

PHENOMENOLOGY AS INTUITIVE SCIENCE

PHENOMENOLOGY  
AS  
INTUITIVE SCIENCE

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## ABSTRACT

This paper proposes to examine Husserl's claim to have initiated a genuinely scientific philosophy. For this purpose we have focused our attention on the method devised to realize this age-old ideal. In our investigation of the phenomenological method we have discussed almost exclusively that aspect which is most crucial, namely, the appeal to intuition. The thesis is, therefore, primarily a discourse on method and more specifically on the phenomenological method as a form of intuitionism.

In his attempt to make philosophy assume the role of a genuine science, Husserl seeks to lay the foundation for philosophy as a rigorous science. His appeal to intuition is precisely this laying of the foundation, and must, therefore, be the starting point for any discussion of phenomenology as rigorous science. More precisely, our examination aims at exploiting the basic relation Husserl finds between intuition and science. It is essentially a relation of dependence in that apart from a form of intuition, as the object-giving source, science, of whatever kind, could not get started. This being the case, Husserl's own genuine science of essential being depends on the recognition of a corresponding form of essential intuition. We shall attempt, largely through interpretative exposition, to examine this relation of dependence and its implications for phenomenology. In so doing we hope to put to the test Husserl's phenomenology as genuine science at its most crucial point. Hopefully, this will both clarify

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the way in which phenomenology is genuine science, and reaffirm Husserl's claim to have made first beginnings in this direction.

## PREFACE

From its inception to the contemporary moment, systematic thought in philosophy has seen a number of attempts to transform philosophy into a science—a discipline providing knowledge with an unbreachable and enduring foundation. A substantial portion of the history of philosophy has been this search for a certain, indubitable cognition, employing this or that method. The adoption of a new method, for example, the method of "clear and distinct ideas" outlined by Descartes, or Kant's "transcendental method", has most often accompanied the various attempts to transform philosophy into science.

In contemporary thought this tradition has been represented by two very influential tendencies. It has been asserted that if philosophy is confined to logical questions, then this ideal of being a rigorous science can be realized, and this has been the intent of the symbolic logic of the present century. On the other hand, at the beginning of our century, empirical naturalism sought criteria for the validity of knowledge in matter-of-fact, fact knowable through the senses. This meant the acceptance of these facts of nature as the only ground for judgement and the absolute rejection of all judgement alien to sense experience (Erfahrung) and set the framework for both scientific and philosophical inquiry.

However, Edmund Husserl, also at the beginning of this century, proposed another method to be employed in the attempt to make philosophy assume the role of a rigorous science. This, of course, is the

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phenomenological method. We propose to examine Husserl's claim to have made first beginnings of scientific work in philosophy through a consideration of this method.

The main principle of the phenomenological method demands that a return be made to "the things themselves". This means that one has to "see" the "things" as they are themselves. Phenomenology proceeds, in the final analysis, by "seeing". However, as we will be concerned to point out, the phenomenological "seeing" is quite different from a simple act of seeing. The act of phenomenological intuition is, as will be made clear, analogous to the seeing of particular things, but cannot be identified with this seeing.

What the phenomenological appeal to intuition means is the strict exclusion of all assertions which cannot be completely realized phenomenologically, that is, in terms of intuitive experience alone. According to the phenomenologist an "observation" of this kind is the necessary foundation of all true cognition, or, in other words, the primordial dator consciousness is the only legitimate source of knowledge. In this Husserl's philosophical principles are very similar to those of empirical naturalism; in both cases there is an appeal to the given, with this self-givenness accounting for the privileged position of objects given in this way. However, Husserl's phenomenology involves an extension of the realm of the self-given, beyond that which is ordinarily accepted, to include its own objects of investigation, namely, essences. It is precisely this extended and more basic concept of intuition or self-givenness which permits an investigation of essences to be rigorously scientific. This notion of intuition, therefore, assumes

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a most important role in any consideration of phenomenology as rigorous science, for the discipline itself is grounded in a particular species of intuition. Consequently, our paper, as an examination of phenomenology as genuine science, will deal primarily with Husserl's conception of intuition.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to Drs. Madison and Simpson for their cooperation and guidance given to me during the writing of this thesis. The willingness and patience of both these men is very much appreciated. Special thanks to Dr. Madison for his confidence. I would also like to express my appreciation to my wife, Marcia, for the kindness shown by her during the more anxious moments.

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## INTRODUCTION

Husserl has referred to himself as a perpetual beginner, and even as late as the Crisis, he felt it necessary to rethink his entire program for phenomenological philosophy. What an odd characterization, we might well remark, for a philosopher whose career had been as long and prolific as was Husserl's. However, the remark speaks not so much of Husserl's work itself, as it does of the far horizons of a phenomenological philosophy. Husserl has indeed opened up the "infinite open country of true philosophy"<sup>1</sup>. The spirit embodied in the problems and in their ensuing analyses forbids completion, and requires constant reworking and revision. Yet, despite the open character and incompleteness of these mere "beginnings of scientific work", we are able to achieve an understanding of Husserl's phenomenology. In this we are faced with obvious, but not insurmountable difficulties. We cannot, for one thing, approach his works as so many applications of an original program and method to various problems, nor can we uncover a strictly controlled development which would provide a scheme for the description of his philosophical endeavour. The development is made, as Husserl himself says, following a "zig-zag" course.<sup>2</sup>

This by no means suggests that Husserl has left us with a large volume of scattered fragments. On the contrary, his life-work can be said to be very programmatic, not in terms of development, but

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<sup>1</sup>  
E. Husserl, Ideas I, trans. by W.R. Boyce Gibson, (New York, 1962), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>  
E. Husserl, Logical Investigations, trans. by J.N. Findlay, (New York, 1970), vol. 1, p. 261.

in terms of certain unyielding commitments. Spiegelberg also finds that in order to comprehend Husserl's philosophical output we must begin with an appeal to certain constant themes. He says that Husserl's was a philosophy which remained constantly in the making. This, however, he goes on to say, does not exclude the persistence of certain constants throughout these changes. They consist of dynamic ideas, which may also explain Husserl's shifts from one phase to another. Spiegelberg describes the most important among them under the following headings: (1) the ideal of rigorous science, (2) the urge to go down to the sources, (3) the ethos of radical autonomy, (4) the "wonder of all wonders": subjectivity.<sup>3</sup> It is in the light of the first of these persistent themes that we will focus our attention while attempting to understand Husserl's phenomenology.

The constant failure of philosophy to become scientific, as for example, with Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, may well serve as a deterrent to following up any such attempt. However, for Husserl, this constant failure proved an incentive. Rather than conclude that philosophy abandon its misguided efforts to become scientific, Husserl, in "Philosophy as Rigorous Science", proclaims,

"The following arguments are based on the conviction that the highest interests of human culture demand the development of a rigorously scientific philosophy..."<sup>4</sup>

In the course of a long and prolific life of philosophical reflection there is little evidence that Husserl ever questioned the scientific ideal as such. It should be mentioned that Husserl's remark, "the

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<sup>3</sup>  
H. Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement. (The Hague, 1965), vol. 1, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup>  
E. Husserl, Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy. trans. by Q. Lauer, (New York, 1965), p. 78.

dream is over(der Traum ist ausgeträumt)" is often used in support of the claim that Husserl explicitly gave up in despair the ideal of rigorous science of philosophy. However, David Carr, in his introduction to the Crisis, maintains that the remark found in Appendix IX of the Crisis documents should not be taken as a repudiation of the scientific ideal, for the context makes clear that Husserl is attributing this to his age, and not asserting it himself.<sup>5</sup> This attempt at demonstrating Husserl's abandonment of the scientific ideal would seem, therefore, to remain inconclusive.

Understanding what Husserl means by "philosophy as rigorous science" is preliminary to and necessary for understanding what he means by "phenomenology". Following this course, we are lead to a basic distinction Husserl makes between science of "facts" and science of "essences", or, in more general terms, between "natural" science or science of direct sense experience and "philosophical" science. Each science, Husserl goes on to tell us, whether it be "natural" or "philosophical", has its own object domain as its field of research, and to all its correct assertions there correspond, as original sources of the reasoned justifications that support them, certain intuitions in which objects of the region appear as self-given, and in part at least, given in a primordial(originärer) sense.<sup>6</sup>

The object-giving or dator intuition of the first, "natural" sphere of knowledge and of all its sciences is perception, in the ordinary sense of the term. The acts of cognition which underlie our

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<sup>5</sup> E. Husserl, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. trans. by D. Carr, (Evanston, 1970), p. xxxi.

<sup>6</sup> E. Husserl, Ideas I. p. 45, sect. 1.

experiencing, that is, our perception, Husserl continues, posit the Real in individual form; posit it as having spatio-temporal existence, as something existing in this time-spot, having this particular duration of its own and a real content.<sup>7</sup> In other words, perception or direct experience, as Husserl points out, gives only singular elements, which are established through acts of cognition (judgements) as independent, objective realities, existing in a spatio-temporal framework. In this way "natural" knowledge makes strides. What perception offers is expressed in judgements, first in singular judgements and then in universal judgements, and from these judgements a move by means of induction and deduction is made to new knowledge. "Natural" science, in this way, progressively takes possession of a reality first existing for us as a matter of course and as something to be investigated continually as regards its extent, and content, its elements and its relations and laws. The total field of research, that is, the world, is a totality of objects that can be known through experience (Erfahrung) and known in terms of orderly theoretical thought on the basis of direct (aktueller) sense experience.<sup>8</sup> Following this description of "natural" science, Husserl proceeds to point out certain of the inadequacies in its approach. This critique will ultimately lead to a conception of "genuine" or "philosophical" science.

"Natural" science, as Husserl has said, and as is quite obvious, derives its data from immediate or direct experience, that is, perception, and has, therefore, singular elements with which to work. As such, it must rely on induction, and so generally on the system of mediate modes of inference to arrive at generalities (relations and laws).

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 46, sect. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

However, the modes of inference, themselves non-experiential, involve "natural" science, as Husserl points out, in "radical absurdity".<sup>9</sup>

On close inspection, therefore, it appears that "natural" knowledge starts from a complex of presuppositions which are not examined in the course of its own endeavour. In other words, "natural" knowledge is forgetful of its origins and is grounded on a number of unclarified assumptions, which include the reliance on mediate modes of inference, and the tacit assumption concerning the objective world which is taken or naïvely accepted as the field of research.

It should be emphasized that Husserl's criticism and that of phenomenology in this regard is not directed toward science of nature as such, but takes objection to a philosophy of science (scientism) which was popular around the early part of this century. We refer, of course, to what Husserl calls "naturalism". Specifically, when Husserl opposed "naturalism", he did not mean to plead for supernaturalism. Actually, he assigned the term a meaning of his own, namely, that of the view which sees the whole of the world as either physical or psychical, and hence to be explored merely by the natural sciences, including psychology. Spiegelberg agrees that protest against such a narrow conception of the range of science as defined by the objects of the traditional natural science does not imply a repudiation of natural science.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to "natural" science, or science of the "factual", Husserl conceives of a "genuine" science; science remaining "faithful" to its origins, a science which would justify each of its steps, a science which would reinforce the objective attitude of the scientist

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<sup>9</sup>  
 Ibid., p. 77, sect. 20, cf. also "Philosophical Presuppositions of Logic" by A. Gurwitsch in Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology, pp. 350-358.

<sup>10</sup>  
 H. Spiegelberg, p. 81, vol. 1.

with a reflective attitude, in short, a science reaching a true justification of cognition by means of a reflective examination of the subjective "activity" of cognition itself. Immediately problems of method arise; problems concerning the character of the corresponding dator intuition, problems concerning the object-domain or field of research, problems which when taken up will further define the science as "genuine" science. Let us follow Husserl in the taking up of these problems in the order they are set down.

"Underlying" individual or "factual" existence, which to speak generally, is "accidental", Husserl recognized "essential" existence. He points out, that the contingency of empirical existence is correlative to a "necessity" which does not carry the mere actuality status of a valid rule of connection between temporo-spatial facts, but has the character of essential necessity.<sup>11</sup> The reference to individual Being as "accidental" means precisely that essentially it (the individual) could be otherwise. According to Husserl, this expresses clearly that it belongs to the meaning of everything contingent that it should have essential being and therewith an "eidos" to be apprehended in all its purity. For Husserl, an individual is not simply and quite generally an individual, a "this-there", something unique, but a being constituted as a "thus and thus, in itself", and, as such, it has its own supply of essential characteristics which must qualify it qua Being as it is in itself. For example, for a sound to have a determined intensity, such and such pitch, a definite timbre, it must possess timbre, intensity, and pitch in general, that is, an ensemble of characteristics which evoke each other mutually and necessarily and which constitute the

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E. Husserl, Ideas I. p. 47, sect. 2.

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necessary structure of the sound. The essence, then, is the necessary structure of the object, that which makes an object into what it is, or that which, before each empirical characteristic trait of the object, makes it possible and understandable, in short, its principle. In this case "principle" does not mean the highest premise from which one can logically derive the contingent properties of the object, but that which makes the existence of the object possible: a structure without which it would be inconceivable. Husserl calls the essence an object, an object of a new type.

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The recognition of essences, as outlined above, provides the object-domain for a body of sciences concerned not with factual existence, but essential existence, that is, the eidetic sciences which are themselves absolutely independent from factual sciences. The eidetic sciences investigate a "new dimension of Being": the very conditions of empirical Being, the structure of the object without which it cannot be. Following this distinction between "natural" or factual sciences and eidetic sciences, another distinction must be made within the domain of eidetic sciences itself. The basis of this further distinction lies in another more basic difference, namely, that between generic essences, which have their scope within the flux of things, and exact ideal essences.

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Accordingly, on one side we have the familiar eidetic sciences, geometry and mathematics, which proceed not by description but by means of deduction. These eidetic sciences are "exact" eidetic sciences in Husserl's terminology. By this he means that these sciences proceed from a number of fixed essences, which are the products

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Ibid.

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Ibid., p. 191, sect. 74

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Ibid., p. 49, sect. 3.

of idealization and which assume the role of axioms. As such, they are "ideal" essences, related to definite manifolds; they express something which one cannot "see". Their origin and therefore their content is essentially other than that of the descriptive essences as essences which express the essential nature of things drawn from intuition in a direct way.<sup>15</sup> Over and against the "exact" essences, inexact or "morphological" essences must be recognized. We cannot dismiss them as provisional or insufficient, but, on the contrary, must recognize their primacy, which is due to the "exact" essences being idealizations of the inexact.<sup>16</sup> The morphological essences can be examined and consequently described, and can serve as the foundation for a new "philosophical" science, in that they are the source of principles. This introduces us to the field of research of Husserl's "genuine" philosophical science.

It must be made quite clear that Husserl's conception of scientific philosophy does not mean that philosophy has to imitate the natural sciences. Perhaps some confusion in this regard prompted Ryle to say that Husserl's claim that philosophy can become a rigorous science is either false or an awkward terminological innovation.<sup>17</sup> It must be emphasized, therefore, to avoid such confusion, that philosophy as strict science is possible not because philosophy can be reduced to one of the empirical or natural sciences, but because it is possible to arrive at a truly scientific, that is, a truly rigorous knowledge of ideal objects which Husserl calls the essences of things. If this ideal

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. <sup>16</sup> E. Levinas, Théorie de l'intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl. (Paris, 1963), pp. 172-173.

<sup>17</sup> G. Ryle, "Phenomenology: Symposium". Aristotelian Society Proceedings. supp. vol. 11, 1932



of philosophy as rigorous science is not to remain vain, it is clear that there must be some possibility of realizing it. The possibility of realizing philosophy as rigorous science of essences, in the case of Husserlian phenomenology, hinges on Husserl's recognition of a corresponding dator intuition, for as "genuine" science, philosophy is to draw its validity from primordial intuitions.<sup>18</sup>

As a science of essences phenomenology is entirely independent of natural science and cannot make an appeal to the methods and procedures of natural science. Furthermore, essence has been characterized in such a way that such an appeal would prove unrewarding. The essence is not an empirical object; it is, as we have already said, an object of a new type. Husserl reassures us in saying, that just as the datum of individual or empirical intuition is an individual, so the datum of essential intuition is a pure essence, and just as the eidetic object is still an object,<sup>19</sup> essential intuition is still intuition. This, of course, requires clarification. The first step in this direction will be an outline of Husserl's phenomenological clarification of the concept of intuition.

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E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 75, sect. 18. Husserl's remark, "It is plain that I, as someone beginning philosophically, since I am striving toward the presumptive end, genuine science, must neither make nor go on accepting any judgement as scientific that I have not derived from evidence, from experiences in which the affairs and affair-complexes in question are present to me as 'they themselves'." repeats the explicit appeal to a form of intuition which will serve as the foundation of his new science. cf. E. Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, trans. by D. Cairns, (The Hague, 1960), p. 13, sect. 5.

