 7, especially, 100; English translation by Leonard Lawlor as *Voice and Phenomenon* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2011), Introduction and Chapter 7, especially, 76.

⁶ Ricoeur renders Husserl’s “Kern” with French “noyau”; Kersten renders “Kern” in English as “core.” The English translators of *Logique du sens* render “noyau” as “nucleus.” The old Boyce Gibson translation of *Ideen I* uses “nucleus” to render “Kern.” We are using “nucleus” here, which allows one to see the image better.

all objects as if that identification is the good).⁷ Finally, we come to the *third* step. Through the assumption of common sense and good sense, Husserl maintains the form of consciousness (LS 124/102). Here (in the “Fifteenth Series”), Deleuze focuses on what Husserl says in *Ideen I* about neutrality modification (he refers to §§110 and 114) (LS 124/102, also LS 147–48/122). Husserl divides consciousness—a “radical separation”—between actual doxic (or believing) consciousness, which is productive (it posits that something exists and makes judgments), and a merely “thinking of” consciousness, which is neutral and non-productive (its neutrality means that it posits no existence and makes no judgments).⁸ Actual consciousness (or the actual *cogito*) is under the “jurisdiction of reason,” while the “merely thinking of” consciousness is not. Deleuze stresses that Husserl determines the relation between the two kinds of consciousness as a relation of proper and improper and he provides an image of this relation. For Husserl, the neutral, that is, improper consciousness is the shadow, while the proper and rational consciousness is the thing that casts the shadow. Thus, according to Deleuze, Husserl, through the “separation,” makes a “disjunction” within consciousness, endowing the form of actual consciousness with the potency of genesis (productivity), while the neutralized consciousness has no productive potency. However, in order to have true genesis, the generating agency—in this case consciousness—must at once be neutral (that is, independent of the modes of consciousness manifested in propositions) and productive. Overall therefore, in these three steps, what Deleuze shows is that the forms of *doxa* (the nucleus of *proto-doxa*), the form of reason (common sense and good sense through the Idea in the Kantian sense), and the form of consciousness (proper and actual consciousness) are used as the genetic source and then these same forms appear in what is generated. In other words, Husserl’s account of the genesis of sense is false; it is a “sleight of hand;” (LS 118/97) Husserl’s genesis occurs only in “appearance” (LS 122/100).

Although we have just gone through a complicated argument, Deleuze’s criticism of phenomenology is reducible to one claim: phenomenology misunderstands the genuine nature of the reversal of Platonism. In order to reverse Platonism, one must not, of course, return to the old metaphysical essences. Not returning to metaphysical essences, one must conceive the genetic source as immanent, but—this is an important “but”—immanence does not mean sameness. Platonism has not been truly reversed if the genetic source is the same as what it generates (the form of consciousness is the same for all psychological consciousnesses, the form of general concepts is the same as all particulars meanings, and the object in general is the same for all particular objects). However, just as immanence does not mean sameness, the difference of the genetic source from the generated does turn the

⁷(LS 119/97) The definition of good sense given in *Logique du sens* is: “good sense affirms that in all things there is a determinable sense or direction” (LS 9/1). Deleuze frequently refers to good sense and common sense. The most thorough discussion occurs in *Difference and Repetition*, Chapter 3.

⁸ Kersten renders Husserl’s “*radikalen Scheidung*” as “radical separation”; Ricoeur renders it as “*coupure radicale*.” Deleuze then uses “*coupure radicale*,” which is rendered in the English translation of *Logique du sens* as “radical cleavage” (LS 124/102).

genetic source into an abyss. For Deleuze, to reverse Platonism truly, one must not descend into the depth of chaos. What then does it mean to reverse Platonism? As Deleuze says, “To reverse Platonism is first and foremost to depose essences and to substitute events in their place, as emissions of singularities” (LS 69/53). Sense must be understood not as a predicate (or concept), not as a generality (or object in general), and not as a form, but as an *event*: “The splendor and magnificence of the event is sense” (LS 175/149).

Implications of Hearing-Oneself-Speak

Introduction

All of us know Nietzsche’s simple definition of the reversal of Platonism. To reverse Platonism means that we value this world in itself, immanently, and no longer value it in relation to transcendent forms such as the good. In other words, the revaluation of existence means that existence is measured neither in terms of an origin from which existence might be said to have fallen nor in terms of an end toward which existence might be said to be advancing. More precisely, we must say that the reversal of Platonism means that the duration of existence has no beginning and it has no end. It has no primary origin and no ultimate destination. In the reversal, the time of duration becomes unlimited, and time itself looks to be composed of nothing but fragments and remainders. While we started out from a well-known definition of the reversal of Platonism, we have ended up in a very complicated idea. The reversal of Platonism leads us to the idea of time imagined as a line that has no terminal points, a line that never bends itself back into a circle. It leads us to the imagination of an unlimited straight line. It seems to me that, despite all the reflections on time that have taken place across the twentieth century, the implications of the idea of unlimited time remain, at the least, under-determined, and, more likely, I think, the implications remain largely unknown.

In the twentieth century, Deleuze of course is the great philosopher of the reversal of Platonism. In his 1968 *Différence et répétition*, he assigns the reversal of Platonism as the task of contemporary philosophy.⁹ It is, however, in his 1969 *Logique du sens* that Deleuze gives us the most precise definition of the reversal of Platonism. There, he says, “To reverse Platonism is first and foremost to depose essences and to substitute *events* in their place” (LS 69/53). Thus, if Deleuze is the great philosopher of the reversal of Platonism, he is also, by means of this definition, the great thinker of the event. The question that therefore drives the investigation in which we shall engage is: what is an event? As we shall see, we arrive at an answer to the question of event only if we conceive the event in terms of the straight, unlimited line of time. That is, we know we have experienced an event when the two questions of its

⁹ Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, 82; *Difference and Repetition*, 59.

primary origin and its ultimate destination are and remain necessarily unanswerable. In other words, an event is happening when we cannot say with certainty of an event what happened and what is going to happen. In fact, if one *can* answer these questions, then one knows that one has not *really* experienced an event. And if one thinks one can answer these questions, then one has not really broken free of Platonism.

The essay you are about to read contains many echoes of and allusions to the works and Ideen of Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida, and some to Heidegger. Yet, its purpose does not lie in producing yet another commentary on their works. Instead, the essay attempts to appropriate their thinking in a way that will open up new possibilities of thinking and acting. What must be appropriated is immanence since, of course, both Derrida and Deleuze, and especially Deleuze, begin their thinking in immanence. While this point is not often recognized, and despite their well-known criticisms of phenomenology, both Derrida and Deleuze belong firmly within the phenomenological tradition. Thus, in order to understand what immanence means, we are going to start with internal, subjective experience. After all, it is impossible to reverse Platonism without passing through a phase of Cartesianism. The phase of Cartesianism means that we must examine the “*cogito*,” or, in Greek, it means that we must examine “*dianoia*.” The Greek term here brings us to the first of our four reference points in Plato himself. Perhaps it is surprising to see us turn so quickly to Plato when all we have spoken of is the reversal of Platonism. Yet, as Deleuze has pointed out, Plato himself was the first philosopher to begin the movement of the reversal of Platonism.¹⁰ Our first reference point is the *Theatetus* (189c–190a). Here Plato says (through Socrates, of course) that thinking is interior monologue. To define thinking as interior monologue means that thinking is equivalent to the experience of hearing-oneself-speak. Therefore what we shall engage in first is a phenomenology of hearing-oneself-speak. By means of this phenomenology, we shall be able to approach the definition of the reversal of Platonism in terms of the event.

