

## THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL REDUCTION AS *EPOCHE* AND AS EXPLICATION

### *Introduction*

A clear understanding of the notion of phenomenological reduction is crucial for any evaluation of the claims of Husserlian phenomenology. The phenomenological reduction is said to be the distinctive step (or steps) one has to take if one is to enter the realm of phenomenology proper. Husserl labored all his life to find the best way which would lead the non-phenomenologist into the new land which he thought he had discovered. Commentators have classified the ways discussed by Husserl under at least three main headings:<sup>1</sup> the Cartesian way, the way through psychology, and the way through ontology. In each of these ways, one is urged to perform a phenomenological reduction. But since the ways are different, the step also of the phenomenological reduction varies somewhat for each approach. Husserl and his interpreters tried hard to clarify these subtle distinctions, but up to now their ways of speaking have proven rather opaque, especially to philosophers accustomed to the standards of clarity of Analytic Philosophy.

In this paper I will therefore try to shed some light on the different notions of phenomenological reduction by relating them to familiar notions of contemporary semantics, such as the distinction between sense and referent and the notion of explication. It will be seen, however, that in each case an analogical transposition from ordinary semantics to what I propose to call metaphysical semantics is involved. The propriety of this analogical transposition is in my estimation the *crux* in deciding the meaningfulness of Husserlian transcendental phenomenology.

The line of exposition will follow what I take to be some of the main turning points in the actual historical development of Husserl's thought.<sup>2</sup> But we are far from being able to give a full developmental account of Husserlian philosophy. Further study on the texts needs yet to be done; especially of the many important shifts in Husserl's philosophical terminology, where a precise account is still missing.

### *1. Descriptive Psychology Based on Inner Perception*

Brentano, Husserl's philosophical master, had taken up afresh the Lockean program of a careful reflective description of the immanently given

of consciousness. The reflective grasp of the immanently given he called "inner perception" (*innere Wahrnehmung*), and like Locke's "reflection" this inner perception was said to grasp intuitively the really occurring mental acts of different kinds: acts of simple presentation, of judgement, and of love and hate. Prominent among the objects of inner perception were the acts of external perception (*äussere Wahrnehmung*), such as perceiving a tree, hearing a noise, etc.

But the status of the objects of external perception proved at once to be problematic. For instance, was the green tree which we perceive in our garden to be counted among the objects of descriptive psychology? Brentano still adhered to the representationalist view which stressed the distinction between the green tree which we see and the invisible colorless tree out there postulated by physics. He tried to describe the existence of the green tree as "in-existence" in the mind, but he had soon to admit that he could make no clear sense of this peculiar mental "in-existence". Husserl, on the other hand, started out as a scientific realist. He stressed that the green tree we perceive is identical with the tree investigated by physics, and he claimed therefore explicitly that the objects of external perception were *not* to be counted among the objects of descriptive psychology (or phenomenology, as he started to call it).<sup>3</sup>

A second major difficulty which concerned Husserl was the one raised by Natorp and Frege, namely their accusation of psychologism. It led Husserl to supplement Brentano's descriptive psychology with an explicit doctrine of abstraction, involving the admission of an intuition of universal kinds (*Species*) in order to account for the necessary character of, e.g., logical and ethical truths. Thus, at the time of the *Logical Investigations* (first edition), the Husserlian descriptive psychology or phenomenology was based both on the inner perception of real mental particulars and on the intuitive grasp of ideal universals.

## 2. *Phenomenology Presupposing a Universal Epoche*

In the period from 1904 to 1906, Husserl was led to reconsider, for various concurring reasons, his stand on the exclusion of the objects of external perception from the domain of phenomenology:

2.1 In actual practice the mental acts could not be phenomenologically described without also describing their objects. Natorp, whose writings the early Husserl had been studying very closely, had even held that, for instance, to describe the hearing of a tone was the *same* as to describe this tone.<sup>4</sup>

2.2 Already Husserl's attempts at giving the descriptive-psychological foundations of set theory and arithmetics had in fact included descriptions of intentional objects, namely of sets and numbers, and Husserl had thus been led to describe in detail the correlation between certain hierarchies of mental acts on the one hand, and their objects of lower and higher categorical order on the other hand.

2.3 Husserl had already enlarged the domain of descriptive psychology by admitting not only real mental particulars but also ideal universals.<sup>5</sup>

2.4 The Munich group (students of Theodor Lipps, such as Alexander Pfänder and Johannes Daubert, who had greeted Husserl's *Logical Investigations* with enthusiasm) held that the new philosophy should not be limited to the description of the essences of mental particulars, but should be concerned with the description of all essences whatsoever, i.e., including those of physical particulars. Meinong (another disciple of Brentano and founder of an influential group in Graz) also was proposing an all comprehensive "theory of objects" (*Gegenstandstheorie*).

