

Edmund Husserl

Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology

This version differs from the published one in that I have corrected a half-dozen typos and added the ISBN13. — C.W.

translated by

Cyril Welch

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## Translator's Preface

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) delivered these lectures at the Sorbonne in 1929 — over two sessions, February 23 and 25, in the *Amphithéâtre Descartes*. They served as the basis from which he wrote his more lengthy *Cartesian Meditations*, published two years later.

They are now often referred to as “The Paris Lectures” and are available in Volume One of *Husserliana* (Martinus Nijhoff, 1963; the numbers in the left margin mark the page numbers of this edition). Since 1964 they have been available in English translation, also from Martinus Nijhoff.

The text runs continuously; I have inserted a few breaks to indicate where the reader might discern the completion of one thought and the beginning of another.

Three expressions deserve special comment:

(1) Husserl talks about “intellectual discipline”; intended is first of all the familiar academic disciplines, positive sciences such as physics, as well as human studies such as history or literary criticism.

(2) He asks us to “suspend the validity” of all established intellectual disciplines; it's not a matter of “doubting” them (as Descartes does), nor of “rejecting” them (as some try to do), but rather of attaining to their foundations without relying on their own presuppositions — and, precisely thereby, of “bringing out their validity” (cf. Plato's *Republic*, 510-11).

(3) He speaks of the “constitution” (phenomenological, intentional, egological) of “objects,” of “self,” of “experience,” of “temporality,” of “meaning” and of “being”; the word is to be understood verbally — whatever arises as an “object,” a “self,” and so on, has a patterned genesis in which “consciousness” plays a part, and the task for us is to become aware of this genesis and of our own creative role in it.

For an account of the manuscript and its original title, the reader may consult the text-critical appendices to Volume One of *Husserliana*, especially pp. 221-2.

Cyril Welch  
September 2003

## Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology

3 To speak here, at the most venerable institution of French intellectual discipline, about the new phenomenology, fills me with joy, and for special reasons. For no philosopher of the past has so decisively influenced the direction of phenomenology as René Descartes, France's greatest thinker. Phenomenology must honor him as its genuine progenitor. It must be said that the study of Descartes' *Meditations* entered directly into the newly formed phenomenology as it was still in the making, and gave it the form and direction it now has, a form that nearly allows us to call it a new Cartesianism, a Cartesianism of the 20th century.

Under these circumstances I may have advance assurance of your interest as I begin with those themes of Descartes' *Meditationes de prima philosophia* that, I am convinced, have timeless significance, and as I then proceed to characterize the changes and renewals from which what's essential about the phenomenological method and problematic has its birth.

Every beginner in philosophy is familiar with the remarkable train of thought in the *Meditations*. Their goal, remember, is a complete reform of philosophy, including all intellectual disciplines. For these are only dependent members of one universal discipline, that of philosophy. Only in their systematic unity can they achieve genuine rationality — a rationality that, as they have developed, they lack. What's needed is a radical reconstruction that satisfies the idea of philosophy as *universal unity of intellectual discipline* in a unity providing an *absolutely rational foundation*. Descartes carries out this demand for reconstruction in a subjectively oriented philosophy. This subjective turn is achieved in two steps.

4 The first: Anyone who seriously wants to become a philosopher must once in his life withdraw into himself and then, in himself, attempt to overthrow and reconstruct all established intellectual disciplines. Philosophy is an entirely personal affair of the one who philosophizes. At issue is a *sapientia universalis* that

is *his*, *his* cognition aspiring to the universal — yet one that is genuinely scientific, one for which he can, right from the beginning, take responsibility from *its* absolutely evident bases. I can become a genuine philosopher only by freely deciding to focus my life on this goal. [The second:] Once I have decided for this, and have accordingly chosen to begin from absolute poverty, from the overthrow [of established intellectual disciplines], it is of course my primary task to consider how I might find the absolutely certain beginning and method of proceeding, given now that I lack support from any intellectual discipline already available. Thus these Cartesian meditations do not intend to be the private affair of the philosopher Descartes, but rather the prototype of the meditations necessary for any beginning philosopher whatsoever.

Turning now to the content of the *Meditations*, so strange to us today, we engage immediately in a *return to the philosophizing ego* in a second and a deeper sense. It's the familiar epoch-making return to the ego of pure *cogitationes*. It's the ego that discovers itself as the one being that is apodictically certain — while it suspends the validity of the existence of the world, the world not being secured against possible doubt.