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E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 49, sect. 3.

## CHAPTER ONE

In order to describe the particular species of intuition Husserl refers to as "essential intuition", we must prepare the way with an understanding of what Husserl means by "intuition", in general. We must, therefore, outline the phenomenological clarification of the concept of intuition as it is found in Husserl's early work, Logical Investigations. The last two studies of this work, wherein the phenomenological mode of analysis comes to complete expression, are of particular importance. However, a brief introduction to the problem and character of the Logical Investigations, as a whole, is the required staging before we examine in some detail the two most pertinent studies.

Husserl's primary concern in the Logical Investigations is with the grounding of the discipline of pure logic. The Prolegomena constitute an attempt at the grounding of pure logic which rejects every justification that is psychological. More precisely, the Prolegomena are a systematic appeal to expel psychology, as an empirical, "natural" science, from the philosophical explanation of logical notions and principles. The point Husserl is trying to make clear is that psychology, as empirical science, has its beginning with direct experience, and can only base its generalizations on such experience. The laws arrived at in this way, however valuable, are but "vague" generalizations of direct experience. But, Husserl points out, logical laws are capable of exact statement, and as such, it seemed obvious that such exact laws could not be developed from the vague generalizations known to psychology. Induction, Husserl

says, does not establish the validity of a law, but only the more or less high level of probability of this validity. Consequently, logical laws would be on the level of probabilities if they were to be grounded in psychological data. Husserl contends, however, that logic cannot be satisfied with mere probability; it must have insight not into mere probability only, but into truth itself and between the two there can be no conflict. He points out that exact laws, as normally formulated, are "pure" laws, that is, they exclude all factual content.<sup>21</sup> The content of pure logic is, therefore, "ideal", insofar as factual content is excluded. Husserl adds that the pure logical laws are just truths,<sup>22</sup> and no truth is a fact. The conclusion that can be drawn from these considerations is twofold: (1) the Prolegomena reject every justification of the grounding of pure logic which is psychological in nature, and (2) phenomenology, which Husserl conceives of as a sphere of neutral investigation in which the various sciences have their roots,<sup>23</sup> must serve as a critical propaedeutic and clarification of pure logic.

As a whole, Logical Investigations is concerned primarily to clarify the ideas that are constitutive of pure logic, and the pure theory of logical forms. However, as was hinted at, logical thinking is, according to Husserl, a way of knowing which apprehends idealities. Consequently, the problem of knowledge Husserl must ultimately deal with is one concerning the nature of idealities and our manner of knowing them. In taking up this and associated problems, Husserl passes from the realm of pure logic to that of epistemology. He remains, of course, specifically interested in the question as to the grounding of pure logic,

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<sup>21</sup> Husserl, L. I., vol. 1, p. 106.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., vol. 1, p. 249.

and his approach to epistemological questions bears the stamp of his interest in logical research. The six studies which follow the Prolegomena are, consequently, directly aimed at the thought and knowledge unities which arise in the course of logical processes. However, the six investigations, which abound in subjective-descriptive analyses, and in painstaking terminological distinctions, all of which must precede the clarification of the fundamental concepts of logic, provide us with a number of fundamental epistemological concepts, and, in particular, with our sought after phenomenological clarification of the concept of intuition. Let us look more closely at these studies.

In the introduction to the six studies, Husserl acknowledges that logic must begin with linguistic discussion,<sup>24</sup> that is, from the empirical natural setting of experience of meaning, for it would be impossible to examine the meaning of propositions otherwise. Though he begins with expressive experience, his primary interest attaches to the experiences lying behind the "mere expressions"; experiences which perform roles either of meaning-intention or of meaning-fulfilment, and in the latter case intuitively illustrating, or intuitively providing evidence for our meaning and thus forming a "phenomenological" or "knowledge" unity with such expressions.<sup>25</sup> The primary concern, then, is with the origin of the concept of meaning and its essential varieties.

This in turn requires, as Husserl points out, a prolonged examination<sup>26</sup> of the experiences themselves, that is, the "acts" involved. These problems; the nature of meaning, the relation between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment, occupy much of the six studies and come to

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., vol. 1, p. 248.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., vol. 1, p. 250.

<sup>26</sup> Husserl uses the word "act" to stand for all intentional experiences.

fruition in the final two studies.

The clarification of "act-structures" is, as Husserl notes, related to a consideration of consciousness, for acts are often referred to as "activities of consciousness", "relations between consciousness and something else", or simply "consciousness itself". It is with such an undertaking that the Fifth Study, entitled "On Intentional Experiences and their 'Contents'", begins. Husserl starts off by saying that the concept of consciousness is highly ambiguous. He then chooses three particular concepts of consciousness with which to work: (1) consciousness as the entire, real(reelle) phenomenological being of the empirical ego, as the interweaving of psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness, (2) consciousness as the inner awareness of one's own psychic experience, and (3) consciousness as the comprehensive designation for "mental act" or "intentional experience",<sup>27</sup> of all sorts. He examines each in turn. The first and second afford Husserl the opportunity to make a number of sketchy contributions to the phenomenology he was later to develop more fully. For example, the germ of the theory of time consciousness, and a first use of the term shading(Abschattung) are found here. After examining these two conceptions, Husserl turns to the third, which may be considered his own. Putting this conception of consciousness into focus requires a brief note concerning Franz Brentano, for in it we find an interpretation of Brentano's doctrine of intentionality.

There can be no doubt that Husserl was profoundly influenced by his older contemporary, Brentano. This is more of a well worn fact, but what is more significant are the changes Husserl found it necessary

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Ibid., vol. 2, p. 535.

to make in adopting Brentano's theory of intentional perception. While  
 not a psychologist primarily,<sup>28</sup> Brentano's doctrine of intentionality  
 interested Husserl to such an extent that it was, with certain major  
 alterations, to become a foundation stone for the later Husserlian  
 phenomenology. Let us be more precise. Brentano had used the scholas-  
 tic term "intention" to characterize the relation between the subject  
 and the object in perceiving. When an object is perceived this meant  
 that a subject "intends" its object, and further, this intending man-  
 ifests itself in "psychical experiences", or "acts", to use another  
 scholastic term. Accordingly, there is no perception without this  
 intentionality, and since the object intended is always phenomenal,  
 Brentano defined psychology in accordance with this characteristic  
 feature of perception as the science of psychical phenomena. For  
 Brentano, this intentional relation between subject and object was  
 purely metaphorical.<sup>29</sup> In fact, in 1911, he had given up using the  
 word "relation" in order to make as clear as possible that he was not  
 implying any real relationship. Consequently, if there is no real rel-  
 ationship there can be no question of co-existence, and, therefore,  
 the doctrine of intentionality leads to no "existential worries" con-  
 cerning the object itself. The intentional object is not a thing in  
 itself, a reality in the physical world, outside the experiencing sub-  
 ject; it is what Brentano called "the mentally immanent object", or  
 "the intentional inexistent", and what Husserl came to call simply the  
 "intended object".

What is of essential importance here is not the overall adequacy

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A.D. Osborn, Edmund Husserl and his Logical Investigations.  
 (Cambridge Mass., 1949), p. 27.

29

Ibid.

of Brentano's doctrine, which Husserl finds riddled with ambiguity, but that in a study of the intentional "relationship" of consciousness to its objects, one can find that there are essential, specific differences of intentional relation or intention, that is, the generic descriptive character of acts.<sup>30</sup> What this means is that the characterization of acts can be made in terms of the specific differences between intentions. There would be, for example, and according to this notion, a difference in the way in which a doubt intends its object from the way in which a judgement intends its object, holding it to be true or false, and so on for the various modes of intentionality. In addition to this insight into Brentano's doctrine of intentionality, the Fifth Study points out that the meaning of expressions lies in the "intentional essence" of the acts concerned. The remainder of the study is given over to a description of the constituents of an act in general, namely, quality, matter, and intentional essence. These considerations lead us deeply into the sphere of logical interests, while the question as to what kinds of acts are capable of the function of meaning remains to be taken up in the Sixth Study.

In the introduction to the Sixth Study, which for our purposes is the most significant study, Husserl asserts that all thought, and in particular all theoretical thought and knowledge, is carried on by way of certain acts which occur in a context of expressive discourse.<sup>31</sup> It is "in these acts", Husserl adds, that the source of the pure idealities, which, as we have seen, make up the content of pure logic, lies.<sup>32</sup> To clarify the nature of ideal objects, and to describe our manner of

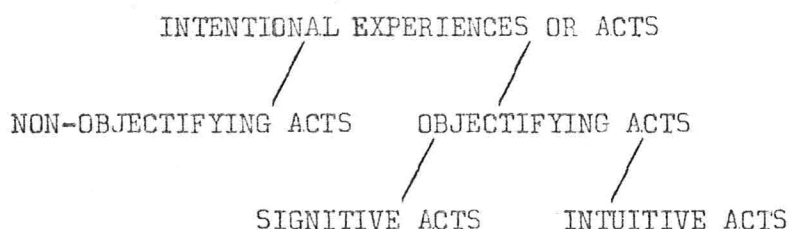
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<sup>30</sup> Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 554.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 667.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

knowing them, Husserl proposes to classify "intentional experiences" or acts in such a way that will make strides in laying bare the source of the idea of meaning, and in the elucidation of knowledge. In this he is making use of the principle that intentional experiences can be distinguished and consequently classified in terms of differing intentions. The resulting classification can be schematically represented as in the following diagram:



The above does not pretend to have taken into account all the distinctions Husserl in fact makes in working out the phenomenological peculiarities of acts as such, but only the most crucial.

Actually, the distinction between objectifying acts and non-objectifying acts is made in the Fifth Study. What it amounts to is this: Objectifying acts, such as judgements, are of such a kind that they intend and name the object as really existing, while, on the other hand, non-objectifying acts, such as desiring and wishing, do not intend and name their object as really existing, and, as such, do not function as full expressions. We have, therefore, a class of acts—those known as "objectifying"—which are in fact marked off from all others in that the fulfilling-syntheses appropriate to their sphere have the character of a "putting-together" of things congruent, while their syntheses of frustration have the character of a "setting-apart" of things in conflict.

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This would seem to mean that for the class of objectifying acts alone would reference to any kind of objectivity be significant. In other words, through this class of objectifying acts some "relation" to objectivity, that is, either fulfilment or frustration, is possible. In more general terms, an act is said to be an objectifying one if it is capable of functioning as a component in a knowledge situation.<sup>34</sup> This will be clearer if we move to take up the further distinction Husserl makes between signitive and intuitive objectifying acts and examine their relation to the phenomenon of fulfilment.

In working toward a distinction between signitive acts and intuitive acts, Husserl uses an example, namely, an expression of a perception with which to clarify precisely what is here the act in which the meaning resides. He has just looked out into the garden and now gives expression to his perception in the words: "There flies a Blackbird".<sup>35</sup> What Husserl is concerned with is that act in the above sequence wherein the meaning can be said to reside. We can be reasonably sure, in light of the argument given in the First Study, that the meaning lies neither in the perception, at least not in it alone, nor with the mere words which function as signs. There Husserl pointed out that the concrete phenomenon of the sense-informed expression breaks up, on the one hand, into the physical phenomenon forming the physical side of the expression, and, on the other hand, into the acts which give it meaning and possibly also intuitive fullness, and in which its relation to an expressed object is constituted.<sup>36</sup> These two alternatives having been eliminated Husserl finds that the expression when examined more

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<sup>34</sup> J.N. Mohanty, Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning. (The Hague, 1964), p. 46.

<sup>35</sup> E. Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 680. <sup>36</sup> Ibid., vol. 1, p. 280.

closely does not mean that any Blackbird flies, but "this one here and now". Husserl concludes that one does not merely perceive when saying "this", but a new act is established on the basis of the perception, indicating it and dependent upon it in its difference. In his own words,

"...we shall rather have to conceive that the function of meaning pertains in all cases to one and the same sort of act, a type of act free from the limitations of the perception or the imagination which so often fails us, and which, in all cases where an expression authentically 'expresses', merely becomes one with the act expressed." 37

In other words, a new act of "pointing" or of "this-meaning" builds itself on the perception, and in this "pointing" reference, and in it alone, the meaning of the expression resides. We conclude, with Husserl, that perception, or for that matter, imagination, in the ordinary sense given to these terms, are acts which determine, but do not embody meaning. 38

Summarizing, we can say that the act of pure meaning finds its "filling" in the demonstrative act in the way of a "pointed" intention. This would mean that there is first of all the intention of meaning and after it there is the corresponding intuition. 39 Filling of the meaning-intention and knowledge of the object are, according to Husserl, alternative ways of expressing the same state of affairs. The act of meaning-intention can also be designated the signitive act. We have, therefore, at this point, and on the level of perception, distinguished between signitive and intuitive acts.

In an attempt to further clarify this distinction between signitive (expressive) and purely intuitive intentions, Husserl points out

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37  
Ibid., vol. 2, p. 681.

38  
Ibid., vol. 2, p. 684.

39  
This, of course, is a logical priority and not a temporal priority.

that we can readily grasp it if we contrast signs with the forms of presentation and representation. <sup>40</sup> Signs, or the physically written or spoken words (marks), are expressions, which can be either meaningful or meaningless. To be meaningful a sign must be animated by what Husserl calls "meaning-intention". It is this feature which constitutes the essence of an expression qua authentic expression as contrasted with a meaningless string of marks. If we prefer, this can be restated in the subjective language of a noetic phenomenology by saying that a genuine expression qua expression is constituted by a meaning-intending act. Illustrating this difference we can take two expressions: (1) "Abckdjf", and (2) "Round-Square". The distinction between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment, or signification and intuition, can be grasped by determining what precisely differentiates (1) and (2). (1) is clearly not an authentic expression at all; it is meaningless. (2), on the other hand, is an expression and is meaningful, and, therefore, "Round-Square" is an authentic expression; only it is absurd that it should designate any entity, for the corresponding intuition is ruled out a priori. With (1), we cannot understand what we are supposedly expressing; we cannot entertain the possibility of a designatum, for it carries no meaning-intention. (2) does make sense, and we can, therefore, entertain the possibility of the designatum in this case, for the expression carries a meaning-intention, one which is a priori incapable of fulfilment. The meaning-intention serves to distinguish between merely a physical sign and the same sign considered or used as a meaningful expression. Returning to the illustration used above, the expression "There flies a Blackbird" is meaningful by virtue of the

meaning-intention which it embodies.

Husserl's analysis of the expression as meaningful, or of meaningful experience, has detected two major constituents of such experience: (1) the sign, (2) the meaning-intention which transforms the sign into an expression as authentic expression. With the analysis thus far, Husserl is not claiming to have discovered something within the physical sign that most of us do not see, but rather is calling our attention to the fact that meaning-intention must be recognized as a constituent of authentic expressions to account for our understanding of expressions even in the absence of the appropriate meaning-fulfilment. Mohanty suggests that the meaning-intention, functioning in this manner, is an "intellectual act of awareness"<sup>41</sup>. This awareness, we must remember, is, according to Husserl, essential for considering signs as meaningful expressions, but is not the same as inspection of the intentional correlate of the act itself, which, of course, is intuition. Husserl tells us that in meaning-intention we are not objectively aware of the meanings, but are, nonetheless, in some sense aware of the meanings. This difference in awareness can be elaborated upon by making use of its correspondance to a more general difference, namely, to one between the notions of thought and knowledge.

This is to say, that the same distinction could be introduced by asking what distinguishes mere thought from knowledge. I might merely think of a thing without knowing it: my thought of the other side of the moon, or of the "round-square", or even of the prime numbers between 1000 and 2000 does not as such amount to knowledge. In this case I am, so to speak, entertaining the possibility of such entities. Husserl

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J.N. Mohanty, p. 43, cf. also Chapter 3, "Thinking and Meaning" for a more detailed discussion of this and related issues.

would say that whereas thinking consists in the meaning-intending act, knowing consists in the appropriate fulfilment of the meaning-intention. So long as the meaning-intention is not fulfilled, we do not have knowledge, which means that knowledge is the intuitive apprehension of what was otherwise only symbolically thought of, in and through an act of meaningful, symbolic thought. So, we can account for the thought or understanding of an expression <sup>42</sup> apart from intuitive fulfilment, but cannot account for knowledge in the absence of intuitive fulfilment.