2.5 Furthermore, there was another most important consideration which may have prompted Husserl to reevaluate his position on the status of the objects of *external* perception, namely the discovery that the status of the objects of *inner* perception was equally problematic. In 1894<sup>6</sup> Husserl had found that he could explain an intuitive grasp of a nonimmanent real particular in terms of an analogy with the interpretation of a symbol or picture. He found, for instance, that as we can "see" a mountain which is *not* present by interpreting the paint marks on a canvas which *are* present, so in external perception we are perceiving a tree which is *not* immanent in consciousness by interpreting the sensations (*Empfindungen*) which *are* immanent. It would seem, therefore, that Husserl assumed at that time that any intuitive grasp of a real particular was either an inner perception of what is immanently present, or else a case where something immanently present serves as a basis for an interpretation. To his astonishment, Husserl discovered after 1905, in his analyses of inner time-consciousness, that remembering could *not* be understood as an act of interpretation; that, for instance, remembering a past sound-sensation could not be described as an interpretation of a presently immanent sound-sensation, but had to be described as a "direct" intuitive intending of a real particular which no longer existed.<sup>7</sup> This exploded the myth of the unproblematic nature of inner perception, because any perception whatsoever necessarily involves some retention of the immediate past. In other words, a restriction of the domain of descriptive psychology or phenomenology to actually immanent real particulars proved to be absolutely impossible, since such a restriction would

veto not only the use of external perception but that of inner perception as well!

The only way out of all these difficulties was to officially admit all intentional objects, i.e., the intentional correlates of all mental acts, into the domain of phenomenology. But at the same time the proper nature of phenomenology had to be safeguarded, and a way had to be found to prevent its getting mixed up with physics and metaphysics.

In looking for a solution, Husserl could go back in history to Descartes, for whom the *cogito* had included not only the act of *cogitare* and the *ego* but also the idea or the *cogitatum qua cogitatum*.<sup>8</sup> Actually, Husserl even went back to the philosophical ancestors of Descartes, namely to the Sceptics: he read at this time a book by Raoul Richter, *Der Skeptizismus in der Philosophie*, which had just been published (vol. 1, Leipzig 1904), and it seems that it was from this book that he picked up the technical term "*epoche*" and incorporated it as a key term into his phenomenology.<sup>9</sup>

The skeptical term "*epoche*" conveyed exactly (and more accurately than the Cartesian term "doubt") what could guarantee that the phenomenological description of a physical object would not be confused with the kind of account that is given by physics: in a phenomenological description of the appearance of an external object one has to abstain from making any claims concerning the actual reality of this object, i.e., all questions concerning actual reality have to be bracketed, set aside, left unanswered. For instance, I might accurately describe a present experience as one of seeing a round tower out there. If, later on, it should turn out that the tower in question was actually square, or that in actual reality there was no tower out there at all (that I had been having a hallucination), then my previous description would still remain a true phenomenological description. All I would have to do would be to make sure that in my previous description I had been careful not to claim that there *actually* was a tower out there which *actually* was round.

Descartes and the Sceptics, as well as Husserl, found it both possible and philosophically necessary to give to this *epoche* an absolutely universal scope. They found it meaningful to guard the truthfulness of their descriptions of consciousness not only against the ordinary possibility that *some* external perceptions might turn out to be illusions or hallucinations, but even against the metaphysical possibility that *all* external perceptions might be illusionary. Husserl explicitly envisioned the possibility that the belief in the actual existence of the material world might collapse entirely.<sup>10</sup>

In the winter semester, 1906/1907, Husserl described for the first time the phenomenological method as involving not merely the use of reflection and of intuition of universals, but as requiring also the initial performance of a phenomenological reduction, i.e., the adoption of a universal *epoche*.<sup>11</sup>

Actually, the scope of the *epoche* is somewhat different according to whether one follows the Cartesian way or the way through psychology. Following the Cartesian way, which might be called the way through epistemology, one approaches transcendental consciousness by first bracketing everything that can be doubted, i.e., all transcendent referents, other minds included. Whereas, following the way through psychology, one starts out bracketing everything that does not belong into descriptive psychology, i.e., all the physical referents, but not the other minds.

### 3. *The Epoche and the Semantics of Sense and Referent*

The *epoche* introduces a certain distinction between the external object qua intentional object, i.e., qua appearance, and the external object qua actual reality. But Husserl's predecessors had been unable to provide a satisfactory clarification of this distinction. The two models used to explain the relationship between actual reality and appearance were (a) the relationship between cause and effect, and (b) the relationship between pictured or signified thing and picturing or signifying thing. But both the causal theory of the noumenon causing the phenomenon, and the representationalist theory according to which the appearance is said to be a picture or a sign of absolute reality, are unsatisfactory, and have run into strong criticism, especially in contemporary philosophy. Actually, Husserl himself is one of the fathers of this contemporary criticism, and it was for this very reason that he had from the start refused to distinguish *two* objects of external perception, a directly perceived immanent one and an inferred transcendent one.