At first, then, this ego engages in philosophizing that is seriously solipsistic. It looks for apodictically certain paths along which an objective externality could be disclosed within pure internality. This happens in Descartes in a well-known manner: first disclosed is the existence and *vericitas* of God; and then, by way of this existence and truth, objective nature, the dualism of substances, in short the objective *basis* of the positive sciences as well as these disciplines themselves. All inferences follow from the guidance of principles that are immanent, that are innate to the ego.

5 So much for Descartes. We now ask: Does it really pay to search out critically an eternal significance of these thoughts? Are they capable of infusing life-giving powers into our age?

In any case, it is noteworthy that the positive sciences, for which these meditations were to have served as providing an absolutely rational foundation, have paid very little attention to them. Nevertheless, in our age these intellectual disciplines — despite their brilliant development in the last three centuries — feel

themselves very cramped by the lack of clarity regarding their foundations. But it still does not occur to them to reach back to the Cartesian meditations in an effort to reform their basic conceptuality.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that in philosophy Descartes' meditations were epoch-making in an altogether unique sense, precisely owing to their return to the *ego cogito*. Descartes in fact inaugurated an entirely new form of philosophy. Changing its entire style, this philosophy takes a radical turn from naïve objectivism into a *transcendental subjectivism* that, in ever new and yet ever unsatisfactory efforts, strives toward a final shape. Might it not be that this continuing drive bears in itself an eternal meaning, a task of major importance for us, assigned to us by history, a task on which we are all called to work together?

The splintering of contemporary philosophy, its helpless busyness, gives pause for thought. Is this splintering not to be traced back to the forfeiture of the original vitality of the driving forces radiating from Descartes meditations? Might not the only fruitful renaissance be one that reawakens these meditations — not in order to take them over but in order to reveal primarily the deepest meaning of their radicalism that returns to the *ego cogito*, revealing then also the eternal values springing therefrom?

In any case, such is the path that has led to transcendental phenomenology.

Let us now travel this path together. Let us engage in meditations as radically beginning philosophers, proceeding in Cartesian fashion — doing so, of course, in constant critical reformation of the older Cartesian meditations. What was merely germinal in them must be brought into free development.

6 We thus begin, each for himself and in himself, with the decision to suspend the validity of all established intellectual disciplines. We do not abandon Descartes' leading goal of providing an absolute foundation for these disciplines, but at first we should avoid presupposing, as a prejudice, even this possibility. It will be enough for us, in our decision, to submerge ourselves into the exercise of such disciplines — and from this position to extract their ideal of research, the very ideal of

intellectual discipline to which they aspire. According to their own intention, nothing counts validly as intellectual discipline that is not founded on, grounded in complete evidence, i.e. not certified *by a return to the matters themselves, to the way matters themselves stand in original [= first-hand] experience and insight*. Thus guided, we, the beginning philosophers, make it a principle to judge only within evidence and to check the evidence critically — this again, of course, within the evidence. Since we have at the beginning suspended the validity of the various intellectual disciplines, we now stand within pre-intellectual life: and here, too, there is no lack of evidence, both unmediated and mediated. This and nothing else is what we at first have.

Starting now from what we have, the first question arising for us is: Can we not come up with unmediated and apodictic evidences, even first evidences, i.e. ones that must necessarily precede all others?

Pursuing this question meditatively, it seems that the evidence of the existence of the world offers itself first of all as in fact the first of all evidences, and as apodictic evidence. It is to the world that all intellectual disciplines relate, and prior to them our [everyday] active life. *Above all else, the existence of the world is obvious* — so much so that no one bothers to formulate it expressly in a proposition. After all, we have the continuous experience of world, an experience in which this world constantly and unquestionably stands before our eyes. But is this experiential evidence really apodictic, for all that it is obvious, and is it really the first evidence of all, the evidence preceding all others? We will have to deny both. Does not much, taken individually, prove itself to be sensory illusion? Does it not happen that even the entire context of experience, overviewed as a unit, gets discredited as mere dream? We will not appeal to Descartes' attempt, based on  
7 a much too hasty critique of sensory experience, to prove the thinkability of the non-being of the world despite our constant experience of it. We retain only this much: that, for purposes of a radical founding of the intellectual disciplines, the evidence of experience stands in any case in need of a prior critique of its validity and its extent — that we cannot appeal to it as unquestionably and unmediatedly apodictic. Accordingly, it is not  
8 enough to suspend the validity of all established intellectual

disciplines, to treat them as prejudicial; we must also rob their universal basis, the experience of the world, of their naïvely supposed validity. For us, the being of the world may no longer serve as an obvious fact: rather, it only poses a *problem of validity*.