The intuitive act, then, functions as giving fulness to a signitive act. In other words, the signitive act merely refers to the object in question, whereas the intuitive makes the object "concrete", in a significant sense; it brings something of the fulness (Fülle) of the object itself. Fulness can be regarded as a characteristic phase of acts along with quality and matter, though it is a positive constituent only in the case of intuitive acts. In the case of signitive acts it is necessarily lacking. The distinction between intuitive acts and signitive acts essentially means that intentionality is twofold: It can occur in a merely unfulfilled, signitive form, and it can also occur in a fulfilled, intuitive or "seeing" form. In both forms of intentionality an object is present to consciousness, that is, is truly intended by it, but in the fulfilled sense, the presence is presence in a truly pregnant sense. In Husserl's own words,

"The signitive intention is lacking in every sort of fulness: the intuitive presentation first brings fulness to it, and through identification into it. A signitive intention merely points to its object, whereas an intuitive intention gives it 'presence' in the pregnant sense of the word, it imports <sup>43</sup> something of the fulness of the object itself."

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The form of an expression, that is, either sentence or term and so on, does not enter into the consideration, for any may designate a phenomenon.

<sup>43</sup>

E. Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 728.

The intuitive act or intuition is distinguished, then, from the signi-  
 ficate act in the sense that it gives something of the object itself.  
 The difference is not drawn in terms of the character of the intended  
 object, but in terms of its mode of being given.<sup>44</sup> The object  
 intuited and the object signified have essentially different modes of  
 existence; respectively, the real, and the possible. The analysis of  
 the intuitive act in general has shown us that intuition is essentially  
 the act's property of giving the object.

At this point, under the title of intuitive acts, Husserl places  
 perception(presentation) and imagination(representation).<sup>45</sup> These are  
 acknowledged as intuitive acts for the simple reason that in both cases  
 the object "aimed at" by these objectifying acts is given, in full or  
 in part, as it is itself. In other words, in perception and imagination,  
 the object is given "in person(Zur selbst-gegebenheit kommen)", so to  
 speak. The notion of fulfilment, as a real constituent of the act is,  
 accordingly, identified with sensations(Empfindungen) and phantasies.  
 These elements constitute the fulness of the act and correspond to the  
 character of the object, whether perceived or imagined, which is pres-  
 ented in perception and represented in imagination.

Thus far, the analysis has led to the disclosing of three dis-  
 tinct aspects, or three different phases, in the structure of knowledge  
 as the establishing of a knowledge-unity, that is, some form of definite  
 relation to objects or objectivity. This three-part division follows  
 from the preceding analyses in a direct manner. Beginning with a char-  
 acterization of consciousness as intentional experience, Husserl has  
 arrived at an essential distinction between objectifying acts. The

<sup>44</sup>

Levinas, p. 105.

<sup>45</sup>E. Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 733. This, of course, is prior to the extension of the conception of intuition.

three distinct phases can be set apart as follows: first, the sign which represents the signitive aspect, second, the perception or imagination, or, more generally, the intuition, and, lastly, the object itself which is signified or intuited. In the Cartesian manner of speaking, the three headings "ego", "cogitatio", and "cogitata" express the same phenomenological or knowledge unity somewhat differently, as a relationship of the ego-pole and the object-poles. These are the two directions our analysis can take and to them correspond different aspects of the general notion of intentionality: direction toward something, appearance of something, and something, an objective something, as the unity in its appearance toward which the intention of the ego-pole, through which these appearances is directed.

The knowledge-unity, or phenomenological-unity, comes about as a result of intuition functioning in such a way as to give fulness to the signitive act, which itself is empty in every respect. The intuitive act has, therefore, the character of being the "fulfiller" and so also, in the most significant sense, the "giver of fulness". To the degree that the signitive act is fulfilled by an act of intuition, the intuition realizes the possibility of an unfolding of the act of signification with its definite relation to the object. Fulfilment, in this context, registers the fact that part, or the whole in the ideal limiting case, of the object is imparted to the signitive act. In more precise terms, when a signitive act is consummated on an intuitive basis, the "matters" of the associated acts are in a relationship of full or partial coincidence.

The fact that meaning-intention is united with intuition

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E. Husserl, Cartesian Meditations. p. 171, sect. 50.

47 Matter is that element in our acts which serves as a basis for fulfilment, or more precisely, identification, for every fulfilment of a signitive act by an intuitive act has the character of a synthesis of identification. cf. E. Husserl, L. I., p. 709, vol. 2.

in a fulfilling manner gives to the object, which appears in such intuition, the character of a "thing" known. This describes what Husserl calls the "dynamic unity" of signitive and intuitive acts. In the case of knowledge, where the thought and the intuition are already together, their unity is static. That acts of signification and intuition can enter into this peculiar relationship, Husserl calls a "primitive phenomenological fact".<sup>48</sup>

Thus far Husserl has limited discussion of the relation between intention and fulfilment so as to talk only of total agreement or complete coincidence. However, he does now describe instances wherein the relation is opposite in character, namely, a relation of disagreement or frustration. As these are characterized merely by the absence of appropriate fulfilment, they do not require further consideration. As well, Husserl's analysis thus far has had another restriction imposed in that it has dealt with a limited class of experiences of fulfilment. Meaning-intentions are merely a special case of intentional experiences in general, and, therefore, the relationship between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment is merely a special case of the consciousness of fulfilment. On the broader basis now introduced, all intentions, whether they be signitive intentions, intuitive intentions, or wishful intentions, have corresponding possibilities of fulfilment.<sup>49</sup>

These possibilities are realized or thwarted, as the case may be, in an act specially correlated to or unsuited to the intentional act. These "peculiar transitional experiences", as Husserl calls them, are characterizable as acts, which in the case of an intention being realized, permit each intentional act to "reach its goal" in an act

<sup>48</sup>E. Husserl, I. I., vol. 2, p. 695.<sup>49</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, p. 699.



specially correlated with it. These latter acts, inasmuch as they fulfill intentions, may be called "fulfilling acts", but they are called so only on account of the synthetic act of fulfillment which underlies them. This establishes intention on a broader basis than that of merely signitive intention, and, accordingly, the fulfilling acts are dealt with on a broader basis as well. We have, therefore, intentions and fulfillments both as classes of acts, in general. The relationship of intention and fulfillment remains unchanged. What the intention refers to, but presents only in a more or less inauthentic and inadequate manner, the fulfillment—the act attaching itself to an intention, and offering it fulness in the synthesis of fulfillment—sets directly before us or "makes present". In fulfillment our experience is, as Husserl remarks, represented by the words: "This is the thing itself".<sup>50</sup> In fulfillment, in other words, the object is given in the same way as it is intended, or as it is meant in the case of signitive intentions. Furthermore, because in each fulfillment there is more or less complete intuitive illustration, the givenness is an intuitive givenness. The fulfillment, which offers to the intention a fulness, is, in all cases, an intuitive fulfillment, insofar as the intuitive member of the synthesis of fulfillment has the character of the "giver of fulness".

A summary characterization of the notion of intuition can now be given. Husserl says that, in general, intuitions are intentions which require fulfillment, or, in other words, intentions, which in themselves are empty, are brought to some degree of fulness by intuition which carries out the work of fulfillment. The work of intuition is, then, that

of contributing to the intending act, when genuinely or authentically fulfilled, a genuinely novel element, to which the name "fulness" has been given. Fulness must take its place as a new moment in an intuitive act alongside of the quality and the matter, a moment specially belonging to the matter which it in some sense completes.<sup>51</sup> The intuition, of which the intuitive act is the primary constituent, provides what Husserl calls "representative content", that is, content—sensus in the case of sensuous intuition—which in its fusion with the intentional essence (the matter of the intuitive act) acquires the character of being an intuitive representative, and, thereby, is made capable of fulfilling the intended act. We are now made aware of the hitherto unstressed side of the phenomenological contents of acts, which are fundamental for knowledge. We can on the basis of the newly found significance of such content reiterate the distinction between intuition and intention in terms of it.<sup>52</sup>

From this it is clear that intuitive illustrations play the essential part in all fulfilment of intentions.<sup>53</sup> The fulfilling act, in which there is more or less intuitive illustration, has a "superiority" which the mere intention lacks, in that the relation to the object is made definite in the former relation. Not merely is the object intended, but it is "seen" as it is itself. Here a distinction must be made and upheld between the two notions; "the object itself", and "the object in itself", the latter having no significance for phenomenology.

While the above discussion of Husserl's elucidation of the general notion of intuition in relation to the phenomenon of fulfilment

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Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 722-723.

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Levinas, p. 105.

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E. Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 726

is admittedly negligent of some of the fine detail, it has nevertheless been the source of sufficient information. Plainly stated, it is now established, with some degree of assurance, that intuition, as Husserl conceives of it, is that mode of consciousness in which the object intended by it is not only intended or referred to but also primordially given. The discussion of the various "kinds" of intuition to be undertaken in the next chapter will further clarify the concept of intuition in general.

## CHAPTER TWO

The present chapter proposes to outline the "essential varieties" of intuition, as primordial ways of givenness, which Husserl recognizes. We are to some degree already familiar with acts of perception and acts of imagination as acts of intuition, but shall further scrutinize these acts in which sensuous concreta and their constituents are presented as given, and later move on to consider quite different acts in which concretely determinate states of affairs (Sachverhalten), collections, and disjunctions are given as complex thought-objects of a higher order, which include their foundational objects as real parts (reell) in themselves. We shall then deal with acts of the type of generalizing or indefinitely individual apprehension, whose objects are certainly of a higher level, but which do not include their foundational objects in themselves.<sup>54</sup> Here, Husserl is first of all distinguishing between acts of sensory intuition and those of higher order which are called "categorical acts of intuition", and, secondly, between different types of acts of categorical intuition. It is these distinctions which must be clarified.

Beginning with an analysis of perception, in the ordinary sense of the term, the first step in such an analysis shows us that perception gives the object in question either from the front, or perspectively fore-shortened and projected, etc. That is to say: perception only gives one of the possible presentations of an object.<sup>55</sup> If it were the case, Husserl points out, that perceptions were always the actual

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<sup>54</sup>

Ibid., vol. 2, p. 788.

<sup>55</sup>

Ibid., vol. 2, p. 712.

self-presentation of the object, that they pretend to be, then there could be only a single perception for each object, since its peculiar essence would be exhausted in such self-presentation. Such is, however, not the case, for in the phenomenological context, ordinary perception is composed of countless intentions, some purely perceptual, some merely imaginative, some even signitive. Yet, as a total act, Husserl tells us, perception gives the object itself, even if only by way of an aspect, for the object as it is itself is not totally different from what is realized, even if imperfectly, in the perception. <sup>56</sup>

More precisely, in each perception the object appears from this side, or from that; now it appears close, now at a distance, etc. Yet, despite these differences, one and the same object is "there". For example, whether I look at this book from above or below, from inside or outside, I always "see" this book. This is accounted for, Husserl points out, by the fact that the individual perceptions of our series, which each give something of the object, have a continuous unity, that is, they are part of a group. Such continuity does not amount to the mere fact of temporal adjunction: the series of individual acts rather has the character of a phenomenological unity, in which the individual acts are fused. In this unity our manifold acts are not merely fused into a phenomenological whole, but into one act. The one act Husserl calls the "continuous perception". It is founded on the individual perceptions, as a whole is founded on its parts, and not in the sense according to which a founded act manifests a new "act-character", which is grounded in the act-characters that underlie it, and is, therefore, unthinkable apart from the underlying act-characters. The unification

of these perceptions into a continuous perception is not, therefore, the performance of some peculiar act, through which a new consciousness of something is set up, but it is rather the case that the continuous perception is merely, as it were, "extended" perception, and we find, consequently, that precisely the same object is continuously meant in it.<sup>57</sup>

We can call this "extended" perception, that is, the continuous running on of individual perceptions, a perception in its own right, for just as the "thing" does not appear before us as a mere sum of its countless individual features, which a later preoccupation with detail may distinguish, so the act of perception is always a homogeneous unity, which gives the object presence in a simple, immediate way.<sup>58</sup> A "thing" perceived is not, therefore, merely a sum of sensuous qualities given to the senses at the moment of perception, such as, for example, a certain colour, form, size, some auditory datum, tactile or thermal properties, etc. Nor is the perceived "thing" a sum of such actually given qualities to which are added a number of remembered qualities of a similar kind. We can conclude, with Husserl, that in sense-perception the object appears "in one blow" as soon as our glance falls upon it. The manner in which perception makes the "thing" appear present is "straightforward", in that no apparatus of founding or founded acts, in the genuine sense, is required. The object is directly comprehended, or is itself present and constitutes itself in a simple way in the act of perception. This direct comprehension is accounted for by the fact that the "theme" of the act of perception is the very thing itself, although in a single perceptual act, it is given in a one-sided manner

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 790.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 789.

of presentation. Every single perception thus points and refers beyond itself to aspects different from its present manner of appearance. To express the point differently, every perception is interwoven with anticipations of what further perceptions will yield.<sup>59</sup> Such anticipations may be more or less indeterminate and vague, but they are never totally devoid of all specification. In sensuous perception, then, we "see" the object directly and immediately as it is itself. For this reason sensory perception is also called "simple perception (schlichte Wahrnehmung)". In clearing up the concept of straightforward perception, or what is the same, sense-perception, Husserl has clarified as well the concept of a sensible, real object. A real object is defined as being the possible object of a straightforward sensible intuition, and, in particular, of a sensible perception.

In contrast to perception in the straightforward sense, Husserl places imagination, which is also straightforward. Perception is characterized, as we have seen, by the fact that in it the object appears "in person", and now imagination is set apart from it by the fact that in it the object appears "in a likeness". It is on this basis that perception and imagination, both taken as straightforward acts of intuition, are distinguished. This difference is a result of the characteristic differences in the syntheses of fulfilment correlated to the acts. Imagination fulfills itself through the peculiar synthesis of image-resemblance, whereas perception fulfills itself through the "synthesis of identical-thinghood (sachlichen Identität)".<sup>60</sup> Husserl points out that certain features of straightforward perception have corresponding features in the sphere of straightforward imagination. As we have

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A. Gurwitsch, "The Problem of Existence". Journal of Philosophy, vol. 58, 1961.

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E. Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 712.

already seen, to the synthesis of "identical-thinghood" of many perceptions, there corresponds the synthesis of image-resemblance of many images, in which the same object attains imaginary representation. To the changing perceptual projections of the object, a further correspondence is detected in imaginative projections, and in the ideal limiting case, to an adequate perception, where the self-presenting sensed-content coincides with the perceived object, there is a corresponding perfect copying, where the imaginative projection coincides with the complete likeness.<sup>61</sup> Sense-perception, then, is characterized by the fact that in it, so to speak, the object itself appears and does not, as in the case of imagination, appear "in a likeness".

Taking the elucidation of the notions of perception and imagination as straightforward intuitions even further Husserl finds that there is a necessary parallelism between them, which guarantees that a straightforward imagination, or, more precisely, a whole series of imaginations, having the same essence, is correlated to a straightforward perception, that is, to a continuous series of perceptions. The concept of sensible intuition is thereby extended beyond its usual meaning to include not only acts of sensuous perception, for which the designation is obvious, but acts of imagination as well, by virtue of this necessary parallelism. Both qualify, so to speak, as sensible intuition as they have been described, for, in each case, the object in question is given or made present, either "as itself", or "in a likeness". In other words, both straightforward perception and imagination, as "intuiting agencies", establish a definite relation to objectivity.<sup>62</sup> More generally, both, as forms of sensuous intuition,

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 714.

<sup>62</sup> Husserl, Ideas I, p. 49, sect. 3.



are consciousness of an individual object.

Our preceding analysis shows the mutual affinities between acts of perception and acts of imagination, and their common opposition as intuitive acts to signitive intentions. We can, therefore, distinguish between a sign-content, on the one hand, and the perceptual or imaginative projection of the object, on the other, with a measure of confidence. It has also been shown that sense-perception "grasps" its object in its "bodily self-hood",<sup>63</sup> and that straightforward imagination gives its object "in a likeness". At this point, with the notion of sensuous intuition clarified, our thoughts are taken back to what is Husserl's over-riding epistemological concern, namely, the nature and origin of "idealities", which, by definition, so to speak, are incapable of separate being, and, in general, are not objects in the same sense as are individual objects. It is here, then, that the more basic and extended concept of intuition makes its entrance, for these ideal objects, inasmuch as they are distinct from individual, spatio-temporal existents, cannot be seen in the ordinary sense of the term. They must, however, Husserl says, be realized in acts of higher level. The following proposes to examine this claim by outlining the distinction Husserl draws between sensory and categorial intuition, and through a description of the specific characterizations of the latter.