The only appropriate model for the distinction between appearance and actual reality is, as far as I can tell, the semantical relationship between sense and referent. Since it is well known that the contemporary analysis of this semantical distinction has its origin in Frege, it is interesting to note that at this very point in his development Husserl took a renewed interest in Frege's views on sense.<sup>12</sup> In the summer semester, 1908, Husserl lectured on the theory of meaning (*Bedeutungslehre*)<sup>13</sup> and on this occasion he was led to abandon his earlier view according to which meanings were a special sort of universal kinds (*Species*); instead he was led to admit that meanings, which he now called *ontic* meanings, were something *sui generis*, being

neither real particulars nor universal kinds. Actually, Husserl's views about meaning were now very similar to Frege's. But Husserl also took the further step of interpreting the troublesome notion of intentional object in terms of his newly found notion of ontic meaning or sense.<sup>14</sup>

But unfortunately, while Husserl took a strong interest in the Fregean notion of sense, his phenomenological inclination prevented him from truly appreciating the importance of the notion of referent. Thus, while discussing the Fregean examples "the victor of Jena" and the "vanquished of Waterloo",<sup>15</sup> Husserl did not introduce the actually existing Napoleon as the identical *referent* of the two expressions; but instead he pointed out that the speaker *intends to refer* to the same *X*. That is, instead of introducing the Fregean notion of referent, Husserl elaborated the phenomenological notion of the-identical-*X*-meant, i.e., the notion of noematic pole. This noematic pole exists even in the cases where there is no referent, and thus it clearly belongs still on the level of the Fregean sense.

Thus, while Husserl saw that the intentional object could be understood in terms of the notion of sense, it seems that he never fully realized that the notion of sense is necessarily connected with the notion of referent; and that if the intentional object is understood in terms of the notion of sense, then the *epoche* has to be defined as the provisional bracketing of all factual questions regarding the *referent*.

Probably it was just because of his adoption of the *epoche* that Husserl never discussed the notion of referent. But this was a mistake; Husserl should have realized that the *epoche* required only that all *factual questions regarding the actual existence* of the referent of external perception had to be bracketed, but that it did not rule out an investigation of the *notion* of referent. Another reason why Husserl did not elaborate the notion of referent may have been his above mentioned early rejection of representationalism and of the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself. He should have realized, however, that a rejection of the notion of a thing-in-itself "hidden behind" the phenomena does not ipso facto entail the rejection of the notion of a referent, since the referent is *not* said to be "hidden behind" the sense, but is rather described as being revealed through the sense.<sup>16</sup>

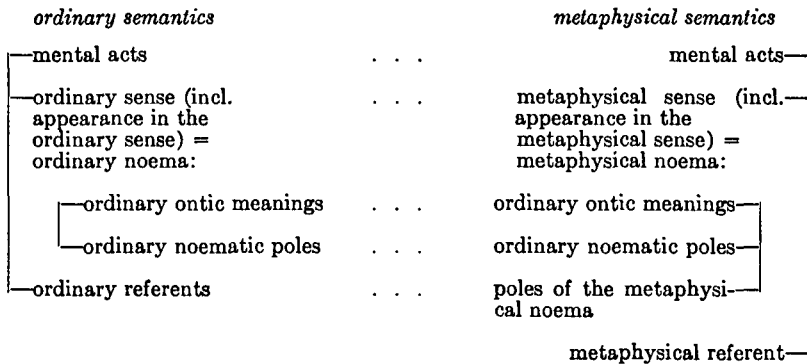
#### 4. *The Ordinary Notion of Referent and the Metaphysical Notion of Referent*

One has to admit, however, that what is here in question is not the ordinary notion of referent, but a metaphysical notion of referent. The basic referents in ordinary semantics constitute what is called the universe of discourse. But while Bertrand Russell had tried to identify the universe of

discourse of his system with absolute metaphysical reality, this is no longer true of the contemporary logicians. They hold rather that one and the same reality can be described in terms of different universes of discourse. This shows that the universe of discourse of a contemporary constructional system has to be understood as being already a conceptualization of reality. Therefore the ordinary referents which compose a universe of discourse are, metaphysically speaking, already appearances and not metaphysical reality as it is in itself.<sup>17</sup>

The theory of sense and referent, as it is worked out in contemporary possible-world-semantics, allows for the singling out of the actual world within the set of all possible worlds. But these possible worlds are not what may be called different possible conceptualizations: they are merely all the possible factual variations within the framework of one single conceptualization. These possibilities can cover the above mentioned possibilities of *ordinary illusion and hallucination*, since they allow, for instance, for a distinction between the following three kinds of possible worlds: (a) worlds where the tower mentioned above is square, (b) worlds where the above mentioned tower is round, (c) worlds where the above mentioned tower does not exist at all. But ordinary possible-world-semantics does not deal with the question of *metaphysical illusion*, namely, with the possibility that an entire world picture, an entire conceptual scheme (an entire ontology) may be mistaken. (Notice here, that the possibility that *several different* conceptual schemes may be equally correct is left open. The notion of a metaphysical illusion merely presupposes the falsity of the claim that *all* conceptual schemes are equally correct.)