The Phenomenology of Hearing-Oneself-Speak and Some of Its Implications

If this investigation is to be a genuine phenomenological investigation, we must enact the *epochē*. In agreement with the *epochē*, we turn back from the objects of our experience to the experience itself. Following the basic trajectory of the phenomenological movement, we must not stop with the *epochē*. We must radicalize it with the universalization of the transcendental reduction.¹¹ Through its strict

¹⁰Gilles Deleuze, “Platon et le simulacre,” *Logique du sens*, 292–306; “Plato and the Simulacrum,” *The Logic of Sense*, 253–65.

¹¹The discussion of epoché and the reduction is based on Edmund Husserl, “A. Abhandlungen. Der Encyclopaedia Britannica Artikel,” in *Phänomenologische Psychologie* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), 277–301; English translation in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger* (1927–1931), translated and edited by Thomas Sheehan and

universalization, the reduction relates all beings, that is, all constituted things, including me as a psychological subject, back to an experience that is itself extra-psychological and even pre-ontic. The universalization of the reduction takes us therefore to a level of experience that is non-existent and “ultra-transcendental.”¹² Through the universalization of the reduction, what we experience resembles nothing that we grasped in the natural experience of objects or beings or things. What has come into view, where have we landed due to the universal reduction? Below the functioning of the natural experience of objects, we find *pure* auto-affection. As we anticipated, at first glance pure auto-affection looks to be interior monologue, hearing-oneself-speak.

Now, let us pursue the investigation of the pure auto-affection of hearing-oneself-speak.¹³ Auto-affection *seems* to include two aspects. *First*, I seem to hear myself speak at the very moment that I speak; and, *second*, I seem to hear my own self speak. The question we must ask is clear: is it really the case that in hearing-oneself-speak, one hears oneself speak *at this very moment* and that one really hears *one's own* self? In other words, is auto-affection really that pure? What we are going to pay particular attention to in the investigation is these “seems.” This is how auto-affection seems to take place. When I engage in interior monologue, when, in short, thinking takes place—it seems as though I hear myself speak at the very moment I speak. It seems as though my interior voice is not required to pass outside of myself, as though it is not required to traverse any space. So, my interior monologue seems to be immediate, immediately present, and not to involve anyone else. Interior monologue seems therefore to be different from the experience of me speaking to another.

However, are we really, truly able to distinguish and separate interior monologue from external dialogue? When I speak in general, that is, with or without the intention of communication, some moment always comes prior to the speaking. The prior moment could be silence or noise, but something like a context precedes all speaking. The prior context implies that the present speaking, whether it is internal or external, whether it has the purpose of communication or not, is in a secondary position. The present speaking is necessarily a “second.” In a few moments, below, by means

Richard E. Palmer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 159–79. It is also based on the presentation of the phenomenological method in *Ideen I*. Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch. Husserliana Band III* (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1950); English translation by Fred Kersten as *Ideen pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983). For a lucid and exhaustive treatment of the “Encyclopedia Britannica” essay, see Joseph J. Kockelmanns, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1994).

¹² I have appropriated the term “ultra-transcendental” from Derrida. See Derrida, *La voix et le phénomène*, 14; *Voice and Phenomenon*, 23.

¹³ In the investigation that follows, I am engaged clearly in a traditional phenomenological study such as the one taken up by Dan Zahavi in his *Self-Awareness and Alterity: A Phenomenological Investigation* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999). However, this investigation takes its inspiration from Derrida, in particular, from the sixth chapter of *Voice and Phenomenon*. Unlike Zahavi, I do not think that “Derrida’s formulations are too excessive” (133).

of an eidetic variation, I shall attempt to demonstrate this claim about the necessity of the secondary position of present speaking. For now, however, we must recognize that the necessity is this: whenever I start to speak—to myself, to others, for the sake of any kind of phonation whatsoever—I find that some other speaking has already taken place and elapsed.

There is always some elapsed moment that has expired, that has been lost and reduced to silence, even as something of that elapsed moment has been retained, even as something of it remains. Necessarily, my speaking is not a pure first time, even though it takes place right now. The secondary character of all speaking means that there is a delay between one speaking and another. This delay then functions as well in between speaking and hearing. Just as the apparent initiating speaking is in truth a “second,” the hearing of the speaking is not immediate. In other words, the delay in interior monologue means that interior monologue is always involved in a process of mediation. We must therefore conclude from this description that my interior monologue in fact resembles my experience of external speech, in which a distance separates me from my hearer. I cannot, it is impossible for me to hear myself *immediately*. Regardless of whether the action is hearing or speaking, the action is a response to the past.

Similar to the first necessity of the delay in time, we encounter another necessity. This second necessity appears despite the radicalization of the reduction, despite the universal bracketing of all natural beings. Here it is. In order to hear myself speak at this very moment, I must make use of the same phonemes as I use in communication (even if this monologue is not vocalized externally through my mouth, even if it does not have the purpose of communication). It is an irreducible or essential necessity that the silent words I form contain repeatable traits. This irreducible necessity means that, when I speak to myself, I speak with the sounds of others. In other words, it means that I find in myself other voices, which come from the past: the many voices are in me. I cannot, it is impossible for me to hear myself speak *all alone*. There is always a very quiet “murmur” coming from the past.¹⁴ Others’ voices contaminate the hearing of myself speaking.¹⁵ Just as my present moment is never immediate, my interior monologue is never simply my own.

As I said earlier, I think that the implications of this description are unclear. Therefore, my presentation of its implications here are by no means exhaustive. First, I think that the description shows, fundamentally, that auto-affection is based

¹⁴ Maurice Blanchot, “Mort du dernier écrivain,” *Le livre à venir* (Paris: Folio Essais Gallimard, 1959), 301–302; English translation by Charlotte Mandel as “Death of the Last Writer,” *The Book to Come* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 222–23. Merleau-Ponty cites this text in *L’institution, la passivité. Notes de cours au Collège de France (1954–1955)* (Paris: Éditions Belin, 2003), 200–201; English translation by Leonard Lawlor and Heath Massey as *Institution and Passivity* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2010), 151–52.