To this point Husserl has proceeded solely on the basis of sensory intuition, and, in point of fact, only a small number of judgements remain on the level of sensibility. Judgements in particular do arise which give expression to certain meanings which have no definite relation to anything individual; they give general expression to

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Ibid.

relations among ideal unities. Yet, Husserl is quick to tell us, the general meanings embodied in such judgements can also be realized on the basis of corresponding intuition, since they have their origin, mediately or immediately, in intuition.<sup>64</sup> The prototype for interpreting the relation between meaning and intuition is the relation already described as the relation of the "proper" individual meaning to corresponding sensory perceptions, wherein the meaning-intention is fulfilled with complete adequacy in the perceptions. However, the case of idealities, whether formal or material generalities, is not as simple as the case of a "proper" individual meaning with its straightforward relation of coincidence with sensory perception.<sup>65</sup> We would, Husserl notes, vainly seek sympathetic elements in individual intuition for objective correlates of formal and general meanings, and for the acts in which these are given to us.<sup>66</sup>

It is clear, then, that in dealing with idealities, as opposed to individualities, the "fulfilling acts" required are of a completely different order from those of straightforward intuitive acts. The acts required, Husserl says, are themselves founded in the straightforward intuitive acts, and this very fact of founding constitutes them as acts of higher level. When, therefore, idealities find their fulfilling intuitively, they build up new acts on the basis of straightforward intuitions. In other words, the fulfilling of an intention referring to an ideal existent requires that new acts be built up on the basis of underlying straightforward acts of intuition. These new acts intend

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Husserl, *L. I.*, vol. 2, p. 776. Findlay, in his introduction to Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, suggests that Husserl's search for objective referents of ideal meanings would nowadays be discouraged as somewhat naïve. His comment is an objection only if Husserl's conception of objectivity were conventional, which, of course, it is not.

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Husserl, *L. I.*, vol. 2, p. 778.

their objects in quite a different manner, for the intuited object, in such cases does not simply exist as what is intended; it functions instead as a clarifying example for the real ideal meaning. This provisional discussion has shown us the difficulty Husserl is faced with, and has hinted at its removal. Let us be more precise.

Husserl distinguishes between two types of categorial acts of intuition, and therewith, between two types of categorial elements or types of idealities. On the one hand, we have the categorial act through which one arrives at formal categorial elements, such as, the general meanings expressed by the following formal words; 'the', 'a', 'some', 'many', 'few', 'two', 'is', 'and', 'which', and so on. These words express what might be called "purely formal notions", such as, 'number', 'being', 'whole', etc. In such acts, concretely determinate states of affairs, collections, disjunctions are given as complex thought-objects, or as objects of higher order, which include their foundational objects, as real parts, in themselves. On the other hand, we have categorial acts in which the objects of the founding straightforward acts of intuition do not "enter into" the intention of the founded one.<sup>67</sup> In and through the latter type of categorial act one arrives at general notions, or universals, such as, the "Idea Colour", or "Idea Triangle", and so on. The latter may be referred to as "material categories", as opposed to the former, which are designated "formal categories". This distinction between the types of categorial acts of intuition translates into one between the types of abstraction Husserl calls "generalizing" abstraction and "formalizing" abstraction.<sup>68</sup>

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Ibid., vol. 2, p. 799.

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Husserl, Ideas I, p. 64, sect. 13, cf. also A. Gurwitsch's article entitled "On A Perceptual Root of Abstraction", Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology. pp. 385-389.

Beginning with the categorial intuition of formal notions, Husserl's first step is to draw a distinction between form and matter (not to be confused with matter of act as opposed to quality). Using such examples of propositional types as; 'A is P' and 'All S are P', etc., Husserl notes that only at the places indicated by letters (variables) in such forms of judgement can the meanings be put that are themselves fulfilled in straightforward intuition. It is hopeless, even quite misguided, Husserl says, to look directly in straightforward intuition for what could give fulfilment to the formal meanings. The distinction between matter and form corresponds, therefore, to one between those elements which find direct fulfilment in sensuous intuition, and those which, as forms of meaning, likewise "crave" fulfilment, but can find nothing that could ever fill them in sensuous perception, or acts of like order. A fundamental line of demarcation between what may be called "sensory matter", which constitutes itself in straightforward intuition, and "categorial form", which, as we shall see directly, constitutes itself in founded acts, is drawn. The distinction can be illustrated by a consideration of "being" qua existence, which Kant has said is not a real predicate. Husserl points out that I can see colour, but not being-coloured, I can feel smoothness, but not being-smooth, I can hear a sound, but not that something is sounding. From this he concludes, that "being" is nothing in the object, not any part of it, not a moment tenanted by it, no quality or intensity of it, no figure of it, or no internal form whatsoever, no constitutive feature of it, however conceived. He continues, pointing out that "being" is also nothing attaching to an object: as it is not a real (reales) internal feature, so also it is not a real external feature, and, therefore, in the only significant sense, not a

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feature at all.<sup>69</sup> "Being", he concludes, "is absolutely imperceptible", in the ordinary sense of "perception". If, therefore, "being" is simply not perceivable, with the ordinary interpretation given to "perception", then, Husserl tells us, it must be realized in acts of higher level.

This position he begins to clarify after first criticizing the doctrine that formal categories arise through reflection upon certain mental states, and so fall into the sphere of "inner sense", or "inner perception". This he criticizes by pointing out that it is not in these states, taken as objective acts, that we have the abstractive basis which enables us to realize the formal concept in question, but in the objects of the acts. The concept of "being", and this applies to the other formal categories as well, can only "arise", that is, become "self-given" to us if based on an act which at least sets some individual instance of it imaginatively "before our eyes". So, the concept of "being" and those like it can only arise when some being, or some instance of the concept in question, actual or imaginary, is set "before our eyes".<sup>70</sup>

If "being" is taken, as Husserl takes it, as a real predicate, then some state of affairs must be given to us, and by way of an act which is an analogue to straightforward intuition.<sup>71</sup> As it stands, then, the categorial forms have no terminus in straightforward intuition, and, more particularly, in sensible perception. However, as we have said, Husserl conceives of, and says quite plainly that there must be at least an act which renders identical service to the categorial elements of meaning, that merely sensible perception renders to the material elements.<sup>72</sup> What Husserl is suggesting is that, while in its narrower sense intuition

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<sup>69</sup> Husserl, L. I., vol. 2, p. 780.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 784.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., vol. 2, p. 785.

applies only to individual, temporal being, there is a wider sense in which categorial forms can be said to be intuited as well.

Each type of categorial act of intuition, as has been pointed out, is associated with a distinct form of abstraction. With respect to categorial forms this abstraction is a formalizing abstraction. Purely formal notions arrived at through an abstractive act of this kind, which issues in a new categorial act-character, and a new style of objectivity, have no reference to any specific material region. Since they refer to no material region in particular, notions of this kind refer to or can refer to every one of these regions--that is to say, to any object, content or phenomenon, whatever its qualitative and material nature. The categorial founded acts which apprehend these purely formal notions, as we know, are founded on acts of straightforward intuition. The objects of these founding acts assume an important role in the carrying out of the abstractive categorial act, in that the synthetic intention of the categorial act is subsidiarily directed to these objects. This, Husserl explains, means that the synthetic intention of this type of categorial act of intuition, that is, those having to do with categorial forms, hold the objects of the founding acts of intuition together in ideal "contents" or bring them to a relational unity. What this means is that the formal categories are reached from a basis of particular instances, and the categorial act of intuition consequently retains a subsidiary reference to the actual instance. In virtue of the essential homogeneity of the function of fulfilment, formal categories are said to find fulfilment in intuition, and, more particularly, in categorial intuition. The state of affairs(Sachverhalt) is not merely referred to, as in the case where meanings function purely

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symbolically, but it is set "before our eyes" in just the intended form. In other words, it is not merely thought of, but intuited, and, more precisely, perceived.

Thus far we have been concerned with only the first type of categorial act of intuition, namely, that which Husserl calls the "simple synthetic act". In them the synthetic intention is directed to the objects of the founding intuitions. There is, however, another type of categorial act of intuition in which the objects of the founding acts do not "enter into" the intention of the founded one, and only reveal their close connection to the founded act in relational acts. It is here, Husserl says, that we have the field of "universal or general intuition"—an expression, he admits, that sounds no better than "wooden iron".<sup>73</sup> What Husserl is referring to is a particular kind of apprehension, which has to do with idealities, as opposed to individualities, and is, therefore, categorial and not sensory, and which is specifically directed toward universals, or general objects, or, as we referred to them previously, material categories. In connection with the discussion of universal or general intuition, Husserl points out that this categorial act, as is the case with all categorial acts, is founded on acts of straightforward intuition. What has been called "generalizing" abstraction sets in on the basis of these primary and straightforward intuitions, and with it a new categorial act-character emerges, in which a new style of objectivity becomes apparent, an objectivity which can only become apparent—whether it is given as real or as merely imagined—in just such a founded act.<sup>74</sup> This abstraction is not meant in the sense of "setting-in-relief" of some non-independent moment of

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Ibid., vol. 2, p. 800.

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Ibid.

a sensed object, but "ideational abstraction", where no such non-independent moment, but its Idea, its universal is brought to consciousness, and achieves "actual givenness". In the act of generalizing abstraction the universal itself is given to us; we do not think of it merely in signitive fashion, as when we merely understand general names, but we apprehend it, "behold" it.<sup>75</sup> Husserl concludes that talk of an "intuition" and, more precisely, of a "perception" is, in this case, well justified.

The twofold aspect of intuition recognized by Husserl is maintained by qualifying intuition by the terms "sensory" and "categorical", in such a way that sensory intuition can be said to relate to sensuous objects, which, in fact, can be characterized as "objects of the lowest level of possible intuition", while categorical intuition relates to categorical or ideal objects, as objects of higher levels.<sup>76</sup> In the narrow sense of intuition, that is, as sensible intuition, an object is directly apprehended, or is present as it is itself or in a likeness. What this means, Husserl has told us, is this: the object is intuited sensibly, with such and such a definite objective content; it is not constituted in relational, connective or otherwise articulated acts, that is, acts founded on other acts, but is present "at a single act-level".<sup>77</sup> To describe the wider and more basic concept of intuition, Husserl tells us that each straightforward act of intuition can serve as basic act for new acts, which at times include it, and at other times merely presuppose it. These latter acts are, of course, those which have been called "categorical" acts of intuition. These are acts which, in their new mode of consciousness likewise bring to maturity "a new

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid.<sup>76</sup>Ibid., vol. 2, p.787.<sup>77</sup>Ibid.



awareness of objects which essentially presupposes the old".<sup>78</sup> When the new acts arise, we do not have any sort of subjective experiences, nor do we have just acts connected with the original acts. What we have are acts which, as was said, set up new objects and in which something appears actual and self-given which was not given, and could not have been given as that which it now appears to be in the foundational acts alone. The new objectivity, it is clear, is grounded in the old; the new phenomenon is essentially determined by this relation to the founding objectivity. We have, therefore, a sphere of objects which can only show themselves "in person" in such founded acts. It is in such acts of the second or higher level that the nature of categorial intuition lies.

Categorial acts of intuition have been described as founded, as intuitions of new types of objects which were brought to light and could only have been given in such founded acts. Husserl thinks that these new acts, these founded acts, are justifiably called "intuitions", for, with a mere surrender of a straightforward relation to their object, they have all the essential peculiarities of intuitions: we find in their case the same essential divisions, and they show themselves capable of achieving the same fully performed fulfilments. This extended and more basic use of the concept of intuition, which rests on a community of essential features, is, according to Husserl, an authentic generalization.<sup>79</sup> This concept of intuition, Husserl continues, is quite capable of general application, and we find that an extended form of intuition takes a prominent position in his phenomenological philosophy. Before moving on to consider another form of intuition, let us briefly

take up the question as to the representing contents of these categorial acts of intuition.

We are reminded of relations of possible fulfilment, or of the fulness which straightforward intuitive acts confer on signitive acts, of the ascending scales formed among intuitive acts by variable fulness, of final adequation as an ideal limit, or, in short, of certain connections with the notion of representing contents. Representing contents constitute the difference between empty and full intuition; they are responsible for fulness. Only intuitive acts, as we have seen, render their object apparent or "seeable", for precisely in them a representing content is contained, and which is seen, in the case of sensuous intuition, as the very self of the object, or as a likeness. However, what is categorial, Husserl tells us, is not bound up with representing contents

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which are sensible. We are, therefore, faced with the question as to the nature of the representing contents for these new founded acts of categorial intuition. Husserl moves toward a solution through a distinction between those concepts framed on the ground of straightforward intuitive acts themselves, and those framed on the ground of "reflection" on any straightforward intuitive act. He gives the following illustration. I perceive a house and reflecting on my perception, frame the concept of perception. But if I simply look at the house, I use my perception itself, rather than the perception of a perception, as the underlying act for an abstraction, and, accordingly, the concept

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of house arises. This leads to a further distinction in the sensory field between the contents of reflection, which are themselves act-characters, or are founded on act-characters which have their ultimate

foundation in the contents of sensuous intuition, and the primary contents, in which all the contents of reflection are mediately or immediately founded. To this distinction there corresponds another in the sphere of representing contents, for "only reflective contents can serve as purely categorial representing contents".<sup>82</sup>

Husserl's analysis has achieved certain important results which can be restated summarily as follows; (1) a distinction between intuition, whether it is sensible or categorial, whether it is adequate or inadequate, and signification has been established, (2) sensory intuition in the ordinary sense has been contrasted with categorial intuition, which is intuition in a wider sense, (3) simple intuition or straightforward intuition, which "makes present" or gives the individual object, has been set apart from universal or general intuition which gives the universal or general object.<sup>83</sup> This much resolved, we can now proceed with an examination of a further application of the concept of intuition, namely, essential intuition.

As the name itself makes clear this particular kind of intuition has to do with essences, and it is this feature which will enable us to distinguish eidetic intuition from either of the kinds of categorial abstractive intuition and from empirical intuition. The identification of the object of interest to the phenomenologist as essence, in other words, makes possible the clarification of this particular way of looking at this type of object, that is, that species of intuition by which we apprehend essences as necessary structures.

Essences, as we know, are to be distinguished from individual existents, and are to be classified as idealities. They are not

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Ibid., vol. 2, p. 815.  
 results are set down in summary form by Husserl himself, in much the same way.

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Ibid., vol. 2, p. 832. These

empirical objects, they do not occupy any place in space, they are not individualized in time, and it is precisely in this that their ideality consists. The ideality of the object does not mean that it exists first and is to be characterized later by an indifference to space and time, but that such indifference constitutes the mode-of-being itself of the ideality, that is, the mode of presenting itself in consciousness, or of constituting itself there, as Husserl expresses it. The essence, therefore, is not to be identified with a characteristic trait or moment of the individual object which is somehow brought into relief; for this, too, remains something individual, whereas the essence is ideal. For example, the essence of "red" is not the "red" of the individual that has been isolated by an effort on the part of one's attention, but the ideal, the necessary structure itself, which is given in and through eidetic intuition. Inasmuch as the essence is called an "ideal object", we are justified in calling eidetic intuition "a particular kind of categorial intuition", as many commentators seem to have done. Osborn, for one, maintains that "eidetic intuition" is merely another name for categorial intuition. In our view, however, and this we think expresses Husserl's own position, eidetic intuition can and must be distinguished from abstractive acts of categorial intuition and not simply identified with it. More accurately, eidetic intuition can be said to be a kind of categorial intuition, and quite distinct from both formal categorial intuition and universal intuition. With this characterization of essence, we can now move to examine, in more precise terms, the meaning of the intuition of the ideal, and more particularly, the intuition of the essence, the famous "Wesensschau" of Husserl.

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We are already familiar with intuition of the ideal, for we have met with it in the form of abstractive categorial intuition. These categorial objects, formal and material generalities, however, must be distinguished from essences. The intuition of categorial elements, of the former type, comes about, as we have seen, with the help, either direct or indirect, of straightforward intuition. The acts of straightforward intuition are the founding acts and the abstractive categorial acts are the founded acts, which manifest a new act-character, itself grounded in the act-characters which underlie it, and unthinkable apart from the underlying sensory act-characters. We have, in other words, a peculiar new act wherein something new is objectively meant, and through which something is objectively set up. We have a new act which is grounded on straightforward acts of intuition, and is, therefore, in a relationship of strict dependence to individual, temporal existence. We know that an act of abstraction sets to work on the basis of primary intuitions and with it a new categorial act-character emerges and a new style of objectivity becomes apparent. It is in this way that the sensible object cooperates, directly or indirectly, in the constitution of abstractive categorial elements. However, as we shall see, the act of ideation which leads to the apprehension of the essence, the act conditional for the apprehension of the essence is a founded act, but not an abstractive one. It is an act of an entirely different structure.