As a matter of fact, the metaphysical notion of referent involves a problematic transposition of the ordinary relationship between sense and referent to the metaphysical level:<sup>18</sup>



What from the ordinary point of view is called a referent is metaphysically speaking still a kind of noematic pole. A metaphysical illusion, if there is such a thing, would be analogous to an ordinary illusion: just as in the case of an ordinary illusion there is an ordinary noematic pole, but no ordinary referent which has the intended properties, thus in the case of a metaphysical illusion there would be the poles of the metaphysical noema (namely, the referents in the ordinary sense), but there would be no counterpart with the intended determinations in actual metaphysical reality. In a way similar to that in which the argument from ordinary illusion warrants the distinction between the ordinary sense and the ordinary referent, an argument from metaphysical illusion would justify a distinction between a metaphysical sense and a metaphysical referent.

Of course, the correspondence between metaphysical semantics and ordinary semantics could never be a sameness-relation, but can only be an analogy. The metaphysical notion of truth, for instance, must be quite different from the concept of truth in ordinary semantics. This is evident from the fact that an articulation is by definition already a form of conceptualization (of sense) and therefore the metaphysical counterpart of the articulated plurality of the ordinary referents cannot be said to be an *articulated* plurality; the metaphysical analogue of the articulated plurality of the ordinary referents must rather be some sort of preconceptual determinateness of the metaphysical referent. (Notice that I prefer to use the notion of metaphysical referent in the singular.)

### 5. *Phenomenological Analysis as Analysis of Sense*

With the admission of the intentional-object-as-such (the noema) into the domain of phenomenology, phenomenology became both noetic *and* noematic phenomenology. Noematic Phenomenology even takes precedence over noetic phenomenology: the analysis of the noema requires only a reflection on the sense of what is before us,<sup>19</sup> whereas the analysis of the noesis presupposes that consciousness has the ability of what might be described as "turning all the way back upon itself". It is thus not astonishing to find Husserl now states that noematic phenomenology comes first and has to serve as a "guiding thread" for the more difficult analysis of the noesis.<sup>20</sup>

But noematic phenomenology is concerned with the analysis of intentional-objects-as-such, i.e., with the analysis of sense. Therefore phenomenology as such is now primarily analysis of sense. This means that it is now much more closely related to Analytic Philosophy, whose chief method is the analysis of the meaning of linguistic expressions.<sup>21</sup>



Actually results mentioned above (in section 2.5), according to which even the objects of so-called inner perception already involve a process of constitution, suggest that not only noematic phenomenology but noetic phenomenology as well is concerned with the analysis of certain intentional-objects-as-such, and is thus nothing but analysis of sense.

One is tempted to say that all phenomenology is somehow noematic phenomenology, that noetic phenomenology is merely the special case where the noema involved is the noema of inner perception. But Husserl did not use this way of speaking, and it would really be misleading to adopt it. For clearly, the sense in which noetic phenomenology could be described as an analysis of the noema of inner perception is *not* the same as the sense in which noematic phenomenology can be described as a description of noemata, e.g., of the noemata of external perception; it is rather the sense in which noematic phenomenology could be described as including a description of *the noema of the noema* of external perception.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, to regard noetic phenomenology as a form of noematic phenomenology would mean to apply the *epoche* not only with respect to the external objects but also with respect to consciousness itself. But Husserl only advocated a demundanization of our notion of consciousness and he did not mean to exclude factual statements concerning the demundanized transcendental stream of consciousness which is immediately present to the phenomenologist.<sup>23</sup> (Of course these factual questions are excluded from the *eidetic* part of phenomenology, but that is another matter.) If one would argue that the *epoche* had to be applied with respect to the noetic acts simply because our reflective knowledge of these acts too is always mediated by a noema, then a similar argument could be made which would require an *epoche* also with respect to all the noemata themselves; thus nothing would remain outside the scope of the *epoche*, which would be absurd.

However, the claim that phenomenology as such is nothing but analysis of sense is nevertheless true, because all phenomenology can indeed be characterized as being concerned with the analysis of the *constitution* of sense, i.e., with the correlation between noesis and noema.

#### 6. *Phenomenological Analysis as a Form of Explication*

One form of meaning analysis described by analytic philosophers and practiced by both analytic philosophers and scientists in general is what is called *explication*, namely, the move from expressions of ordinary language to explicitly defined expressions of a technical language, i.e., to expressions of a language with an explicit system of exact definitions.<sup>24</sup> It is illuminating,

I think, to view the step from ordinary descriptions to the descriptions of transcendental phenomenology as such a step of explication, that is, as a step of translation from ordinary ways of speaking into the highly technical language of transcendental phenomenology. For instance, instead of saying "I am seeing a green tree" a transcendental phenomenologist might report "My intentional acts of visual perception are directed towards a constituted perceptual noema Green Tree".