¹⁵ Fred Evans has developed an important conception of the voice in *The Multivoiced Body: Society and Communication in the Age of Diversity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), see especially 144–68 and 280–82.

on a structure that consists of two contradictory forces.¹⁶ On the one hand, there is always a present moment, a point or a singularization. Each thought I have, as I speak it, has a kind of novelty to it, giving it a singular location. It is important to realize that what makes the singular point novel is that its appearance is haphazard and determined by chance. Undoubtedly, this first force of singularization is the root of what we naturally call an event-like experience. Yet, this experience is not the experience of the event. It is only the experience of an accident, an accident due to the mixed up way in which the singular points succeed one another. As we shall see, more is required for an event than an accident. Now, let us turn to the other force in the structure we have been examining. Beside the singularizing force of chance, there is the universalizing force of repetition. As the description showed, the singularity of a thought, my present interior speech, is always connected back to some other thoughts in the past or its location is connected back to some other places elsewhere. Because of this necessary inseparability of the present thought to past thoughts, the present thought is necessarily composed of traits already used in the past, traits standing nearby. These traits are necessarily repeatable to infinity. The structure we have discovered therefore consists of the force of singularization and the force of universalization. These two forces of universalization and singularization are irreducibly connected to one another but without unification. In other words, these two forces are necessarily bound to one another and necessarily dis-unified. The paradoxical relation of the two forces implies that auto-affection is really, necessarily, at the same time, hetero-affection. The paradox is that the relation is heterogeneous and yet the alterity does not make a separation. The inseparability is a distribution of the unity into a duality. Or, more precisely, insofar as a new now is always, necessarily linked to repetition, the unity is distributed into a multiplicity.

The wording of this last formula for the structure implied in the description of hearing-oneself-speak (that is, “the one distributed into a multiplicity”) brings us to our second landmark in Plato’s dialogues: the ancient problem of the one and the many in the labyrinthine discourse of the *Parmenides*. Here, Parmenides presents astonishing arguments that support the description of the structure we have just laid out: the one is the same as the many insofar as it is different from them, and unlike the many insofar as the one is the same as the many.¹⁷ However, also in the *Parmenides*, we find this argument. It concerns the one touching itself, and therefore it concerns auto-affection. Parmenides argues that, if the one were to touch itself, it would have to be situated next to itself (148e). Yet, Parmenides counters by saying that the one does not have this “next to itself” distance since it is not two. He concludes that since it is not two, it cannot touch itself. In the structure we have been outlining,

¹⁶ The description of hearing-oneself-speak and its implications have evolved out of years of reflection upon Derrida’s *Voice and Phenomenon*, especially on its introduction and chapter 6.

¹⁷ (147c–148c) I have used both the Fowler English translation and the Cornford English translation of the *Parmenides*. Plato, “Parmenides,” trans. F. M. Cornford, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, eds. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961). Plato, *Cratylus*, *Parmenides*, *Greater Hippias*, *Lesser Hippias*, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939).

however, the one of the “auto” is necessarily distanced from itself and distributed into two. So, according to Parmenides’ argumentation, we must be able to say that, since the structure is a “two,” the structure in some way touches itself or makes contact with itself. How are we to understand this self-contact of the two forces?

We said that the two forces are contradictory. The terms with which we designated the two forces clearly indicate their contradictory character: the one is the force of singularization, while the second is the force of universalization. The contradictory character of the two forces means that the two are in competition with one another, the one overstepping the other. We might imagine the competition as a race, with the two forces going beyond one another on a straight line. But, the image of the competition does not really emphasize the back and forth of the two forces; it does not really capture the idea of them as forces. Therefore we could also imagine contradictory character as a kind of transgression, as a border-crossing. If we understand the “contra” of “contradiction” in its logical sense, then we must say that the two forces are the negation of one another.

Or, taking up Heidegger’s discourse on the “*Ereignis*,” we could say that, even though the two forces are appropriate (*geeignet*) to one another, the one dis-appropriates (*enteignen*) itself into the other. Through the language of appropriation and disappropriation, we have retained the negative relation. But also we see now that the relation between the two forces—the one dis-appropriates itself into the other like an infection—is one of “pain.”¹⁸ The two forces are trying to annihilate one another. The self-contact of the two forces is a struggle, and the distance between them is not a threshold (as Heidegger would say), but a battlefield. Therefore by pursuing the implications of the description of auto-affection, we have entered into what we could call, following Deleuze, chaos, or, following Derrida, we could call it fundamental violence.¹⁹

The paradoxical relation of the two forces has taken us very far from the apparently peaceful experience of my own interior monologue. In light of how far we have come, how should we now characterize the experience? Not only did we speak of the two forces in terms of contradiction, but also we spoke of them in terms of necessities. Indeed, could there be a force that did not build up and demand or even command its discharge? It is as if the forces are saying to one another: “Singularize! No, universalize!” and “Universalize! No, singularize!” These two commandments

¹⁸ These comments on Heidegger and the *Ereignis* are based on a reading of his 1950 “Die Sprache,” Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe, Band 12, Unterwegs zur Sprache* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976), 25. The essay “Die Sprache” has been translated into English by Albert Hofstader as “Language,” *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 203. I have developed an in-depth reading of Heidegger’s “Language” essay in my *Early Twentieth Century Continental Philosophy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011).

¹⁹ For chaos, see Deleuze, *Logique du sens*, 129–31; *Logic of Sense*, 106–107. See also Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991), 44–45; English translation by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell as *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 42. For fundamental violence, see Jacques Derrida, “Violence et métaphysique,” *L'écriture et la différence*, 117–227, especially, 171–72 and 191–92; English translation by Alan Bass as “Violence and Metaphysics,” *Writing and Difference*, 79–153, especially, 116–17 and 130–31.

must be obeyed, and yet they cannot be obeyed. In other words, the two commandments cannot be reconciled. The impossibility of reconciliation tells us how to characterize the experience we have entered into. It is the experience of injustice. It is impossible to make the relation right or just. Does the experience of the impossibility of justice imply that the two forces are *strong*, too strong not to be obeyed? The answer to this question will not only reveal one more way to characterize the experience, but it will also tell us something about the forces themselves.

We must return to the structure which the description of auto-affection implies. What defines the structure is the necessary inseparability of the two forces. A moment ago, I said that I think that an eidetic variation would be able to demonstrate the necessity of the present speaking coming second, as if it is always a response to the past. You can see in this wording—“always a response to the past”—that the eidetic variation really concerns the experience of time.²⁰ So let us imagine any experience in any domain. We could imagine an experience in the domain of the everyday, in the practical, the arts, the theoretical sciences, or in mathematics. No matter what the experience and no matter what the domain, we see that, each and every time, the experience involves a before and an after. As we imagine a variety of experiences, we never find an experience in which there is a before with no other before prior to it; likewise, we never find an after that does not have another after coming later than it. In other words, it is not possible to imagine a present moment or a now-point that does not come after a previous point and that does not remember a past moment. No matter what now-point I think of, there is always a prior retention.