This act of intuition can and must be distinguished from that of abstractive categorial intuition. As Levinas points out, a basis for such a distinction is not explicitly given by Husserl and, consequently, the description of the concept of eidetic intuition "scarcely transcends"

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the very general description of the phenomenon of categorial intuition of general categorial objects.<sup>84</sup> However, what Husserl clearly has in mind, when speaking about eidetic intuition, is a form of intuition which "grasps" objects at the level of their necessary structure. This, then, is quite distinct from the apprehension of the very general, which requires an abstractive act. In this regard Husserl says,

"That ideation which gives the ideal essences as ideal 'limits' which in principle cannot be found in any sensory intuition is something radically different from the apprehension of the essence through simple abstraction."<sup>85</sup>

Clearly, this means that the act of ideation (the celebrated Wesensschau) is an original type of experience. It cannot be reduced to mere isolating abstraction or to acts of selective attention, which can do no more than pick out individual wholes, elevating them to generality.<sup>86</sup>

Further clarification of the concept of eidetic intuition requires that the phenomenological method, which prepares for, or leads the way to the intuition of essence, be set down. We must, therefore, pause, so to speak, with the direct examination of eidetic intuition, to describe briefly the phenomenological way of thinking, through a description of the phenomenological method as it bears directly on the concept of eidetic intuition.

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Levinas, p. 158.

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E. Husserl, Ideas I, p. 191, sect. 74.

86

Spiegelberg, vol. 1, p. 106.

### CHAPTER THREE

The following consideration of the phenomenological method will ultimately lead to a clarification of the concept of eidetic intuition. Such a preliminary consideration is necessary, for the concept of eidetic intuition must be clarified within the context of phenomenological method, for it is the ultimate goal of the method. A discussion of method provides the context and makes possible, by clarifying the strict procedure, a description of the final aim of that procedure.

Phenomenology, as Husserl defines it, is to be a science of true beginnings or origins; "a return to the things themselves". This means that the phenomenologist is to return to the immediate, original data in the field of inquiry, that is, the field of pure consciousness. The ultimate root, the absolute and radical starting point is not, therefore, any single fundamental principle such as Descartes' "cogito" or Spinoza's "substance", but an entire field of original experience. The first step must define this field of original experience; it must bring us to the primordial level by means of specific techniques. With this in mind, Husserl devises the systematic theory of the "reductions", thinking that the reductions can lead us to this field of primordial data, that is, the "phenomenal field". In general, the reductions mean a series of "purifications", in the sense of excluding all "trascendences", and an accompanying definition of the phenomenological thematic. As such, they function both negatively and positively to bring about the desired return to primordial data. More precisely, Husserl distinguishes

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a twofold reduction: the "eidetic reduction" and the complex of reductive phases, which Husserl calls the "transcendental-phenomenological" reduction. As a methodological device the systematic theory of the reductions is indispensable to the phenomenological program, for the phenomenal aspects of that which is thematized are not revealed by ordinary empirical observation, but demand a change in "standpoint". This the phenomenologist accomplishes through the performance of the reductions. It can be said that the reductions signify nothing in themselves, but are this fundamental change of standpoint. Let us examine them in more detail.

The transcendental-phenomenological reduction, which is really a series of graded reductions, is performed by me, as the actually philosophizing subject, from the basis of the "natural" standpoint, at which I experience myself here, in the first instance as "I", in the ordinary sense of the term; as this human person living among others in the world. <sup>88</sup> From the natural standpoint, it is a world of things, other people, affairs, which are accepted as wholly unproblematical. As I look about, I see things, pen, ink bottle, their shapes, colours, and occupy myself—cognitively, practically, aesthetically, in any manner of engagement—with these and other things as objects, which are strictly independent of myself. Our existence, in the natural attitude, Husserl points out, is one of "naïve" acceptance of the world filled with objects, existing wholly in themselves and in possession of a rationality that can be understood. More precisely, in the natural attitude, in every cognitive and evaluative act, we implicitly posit an existential judgement about ourselves and the world. Thus, every

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Lauer distinguishes at least six levels of reduction, cf. Q. Lauer, Phenomenology: Its Genesis and Prospect. (New York, 1965), pp. 51-57.

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Husserl, Ideas I, p. 7.



cognitive and evaluative act effected naturally already carries with it the predecision about what it is supposed to provide: an essential, unprejudiced cognition, or evaluation, of the object in question. It is precisely because of these preconceptions that the "Cartesian" doubt arises in the form of such questions as; do I exist?, does the world exist?, since our experience gives such contradictory views of the world. Descartes had attempted to doubt everything and anything in his search for an indubitable basis for knowledge, which was motivated by such questions. However, with Descartes, the attempt at universal doubt is tantamount to an essay in universal denial, and to proceed entirely in this manner is clearly to take a position with regard to reality, and this, Husserl refuses to do.

His approach to an attempt at "radicalization" of foundation, conditioned by such doubt, takes the form of a consideration of the given apart from all aspects of the act of cognition in its natural form. The level of empirical, contingent existence, which cognition of the natural sort attains, is considered, by Husserl, to be thoroughly unfit as a secure basis for knowledge. He proposes, therefore, to alter the natural standpoint, and thereby achieve a reflexive standpoint which would disassociate the cognitive from the abuse of the natural standpoint. The first technique devised for this transformation to a radical standpoint Husserl calls "epoché".

The epoché can be considered the first of the transcendental-phenomenological reductions, through which one assumes a standpoint radically different from the natural standpoint. By the application of the epoché a particular thesis is disconnected, or assigned the

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coefficient of nullity. In other words, the thesis remains unchanged, but is put out of play, suspended, and is of no further consequence to the examinations which follow. In this way the "Cartesian" methodological doubt is radicalized, or fashioned in such a way that the "moment of doubt" conditions the suspension of the thesis in question, but does not lead to its negation. The epoché itself is never a doubt, not even a methodical doubt. It is simply the eliminating of any position whatever concerning the data of consciousness so that they can be "reconstituted" without the addition of any element foreign to pure consciousness. This, then, is the first and fundamental technique which has "bracketed" the thesis of the natural standpoint. The epoché can and has been limited as to its universality to accommodate the task at hand, namely, the disclosure of a new scientific domain.

In Ideas I, Husserl specifically carries through his phenomenological program, and the existence and reality of an external world is bracketed by the application of the epoché. This much accomplished, Husserl is able to focus solely on the presentational structure of the phenomena, that is, on the phenomena as they appear prior to any interpretation or belief attached to them. The epoché brings to expression the fundamental and essential contingency of the world and of all things which are encountered therein. It does not retain some alleged indubitable scrap of the world, but radically undermines all ontological pronouncements, proposing to understand the world from a standpoint which appears "to be necessary in principle".<sup>89</sup> The world, previously accepted as "just out there", is now treated as phenomena, that is, as correlative to pure consciousness. The extension of the transcendental-

phenomenological reduction completes the process of "purification", and, in specific terms, defines the field of inquiry.

The critical extensions include the transition to pure consciousness by means of the transcendental reduction and the phenomenological bracketing of the transcendent-eidetic sciences. At this point the "I" of the natural standpoint has "become", so to speak, the transcendental inquirer for all time. I am no longer posited as real (wirklich), but exclusively as a pure subject for which this world has being, that is, meaning. The real being, that is, the existence or reality, remains 90  
unconsidered, unquestioned, and its validity is left out of account.

Through the transcendental-phenomenological reduction, the transcendental ego is directly set up at the focus of reflection and made the theme of transcendental description. What we are left with, if one wishes to put it this way, is the transcendental ego with its transcendental life, or, expressed differently, with the "pure experience as act with 91  
its own proper essence."

The transcendental-phenomenological reduction, which we have just briefly described, is called "transcendental" because it reveals the ego for which everything has being, that is to say, experience is regarded as meaningful. It is phenomenological in the sense that the objects in question are considered as pure phenomena, and, finally, it is called "reduction" because, according to Husserl, it leads back to the source, the original data, that is, the pure phenomena. As an entire operation the transcendental-phenomenological reduction brings about the transition from a non-reflective to a reflective attitude, in which phenomenology is then operative. In a purely methodological

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90  
Ibid., p. 8, author's Preface.

91  
Ibid., p.214, sect. 80.

sense of the operation, it means, as Ricoeur points out, "an abstention from judgement concerning the ontological status of the appearing and an occupation with only the pure appearing"<sup>92</sup>. It serves to overcome the "oblivion" of the natural attitude. When I realize that the natural attitude is an operation, a thesis, and not a passivity, then I "become" absolute consciousness, to which objectivity is strictly correlative. With this much accomplished, all naïve existence is eliminated, and the analysis is restricted to that which is immediately given precisely as it is given. The next instrument brought to bear on this field of reduced experience is what Husserl calls the "eidetic reduction", which like the transcendental-phenomenological reduction is no more than a device of method.

The eidetic reduction leads us from the realm of facts to that of essences; it is that methodological procedure whereby our knowledge moves from the level of fact to the level of "eidos", which are put before us, as pure subject, as "pure possibilities", whose validity is independent of contingent existence. Through the eidetic reduction the real existent is divested of its actuality, that is, its factual character, its existential character, its spatio-temporal determinations, which all serve to individualize the object, and from all those characters that accrue to it on account of its integration into the real world. In this regard, Husserl says,

"It is only the individual element that phenomenology ignores, whilst it raises the whole essential content in its concreteness to eidetic consciousness..."<sup>93</sup>

The real existent is, therefore, not regarded as an individual existent, but as an actualized possibility. Under the eidetic reduction even the

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<sup>92</sup>

Paul Ricoeur, Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology. (Evanston, 1967), p. 10.

<sup>93</sup>Husserl, Ideas I, p. 192, sect. 75.

fact of its actualization is of no consequence, and, hence, is disregarded. Thus, from the status of a factual existent, the object is transformed to a kind of being having the status of an example lending itself to "imaginative variation", and, therefore, becoming apt to serve as starting point for an open series of possible variations. The eidetic reduction, which must not be confused with the transcendental-phenomenological reduction, is, therefore, a necessary condition for the act of ideation which brings the essence of the phenomenon is question to normal distance, to complete clearness. Before directly discussing the act of ideation itself, which leads directly to the apprehension of the essence of the object as phenomenon, let us bring to a close the description of the reductive stage of the phenomenological method.

The transcendental-phenomenological reduction, as we have seen, intends to provide a phenomenal ground for inquiry by means of disconnecting the preconceptions of the natural attitude, and by restricting the inquiry to the purely phenomenal frees the inquiry from the vicissitudes of the empirical order. The eidetic reduction, in turn, leads from the factual, individualized level of knowledge, to the level of knowledge of essences, by means of divesting the phenomenon in question of its actuality. The "return to the things themselves" entails not only these reductions to the level of pure essence, but also demands a mode of apprehension of that which is given to us at this reduced level. In other words, the aim of all this rigorous procedure is the intuition of essences (*Wesenserschauung*).

Once the difficulties of the first beginnings have been overcome we are faced with, Husserl tells us, a field of eidetic knowledge,

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a new scientific domain.<sup>94</sup> When we press on to increase our knowledge of this new field, our primary concern is with the development of special methods suited to our proposed task, which is, of course, the acquisition of essential knowledge. Turning directly to this field of eidetic knowledge, Husserl observes that we find, in general, presentations with a certain emptiness of content, and vague sense of distance, which prevents their direct employment in reaching conclusive results.<sup>95</sup> We must, therefore, bring to normal distance, to complete clearness, what at any time "floats before us shifting and unclear and more or less far removed". What is obscurely presented comes closer to us in its own peculiar way, "eventually knocking at the door of intuition."<sup>96</sup> The method of apprehending essences, of bringing to normal distance that which lies before us in an obscure manner, must now be described in more detail.

It belongs to the general and essential nature of immediate essence-apprehension that it can be carried out on the basis of "the mere present framing of particular illustrations".<sup>97</sup> We can, therefore, with the aim of grasping an essence itself in its primordial form, set out from corresponding empirical intuitions, but we can also set out, just as well, from non-empirical intuitions, that is, from intuitions that do not apprehend sensible existence and are of a merely imaginative order. In general, sense-perception, with its primordial dator quality, and, of course, "outer" perception in particular, has advantages of its own as compared with all other forms of presentation, but in phenomenology, as in all eidetic sciences, what Husserl calls

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 171, sect. 63.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 180, sect. 69.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp. 176-177, sect. 67.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 181, sect. 70.

"free fancies" assume a privileged position over against straightforward intuitions. Therefore, those elements which make up the "life" of phenomenology are not concrete real things, as individuals, but possibly imaginable things or "fictions".<sup>98</sup> In attempting to clarify what he means by the privileged position of free fancies, Husserl draws a parallel between the geometer and the phenomenologist. He finds that their endeavours are substantially the same, for as the geometer; when he thinks geometrically, operates with imagery vastly more than with perceptions of figures or models, so the phenomenologist operates in the field of reduced experience. The "work of fancy" is called, by Husserl, "imaginative variation": it is an imaginative process wherein the essence is ultimately brought to normal distance, that is, made present, or, as has been the case everywhere else, when something is made present, the essence is intuited.

The act of imaginative variation is introduced as the operation to account for the apprehension of phenomenological essences. The principle of this operation is best described by means of an example of its use.<sup>99</sup> Starting with a red wooden cube on the desk before me, we may imagine successive variations of certain features of this cube—its colour, its size, the illumination, and so on. This way I am able to imagine an infinite number of varied cubes. In all these possible variations there remains a set of characteristics that are not touched by the variation. If a member of such a set of characteristics were altered in some way, then the consideration of the cube would come to an end. In other words: abstaining from acceptance of its being, we

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Ibid., p. 184, sect. 70.

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Husserl's own example should be looked at in full. cf. Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, p. 70, sect. 34.

change the fact of this cube into a pure possibility, one among other quite "optional" pure possibilities—but possibilities that are possible cubes. We, so to speak, shift the actual cube into the realm of non-actualities, the realm of the as-if, which supplies us with pure possibilities, pure of everything that restricts us to this fact or to any fact whatever. We arrive at certain characteristics, such as; rectangularity, limitation to six squares, corporeality, etc. This set of characteristics, which remains unchanged throughout all the imagined variations can be termed the "eidos" of the cube. Removed from all factualness, it has become the pure "eidos" cube. Needless to say, the red cube of specific dimensions serves as point of departure for numerous other imagined variations through which we could find the "eidos" of colour, size, object of perception, corporeal thing, and so on. <sup>100</sup> This serves as an example in which the departure point on the way to essence is actual experience, rather than an imagination, such as, for example, starting from an imagined coloured surface. The latter way of proceeding, as we have pointed out, is the more prominent starting point, but regardless of the starting point, the principle is the same. The operation of imaginative variation leads—of necessity—to ideal objects, which are not and have not been given in either the imagined starting point or in the starting point from actual experience.

The process of imaginative variation leads in this way to the apprehension of essences, for certain features and structures prove to remain unaltered throughout the process in question. Conceived of in this way, as an invariant which manifests itself in a process of imaginative variation, the "eidos" presents itself in genuine apprehension



as an identical ideality in contradistinction from the multiplicity of possible varieties. The process itself is carried out in the imagination, and, hence, all the forms, that is, all the possible varieties, which originate by way of variation are possible varieties. Since eidetic science is interested, not in matter of fact, but in possibility, the eventual existence or non-existence of the forms arrived at is of no consequence whatever.

The point has been raised that the process of imaginative variation described by Husserl is in some sense circular, and, therefore, faulty. <sup>101</sup> It is pointed out that we must already know what the invariant is before we can use it in the process of variation. This accusation would seem, at first sight, to be well founded. However, on closer examination, it is found to be based on what is a fundamental misunderstanding of Husserl's method of inquiry, for nothing is amiss in beginning eidetic investigations with a particular, antecedently taken as an example of the essence in question, and yet to be disclosed in essential intuition. In other words, Husserl may rightly presuppose, if this is the right word, a "natural" or pre-critical understanding of essences. His point would be that such understanding is critically naïve insofar as it does not truly apprehend the grounding of these essences in the constitutive achievements of pure consciousness.