This characterization of phenomenological analysis as a kind of explication is in agreement with Husserl's emphatic claim that phenomenology is a strict science. But the most interesting feature of this way of specifying what phenomenology is doing, is that no mention of performing an *epoché* has to be made. From this point of view transcendental phenomenology is concerned not with setting certain kinds of nonphenomenological knowledge aside, but with translating *all* our knowledge claims into a most accurate scientific language.

This corresponds exactly to what we find Husserl saying when he stressed the distinctive advantage of the way into phenomenology through ontology.<sup>25</sup> As a matter of fact, Husserl had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Cartesian way (and also with the way through psychology). The main reason for his dissatisfaction had been precisely the fact that the *epoché* involved seemed to obscure the really universal scope of phenomenological analysis. Husserl discovered, on the other hand, that if one followed the way through ontology, nothing had to be bracketed or excluded from phenomenology. If one follows the way through ontology (which might also be called the Kantian way) one is led into transcendental phenomenology by the aim of explaining the categories and necessary truths of our conceptual schemes. According to Husserl, this aim can be achieved by making explicit the constituting activity that is involved in building up our knowledge. From this point of view, phenomenology leaves nothing out, but rather broadens (adds a new dimension to) our knowledge. From the point of view of this third way, the transcendental phenomenological reduction, i.e., the step which brings us into transcendental phenomenology, is not an act of *epoché*. Rather is it an act of conversion, of changing from the natural view of the world (which, according to Husserl, can easily degenerate into a mistaken naturalistic view) to the more perfect and more comprehensive transcendental view of the world.

Of course, it remains true that physics is not phenomenology, and thus it still makes sense to recommend an *epoché*, an explicit bracketing of the results of physics, but only as far as this can be a *safeguard* preventing a

naturalistic confusion between phenomenology, i.e., conceptual analysis, and a scientific investigation of mundane matters of fact. The *epoche* is no longer the first step in the phenomenological method, it is now merely a useful accessory device to preserve methodological purity (to prevent a "*metabasis*", i.e., to prevent slipping into the category mistakes of naturalism).

### 7. *Logical Explication and Phenomenological Explication*

However, just as we have seen before that the phenomenological *epoche* is not an ordinary *epoche* bracketing factual questions concerning an ordinary referent, but a more problematic metaphysical *epoche* bracketing factual questions concerning the metaphysical referent, so we find here that transcendental phenomenology is not concerned with an explication of the kind we are familiar with from science or from the constructional systems of the logicians, but with a more problematic kind of explication.

In an ordinary explication, the meaning of the explicata is said to be more explicit because each term has been assigned its exact place in an explicitly stated system of definitions. Transcendental phenomenology, however, possesses as yet no explicitly stated system of definitions, such a logical systematization of it is still a totally unrealized desideratum. But one might say that in phenomenological "explication" the meaning of the "explicata" is more explicit in another sense, namely, in the sense that each intentional object, each ontic meaning, is being assigned its exact place in the accurately described "system" of transcendental constitution.

Carnap had once attempted to do logical explication and this kind of phenomenological "explication" simultaneously: when in his book *The Logical Structure of the World* (1928) he tried to sketch an all comprehensive constructional system of definitions, he wanted to give by the same stroke an account of a possible route of transcendental constitution.<sup>26</sup> But it seems, in principle, impossible that the train of definitions of some constructional system could be an adequate representation of the progression of transcendental constitution. The point is that while transcendental constitution is said to start from the *unarticulated* stream of experience, every constructional system must start from an already articulated universe of discourse. Carnap's *Aufbau*, for instance, has a universe of discourse of so-called elementary experiences (i.e., momentary cross sections of the stream of experience).<sup>27</sup>

I do not want to claim that the study of constructional definitions is of no help towards an understanding of the processes of constitution. Quite on the contrary, it would seem that constructional methods, like, e.g., defi-

nition by abstraction based on an equivalence relation, *are* methods operative in constitution, namely, at higher levels of constitution. And the processes at the lower, prepredicative levels of constitution seem to have some as yet not exactly specified analogy to the processes occurring at the higher levels.

### 8. *Phenomenology and Cartesian Epistemology*

Husserl had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Cartesian way into phenomenology. Does this mean that he came to reject Cartesian epistemology as being misguided or even outright nonsensical? Some interpreters of Husserl seem to argue this, but it remains a fact that Husserl did not categorically dismiss the Cartesian way.<sup>28</sup> It seems, therefore, that his criticism of the Cartesian way was not that it was wrong, but merely that in actual practice it was not very effective in achieving what it is designed to achieve (namely, to introduce the uninitiated to phenomenology), since it can give the wrong impression that the scope of phenomenology is a very limited one.