Do we have any basis of being left, any basis for any judgements at all, for evidences, in order to be able to found a universal philosophy — and do this apodictically? Is not the world the term for the universe of anything at all that *is*? Might it be that, in the end, the world is not at all the very first basis of judgement? Might it be that the existence of the world itself presupposes a prior basis of being?

Following Descartes, we now make the great turn, one that, correctly performed, leads to *transcendental subjectivity*: the turn toward the *ego cogito* as the apodictically certain and ultimate basis of judgement, on which every radical philosophy is to be grounded.

Let us consider: as philosophers meditating radically, we now have neither an intellectual discipline that is valid for ourselves nor a world that *is* for us. Instead of simply being, i.e. being naturally valid for us in our faith in experience, the world is for us a mere claim to being. The same holds also for every other I, so that properly we should not really speak in the communicative plural. Other people and animals are for me only given by way of sensory experience, the validity of which (also in question) I can make no use. Along with other people, I naturally lose also the whole formation of sociality and culture. In short, the entire concrete world is for me not being but only a phenomenon of being. Yet, however matters stand in regard to the claim to actuality of this phenomenon of being — whether being or illusion — it itself is,  
8 as my phenomenon, not nothing: it is rather precisely what everywhere makes being and illusion possible for me. Again: as I withhold myself from every belief regarding experience, thereby suspending the validity, for me, of the being of the world of experience — as I can do and have done in my freedom — there *is* nonetheless precisely this withholding of myself, what this is in itself, along with the whole stream of life as experience and all its particular phenomena, things as they appear, my fellow human beings as they appear, cultural objects, and so on. Everything

remains as it was, except that I do not take it all as simply being but rather withhold myself from taking any stand regarding [what counts as] being and [what as] illusion. I must also withhold myself from any other opinions, judgements and valuations regarding the world, since these presuppose the being of the world; and for these as well my withholding of myself does not entail their disappearance — inasmuch as they are themselves phenomena.

This universal abstention from taking any stand regarding the objective world — what we call the *phenomenological epoché* — becomes the methodological means by which I comprehend myself purely as that ego and that life of consciousness in which and by which the entire objective world is for me — and *is* in its manner of being for me. Everything in the world, everything in space and time *is* for me by virtue of my experiencing it, my perceiving it, my remembering it, my thinking about it in some way or another, my judging it, my valuing it, my desiring it, and so on. As is well known, Descartes designates all this by the term *cogito*. In such *cogitationes*, the world for me is nothing other than the world that I myself am conscious of and that is valid for me. *The whole meaning of the world, the very validity of its being, lies exclusively in such cogitationes.* My entire life in the world runs its course in them. I cannot move into any world, whether by living, experiencing, thinking, valuing or acting, except as it obtains its being and validity in me and from me myself. Once I place myself above this entire life and withhold myself from completing any sort of belief in being that takes the world for granted — once I direct my look to that life itself as consciousness *of* the world, I gain myself as pure ego along with the pure stream of my *cogitationes*.

I gain myself not as a piece of the world, since I universally suspended the world in its validity; I gain myself not as an isolated human being; rather, I gain myself as the I in whose  
 9 conscious life precisely the entire world receives its meaning and validity, along with I myself as an object in the world and as a human being in the world.

Now we stand at a dangerous point. It seems so simple, by following Descartes, to apprehend the pure ego and its *cogitationes*.

Yet it's as though we were on a steep mountain crest on which the ability to proceed calmly and surely decides between philosophic life and philosophic death. Descartes had the most pure will to be radical and presuppositionless. However, recent research, especially the fine and penetrating work of Gilson and Koyré, has shown us that there's a lot of Scholasticism hidden in Descartes' meditations as unclarified prejudgement. But this is not all; right off, we must guard ourselves from prejudgements, hardly noticed by us, stemming from the orientation toward the mathematical sciences of nature — as though what's at issue in the term *ego cogito* were an apodictic primitive axiom that, in conjunction with others (to be derived from the same axiom) would provide the foundation for a deductive science of the world, a science *ordine geometrico*. In this connection we should not take for granted as obvious that, in our apodictically pure ego, we had salvaged, for the philosophical I, a small bit of the world, something uniquely unquestionable about the world, and that it would now be a matter of disclosing in addition the rest of the world, doing so by correctly guided inferences based on principles innate to the ego.