Likewise, it is not possible to imagine a retention that does not come before and that does not anticipate another now-point. In other words, there is no repetition without the supervenience of a singularity and there is no singularity without the supervenience of universality. If this imaginative exercise has disclosed a truth about the structure, then we must say that, within the structure, it is impossible to speak of

²⁰ Although I am using a method from classical phenomenology, I am trying to make the method have an effect not just on the objective side of the variation but also on the subjective side of the variation. In other words, when I vary to determine a structure, I am also trying to make that variation change the one engaged in act of variation. I am here following a clue provided by Foucault in his course called *L'Hermeneutique du sujet*: “Meditating death (*meditari, meletan*), in the sense that the Greeks and Latins understand this ... is placing oneself, in thought, in the situation of someone who is in the process of dying, or who is about to die, who is living his last days. The meditation is not therefore a game the subject plays on his own thought, with the object or possible objects of his thought. It is not something like eidetic variation, as we would say in phenomenology. A completely different kind of game is involved: not a game the subject plays with his own thought or thoughts, but a game that thought performs on the subject himself. It is becoming, through thought, the person who is dying or whose death is imminent.” Michel Foucault, *L'Hermeneutique du sujet, Cours au Collège de France, 1981–1982* (Paris: Seuil Gallimard, 2001), 342; English translation by Graham Burchell as *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 359–60. In Husserl, an eidetic variation results in an eidetic intuition. What Foucault is implying here is that the phenomenological eidetic intuition does not transform the subject doing the variation and having the intuition. In contrast, the intuition I am trying to bring about, like meditation in this sense, is supposed to transform the subject.

an origin in the traditional sense, a principle (or *arché*), a unitary starting point, complete in itself, an unprecedented beginning. Instead, the origin is always *origin-heterogeneous*, that is, the origin is heterogeneous from the start or what starts is itself heterogeneous to the very idea of origin.²¹ Likewise, if there is always another singularity beyond every repetition, then we cannot speak of an end in the traditional sense, a purpose (or *telos*), a unitary stopping point, complete in itself, with nothing left over. Instead, the end is always *end-heterogeneous*, that is, the end is in the end, finally, heterogeneous or what finishes is heterogeneous to the very idea of an end. In short, there is no original principle and there is no final purpose.

The lack of an original principle and of a final purpose always tells us something about the forces. A strong force would be one that is based on a principle from which it would derive all of its functions or it would be based on a purpose toward which it would orient all of its functions. Because the two forces function *without* an *arché* and *without* a *telos*, we *cannot* describe these forces at the bottom of auto-affection as strong. They are *weak* precisely because they are neither archeological nor teleological. Yet, despite their weakness, the forces continue to work, to function, and to struggle in the depths of the ultra-transcendental.

The Experience of the Event

We reached the ultra-transcendental level by following the phenomenological method of the universal epochē. It was as if we had merely “leaped” out of the natural attitude into the depth of the experience, a leap made possible by “our perfect freedom,” as Husserl says in *Ideen I*(§31). Yet, later in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserl says that this “shorter way” of the leap into the transcendental level—this is the Cartesian way, of course—has “a great shortcoming.”²² The shortcoming, for Husserl, lies in the fact that the shorter way places us in an experience that seems to lack any content. Then, because it lacks content, it is “all too easy right at the beginning to fall back into the naïve-natural attitude.”²³ Thus in the Cartesian way, it is not clear that one is not copying the

²¹ I have appropriated “origin-heterogeneous” from Derrida. Jacques Derrida, *De l'esprit* (Paris: Galilée, 1987), 176–78; English translation by Geoff Bennington and Rachel Bowlby as *Of Spirit* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), 107–108.

²² Edmund Husserl. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Husserliana VI (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), §43; English translation by David Carr as *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), §43. Ludwig Landgrebe’s “Husserls Abschied vom Cartesianismus,” *Der Weg der Phänomenologie* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohr, 1967) helped me a great deal in the writing of this paragraph. See Ludwig Landgrebe, “Husserl’s Departure from Cartesianism,” *The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl*, ed. Donn Welton (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 66–121, especially 98–99.

²³ Husserl. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft*, §43; *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental*, §43.

transcendental level off the naïve level of natural experience. It is not clear that one has escaped a vicious circle. As we further know from *Die Krisis*, Husserl thinks that a “preparatory explication” of the *epochē* is necessary to avoid this shortcoming. In other words, we must engage in a criticism of the history of philosophy in order to show how the transcendental level differs from all other philosophical positions. In short, something like a genealogy is required to show us how to reach the ultra-transcendental experience.

Yet, in order to escape the vicious circle, something else is required. If the *epochē* or even the genealogy is taken up on the basis of “our perfect freedom,” it amounts to an act of will. In an act of will, one is directed toward something one already has a sense of. One projects a series of means in order to reach a goal that one has outlined in advance. The will always seems therefore to be about recognition. Therefore, once again, we have not escaped the vicious circle: we reach only that which we had projected ahead of time, something we are able to re-cognize. Through an act of will, no change occurs in me: at the other end of the action, I find myself again. In other words, I have not become other, I am not thinking otherwise. Unlike an act of will, what is required is an experience that is *undergone*, a negative experience that throws all accepted opinions into question. It is only through such an *involuntary epochē* that the phenomenological attitude can become, as Husserl wanted, a vocation. In this way alone, can it become a complete, personal transformation, like a “religious conversion.”²⁴ It must start from the violence of being struck blind, like Paul on the road to Damascus.²⁵

Perhaps, however, we can start from a simpler experience than Paul on the road to Damascus. Let us take another clue (our third) from Plato, from Book VII in the *Republic* (522c–524b).²⁶ Appearing after the allegory of the cave, there is a well-known illustration. The illustration is supposed to answer the question of what sensation would motivate one to ascend from the depths of the cave. In other words, Socrates is trying to tell Glaucon how certain kinds of sensations provoke “thought” (here again the word is “*dianoia*”). The sensation is *not*, Socrates stresses, that of things “far away”; the sensation is *not* “shadow paintings.” It is simply the sensation of Socrates’ hand being held up to Glaucon’s vision. In particular, it is Socrates’ hand composed of only three fingers, the index, the middle, and the little finger.

The question is not whether the fingers held up are fingers; the question is not whether Glaucon is able to recognize these fingers as fingers.²⁷ Instead, the question is whether the middle finger is big or small. It seems to be at once both big (in relation

²⁴ Husserl. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaft*, §35; *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental*, §35.

²⁵ See “Acts of the Apostles,” Chapter 9.

²⁶ I have used the Shorey English translation and the Bloom English translation of the *Republic*. Plato, Republic II, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987). Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans., Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1968).

²⁷ Deleuze, *Proust et les signes* (Paris: Quadrigé Presses Universitaires de France, 1996 [1964]), 122–23; English translation by Richard Howard as *Proust and Signs. The Complete Text* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 100–01.

to the pinky finger) and small (in relation to the index finger). The sensation of the middle finger is a *mixture* of big and small. According to Plato (through Socrates' mouth), it is this simultaneously contradictory sensation that provokes thought. The type of sensation Plato is pointing toward is the paradox of mixtures. Indeed, Socrates choice of the fingers indicates something more than the mixture of big and small. It also indicates the mixture of sensing and sensed, since the hand, as Merleau-Ponty knew best of all, both touches and can be touched.²⁸

There is a duplicity to the very experience of the hand that makes the sensation of touching itself paradoxical.²⁹ When one clasps two hands together, it is not possible to determine whether the hand touching is not also the hand being touched. Which is the actor and which is the patient, which is the beginning and which is the end? Such paradoxes—like the Sorites paradox of the large and the small, but also the paradox of auto-affection with which we started—plunge thought into unlimited becoming.³⁰ It is from the depth of these mixtures that thought must emerge. And, just as Plato knew, when thought emerges from these mixtures, it no longer possesses its former opinions, it no longer possesses the attitudes with which it finds itself naturally. Here with these double sensations, we have *para-doxa* against the *doxa*.