The point which has to be stressed, I think, is that phenomenology as such is not the same as epistemology.<sup>29</sup> Epistemology is the discipline which seeks to *assess the value* of our knowledge claims, while phenomenology is primarily a *descriptive* and not an evaluative discipline. The relation of transcendental phenomenology (which describes transcendental consciousness and its activities of constitution) to epistemology, is similar to the relation of ordinary psychology to an ordinary assessment of the reliability of our mental capacities. One can therefore argue that the Cartesian way is unsatisfactory as an introduction to phenomenology precisely because it burdens the beginner prematurely with difficult epistemological distinctions (such as the distinction between appearance and reality), and limits him unnecessarily, i.e., for purely epistemological reasons, to a solipsistic starting point. The limitation to a solipsistic starting point is unnecessary for phenomenology, but it is essential for an epistemology in the spirit of Descartes, and as far as I know, Husserl has never doubted that for epistemology the Cartesian approach is the only appropriate one.

One can, however, raise the further question, whether in the light of certain results of his phenomenological investigations, Husserl *should have* rejected the Cartesian approach to epistemology, though as a matter of fact he never did reject it. This question is a very difficult one; it is none other than the question as to whether the contemporary objections against the so-called myth of the given have succeeded to demolish beyond repair the Cartesian program for epistemology; whether they actually render the

Cartesian program irrevocably obsolete. I do not pretend to be able to give a decisive answer to this difficult question, but I believe that more attention to the semantical distinction between sense and referent can contribute towards a much needed clarification of the issue.

The phenomenological results which I have in mind and which concur with analogous findings in contemporary analytic philosophy are the ones mentioned above (in section 2.5), according to which not only in *external* perception but also in so-called *inner* perception we are faced with an already constituted noematic object. Does this not show that the myth of the given, i.e., the notion of an unmediated, "naked" immanent given which could serve as the apodictically given starting point of all knowledge, is untenable?

To clarify the issue I would like to draw attention to the following four points:

8.1 Sense can still be made of the claim that inner perception, in contrast to external perception, refers to a *directly present* object.

The fact that inner perception too involves an already constituted intentional object, does not entail that the referent of inner perception is not directly present. If the intentional object in question is understood to be a noematic object which belongs on the level of sense, and if one understands that the referent is not hidden behind the sense like one *thing* may be hidden behind another *thing*, then it is still possible to make sense of the claim that inner perception is "perceiving" a "directly present" referent. On the other hand, external perception is "less direct", not in the sense that its referent would be "invisible", but simply in the sense that its referent is separated from the perceiver by a spatial distance.

Of course, in the light of the analyses of inner time-consciousness, the situation turns out to be more complex than it was thought to be at first. If inner perception is reflection involving memory, then "directly present" cannot mean "really immanent now", but must mean "immanently present in the specious present" where the specious present includes an immediate past which is still intuitively "present" (i.e., retained by way of so-called "horizontal retentions"), but not really (*reell*) present, since strictly speaking it is already past.

8.2 The claim that the intentional object of external perception is constituted on the basis of immanent sensations is still meaningful.

Since in perception we do not have the kind of freedom with respect to the object which we have in imagination, therefore in perception a special limiting factor must be present. In the case of inner perception this limiting

factor can be identified with the directly present immanent referent. But in external perception, too, there must be a limiting factor which is *immanent*; because an external object which is transcendent can only be known by a human knower if it causes an effect in the knower. Husserl calls the immanent limiting factor of external perception "sensations" (*Empfindungen*).

8.3 The claim that we are not only able to reflect on the sense (the noematic objects) of our acts, but that we are furthermore capable of reflecting on the noetic acts and sensations themselves (that we can have an inner perception of our acts and sensations) is not *prima facie* meaningless.

8.4 One may furthermore claim that we have a nonreflective consciousness of our acts and sensations. Especially if it is assumed that the knower is essentially consciousness, i.e., that the knower must be conscious in one sense or another of everything which is immanent, then nonreflective consciousness of acts and sensations must precede any reflective consciousness (i.e., any inner perception) of them. And it would seem that we can find such a nonreflective awareness in our actual experience. Roman Ingarden, e.g., has described it as a conscious "living-through" (*Durchleben*), and J.-P. Sartre too has given an account of unreflected consciousness (*la conscience irréfléchie*).<sup>30</sup> Husserl's descriptions of the sensations (*Empfindungen*) as experiences (*Erlebnisse*) which are a kind of nonintentional feelings (*nicht-intentionale Gefühle*) belong also in this context.<sup>31</sup> Such a nonreflective living-through, however, though it is a form of consciousness, is *unlike* a perception, precisely because it involves no duality of perceiving act and perceived object. Such a pure "living present" includes no objectification, i.e., no articulation, and therefore it is not knowledge in the proper sense of the word.

However, even to concede these four claims is not yet sufficient to remove the doubts concerning the Cartesian program for epistemology. Does not the fact that the ultimate "given", namely the living present, is either merely lived-through and thus not known in the proper sense of the word, or else is known, but only in reflection when it is no longer really present, cause the Cartesian program to collapse? For in neither one of the two alternatives is the "given" given in the form of absolutely certain knowledge, and therefore there is no absolutely certain knowledge to start from.

This is, in my opinion, the heart of the question.