The method of imaginative variation, at first glance, may seem to bear a strong resemblance to the procedure Descartes follows in trying to distinguish reality from superficial appearances, in the wax example

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Richard Schmitt, "Phenomenology", Encyclopedia of Philosophy.  
cf. also D.M. Levin, Reason and Evidence in Husserl's Phenomenology,  
(Evanston, 1970), Chapter 5 .

given in the Second Meditation. Inasmuch as both of these "experiments" aim at disclosing certain features of objects which remain unchanged throughout the various changes made, the processes seem to be very much alike. Granted, that the actual procedures do in fact have much in common, there are certain very important distinguishing marks. In the first place, the phenomenologist need not and most often does not take, as a starting point, a real, concrete particular, whereas Descartes' experiment explicitly involves the physical manipulation of a particular, and remains tied to contingent, empirical existence. In contrast, the process of imaginative variation is carried out in the imagination and carrying through the process of imaginative variation we are in the realm of pure possibility, and not in the realm of so-called reality. The eidetic reduction has divested the phenomenon of its actuality; it is considered as an exemplar of a certain essence. Phenomenology is, as Ricoeur points out, the "victory over brute fact by the method of imaginative variation".<sup>102</sup> It is a victory in the direction of the eidos accomplished in such a way that the fact is no longer anything but an example of a pure possibility. Secondly, Descartes' experiment ultimately leads to an abandoning of sense experience, and, consequently, he cuts himself off from the world, and recedes into the realm of understanding. Phenomenology, on the other hand, makes the world appear and instead of losing the world, discloses it as intentional, that is to say, as the world as meant.<sup>103</sup> More generally, for Descartes what is real is given in an inspection of the mind, while phenomenology, finding the distinction between reality and appearance inappropriate,

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Ricoeur, p. 108. P. Thévenaz, What is Phenomenology?, and Other Essays, (Chicago, 1962), p. 103, cf. also "The Question of the Radical Point of Departure in Descartes and Husserl" for a detailed treatment of the question as to some relationship between Descartes and Husserl.

suspends the question as to reality and busies itself with the pure appearing. The world is not lost or shut out, but elucidated. The two procedures are fundamentally different, and can only be compared at the superficial level of the activities involved. In short, the difference can be accounted for simply by saying that Descartes lacked the reductions, which, as we have seen, set the tone for the entire phenomenological philosophy.

The process just briefly outlined is the method Husserl has devised to lead to the apprehension of essences. The ideation reaches its final completion with the explicit apprehension of the invariant in question. The invariant is the "eidos", in the Platonic sense, but must be thought of without any metaphysical connotation. Phenomenology has often been misinterpreted as presupposing eidos as an ideal entity privileged by a specific ontological status, and thus representative of some form of Platonic realism. However, the phenomenological essence is not to be conceived of as identical to the Platonic "Idea"; as a real being opposed to individual concrete existents. To clarify this issue, which, by the way, also provides a platform for distinguishing between universal or general intuition and eidetic intuition, we must look more closely at the relationships between straightforward intuition, categorial intuition, and eidetic intuition.

Straightforward or empirical intuition and eidetic intuition, Husserl says, differ in principle. <sup>104</sup> To the essential difference between these two types of intuition there corresponds the essential relations between "essence", and "existence", in the sense of individual concrete being, or between "eidos" and "fact". Just as to think a fact

or to express it needs the grounding or empirical experience, so thought concerning pure essence--the unmixed thought, not that which connects essence and fact together--needs for its grounding and support an insight into the essence of things. Husserl points out, however, that it lies undoubtedly in the intrinsic nature of essential intuition that it should rest on what is a chief factor of individual intuition, namely, the striving for this: the visible presence of the individual fact, though it does not, to be sure, presuppose any apprehension of the individual object or any recognition of its reality. Therefore, although the individual object does not directly or indirectly take part in the constitution of the essence, as it does in the constitution of abstractive elements, the relation to the individual is nevertheless not a contingent one, <sup>105</sup> for as Husserl says,

"...it is certain that no essential intuition is possible without the free possibility of directing one's glance to an individual 'counterpart' and of shaping an illustration; just as contrariwise no individual intuition is possible without the free possibility of carrying out an act of ideation and therein directing one's glance upon the corresponding essence which exemplifies itself in something individually visible."

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It follows essentially from all this that the positing of the essence, with the intuitive apprehension that immediately accompanies it, does not imply any positing of individual existence whatsoever. The former is independent of the "effectiveness" of the individual object. There is, therefore, an independence, but no radical break between the act of cognition leading to eidetic intuition and the act of cognition leading to empirical intuition. There is, in other words, an overall modification, a transformation of the cognitive act, without a

"cutting-off" of its roots in empirical intuition. The essence is not, therefore, a "Platonic Idea", real and existing separately from concrete being, but is itself that mode-of-being correlative to actual, individual being, that is, the necessary structure.<sup>107</sup> All Husserl asserts is that essences are entities of their own with an existence sufficient to allow for assertions of true propositions about them. He never stated that they were real, eternal, changeless, or in any way superior<sup>108</sup> to particulars.

Accordingly, the often misunderstood concept of "essential intuition" is in no way defined as some sort of mystical act, as a lyric leap into the unknown, or as a pure "seeing" of the non-sensible. Rather, the eidos is the correlate of an operation of thought. It is known, as we have pointed out, as the invariable element of something held fast in terms of self-identity throughout its variations and running through of its possible modifications. The reference to essential intuition does not, then, suggest a non-sensible or "intellectual" species of awareness, but serves to indicate the manner in which a thought intention is fulfilled.<sup>109</sup> The phenomenological definition of essence as itself an actual objectivity does not signify its hypostatized substantiality, but simply indicates the eidos' ideal existence, that is, its being engendered through acts of thought. We must, therefore, understand by essence, not mere subjective representation, which would leave us on the plane of psychology, nor "ideal realities", in the Platonic sense, which would leave us on the plane of metaphysics by unduly reifying or hypostasizing the data of consciousness.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>107</sup>

Ibid., p. 92, sect. 27.

<sup>108</sup>

Spiegelberg, vol. 1, p. 106.

<sup>109</sup>

E. Fink, "Husserl's Philosophy and Contemporary Criticism", in Elveton's anthology The Phenomenology of Husserl, (Chicago, 1970), p. 84.

<sup>110</sup> Thévenas, p. 43.

Rather, we must understand essence as the correlate of an operation of thought, that is, as a component of pure phenomena. It is precisely in this direction that further clarification of the concept of "essential intuition" lies. That is to say: an adequate account of the intuitive character of phenomenology must have at its base a sound understanding of the phenomenological mode of analysis, which itself can be gotten at through close inspection of the consequences of the phenomenological method as was just outlined. We therefore turn to a detailed consideration of the sphere of reduced experience.

The suspension of the naturalistic components of experience has permitted the passage from the natural attitude to the reflective attitude, or the phenomenological standpoint. All the objects in this sustained attitude of disengagement and neutrality are considered strictly as intended, as meant, or as experienced in such and such conscious acts (cogitationes), which are themselves considered strictly as acts intensitive to such and such objects. Acts of consciousness are not considered as "mundane" or worldly events, and as such causally and functionally dependent on other "mundane" events, nor is consciousness itself any longer considered as a particular "mundane" region among other regions. Consciousness is regarded as its acts, which, as we know, are intentional experiences; consciousness is essentially intentionality, and the acts are considered solely as experiences of objects, in and through which the objects appear, present themselves, and are apprehended as those which they are.

Thus we see that the essential property of consciousness, in its general form is preserved in the modification, that is, in the

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 reduction. We can even go so far as to say that it is not merely preserved, but purified, brought to light, made visible. The reduction not only brings to light absolute consciousness, but reveals "ego-cogito-cogitatum", that is, the essential relationship between consciousness and its objects, which in the natural attitude remains hidden. We must, however, be quite clear on this point that there is no question here of a relation between a psychological event-- called experience (Erlebnis)--and some other real existent(Dasein)-- called object-- or of a psychological connection obtaining between the one and the other in objective reality. Intentionality is to be understood as signifying that "all consciousness is consciousness of something",<sup>112</sup> but this relationship cannot be conceived of as a direct link between consciousness and object, nor should it be understood as an instrument of contact between two psychical states, where one would be the act and the other the object. The intentional objects are not objects somehow in the mind, that is, interiorized, nor are they intermediaries between consciousness and the "things themselves". Consciousness as intentionality defines them by separating consciousness from the objectively real world. We have, as a result of this separation, two distinct "realms of Being", namely, the transcendent-phenomenal(real world), and the immanent-<sup>113</sup> intuitive(structure of consciousness). In this Husserl does not reduce reality to consciousness, nor does he dissolve consciousness in the objective real world, but rather both are regarded as essentially correlative to each other. Both are kept as irreducible to one another. In short, the real objective world is considered as the intentional

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Husserl, Ideas I, p. 108, sect. 36.

112

Ibid., p. 223, sect. 84.

113

Ibid., p. 139, sect. 49.

correlate of consciousness. The relationship is neither one of creator to created, nor one of premise to conclusion, but rather is described by the complex doctrine of constitution, which must now be the subject of a brief description.

The relation of consciousness vis-à-vis its objects is constitutive. Constitution is neither a discovery, nor a creation, but a sense-bestowing "activity" of a sense-giving consciousness, which on its side is absolute and not dependent in its turn on sense bestowed on it from other sources. <sup>114</sup> Consciousness is considered as absolute, while the objective real world is said to essentially lack independence, that is, it is considered as having merely phenomenal status. To make reality appear as phenomena is to understand that the being of the world is no longer its existence or its reality, but its meaning, its "sense", and that it is what it is solely in terms of its being correlative to consciousness. In short, reality is considered as something meant; as something having a certain "sense". This being the case, the world or reality as phenomenal-intentional reality, reality which is regarded in terms of its carrying a sense, a sense which arises from the source of all sense, namely, consciousness, can be said to have been retained in the realm of absolute consciousness. The world, therefore, with the question as to its reality status disconnected, takes its place "in" absolute consciousness, as intentional objectivity. We have, as Husserl says, literally lost nothing, but, on the contrary, have won the whole of absolute Being, which, properly understood, conceals in itself all transcendencies, constituting them within itself. <sup>115</sup> Our familiar world of objects, affairs, other

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114

Ibid., p. 153, sect. 55.

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Ibid., p. 140, sect. 50.



people, if we anticipate certain fears correctly, has not been obliterated, but remains as it had been, only now understood in its uninterrupted givenness, that is, as pure phenomena.

We can now see that Husserl's leading us back to consciousness has not meant that it should become the salvaged basis for knowledge, but has shown us precisely the vacancy of the inside of consciousness. Husserl makes this quite clear when he says,

"In this connection, furthermore, it must by no means be accepted as a matter of course that, with our apodictic pure ego, we have rescued a little 'tag-end' of the world, as the sole unquestionable part of it for the philosophizing ego, and that now the problem is to infer the rest of the world by rightly conducted arguments, according to the principles innate in the ego." 116

Consciousness is not a sphere choked with acts or processes, as real psychological occurrences, which coexist with and succeed one another, but is precisely "what is outside", that is, it is intentionality. Consciousness has not been simply located as the centre of knowledge, as the source of knowledge, but has been described as being distinct from the objectively real world, and, therefore, wholly without position; it is a transcendental absolute to which all transcendencies are correlative.

This much inspection has brought to the surface a very fundamental distinction, namely, that between transcendent-relative being and immanent-absolute being, and, in addition, has shown that an analysis of the former is essentially an analysis of the latter. 117 This, in turn, means that the centre of attention is now this absolute sphere of reduced experience. In contrast with Descartes, whose starting point had been the substantiated ego-cogito, Husserl remains in the field of ego-cogito-cogitatum, accepting nothing which we ourselves

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Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, p. 24, sect. 10.

117 If x is relative to y, then y is a necessary condition for the possibility of x. cf. Husserl, Ideas I, sections 47-51.

do not "see", and remaining with the principles of pure intuition or evidence.

Experience itself is now recognized as pure act, which is nothing more than the intentional "relationship" of pure consciousness to the intentional object. The whole of reality thus appears as a stream of experiences interpreted as pure acts, and it is from this basis that phenomenology makes its start as the science of essences in pure experience. It cannot be overemphasized that the stream of experience, as essentially intentional experience, is in no way mental or psychological, and that pure consciousness is not a real subject, because its acts have this essential intentional character. Consciousness is conceived of as that of which it is conscious. Furthermore, description of consciousness as intentional experience is now in order, bearing in mind the contrast between the transcendent status of its objects, and the character of conscious acts, as given upon reflection, as immanent to some consciousness; as components of that consciousness. This description will make clear the situation with which we are now concerned, that is, the phenomenological situation.

The distinction with which we are now involved has established two "realms of Being"; the absolute-immanent, and the relative-transcendent. Everything transcendent, meaning, of course, everything which is not given to me immanently, is assigned the index zero, that is, is excluded, and our analysis is to focus on that which is immanently given to me. This, of course, is the absolute sphere of consciousness, which is nothing more, as we know, than its intentional acts. The science of phenomenology is, therefore, taken up with the analysis of acts of consciousness as cognitive phenomena. Husserl points out that reference

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to cognitive phenomena is, however, somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, it has to do with cogitationes as acts of consciousness in which this or that object is an object of consciousness, and, on the other, it has to do with these objects themselves. The word "phenomenon", Husserl continues, is itself ambiguous, in virtue of the essential correlation between appearance and that which appears. In its proper sense "phenomenon" means, Husserl says, that which appears, and yet he uses it by preference for the appearing itself, that is, for the act of consciousness.<sup>118</sup> According to Husserl, the phenomena, in the preferred sense, are given absolutely. Their existence, in other words, is beyond question. We have thus far secured the whole realm of cogitationes, as absolute data.

If it is possible to take such phenomena for objects of investigation, then it is obvious that we are no longer within a natural, transcendently "objectivizing" science. We do not speak of and investigate psychological phenomena of certain happenings in so-called reality, but of that which exists and is valid whether there is such a thing as objective actuality or not, whether the postulation of such transcendence is justified or justifiable or not. Rather, we concern ourselves with absolute data, with objects of whose existence we are assured. While the transcendence of things required that we put them in question, we have the givenness of the pure cogitationes as absolute possessions.<sup>119</sup> To this manifold sphere of being, which can be given to us absolutely, Husserl gives the name "cognition", and points out that immanence is the generally necessary characteristic of all

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E. Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, trans. by G. Nakhtnikian and W. P. Alston, (The Hague, 1964), p. 11.

119

Ibid., p. 29.

120

epistemological cognition. We have, therefore, the manifold sphere of being characterized by immanence, and our inquiry will be, as phenomenology, restricted to this sphere of absolute and immanent givenness. It should be mentioned here that a distinction must be made between genuine immanence (reellen Immanenz), which signifies something actually being in consciousness, and true immanence, which is immanence in the sense of self-givenness constituted in evidence. The sphere of absolute data with which phenomenology is concerned is immanent being as self-givenness

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in the absolute sense. Furthermore, that which is given absolutely and immanently can be apprehended purely and immanently. This Husserl expresses by saying that "the seeing cognition of the cogitatio is immanent". This is to say: that the mode of givenness and the mode of apprehension are one and the same phenomenon. This can be restated as follows: Husserl points out that the manifold sphere of being known as cognition, consisting as it does of nothing other than cognitive phenomena as acts, is necessarily characterized by immanence, in the phenomenologically relevant sense. Further, this fact of immanence entails a mode of givenness, namely, absolute and clear givenness, and finally, Husserl says that that which is given clearly and absolutely can be intuited directly and immanently. What this amounts to basically is an identification of the concepts of "givenness" and "intuition".

Consequently, the idea of the phenomenological theory of reductions acquires a more immediate and more profound determination, and a clearer meaning. It does not merely entail an exclusion of all transcendence, and, therewith, a limitation to the realm of absolute consciousness, but more significantly means a limitation to the sphere of things which

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120

Ibid., p. 26.

121

Ibid., p. 28.

122

Ibid., p. 2.

are purely self-given, to the sphere of those things which are not merely spoken of, meant, or thought of, but instead to the sphere of things that are given in just the sense in which they are intended, and, moreover, are self-given, in the strictest sense--in such a way that nothing which is meant or thought fails to be given. In a word, we are restricted to the sphere of pure evidence. <sup>123</sup>

Within this sphere of pure evidence our interest lies, not with the phenomenon itself, which is given absolutely, but specifically with the essence which is exhibited in the pure phenomenon as an absolute datum itself. <sup>124</sup> The modification, to this point, has left us with not only the pure experiences as acts, but with the "pure experience as act with its own proper essence". This being the case even greater restriction is called for. The field of reduced experience must be considered as regards its essences, while the factual side of our phenomenon is disregarded. At this point the significance of the eidetic reduction is truly revealed. The eidetic reduction provides access to the essential forms of the reduced field of experience. <sup>125</sup> Husserl points out that any closed field may be considered as regards its essence, its eidos and we, for this purpose, disregard the factual aspects, and regard it merely as an example. The phenomenon, as we already know, is given absolutely and is referred to as the absolute datum in the sphere of pure evidence, but what remains unclear is our intuition of essences. Husserl points out that the notion of absolute self-giveness extends to essences and they can, therefore, be "seen" directly and immediately. This, of course, requires further examination,

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123

Ibid., pp. 48-49.

124

Ibid., p. 35.