This whole experience of the hand, however, even with all of its facets, does not bring us to the experience of the event. Socrates holding his hand in front of his student Glaucon is too friendly. My clasping your hand in a handshake is not disturbing. These experiences have no danger to them. However, we know the dangers involved in the experience of alcohol and of hallucinogenic drugs. Indeed, Deleuze (both when he writes alone and when he writes with Guattari) has more than suggested that these experiences might have a philosophical function. He suggests a philosophical function for drunkenness because, for Deleuze, the event is like a plague, a wound, or a battle (LS 177/151). In fact, Deleuze says, “the battle is not one example of an event among others..., [it is] the [event] in its essence” (LS 122/100).³¹ The battle is the event in its essence because, *first*, it involves mixtures, deep mixtures down in the battlefield, mixtures in this case of bodies, the soldiers clashing. The mixtures consist in accidents and chance encounters. The accidents and chances taken make the battle singular, unlike any other battle. Here we have the force of singularity that we described earlier. However, a series of chance accidents does not make an event. If the event were nothing more than a series of accidents, it would indeed be the simple equivalent to drunkenness.

There is a *second* reason why the battle is the event in its essence. Due to the chance mixtures of bodies on the battlefield, a soldier comes to be mortally wounded.

²⁸ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le visible et l'invisible* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), chapter 4; English translation by Alphonso Lingis as *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), chapter 4.

²⁹ John Sallis, *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1986), 430.

³⁰ Sorites paradoxes are at the heart of Deleuze's *Logique du sens*.

³¹ Deleuze capitalizes the word “event” in the phrase “Event in its essence.”

Being caused by the mixture, the wound is an effect. It is the effect of the soldier risking his life in the abyss of the battle; he has risked and lost. Due to the mortal wound, the soldier has become aware, painfully aware that he is going to die. The awareness, however, releases him from the causes of the battle. His wound blinds him to the means and the purposes of the battle. The blindness however releases the soldier enough to able to see the battle in its unlimitedness hovering above the battlefield. What does the soldier see? It is not the vision of his personal death; it is the vision of impersonal death.³² The soldiers, whose names he does not know, they never finish up with dying (LS 178/152). It is the vision of incessant dying and being lost—and not just incessant dying of soldiers with unknown names, but also animals perishing and countrysides and cities being destroyed. It is the vision of life in its endless struggle with death. This vision is why the event is horrifying. In this intuition, chaos has risen from the depths to the surface. Because the surface that the vision sees—like a plane—never comes to an end, the vision itself cannot be grasped. It is this vision of death never ceasing, never ending, never accomplishing itself, never making itself be over once and for all, this vision cannot be thought. The inability to stop the struggle is the impotence of the event. It is, however, a powerlessness that clearly includes a kind of power.

So far, we have seen that the experience of the event involves two features. On the one hand, it involves the depth of mixtures, chance relations of cause and effect, accidents, which make the battle unlike any other. This is the force of singularization. On the other hand, however, there is the force of universalization. Through the effect of being wounded, one is forced to see, intuit, have a vision of the battle; the battle rises to the surface and is no longer limited to the accidents. Without end, incessantly singularities pass away, as if a plague is taking place. There is, however, a third feature of the experience of the event. *It is the most important feature.* The mortally wounded soldier has no choice in relation to the two forces we have just described. The effect of the battle is that he is dying and others are incessantly dying. Although the vision of the battle's incessant deaths cannot be grasped, cannot be thought, the unthinkable must be thought, the ingraspable must be grasped. Due to the force of universalization, something remains of the singularities as they pass away.

In this moment of grace between life and death, the mortally wounded soldier is able to effectuate the battle differently, *against* the incessant deaths being caused in the battle. *Counter* to the accidental, *de facto* characteristics of the battle, he is able to select traits that are ideal and *de jure*. In other words, he is able to create an ideal sense of the battle. In still other words, he is able to create a philosophical concept or an artwork. Responding to the vision, the mortally wounded soldier, through the selection of traits, a selection that is like a single act of violence, includes all violence and all mortal events in one single event—a book, a speech, a picture, a song, or a concept—that denounces and deposes all violence and all death (LS 179/152–153).

³² Deleuze cites Maurice Blanchot, *L'Espace littéraire* (Paris: Folio Essais Gallimard, 1955), 160; English translation by Ann Smock as *The Space of Literature* (Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 123.

The mortally wounded soldier must write the story of the battle—in order to liberate it, as Deleuze says, “always for other times” and “to make us go farther than we would have ever believed possible.”³³

This third feature of the experience of the event amounts to what Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* calls “counter-effectuation.” Effectuation, which is the deep, accidental mixture of bodies, takes place in the present. The counter-effectuation in the artwork, in a novel, in a concept, makes the battle “eternal.” The counter-effectuation is “eternal” not in the sense of an eternal present that never changes or of a circle of time that constantly returns to the present. The experience of the event is “eternal” in the sense of being non-present, that is, it is the experience of the openness of an unlimited past and future (LS 78/61). The experience of the event is no longer simply the present of effectuation; instead, the battle is always to come and already passed. That is, as an ideal sense, the battle appears to lack an origin; but also, as an ideal sense, it exceeds all actual fulfillments. In this sense, the event has never taken place and never will take place. What is the experience of the event? It is the grasping in a work of the ungraspable vision of incessant struggle: endless fundamental violence. The terrible nature of the event means that we really do not know, in the strong sense, what happened and what is going to happen. Although we cannot develop it here, this non-knowledge (in the strict sense of non-presence) has profound ethical implications.

³³ (LS 188/161) I have argued for the importance of writing (either a story or a philosophical concept) in Deleuze’s thought, and in particular to his concept of becoming in my “Following the Rats: An Essay on the Concept of Becoming-Animal in Deleuze and Guattari,” *Sub-Stance, The Political Animal* 117/37/3 (2008): 169–187.

Chapter 28

Thoughts on the Translation of Husserl's *Ideen, Erstes Buch*

Fred Kersten

1

I was given my first copy of Husserl's *Ideen I* as a present when I graduated from college. It was the *Husserliana* edition, edited by Walter Biemel. When reading it for the first time, using the critical appendices, I bracketed out Biemel's additions of Husserl's comments, and, for all practical purposes, restored the original edition of the text. Then, as now, I thought it the best book in philosophy I had read since Locke's *Essay* and Hume's *Treatise*. And I read *Ideen I* in the same way I read Locke and Hume at the time: I wrote out what I thought they were talking about, tried to see what they were talking about in ways similar to what they ostensibly saw. In the case of Husserl, writing out what I thought he was talking about meant translating a good deal of *Ideen* into English.