Unfortunately, Descartes falls onto that path when he takes the unobtrusive but fateful move that turns the ego into a *substantia cogitans*, into a separate human *animus*, into the point of departure for inferences according to the principle of causality — in short, the move by which he became of father of nonsensical transcendental realism. We steer clear of all this if we remain faithful to radical self-recollection and thereby to the principle of pure intuition, and that means to allow nothing to have validity except what we have actually and at first entirely unmediatedly given on the field of the *ego cogito* opened up to us by the *epoché* — and this means to allow nothing to evolve into an assertion that we do not ourselves *see*. In this, Descartes was deficient, and so it happens that he stands  
 10 before the greatest discovery, has even made this discovery in a certain way, and yet does not apprehend its real meaning, that of transcendental subjectivity, and thus does not pass through the portal that leads into genuine transcendental philosophy.

The free *epoché* regarding the being of the world as it appears and has actual validity for me — as actual in the earlier natural viewpoint — shows indeed this most great and most wonderful of

all facts, namely that I and my life remain untouched in the validity of my being whether or not the world is, and however this question may be decided. Should I say, in my natural way of living, "I am, I think, I live," I am referring to myself as this one human person, one among many in the world, standing in real connection with nature by way of my material body, into which my *cogitationes*, my perceptions, memories, judgements, etc. are integrated as psycho-physical facts. So understood, I am—we all are, humans and animals—themes for objective intellectual disciplines such as biology, anthropology, zoology, and even psychology. The life of the psyche studied in psychology is understood as its life in the world. The phenomenological *epoché* that the course of purified Cartesian meditations requires of me, the one who philosophizes, shuts out not only the claim to valid being of the objective world but also the intellectual disciplines that study the world, and even these as facts in the world—shuts them out of my field of judgement. *Thus for me there is no I, there are no acts of the psyche, no psychical phenomena as understood by psychology.* For me there is thus no I as human being, no *cogitationes* of my own—these construed as elements of a psycho-physical world. But in exchange I have won myself, but myself now as *that* pure I with its pure life and its pure abilities (e.g., the one evident ability to restrain myself from judging) *through which the being of this world*, and each and every how-it-is, has its possible validity. If the world (since its possible non-being does not remove my own pure being, even presupposes it) should be called *transcendent*, so my own pure being, or my pure I, should be called *transcendental*. By way of the phenomenological *epoché* the natural, the human I, indeed my own, gets reduced—led back—to the transcendental I: such is how we must understand the talk of the phenomenological reduction.

Yet further steps are needed so that what has here been set out can be correctly used. What can we make of the transcendental ego—philosophically? For me, the one who is philosophizing, the being of this ego does indeed precede, in the order of evidence and in the domain of cognition, all objective being. In a way, it is even the basis, the soil on which all objective cognition, whether good or bad, plays itself out. But does this

precedence, this presupposedness in regard to all objective cognition, mean that it is the basis of objective cognition in the usual sense? The thought, the temptation lingers; it's the temptation of every theory of realism. The temptation to seek within transcendental subjectivity for premisses establishing the existence of the subjective world disappears when we recall that, grasped purely in themselves, all inferences that we draw are already occurring within transcendental subjectivity—and that all proofs that pertain to the world take their measure from the world itself, just as the world gives and proves itself in experience. It's not as though we wanted to declare as false the great Cartesian thought of seeking the deepest justification of objective intellectual discipline, and of the objective being of the objective world itself, within transcendental subjectivity. For we would then not be following his meditative paths, not even critically. But perhaps there's a *new idea of justification, namely transcendental grounding*, that opens up with the Cartesian discovery of the ego.

Indeed, instead of assessing the *ego cogito* as a mere apodictic proposition and as an absolutely founding premiss, we turn our attention to this: that the phenomenological *epoché* lays bare for us (or for me, the one who is philosophizing), along with the *I am* that is indeed apodictic, a novel, an infinite sphere of being, and this as a sphere of novel, of *transcendental experience*. And precisely therewith, also the possibility of a transcendental cognition of experience—as well as of a transcendental intellectual discipline.