125

Husserl, "Phenomenology" The Encyclopedia Britannica, 14<sup>th</sup> ed., (London, 1929), p. 700.

and for this we move to take up Husserl's theory of evidence.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

Returning to Logical Investigations, we find there the foundations for a theory of evidence, in the notion of intuitive fulfilment of the signitive act. The notions of signification and intuition in relation to the phenomenon of fulfilment were outlined in some detail in Chapter One, so that here we need only emphasize what was established. As was pointed out, the intentional-signitive act of consciousness, which merely refers to the object in question, is distinguished from the intentional-intuitive act, which with some degree of fulness, gives or makes present the object. When the object intended and the object given in the intuition are found to be identical, that is, where there is an agreement between the actual sense of the intention and the self-given content, the intention is said to have reached fulfilment. To the degree that this intention is fulfilled, it is fulfilled intuitively, for only in intuition can an object be made present or brought to givenness. Furthermore, in the intuitive fulfilment of intentions, there can be a "progression" of intuitive fulness, as a representative content is brought ever more adequately to giving the "whole" of the object as it itself is. There is, in other words, a scale of adequation, with the purely signitive acts at one end, and the full intuitive acts at the other. Points between are characterized by an intuitive fulness in varying degrees of more or less. The object is, therefore, present or given as just what is intended when no partial intention remains implicit and still lacks intuitive fulfilment. In such cases the

object is fully presented, or actually given as was intended, which is to say, that the object is "self-given". The object is not merely intended, but, in the strictest sense, given, and given as it is intended. To such cases, which give to an intention the absolute fulness of content, the fulness of the object itself, Husserl says that the epistemological pregnant sense of self-evidence (Evidenz)<sup>126</sup> is exclusively relevant. Self-evidence has, Husserl continues, significance whether we deal with individual, universal, or essential being; it remains the act of the most perfect synthesis of fulfilment whatever the intentional object. The basic point one must not overlook here is the fact that self-evidence is this consciousness which is truly a "seeing" or apprehending consciousness and signifies nothing other than "self-giveness".<sup>127</sup> The interweaving of the concepts of "giveness", "self-evidence", and "seeing" can and must be made more precise.

Self-evidence, Husserl says, is a form of consciousness, and, more precisely, is that form of consciousness in which the object of consciousness is present to it in the mode of "grasped itself"; it signifies the intentional achievement of the "giving of things themselves" as they are intended. In short, self-evidence can be said to be that mode of intentionality "par excellence", that is, truly "the consciousness of something". Fink points out that self-evidence is a basic mode of intentionality in general, of all kinds of acts, which everywhere has its opposite mode in signitive and empty intentions.<sup>128</sup>

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For the word "Evidenz", in its most special or technical sense, "self-evidence" is a better translation than "evidence".

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Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 47.

128

Fink, p. 83.



Intentionality here, as before and always, describes consciousness in its grasp of its objectivations. From this it seems to follow that the notions of "self-evidence" and "intuition" are in some sense identical, which is to say, that they both describe the same state of affairs, namely, the grasp of the object as it is itself. The identification, if indeed this is the case, can at once be tested through a closer examination of the conception of evidence.

Evidence, Husserl says, is not a feeling, marking out the phenomenon as at one time evident and at another time, through its absence, marking out the same phenomenon as non-evident. In distinguishing between cases of evidence and non-evidence, Husserl opposes this notion of feeling as evidence, saying that the difference between evidence and non-evidence lies precisely in the fact that the phenomenon itself differs in each case. He gives an example. If I at one time have redness in an intuition and at another time think about redness in terms merely of symbols with empty intention, then, according to Husserl, one need only look at the phenomena in order to recognize that they are entirely different, and united through that which identifies them as two cases of the same thing, namely, meaning. From this Husserl concludes that if the phenomena themselves differ, then this difference lies precisely in that, in one case the "self-giveness" of redness lies before us, or, subjectively expressed, the adequate "seeing" or intuition of the phenomenon itself, while, in the other case, we have a mere reference to the phenomenon. Thus we see that the difference between evidential and non-evidential presentation is precisely a difference between intuitive fulfilment and signitive intention. We conclude, therefore, that self-evidence is intuition, or expressing it differently, self-

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evidence or intuition is the self-givenness of the phenomenon itself.

In Husserl's own words,

"In the broadest sense, self-evidence denotes a universal primal phenomenon of intentional life, namely—as contrasted with other forms of consciousness-of, which is capable a priori of being empty, expectant, indirect, non-presentive—the quite preeminent mode of consciousness that consists in the self-appearance, the self-exhibiting, the self-giving, of an affair, an affair complex(or state of affairs), a universality, a value, or other objectivity, in the final mode: 'itself there', 'immediately intuited', 'given originaliter'." 129

The close connections, or, so to speak, the identification of the concepts of "intuition" and "self-evidence" proves an immense step forward in our primary task which is the fullest possible clarification of the concept of "intuition", and, more specifically, "essential intuition". A further step, however, is necessary, for we must now examine the relevance of this so-called identification to the field of reduced experience.

Consciousness, we will remember, is conceived of as a stream of experiences(Erlebnisse). This, we might add, is by way of essential necessity, for consciousness, as intentionality, does not have things in it; its only things, so to speak, are the acts of consciousness. The cogitationes are referred to as the "first absolute-immanent data". In contrast, transcendent being is put and held in question. More precisely, the cognitive act has genuine abstract parts constituting it, but transcendent being, here meaning the "real" object, is not to be found as a genuine(reell) concrete part(Stück), not as something which really exists within the cogitatio. 130 It is, however, "there", meaning in consciousness as a stream of experience, but this being "there" must

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129

Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, p. 57, sect. 24.

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Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 27.

be spelled out, for it is not presence in any ordinary sense.

Being "there", in this connection, consists of certain conscious acts of specific and changing structures, such as; perception, imagination, memory, etc., for which being "in" does not mean "in" in the sense of being contained as in a hull or vessel. The things instead come to be constituted in and through conscious acts, although in reality they are not at all found in them. <sup>131</sup> This means, that the object, which itself is not an immanent "component" of the stream of experience, in any genuine sense, is regarded as object of consciousness, and, accordingly, is constituted as "such and such", as an intended object. As an intended object, it is an "irreal" or ideal "component" of consciousness. It is, as intended or phenomenological object, no longer regarded as transcendent, for, as we know, as meant object, the object is correlative to consciousness. <sup>132</sup> The object is "intentionally immanent", that is, it is immanent in the sense of self-given as constituted in evidence. Within the immanent a distinction between appearance and that which appears must be made. Immanence, therefore, signifies the nature of whatever objects have been reduced to the stream of experience. Consciousness as cogitationes and its objects as intended are immanent. We have, therefore, two absolute data; the givenness of the appearing (cognitive act) and the givenness of that which appears (object of cognition). <sup>133</sup>

To be given, and this applies to any kind of object, is to be exhibited as "so and so" in particular acts of consciousness. In and

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Ibid., p. 9.

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The term "object" must be understood in its widest possible sense. It is meant to apply not only to physical things of ordinary perception, but things of cultural value, beliefs, opinions, logical and scientific concepts, to all real beings both inanimate and animate, and so on.

133

E. Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 9.

through specific acts of consciousness the object in question exhibits the components that contribute towards determining its sense, and also the sense of its specific objectivity and existence, which is obviously not the same in the case of ideal objects, and essences in particular, than it is in the case of physical things. In and through specific acts of consciousness objects are exhibited as "so and so", that is, they are given. This is to say: that in and through specific acts of consciousness particular objects are constituted as "such and such". An object's givenness is, therefore, a function of its constitution. It is for this reason that Husserl says that, "the problems of givenness are the problems of the constitution of objects of all sorts within cognition".<sup>134</sup> Thus we see that if an act of a certain structure is present, then by that very fact a certain object is also present, and, moreover, that the character of the object in question is co-determined by the character of the act in which the object appears. This being the case we must acknowledge that to each kind of object there attaches a mode of givenness which is exclusively its own, and which accounts for its particular kind of being. In other words, every kind of object, whether it be physical-material, categorial, or essential, has its own way of giving itself, or, as Husserl says, its own appropriate kind of evidence or self-givenness.<sup>135</sup> Thus to understand the different ways in which an object can be itself present to consciousness, that is, can itself be given, is to understand evidence. This in turn implies that through an investigation of the modes of givenness we can come to a greater understanding of the kinds of intuition, and, in particular, essential intuition. Let us now enter into such an investigation.

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<sup>134</sup>

Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 11.

<sup>135</sup>

Husserl, Ideas I, p. 210, sect. 79.

The adequate, or the perfection of self-giveness, corresponds, according to Husserl, to the immanent phenomenological sphere of experience. More precisely, where the object is itself immanent, it can come to be adequately given or self-given. In contrast, the transcendent can only come to be inadequately given. In section 44 of Ideas I, Husserl even more precisely contrasts the mode of givenness of things, and of transcendencies in general, with the mode of givenness of that which is immanent. He states that transcendent being in general, no matter what sort, can only be brought to givenness through appearances, that is, in a manner analogous to that mode in which a thing comes to givenness.<sup>136</sup> The real object is necessarily given perspectively (onesidedly), presenting or giving the object through an incomplete series of profiles. The evidence pertaining to particular objects in a real objective world is "external experience"; and we see that, as a matter essential necessity no other mode of self-presentation is conceivable in the case of such objects. But we can also see that, on the other hand, this kind of evidence has an essential "onesidedness"—stated more precisely: a multiform horizon of unfulfilled anticipation (which, however, are in need of fulfilment) and, accordingly, contents of a mere meaning, which refers us to corresponding potential evidences.<sup>137</sup> That which is immanent, however, does not present or give itself in this way, that is, as an identity uniting modes of appearances through perspective continua, but as absolute. This serves to distinguish between the "quasi-giveness" of the transcendent and the absolute givenness of the immanent.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 125, sect. 44.  
sect. 28.

<sup>137</sup> Husserl, Cartesian Meditations, p. 61.

<sup>138</sup> Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 35.

To this fundamental difference in the modes of being given we might well expect a corresponding difference between the acts of intuition associated with the respective modes of givenness. We find that this is indeed the case. Husserl says, that as regards immanent being, the dator intuition is itself immanent, while with respect to transcendent being the dator intuition is of a transcendent character, and cannot give the object in question adequately, in any sense.<sup>139</sup> What is referred to as "transcendent intuition" is, of course, perception, in the ordinary sense. It seems that to this latter type of intuition there attaches a certain inadequacy by way of essential necessity. Immanent perception, on the other hand, which is also called "immediate" or "reflective" perception, has to do with immanent objects, or, in other words, with experiences (Erlebnisse). An experience, Husserl tells us, has no perspectives (Ein Erlebnis schattet sich nicht ab) and, therefore, through acts of immediate intuition, we intuit a "self".<sup>140</sup> It is a mark of the type of being peculiar to experience (Erlebnis) that perceptual insight can direct its immediate and unobstructed gaze upon every such experience. It must be pointed out that immanent, or immediate perception is in no way the same as introspection. According to Husserl, there is a clear distinction between the two. Introspection, in its usual sense, means a person's apprehension of his own experiences. It is a looking inward at one's own mental states, instead of a looking outward at the world in which he is. Immanent perception, on the other hand, is precisely this looking outward. It is reflection on our experiences which as we "live" them

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139

Husserl, Ideas I, p. 367, sect. 144.

140

Ibid., pp. 121-123, sect. 42 & sect. 43.

cannot be doubted. Introspection looks only at the conscious activity, not at its objective correlate. Only immanent or reflective perception does the latter.

From all of this it has been established that transcendent or empirical intuition and immediate intuition are distinguishable in terms of their respective modes of givenness. This is to say: that transcendent being gives itself only through appearances, which are necessarily perspectival; it gives itself now from this side, now from that, and so on, and can, therefore, only be seen as such. On the other hand, immanent being has no perspectives and is given absolutely, which means that it can be apprehended or intuited immediately and directly. It is given as something that "is", and that "is" here and now and whose being cannot be sensibly doubted. In this way the pure phenomenon, the cogitatio, for example, a particular perception is reached, for while I am perceiving I can also look, by way of pure "seeing" at the perception, at it itself as it is there. The perception which is thereby grasped and delimited in "seeing" is an absolutely given pure phenomenon in the phenomenological sense, renouncing everything and anything transcendent.

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We have the givenness of the pure cogitation as an absolute possession, but not the givenness of outer things in external perception, although such perception makes a claim to be giving the existence of these things. We do not understand, Husserl says, how perception can reach transcendent objects, but we do understand how perception can reach the immanent, provided, of course, that it is reflective, and purely immanent perception, which has undergone the reductions. Every

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Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, pp. 34-35.

immanent perception, moreover, necessarily guarantees the existence  
 (Existenz) of its object.<sup>142</sup> In answer to the question: How do we  
 understand this? Husserl responds, "well, we directly 'see', we directly  
 grasp what we intend in the act of 'seeing' and grasping".<sup>143</sup> This  
 "seeing" or grasping of what is given, insofar as it is actual "seeing",  
 actual self-giveness in the strictest sense, and not another sort of  
 givenness which points to something which is not given—this, Husserl  
 says,<sup>144</sup> is an ultimate.

Turning now to Husserl's views about immanent objects one must  
 recognize that there are many kinds of immanent objects. There are,  
 for example, this act of perceiving, of recollecting, and so on, but  
 also universals (objects and states of affairs) and, of course, essences.  
 The latter kind of immanent object is most important, for, as we know,  
 phenomenology is to be a purely eidetic science; its subject matter is  
 essential being. In short, Husserl wants to secure knowledge of essences  
 (Wesenserkenntnisse). The particular cognitive phenomenon, as cognitive  
 act, coming and going in the stream of experience is, therefore, not the  
 sort of thing about which phenomenology establishes its conclusions. The  
 phenomenologist is primarily interested in putting the question of  
 essence. The question then arises as to whether or not essences and  
 idealities in general are capable of self-giveness in the same sense  
 as cogitationes. Husserl states plainly that no less do we find evidence  
 in the essence and the universal; we recognize that essences, and other  
 idealities in general, attain self-giveness.<sup>145</sup>

First of all, with respect to universals or general objects, we

<sup>142</sup>

Husserl, Ideas I, p. 351, sect. 136.

<sup>143</sup>

Husserl, The Idea of Phenomenology, p. 39.

<sup>144</sup>

Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>145</sup>

Ibid., p. 48.



must make use of what we have already ascertained, namely, that in reflective perception the cogitationes are absolutely given to us insofar as we consciously undergo them. We can, Husserl now states, inspect universals which are singled out within these cogitationes, and within their genuinely (reell) abstract aspects; we can in a "seeing" abstraction grasp universals. We know that this is the case from our previous considerations of universal or general intuition. Let us consider a case which Husserl sets down as an illustration of what is meant here. Let us consider, therefore, a case in which a universal is given, that is, a case where a purely immanent consciousness of the universal is built up on the basis of some seen or self-given particular. I have, he begins, a particular intuition of redness, or rather, several such intuitions. I stick strictly to pure immanence; I am careful to perform the reduction. I then snip off any further significance of redness, any way in which it may be viewed as something transcendent, for example, as the redness of a piece of blotting paper, on my table, etc., and thereby isolate or abstract an aspect of the phenomenon. And now, he continues, I fully grasp in pure "seeing" the redness in general. No longer is it the particular as such which is referred to, not this or that red thing, but redness in general. <sup>146</sup> This givenness is also something purely immanent, not immanent in the spurious sense, that is, as something existing in the sphere of an individual consciousness. We are not speaking at all of the act of abstraction in the psychological subject and of the psychological conditions under which this takes place, but we are speaking of the givenness of the universal redness in general, or of universal or general "seeing". The universal or general object

comes to self-givenness through an abstractive "seeing" which is itself founded on acts of transcendent perception. This, then, is one form of pure "seeing" or immanent perception, in and through which the object, as universal or general object, is brought to self-givenness.

Now, with respect to the givenness of essences, we know that it is not constituted on the basis of acts of straightforward intuition in such a way that we, so to speak, "pluck" a universal from the phenomenon itself, but is reached through a process known as "imaginative variation". Following the eidetic reduction, which itself restricts phenomenological inquiry to "immanental essences", the above process brings the essences to normal distance, to complete clearness. They are put before us, as pure subject, as "pure possibilities" whose validity is independent of contingent existence. In other words, the individual element is ignored whilst the whole essential content is raised to eidetic consciousness. The act reaching the essence is not an abstractive act, that is, it is not an abstractive act in the sense that abstraction is understood as subtraction, but is aimed at a particular level of the phenomenon itself, namely, the level of necessary structure. This process reaches the essence in a manner which is entirely different from abstraction. The definition of essence as necessary structure itself makes clear that it is not merely a matter of elevating a number or perhaps all of the characteristics of a particular phenomenon into generality; but that the essence is formed of those characteristics which form the very condition of the possibility of the phenomenon in question. A distinction must, therefore, be made and held between general objects and essences. There is certainly a difference between their respective modes of givenness and this must,

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as we know, be a consequence of a difference in their respective kinds of being. Moreover, this difference in their modes of givenness is, of course, a difference in the modes of apprehension associated with them. The essence, therefore, can be brought to self-givenness, which is to say, that essential intuition is, and, therefore, can be brought to bear.