After graduating from college I went on to graduate school studying with Dorion Cairns, Aron Gurwitsch, and Alfred Schutz among others. That study certainly broadened and deepened my understanding of Husserl's *Ideen I* as well as the earlier and later works of Husserl I studied at the time. From the earlier and later works, under the guidance of my teachers, I learned to see much more in *Ideen I* than previously afforded me. So far as possible, I tried to bring *Ideen I* up to the level of analysis of the later work.

Once I had finished my doctorate, and began teaching, my study of *Ideen I* had reached a point where I thought I could begin a translation into English, at first and chiefly for my own use in teaching graduate courses, but then for a more general academic public. It was the latter project that led me to make the translation now in print. As I wrote in my Introduction to the translation, to make the translation acceptable as a published scholarly work I went to great length to compare my translation,

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line by line with fragmentary drafts for a translation made by Dorion Cairns, with the existing English translation by Boyce Gibson, the French translation by Paul Ricoeur, and the Spanish translation by José Gaos. I also had the benefit of the *Guide for Translating Husserl* of Dorion Cairns, to which I made many additions, emendations, and some corrections.

Around this time I was able to acquire a nice first edition of *Ideen I*, and was in possession of the marvelous edition for *Husserliana* edited by Karl Schuhmann.

2

By the time I came to offer the translation¹ for publication, on and off, I had spent some 20 years with Husserl's text, and felt ready enough to prepare a clean type-written version of the translation which I felt was also consistent with Cairns' English translations of *Cartesianische Meditationen* and *Formale und transzendentale Logik*. The translation is based on the first edition published in Husserl's *Jahrbuch*. In some footnotes, and in several appendices, I also included some of Husserl's marginal notes and supplementary material that was published by Walter Biemel and Karl Schuhmann in their editions of *Ideen I* in the *Husserliana* series. The editions, and how they are treated in the translation, are fully described in the introduction to the translation.

Although it would be impossible to emulate Husserl's style, still I thought that in English I could present an accessible and plausible text in a consistently "Husserlian" fashion that preserved and remained faithful to Husserl's distinctions and expressed his thought and observations in such a way that they conform to the things themselves Husserl sought to describe. In any case, translating the book I tried to keep as close to Husserl's language as possible and above all tried to express what he saw in writing the book.

Even so I still had my doubts and uncertainties. Until I could resolve them, or at least make my peace with them, it seemed a good idea to put the translation on the back burner (more accurately, in the bottom left-hand drawer of my desk) and let it simmer for a while. There it remained for several years. Unfortunately, around that time, there were personal problems that arose as well as problems of promotion. In short, I needed to publish something more substantial than peer-reviewed articles. The only substantial finished work I had on hand was the translation of *Ideen I*. So off it went to Martinus Nijhoff, the publisher of Husserl's writings at the time. I was gratified that it was accepted, prepared yet another typescript and sent it on. So far so good, although two major difficulties lay in the way of publication.

The first difficulty was that Boyce Gibson's translation from 1931 was still under copyright. The arrangement was made that I would cede about half of any royalties

¹ *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Book I, trans. Frederick Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1983).

I might receive to Boyce Gibson's estate, and that publication of Boyce Gibson's translation would cease. As far as I can tell, that translation nevertheless is still in print. It is, of course, difficult to offer a new translation of a book which already exists in a famous translation, long accepted as an accurate expression of Husserl's thought. Thus, we now have two translations into English of Husserl's book, which, it seems to me, is really all to the good: the English reader can choose and compare. And if both are insufficient, there is no reason why yet another cannot be published. Every generation, after all, needs its own translations.

The second difficulty was that the translation was the first book the publisher was to prepare for printing using a computer. Unfortunately, the publisher's transfer of the typescript to computer posed a variety of problems. A good part of the problem lay in the early software used by the publisher: for instance, a misspelled word on one page would reappear in a sentence on another page. Or if a word in a sentence was eliminated on one page, the word would be added to a sentence on another page. A garbled sentence or paragraph on one page might reappear several pages later. And when I would correct the weird transpositions, almost always they would end up somewhere else in the text. In addition, there were the inevitable misspellings of words in English which had to be corrected. I think I have said enough to furnish the picture.

And, of course, the more sets of page proofs, the more errors there were in the publisher's transcribing of the typescript to the computer. Correcting page proofs soon became a nightmare! I could never get the computerized text fully corrected, and gave up after going through eight sets of page proofs. I tried to get an errata sheet published with the book, but was informed by the publisher that the publisher does not make errors. Fortunately the publisher agreed eventually to publish a paperback edition of the translation in which, by then, the software used accommodated correction of many of the errors which were silently corrected.

3

Despite its imperfect printing, the translation has sold fairly well over the years. Its reception, however, went from lukewarm and too literal to outright rejection for being nothing more than a dictionary-derived translation. And in one case, in a German review, I was accused of single-handedly destroying Western metaphysics and of ruining the reception of the great philosopher in the English-speaking world. Why a German journal would review an English translation I do not know, nor do I know how I accomplished such an incredible feat. I was saddened to think I had impaired Husserl's reputation as a thinker, though heartened to think that Western metaphysics finally got the kick in the pants it richly deserved. The academic and scholarly world is certainly full of surprises. As I said in the introduction to the translation, a translation is only that: a translation. It purports to be nothing more.

Even so, reading the translation over so many years later my conscience is clear. I still think that it is a good, readable translation that allows the reader ample opportunity to see the things Husserl discusses and to confirm, or to disconfirm,

what he describes within the domain of phenomenology. Too, I have been fortunate since its publication that many readers and colleagues have generously furnished me with corrections, emendations, and suggested improvements in the translation, many of which could be included in a second edition of the translation should the present publisher be interested.

4

What I have been able to learn from the First Book of *Ideen* is represented in many published writings, but especially my book, *Phenomenology: Theory and Practice* based on the First Book of *Ideen* and its Introduction to the projected three books of *Ideen*. I have since prepared a second edition of this book under its original title, *Space, Time and Other*, with corrections, revisions, and additional material. The book embodies a reading of the First Book of *Ideen* as viewed from the standpoint of Husserl's later works, mainly *Formale und transzendentale Logik* and *Cartesianische Meditationen*. That means that, for the most part, the *Husserlian*, rather than Husserl's, phenomenology of concern to me is an eidetic, e.g. pure *phenomenological idealism*. One of the several main purposes of the book is to show that. Almost from the very beginning, Husserl was overtly concerned to develop an eidetic, transcendentally pure phenomenological idealism in his special sense of "idealism" and to establish its limits.