On the one hand, the Cartesian program does not seem to be totally misguided, because even if there is no absolutely certain knowledge there

is nevertheless a genuine sense in which knowledge of what is immanent *does* have an epistemological priority, i.e., is *in a certain respect* more certain than knowledge of what is transcendent. Knowledge of what is transcendent does in fact genetically presuppose (is in fact built on) an awareness of what is immanent, i.e., is in fact based on a prereflectively lived-through living present of the really real stream of consciousness. On the other hand, however, it is also true that in another respect knowledge of what is transcendent is more certain than knowledge of what is immanent, since living-through is not knowing and reflective inner perception, even if there is such a thing, is less reliable because it requires us to take up an attitude which is much less natural for us than the attitude of external perception.

I am therefore inclined to think that a modified form of the Cartesian program has to be worked out, where the simplistic notion of the *absolute* certainty of inner experience is abandoned, but where the epistemological importance of inner experience with its specific and irreplaceable kind of certainty is nevertheless recognized. It may therefore still be correct to require that the process of epistemological justification start from the solipsistic starting point of the living present of consciousness. But then the specific weakness of inner experience must also be taken into account, i.e., one must check the account based on inner experience and see to it that it harmonizes with the convictions based on external perception. That is to say, one must strengthen the epistemological justification by making appropriate use of the specific kinds of certainty which are available in each type of experience.

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#### NOTES

1. Cf. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant, Phaenomenologica*, vol. 16 (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1964); R. O. Elveton, "Introduction" in *The Phenomenology of Husserl: Selected Readings* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970).

2. Cf. my paper "Husserl on Pictures and Intentional Objects," *Review of Metaphysics* 26(1973): 670-80.

3. E. Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 1st ed., vol. 2 (Halle, 1901), pp. 11-12, 17, 387.

4. Cf. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, pp. 356f.

5. Cf. E. Husserl, *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, 2d ed., *Husserliana*, vol. 2 (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1958), p. 50.

6. E. Husserl, "Psychologische Studien zur elementaren Logik," *Philosophische Monatshefte* vol. 30 (Berlin, 1894), pp. 159-91, and Husserl's unpublished review of K. Twardowski, *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (Wien, 1894).

7. E. Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893-1917)*, *Husserliana*, vol. 10 (1966), pp. 31f. and pp. 269f. (texts "Zur Auflösung des Schemas Auffassungsinhalt-Auffassung").

8. A discussion in these terms occurs in a manuscript of Husserl dated June 16, 1904 (Ms. B II 1 fol. 47a). Cf. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, pp. 180-81.

9. Cf. H. Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, 2d ed., (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1965), p. 134; P. J. Bossert, "The Origins and Early Development of Edmund Husserl's Method of Phenomenological Reduction" (Ph.D. diss. Washington University, St. Louis, Mo., 1973), pp. 98f., 128.

10. E. Husserl, *Ideas* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), § 49. Cf. also E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), § 40. "The difficulties surrounding the genuine sense of performing the total *epoche*. The temptation to misconstrue it as a withholding of all individual validities, carried out step by step".

11. Cf. the unpublished lecture notes "Einführung in die Logik und Erkenntniskritik," esp. Ms. F I 10 fol. 59b, for what is probably the first occurrence of *epoche* (see Bossert, "Origins and Development," p. 128, who relies on E. Marbach), and Ms. F I 10 fol. 76a, for the first discussion of the phenomenological reduction (see U. Claesges, "Einleitung" in E. Husserl, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*, *Husserliana*, vol. 16 (1973), pp. xiv-xv). Excerpts from these lecture notes are published in E. Marbach, "Ichlose Phänomenologie bei Husserl," *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 35(1973): 518-59, and in E. Marbach, *Das Problem des Ich in der Phänomenologie Husserls*, *Phaenomenologica*, vol. 59 (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1974). On the origin of the reduction see also K. Schuhmann, *Husserl Über Pfänder*, *Phaenomenologica*, vol. 56 (1973).

12. In the Winter of 1906/1907, Husserl had his second exchange of letters with Frege, where Frege insisted that logic deals with objective propositions (*Gedanken*). The letters are dated Oct. 30/Nov. 1, 1906, Frege to Husserl; Nov. 16, 1906, Husserl to Frege (this letter is lost); Dec. 9, 1906, Frege to Husserl. The first exchange of letters had taken place in 1891 after the publication of Husserl's *Philosophie der Arithmetik*.

13. Ms. F I 5.

14. Cf. D. Føllesdal, "Husserl's Notion of Noema," *Journal of Philosophy* 66 (1969): 680-87.

15. Ms. F I 5 fol. 29bf.

16. Admittedly there is also the phenomenon of the "opacity" of the sense, cf. Quine's notion of "referential opacity", *Word and Object* (New York: M. I. T. Press, 1960), § 30. But to grant this opacity is not the same as to accept the Kantian notion of an unknowable thing-in-itself.

17. Cf. my paper "The World as Noema and as Referent," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 3, no. 1 (1972): 15-26.