The earliest stage was the evidence of the cogitatio. There one would only have to grasp and "see" it, in reflective or immediate perception. Following this we found that one could, on the basis of these first absolute data, separate out specific universals and categorical forms, and, finally, that the essence could be brought to self-givenness and therewith "seen" through a process of imaginative variation. The consciousness in which these objects are brought to givenness, as well as, purely intuited, is, Husserl emphasizes, not like a box in which these data are simply lying; it is the "seeing" consciousness which consists of cognitive acts which are formed in such and such ways, and the things which are not cognitive acts are nevertheless in these acts, and come to be given in and through such acts. <sup>147</sup> The problems of givenness are, we must remember, ultimately the problems of constitution, and, therefore, the notion of intuition, of whatever kind or whatever form it may have, can be conceived of as constitutive intuition. <sup>148</sup>

We have, in this chapter, approached the notion of intuition in general, and then each of the kinds of intuition explicitly recognized by Husserl, as basically a question of evidence, or, in other words, as

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Ibid., pp. 56-57.

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It is only in the period after Logical Investigations that Husserl goes so far as to ascribe to the intentions the function of actually constituting the intentional. It thus becomes the achievement (Leistung) of the intentional acts.

a question regarding the various modes of givenness attaching to the various ontological types of being. What we have found is that the form of intuition and mode of givenness are one and the same phenomenon expressed from different points of view. This has great bearing on the understanding which can be attained of the phenomenological appeal to intuition. This is to say: that, according to the conception of intuition advanced, we do not have a number of cognitive faculties which give us knowledge of various sorts of objects, but a consciousness as stream of experience (Erlebnis) which can inspect the modes of of givenness attaching to various types of objectifications. The point of introducing intuition, and of grounding an entire phenomenological philosophy in intuition, is not to make psychological statements about the origin of our knowledge of a particular kind of object, and, hence, to do psychology, but to return to origins, to ultimate beginnings, which means, of course, a return to self-evidence. In short, intuition, in the phenomenological context, is an inspection of evidential claims. The appeal to intuition reflects an over-riding concern with questions of evidence, and ultimately makes possible the realization of phenomenology's intent to "return to the things themselves". This return is essentially a submission to self-evidence. The appeal to intuition neither needs to, or for that matter can, be justified beyond its expression in terms of self-evidence.

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## CONCLUSION

The preceding has been primarily concerned to test Husserl's claim to have made first beginnings in a rigorously scientific philosophy. As was pointed out in the Introduction, this claim immediately gives rise to problems of method. More precisely, this claim implies two correlated elements: (1) that philosophy as rigorous science has its own unique object-domain, and (2) that the constituents of this particular object-domain are in some sense "experienceable".<sup>149</sup> It has been our point of view, from the outset, that, in the final analysis, these requirements are met by Husserl's acceptance of a more basic and larger conception of intuition, which, in short, defines intuition as a cognitive instance presenting an object to us as self-given. What this acceptance means precisely is the "every possible object has its own ways of coming under a glance that presents, intuitively, meets it eventually in its 'bodily-selfhood', and lays hold of it."<sup>150</sup> With this extended and more basic conception of intuition Husserl is permitted to speak of essential intuition, and, therefore, of phenomenology as rigorous science of essential being. Without this conception of intuition, essences as the constituents of the phenomenological object-domain could not be said to be, in any sense, "experienceable", and they could not then be said to constitute a unique object domain. The claim to have established philosophy as rigorous science, therefore,

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These, of course, are not the only problems associated with a claim to have established philosophy as a rigorous science, but in meeting them, one comes a long way in support of such a claim.

<sup>150</sup>

Husserl, Ideas I, p. 49, sect. 3.

seems to rest on Husserl's recognition of this more basic and larger conception of intuition. The same thing is expressed in saying that the phenomenological method, which is developed to achieve the ideal of rigorous scientific philosophy, is essentially a method of intuition. Spiegelberg goes as far as to define phenomenology, in the sense that it is common to the whole earlier "movement", as an intuitive method<sup>151</sup> for obtaining insights into essential structures. It is precisely because of this that our inquiry into Husserl's phenomenological philosophy has, in the main, been given over to a consideration of his conception of intuition. In conclusion, we shall endeavour to make this connection quite clear and draw out certain of its implications.

Philosophy, according to Husserl, by virtue of its essential aim, wants to be rigorous science. As such it would be, as we have already seen, of an entirely different character than either sciences of nature or of mind; it lies in an entirely new dimension, one of true origins or beginnings. Being radically different from natural science it cannot rely on the well established methods of these sciences, with which we are thoroughly familiar, but must concern itself generally, with the developing of special methods which would make possible a return<sup>152</sup> to origins, or to "presuppositionlessness". It must devise methods which would fit in from the outset, and continuously throughout its whole development with the aim of achieving a rigorously scientific

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Spiegelberg, "The Phenomenology of Direct Evidence", Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, vol. II, no. 4, 1942, pp. 427-456.

152

"Presuppositionlessness (Voraussetzungslosigkeit)" stands for the attempt to eliminate presuppositions that have not been thoroughly examined. It is thus not freedom from all presuppositions, but merely freedom from unclarified presuppositions that is involved.

philosophy.

That philosophy is to be rigorous science and characterized by "presuppositionlessness" means, in Husserl's view, the strict exclusion of all assertions which could not be completely realized phenomenologically, that is, in terms of intuitive experience alone, and subject to well defined conditions. So, as a matter of essential methodological necessity phenomenological philosophy, as rigorous science, refers back to self-evidence. What it accepts as the source of authority for all rational statements is immediate "seeing"—not the bare seeing of sense experience, but seeing in the sense of originally given consciousness. Husserl formulates the "principle of all principles", of his philosophical science, in these words: "that very primordial dator intuition is a source of authority(Rechtsquelle) for knowledge, that whatever presents itself in 'intuition' in primordial form(as it were in its bodily reality) is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it then presents itself."<sup>153</sup> The method and aim of phenomenology as rigorous science are, therefore, united. The primary interest is one of grounding all knowledge on final ultimate sources, that is, on principles which present themselves in and through primordial intuition. Husserl seeks the ultimate foundation of all our rational assertions in an original intuition of the "things themselves" concerning which we want to make a statement. It is in this sense and only in this sense that philosophy as science of final and original grounds is rigorous science. For Husserl, "scientific knowledge is, as such, grounded knowledge".<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>153</sup>

Husserl, Ideas I, p. 83, sect. 24.

<sup>154</sup>

Husserl, L. I., vol. 1, p. 227.

In order that philosophy be rigorously scientific, it must return to origins or beginnings or, as Husserl himself puts it, "to the things themselves (zu den Sachen selbst)". It is above all imperative to get at "the things themselves"; that is the first and fundamental rule in the phenomenological method. This appeal for a "return to the things themselves" means precisely a return to the ultimate source for all justification of all our rational assertions, a return to the primordial sources of intuitional experiences and to the insights into essential structures (Wesenseinsichten). This appeal is, therefore, but another way of expressing Husserl's "principle of all principles", which, as we have seen, recognizes that the ultimate source for the justification of knowledge is "seeing (Anschauung)". A "return to the things themselves" is, therefore, a return to that which is given, that which presents itself, that which we "see" in consciousness.

This given is called "phenomenal" in the sense that it gives itself or "appears" to pure consciousness. The word "phenomenon" must not be understood in the Kantian sense as implying an unknown something (Ding an Sich) behind phenomena; such an unknown does not come into question for phenomenology which is concerned solely with that which gives itself, that is, the data of primordial intuition. The "things" referred to are, of course, not the real objects or facts, but rather the immediately evident phenomena within the region of purified experience. In short, "phenomena", in the phenomenological sense, are those things which appear to the reflecting consciousness as self-given. The phenomenological analysis is not concerned with matter-of-fact, but with essences as the phenomena of purified experience. In other words,

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the intuition spoken of is not the self-givenness of physical things in "outer" perception, but essential intuition. It is at this point that the recognition of a more basic and larger conception of intuition takes on its full significance. Indeed, it can be said that the acceptance of this conception of intuition, so to speak, structures the whole phenomenological program.

The program itself, as we have seen, is basically a methodological one, which leads us back to consciousness, and by consciousness it does not mean the empirical consciousness of the psycho-physical organism in relation to the physical world, the field which psychology investigates, but pure consciousness of the "geistiges" ego. Unfortunately, this can only be poorly translated as "spiritual" or "intellectual". The starting point is an ego-cogito, but, in virtue of the fact that consciousness is always consciousness of something, every cogito is necessarily the cogito of a cogitatum. Consequently, if one asserts that all consciousness is intentional, then it is evident that nothing can be said about consciousness unless attention is paid to that of which one is conscious and vice versa. From this, it is clear that the question as to the essence of any being is a question concerning the acts of consciousness in and through which that being has to manifest itself originally as "this" or "that". It is in this sense that phenomenology is at once science of essence and science of consciousness. The essences of things, therefore, can only be determined it seems by returning to the acts of consciousness. This is a necessary consequence of the application of the concept of intentionality to cognition. In the act itself is revealed the manner in which the

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intentional object is given, which is to say that the act contains its own evidence, its own assurance of givenness.

As we know, Husserl contends that immediate self-comprehension (Selbsterfassung) of intentional objects given in evidence is indeed possible, so far as they present themselves in consciousness as intended objects. In broadening the ordinary sense of intuition what Husserl is saying is precisely that not only sensible particulars can be brought to givenness but idealities and specifically essences as well. In other words, phenomenology in dealing with essences treats of a kind of being that can be grasped absolutely, for it has been given to us absolutely, which means, of course, that it has been intentionally constituted in the immanence of consciousness.

What we have found in our examination of Husserl's theory of intuition is that intuition is by no means to be looked at as a mere fleeting act of introspection, nor does it suggest an abandonment of rationalism for some form of irrationalism. On the contrary, phenomenological intuition conceals no more difficulty or mystical secrets than does perception in the ordinary sense of the term. For example, when we bring "colour" to full intuitive clarity, to givenness for ourselves, then the datum is an essence; and when we likewise in pure intuition--looking say, at one perception after another--bring to givenness for ourselves what perception is, perception in itself (this identical character of any number of flowing singular perceptions), then we have intuitively grasped the essence of perception. <sup>155</sup> Phenomenological intuition is simply a "bringing to givenness", or a "making present" in evidence.

The phenomenological method meant to achieve the ideal of philosophical science has broken all inquiry loose from empirical preconceptions to the extent that the rational structure of the object alone can be brought to givenness. This structure, as rational "residuum" displays itself in its bodily presence, showing its components or constituents to reflective consciousness. The essence has thereby been rendered intuitable, has been brought to givenness, and offers its credentials for inspection. The method is, therefore, neither deductive nor empirical, but consists in "pointing(Aufweis)" to what is given and elucidating it; it neither explains by means of laws nor deduces from any principles. Instead, it fixes its gaze directly upon whatever is presented to consciousness, that is, its object. Husserl offers primarily a methodology, a theory of method "rooted" in intuition. Having ascertained that all objects of cognition can be objects of intuition, Husserl proposes phenomenology as rigorous science of essence, and therewith establishes a much broader basis than sense experience as the authority for cognition and ground for judgements.

Phenomenology, as rigorous science, consists of investigations into origins; it is a search for ultimate ground for our knowledge. Husserl's search for such ultimate roots leads him to the "things themselves", to the plane of original phenomena to which all our concepts and ideas refer. Putting to use a more basic and extended concept of experience(as intuition) Husserl has confronted the time honored prejudice which certifies only empirical experience(Erfahrung) as the sole legitimate source of knowledge by acknowledging that all forms of objectivity, all objects of cognition, insofar as they are

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intelligible, are experienceable or intuitable. This broadens the field of data and yet remains tied to the principle which accepts as valid only that which can be "seen". Rationalism and Intuitionism, often taken as contraries, are made compatible.

This broader experiential base prompted Husserl to point out that if by "positivism" we are to mean the absolute unbiased grounding of all science on what is "positive", that is, on what can be primordially apprehended, then it is we (the phenomenologists) who are the genuine positivists. <sup>156</sup> The thrust of Husserl's criticism of empiricism is that it identifies the return to the things themselves with the supposition that all knowledge must be founded on that which is given empirically. In accepting this restriction empiricism simply takes for granted that only empirical experience (Erfahrung) can be a source of knowledge. Husserl, on the other hand, suggests that a genuine "return to the things themselves" is a return not to isolatable facts, but to "seeing" in general, as the primordial dator consciousness of any kind whatsoever. In recognizing all kinds of intuition, as modes of being presented, and as equally valuable sources for the justification of knowledge, Husserl is saying that empiricism is only a "half-way" intuitionism or only an apparent empiricism (Scheinempirismus). Husserl's own radical "transcendental empiricism" is based on the idea that intuition (Anschauung) should be broadened so as to bring within its range not merely sense particulars but also--and more significantly--ideal concepts and types.

More precisely, while phenomenology, on the one hand, calls attention to a hitherto neglected field of data, namely, transcendental

experience, it does not, on the other, claim to have discovered a realm of being behind, beneath, or beyond, in any conceivable sense, the perceptual world of everyday experience, or apart from the order of existence already familiar to pre-philosophical judgement. It does not claim a special "philosophical" intuition enabling one to penetrate into a "new realm" accessible only to such intuition, but otherwise not open to sight, nor does phenomenology set out to construct such a "new realm". Its procedure is neither speculative nor constructive. What phenomenology sets out to do is to clarify, to elucidate the world through a questioning which transcends the world.<sup>157</sup> The level of essential being is correlative to factual being. One needs only to purify ordinary experience in order to gain access to transcendental experience.

As a science, phenomenology thus aims at Wesenserkenntnis and as such, "its sole task and service is to clarify the meaning of the world, the precise sense in which everyone accepts it, and with the unquestionable right, as really existing."<sup>158</sup> The task of phenomenology, whether in respect to ordinary experience or scientific knowledge, or other sphere of human discipline, is to trace back concepts and ideas to their corresponding essence-origins. In this sense, phenomenology offers to be science of essence—science based on essences and about essences. More precisely, phenomenology devotes itself to an elucidation of meanings, which is performed by questioning experience. Its task, once again, is to clarify all concepts and ideas, whether they are our creations or are derived from tradition, which we use in our life, and

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Fink, p. 113.

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Husserl, E., Nachwort, p. 462 (cited in Welch's The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl, p. 287.

particularly the basic concepts and ideas of our entire common sense as well as scientific concepts of the world. Thus phenomenology is "sense-investigation", which is a matter of insight into the essence of the concepts and ideas in question, and methodologically, this end can only be attained by making the essence present intuitively in an adequate intuition.

The above characterization of phenomenology has at least three important implications which establish the foundation for the discipline of phenomenology. These are: (1) there is a world, bearing in mind that for Husserl "world" is itself a concept that must be phenomenologically constituted, (2) this world has meaning and significance, (3) both the world and its meaning are accessible in experience. The last of these is, of course, the most important, for if it were not the case, the phenomenologist's most basic question—What it means to be—would suggest merely a vain preoccupation.

The subject matter of phenomenology consists, as we know, of experiences whose essentiality is to be analysed in intuition, and not of experiences as events occurring in the natural world. Phenomenology is, then, not interested in the real conditions of empirical being, that is, in causal explanation, nor is it concerned with even those conditions which belong to an only possible natural world, but is interested only in the possible as such. Admittedly, it is difficult to conceive immediately of what possibility can mean in the sense of that which is merely possible. Can there be a possibility without reference to actuality? Undoubtedly, Husserl is saying that, in a sense, there is, and it is precisely on this point that his essentialism

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differs most markedly from "existentialism", which allegedly owes much to Husserl. Husserl's philosophy is a radical essentialism. It ignores the individual, the unique, precisely because it could not take such elements into account and still be rigorously scientific. Husserl wants to establish philosophy as genuine science and such a science could only be an essentialism. In such a science, existence could only be significant as possible existence, and it is in this sense that Husserl's phenomenology is rigorous science of possibility. It neither makes, nor can it make, factual determinate claims, but is restricted to dealing with that which is possible and as such represents an indispensable philosophical task insofar as the knowledge of possibility must precede that of actuality(Wirklichkeit).

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