I should add that eidetic, transcendentally pure phenomenological idealism is the main active ingredient, as pharmaceuticals say, in most of my other publications on phenomenology and phenomenological philosophy. I mention this because one of the points I make in *Phenomenology: Theory and Practice* is that, although focusing on eidetic, transcendentally pure phenomenological *idealism*, nowhere does Husserl reject a phenomenological *realism*. And perhaps this is the crux of the matter. However, following a suggestion of Herbert Spiegelberg, instead of considering the difference in terms of "idealism" and "realism" it may be more fruitful to consider the difference in terms of "transcendental" and "non-transcendental" phenomenologies.²

There is nothing in the "transcendental phenomenology" that precludes a realism, nor is the realism any less or more purely descriptive, eidetic phenomenology. Further evidence of this is Husserl's willingness to include in publication of his *Jahrbuch* essays that would certainly count as cases of "non-transcendental" phenomenological *realism*.³

Immediate and obvious examples are Pfänder's studies of will and striving, of "sentiments" (Vols. 1, 3), and logic (Vol. 4); Reinach's essay on civil law (Vol. I); Geiger's several essays on aesthetic enjoyment and art (Vol. I); Paul Linke's essay

² See Herbert Spiegelberg, "How Subjective is Phenomenology?" *Essays in Phenomenology*, ed., Maurice Natanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 138.

³ See *ibid.*, pp. 138 f. for the "peculiar phenomenological realism" they develop.

on the perception of motion (Vol. 2); Hermann Ritzel's essay on analytic judgments (Vol. 3); Conrad-Martius's several essays on ontology of the external world (Vols. 3, 6, 10); Dietrich von Hildebrand's several essays on ethics (Vol. 3, 5); Arnold Metzger's essay on epistemology (Vol. 7); Jean Hering's essay on essence, essentiality and idea (Vol. 4); and Herbert Spiegelberg on the nature and ontology of Idea, on law, and ethics (Vol. 11).⁴

To be sure, there are many separate publications by those authors. Still other writers whose work might be classed under the general heading of "non-transcendental" phenomenological realism are Wilhelm Schapp⁵ on the phenomenology of perception, Heinrich Hofmann's essay on sensations⁶ (which gave rise to a long review of Husserl's *Ideen* and phenomenology by the Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset⁷), Theodor Conrad's essay on the eidetic theory of mental life,⁸ and one of my favorites, Herbert Leyendecker's wonderful essay on the phenomenology of illusion.⁹ Of course one can make up one's own list where, under the influence of the First Book of Husserl's *Ideen*, writers laid out a phenomenological realism. And, to be sure, the list is equally long of those who set forth a phenomenological idealism. Perhaps as well many who did both.

Although, as I said, eidetic, transcendently, or non-transcendentally pure phenomenologies may not exclude each other, there remains the question of the relationship between them. It does not seem to me to be the case that the one is implicitly the other, nor does the one entail in some sense the other. Can the one be "translated" into the other? Do they each in their own way disclose different phenomenological domains? Do they somehow "overlap"? Or is the one "naïve" with respect to the other?

How do we proceed to resolve these (and similar) questions? Is it simply a matter of comparing pure phenomenological descriptions of the ostensibly "same" state of affairs? Even if we are successful in doing that, seeing in what ways the descriptions are similar and different, what do we do then? Reconcile or unite them in some "meta-phenomenological" account? How do we know we are even talking about the "same" thing? After all, for those of a "realist" persuasion in phenomenology Husserl's "idealism" in the First Book of *Ideen* smacks of the very metaphysics Husserl sought to avoid in the first place in launching his phenomenology.¹⁰

⁴ A bibliography as well as brief reviews of these *Yearbook* essays can be found in Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement. A Historical Introduction*, Third Revised and Enlarged Edition, with the Collaboration of Karl Schuhmann (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982).

⁵ Wilhelm Schapp, *Beiträge zur Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung* (Göttingen: W. Fr. Kaestner, 1910).

⁶ Heinrich Hofmann, "Untersuchungen über den Empfindungsbegriff," *Archiv für die gesamte Psychologie* XXVI (1913): 1–135.

⁷ José Ortega y Gasset, "Sobre el concepto de sensación," *Obras Completas*, Vol. 1, (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1950), 245–261. This essay was originally published in 1913.

⁸ Theodor Conrad, *Zur Wesenslehre des psychischen Lebens und Erleben* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968).

⁹ Herbert Leyendecker, *Zur Phänomenologie der Täuschungen* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1913).

¹⁰ Cf. Herbert Spiegelberg, "How Subjective is Phenomenology?" *loc. cit.*, pp. 140 ff.

To say the least, Husserl's phenomenological collaborators and colleagues viewed the “idealism” of *Ideen* with considerable suspicion. And from outside the phenomenological circle there was critical issue taken with phenomenological idealism. For example, Paul Natorp's sympathetic but critical review of *Ideen*, or perhaps also the sympathetic but likewise critical account provided by Georg Misch from yet another angle, that of the “school” of Dilthey.¹¹ Too, there is the much less sympathetic criticism of the Rickert “school” of Rudolf Zocher and Friedrich Kreis, famously reviewed by Eugen Fink.¹² Finally it is worth mentioning the interesting collection of readings assembled by Roderick Chisholm under the heading of *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology*.¹³ Here the case for phenomenological “realism” is set by Brentano and Meinong, expanded to Husserl's non-German contemporaries that include not only H.A. Prichard, but the American “New Realists,”¹⁴ Samuel Alexander, Bertrand Russell, Arthur Lovejoy and G.E. Moore.

And, in more recent times, Herbert Spiegelberg did not hesitate in remarking that *transcendental* phenomenology was a dead end from the beginning, rejected as much by Husserl's colleagues and fellow phenomenologists as, early on, by his many students.¹⁵ It is, of course, bad enough to be misjudged by one's peers, but even worse to be so judged by one's students. Transcendental phenomenology, it would seem, has never been approved without gross qualification.

5

For the record, it is worthwhile sketching very briefly my own view of the matter. In his *Logische Untersuchungen*, second edition, and in *Ideen*, Introduction and First Book, Husserl develops the view (1) that there is an *a priori* of “Consciousness,” as well as of its objects of any sort you please; (2) that therefore a non-formal or

¹¹ Paul Natorp, “Husserl's 'Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie,'” *Logos* VII (1917/18): 224–246; Georg Misch, *Lebensphilosophie und Phänomenologie. Eine Auseinandersetzung der Dilthey'schen Richtung mit Heidegger und Husserl* (Berlin and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1931). For a discussion of Natorp and Husserl, see Fred Kersten, “The Occasion and Novelty of Husserl's Phenomenology of Essence,” *Essays in Honor of Herbert Spiegelberg*, Philip Bossert ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975), 61–92.

¹² Eugen Fink, “Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik,” *Kant-Studien* 38 (1933): 319–383. (English translation in *The Phenomenology of Husserl. Selected Critical Readings*, R.O. Elveton ed. (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 73–145. Elveton's Introduction discusses the various criticisms of Husserl's “idealism” by Husserl's contemporaries (e.g., Reinach, Conrad-Martius).

¹³ Roderick M. Chisholm, *Realism and the Background of Phenomenology* (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press of Glencoe, Illinois, 1960).

¹⁴ E.B. Holt, W.T. Marvin, W.P. Montague, R.B. Perry, W.B. Pitkin, E.G. Spaulding.