18. Cf. the chart in my paper "The World," p. 16. There I had introduced for the first time the distinction between ordinary referents and metaphysical referents (referents<sub>r</sub> and referents<sub>p</sub>).



But the specific problem of the analogy between ordinary semantics and metaphysical semantics had not been brought out, as is shown by the fact that in that chart, instead of the metaphysical referent being moved down to a fourth level, the ordinary referents are being moved up one level. My distinction between ordinary noema and metaphysical noema has some similarity with Eugen Fink's distinction between the psychological and the transcendental noema; but Fink rejects the analogy between ordinary semantics and metaphysical semantics and claims explicitly that "the transcendental noema cannot refer to a being beyond", i.e., he does not accept the notion of a metaphysical referent. Cf. E. Fink, "Die phänomenologische Philosophie Edmund Husserls in der gegenwärtigen Kritik," *Kantstudien* 38 (1933): 319-83, esp. pp. 364-65; English translation in R. O. Elveton, ed., *The Phenomenology of Husserl*, pp. 73-147, esp. pp. 123-25.

19. Husserl once called the reflection on the sense "*Be-sinnung*", taking advantage of the etymology of this German word for contemplation. Cf. Ms. B III 12 IX fol.178b from October 22, 1908.

20. This is the phenomenological analogue of the topic of the "Jonesean myth" in analytic philosophy, cf. W. Sellars, *Science, Perception and Reality* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 183-96. Of course "analogy" is not "sameness", and what I want to point out is merely that there is a certain similarity between the two topics which could be a source of interesting comparisons.

21. Paul Ricoeur (in a paper "Phénoménologie du vouloir et approche par le langage ordinaire," read at the International Congress "Die Münchner Phänomenologie" in Munich, April 13-18, 1971) has also defended the claim that with the notion of the noema, Husserl had reached the level of meaning, of what can be said, which is the starting point of analytic philosophy.

22. Husserl accepted, like Frege, that there are infinite hierarchies of sense: sense had in referring to this sense, sense had in referring to the sense had in referring to this sense, etc. Cf. the manuscripts Ms. F I 5 fol.34b(1908); B III 12 fol.118-21 (1917/1918); B III 12 fol.106b(1927); and E. Husserl, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1969), § 49.

23. Cf. E. Marbach, "Ichlose Phänomenologie bei Husserl," *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 35(1973), esp. p. 546, where the author insists that the starting point of pure phenomenology is "*transzendental-solipsistisch*".

24. Cf. R. Carnap, *Logical Foundations of Probability* (University of Chicago Press, 1950, 2d.ed., 1962), chap. I. By the way: it seems that Carnap's choice of the words 'explication' and 'explicatum' was made on the basis of the entry "Explication" by the Husserlian phenomenologist Dorion Cairns in D. D. Runes, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1942; reprinted Patterson, N.J.: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1962). In addition to Husserl, Carnap mentions also Kant (cf. *Critique of Pure Reason* B 755f.) and C. H. Langford. Notice however that Husserl did not use the term "explication" in connection with the phenomenological reduction.

25. Cf. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, pp. 202f., 219f., 233f.

26. R. Carnap, *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*, 2d ed. (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 1961); English translation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967). Note that Carnap's word for "constructional system" was the German word "*Konstitutionsystem*", and cf. also the references to Husserl and to other nonpositivistic philosophers.

27. Cf. to this N. Goodman, *The Structure of Appearance*, 2d ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), p. 155: "Carnap seems to hold that experience is originally given in a single stream and that lesser elements are known only through subsequent analysis. Others might argue that experience is no more given in one big lump than it is given in very minute particles, and that the single stream is as much the product of an artificial synthesis as the minimal particles are the products of an analysis. To me the debate seems a futile one, for I do not know how one would go about determining what are the originally given lumps". In my opinion it is important to realize that the noetic stream of experience *in itself* is not an ordinary referent but a metaphysical referent. As such it is neither articulated as one thing nor articulated as many things. This does, of course, not mean that it is chaotic; it must rather be said to have a "preconceptual determinateness" (cf. section 4 this paper).

28. Cf. I. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, p. 209.

29. Concerning the proper place of epistemology see R. Ingarden, *Ueber die Stellung der Erkenntnistheorie im System der Philosophie* (Halle: Karras, Kröber und Nietschmann, 1925). Cf. my paper "Zum Lebenswerk von Roman Ingarden: Ontologie, Erkenntnistheorie und Metaphysik" to appear in the Proceedings of the International Conference "Die Münchner Phänomenologie" (held in Munich, April 13-18, 1971), The Hague: M. Nijhoff.

30. R. Ingarden, "Ueber die Gefahr einer Petitio Principii in der Erkenntnistheorie," *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung* vol. 4 (1921), pp. 545-68; J.-P. Sartre, "La transcendance de l'égo," *Recherches Philosophiques* 6(1936): 85-123.

31. Cf. E. Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, vol. 2 (New York: Humanities Press, 1970), p. 572.