¹⁵ See the exchange between Calvin Schrag and Herbert Spiegelberg in *The Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, II., No. 3 (October, 1980): 281 ff.; and Theodor Celms, *Der phänomenologische Idealismus Husserls* (Riga: Acta Universitatis Latviensis, XIX, 1928), Chapter VI.

“material” eidetic science of consciousness itself is possible and can be progressively realized; (3) that the definite conditions of the ideal possibility and compossibility of the operations of consciousness can be directly seized upon in reflection and formulated in universally valid and necessary laws; and (4) that the *only* assumption required to legitimize 1–3 is that one’s own consciousness is a possible *empirical* instance or exemplification of the *Eidos*, consciousness. By exercising phenomenological epochē on the assumption, extending the resultant “reductions” or “discriminations” to the limit, one arrives at a “subject-related” though not a “subject-dependent” account of the transcendental constituting of the world.

Expressed in formally objective, logical terms, this means that the necessary conditions for the ideal possibility and compossibility of specific acts or operations of consciousness prove to be necessary conditions for the ideal possibility and compossibility of objects experienced and constituted in consciousness of them. The eidetic conditions are, therefore, universally valid conditions for the possibility and compossibility of constituting any Objects you please, whether they be things or Ideas (or “essences,” or “universals”). Moreover, the propositions and judgments of and about the constituting of the universe of the ideal possibility and compossibility of any objects you please are independent of any constituting of factual matters. The positing of factual matters in no way validates or invalidates propositions and judgments of an eidetic science. Eidetic propositions and judgments exclusively concern the constituting of ideal possibilities and compossibilities. They do not concern the constituting of factual matters *per se*. This novel twist in Husserl’s thinking is perhaps best expressed in the second edition of *Logische Untersuchungen*, worked out a year before in the first book of *Ideen*:

...phenomenology is not descriptive psychology: its peculiar “pure” description, its contemplation of pure essences on a basis of exemplary individual intuitions of experience (often freely imagined ones), and its descriptive fixation of the contemplated essences into pure concepts, is no empirical scientific description. It rather excludes the natural performance of all empirical (naturalistic) apperceptions and positings. Statements of descriptive psychology regarding “perceptions,” “judgments,” “feelings,” “volitions,” etc., use such names to refer to the real states of animal organisms in a real natural order, just as descriptive statements concerning physical states deal with happenings in a nature not imagined but real. All general statements have here a character of empirical generality: they hold for *this* nature. Phenomenology, however, does not discuss states of animal organisms...but perceptions, judgments, feelings *as such*, and what pertains to them *a priori* with unlimited generality, as *pure* instances of *pure* species, of what may be seen through a purely intuitive apprehension of essence, whether generic or specific.¹⁶

Here and in the continuation of this passage Husserl develops the view that ideas, essences, are seen and apprehended in a manner generically alike but specifically different from the way in which real individual things are perceived and apprehended. We may expand his view here in terms of five points:

¹⁶ Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen* II, 1 (Halle a.d. S: Max Niemeyer, 1928), 17 ff.; English translation, Vol. I, trans. J. N. Findlay (New York: The Humanities Press, 1970), 261.

First, the seeing of an essence or *Eidos* is founded on actual or imagined (feigned) perceiving of *individual exemplifications*. Indeed, the founding stratum can be as much an actual as an imagined (feigned) perceiving, as it can be a recollecting of a perceiving. This means that I do not have to see any particular colors, for instance, to see and seize upon the universal, Color. But I still have to feign the perceiving of colors to do so.

Second, there is no analogue in perceiving for the structure manifest in the seeing of essences or *Eide*, hence there is no “*empirical, scientific description*” of them.

Third, in the case of perception, the perceived is something real, i.e., in space and time. In contrast, space and time are utterly unimportant for the seeing of essences. The clear recollecting of an essence, for instance, as previously seen, is forthwith a clear seeing of that essence with as much originality as before. Thus even though we speak of seeing essences, that need not signify that we also speak of an original acquisition of essences any more than the generic likeness and specific difference of seeing essences and seeing real individual things means that we must also therefore speak of an analogy between those two seeings.

Fourth, with respect to perception there is a clear-cut distinction between actually seeing something, for example, and feigning the seeing of that something. Accordingly, I can speak of seeing possible actual and feigned real individuals. In contrast, the distinction is unimportant for seeing essences. It makes no difference whether I see or feign the seeing of them.

Fifth, and finally, in Husserl’s novel sense, *essences have no metaphysical meaning whatever because they are defined only over against fact. Rather than opposites, fact and essence are correlative concepts*.

In a word, all of the differences important for perception are not only unimportant for, but are also absent in, seeing essences. The only important difference among seeings of essences is that which obtains between those having actual and possible individual exemplifications, and those that do not. But that is only part of the story. Phenomenology, after all, defines itself with respect to other theoretical sciences, particularly those which proceed in the “natural theoretical attitude.” *The level of discourse is scientific* rather than pre-scientific.¹⁷ And natural scientific cognition begins with experience, and therefore cognition of realities in the usual sense and remains within experience in the usual sense of objectively seizing upon consciousness of real things. In other words, it is taken for granted that *natural* theoretical cognition only engages worldly, i.e., spatiotemporal, things and not “ideal” or transcendental things. Thus the *natural* theoretical attitude is contrasted with a (“transcendentally pure”) *phenomenological* theoretical attitude as well as *with an eidetic* theoretical attitude.

In other words, there are eidetic sciences of the natural attitude such as geometry, formal and logical disciplines. *In contrast*, phenomenology develops a (“transcendentally pure”) eidetic science as well. Phenomenological, theoretical eidetic sciences, then, are concerned with “universals” (or essences), with ideal possibilities

¹⁷ *Ideen* I, §1.

and compossibilities, the extension of which is not limited to factual matters or factual existence. Examples of such eidetic sciences are not only mathematical ones, such as geometry, but especially “material” or “non-formal” sciences coordinate with the eidetic science of consciousness. Examples are the so-called human sciences, which would include the social sciences and political philosophy in the *phenomenological*, not in the natural, theoretical attitude.¹⁸

More specifically, eidetic sciences study structures and relations of ideal possibilities and compossibilities which are independent of positing factual matters and existence. But this independence does not obtain for the factual matters themselves *with respect to* eidetic affairs. Every factual matter or occurrence is always presented with some content or other, with some determinate and further determinable description, with some properties and attributes or other—whether a utensil, an artwork, a perceptual or a sensory datum, or even social or political actions and relations. Thus every factual matter or occurrence in actual experience refers to a certain material or non-formal region which contains it. An eidetic science in the phenomenological theoretical attitude, then, has the further task of fashioning true propositions stating what is essentially possible, impossible, compossible, non-compossible or necessary in a given material region. A phenomenological eidetic science is made up of strictly universal propositions, open to no possible exception, and, thus, in a strict sense, contains no inductive generalizations or hypotheses.

¹⁸ See Husserl, *Ideas*, I, *loc. Cit.*, §§2–7, 15 ff. Theoretical sciences in the *natural attitude* include the *Geisteswissenschaften* and *Kulturwissenschaften* in so far as they are experiential sciences in the ordinary sense.

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