Here a highly remarkable horizon of cognition opens out. The phenomenological *epoché* reduces me, takes me back to, my transcendental and pure ego, and at first I am in a certain sense *solus ipse*: not in the usual sense, as we might think of some one individual left over from a general catastrophe in a world that otherwise continues to be. Having banished from my field of judgement the world that now receives its meaning of being from me and in me, I become the transcendental I that precedes the world, *the one being that can be and now is posited in any judgement*. And henceforth it is my task to achieve an unprecedented and peculiar intellectual discipline, one that, since it is created exclusively from and within my own transcendental subjectivity, holds (initially at least) only for itself: a transcendental-solipsistic intellectual discipline. So it's not the *ego cogito* but rather the

intellectual discipline of the ego, a pure *egology*, that should serve as the deepest foundation of philosophy in the Cartesian sense of a universal intellectual discipline, and that should provide at the very least the terrain on which to work out its absolute grounding. As a matter of fact, this discipline is already present as the deepest transcendental phenomenology—the deepest, not the full version, since of course this latter includes the further passage from transcendental solipsism to transcendental intersubjectivity.

To make all this intelligible we must first do what Descartes neglected to do: lay bare the infinite field of the transcendental experience of the ego. As we all know, this experience of self has a role to play in Descartes, and this experience even figures as apodictic. But he came nowhere near to disclosing the ego in the entire concretion of its transcendental presence and lifeblood, to viewing it as a field of labor to be systematically explored in its infinite facets. For the philosopher, the ego must be placed at the center as a fundamental insight so that, in the attitude of transcendental reduction, he can reflect, in an orderly and thorough fashion, on its *cogitationes* and its purely phenomenological content, and thereby fully reveal its transcendental being in its transcendental-temporal life and in its various capacities. What's at issue here obviously parallels what the psychologist, in his worldliness, calls inner experience, or experience of self.

Of greatest, indeed of decisive importance to notice is then  
 13 that we cannot hastily pass over what Descartes himself occasionally remarked on, e.g., that the *epoché* does not change anything worldly, that experience is experience of what's worldly and so any consciousness is consciousness of something worldly. The term *ego cogito* must be expanded by one element: every *cogito* has within itself, as already intended, its *cogitatum*. Even when I restrain myself from activating belief in perception, the perception of a house is, taken as I experience it, precisely perception of this and just this house, appearing in such-and-such a way, showing itself as having just these determinations, from one side, close up or far away. In the same way, a clear or vague memory is a memory of a vaguely or clearly represented house, an ever so false judgement is an intended judgement of this or that affair, and so on. *The basic property of all manners of consciousness in which I live*

*as ego is, as we say, its intentionality*—is being consciousness of something. To this what-ness of consciousness belong also modes of being like “there it is,” “it likely is,” and “it's nothing,” then too modes of “seeming to be,” “being good,” “being valuable,” and so on. As reflection, phenomenological experience must steer clear of all constructive contrivances. To be genuinely phenomenological, such experience must be taken exactly as concrete as it actually comes about, with exactly its content of sensation and being.

One constructive contrivance is sensualism: when one takes consciousness as a complex of sensory data and then goes on to invoke formative qualities to account for the integration [of these data]. Already in the worldly attitude of psychology this is false from the ground up—and disastrously so in the transcendental attitude. While in the course of its development phenomenological analysis does disclose something under the rubric of perceptual data, what's disclosed as primary in every case is never the “perception of the external.” Rather, in any honest and intuitive description, what's primary, namely the *cogito*, is to be described closely, e.g. the perception-as-such of a house—described in its meaning as an object and in its mode of appearance. The same applies to every manner of consciousness.

14 Straightaway directed to the object of consciousness, I find it as something that is experienced or intended to have such-and-such determinations—when judging an object, I find it as the bearer of judgement-defined predicates; when valuing an object, I find it as the bearer of value-defined predicates. Looking to the other side, I find the shifting manners of consciousness—what pertains to perception, what pertains to memory, everything that is not an object, not itself a determination of a object, but rather a subjective mode of givenness, subjective manner of appearance, e.g. perspective, distinctions of vagueness and clarity, attentiveness and inattentiveness, and so on.

As a meditating philosopher who has thereby become the transcendental ego, one is continually recollecting oneself: this now means to embark on openly infinite transcendental experience. It means not to rest satisfied with the vague *ego cogito* but rather to pursue the constant flow of cogitating being and living; to see everything in this flow that is to be seen, to penetrate

it while explicating it, to take hold of it with concepts and judgements while describing it—to bring it into those concepts and judgements obtained entirely from their original source in intuition.

As already said, the schema guiding phenomenological expositions and descriptions is threefold: *ego cogito cogitatum*. If we disregard for a while the identical *ego* (even though it somehow resides in every *cogito*), the differentiation of the *cogito* itself becomes more easily evident in reflection; and descriptive types immediately become distinct, ones very vaguely suggested by language: perceiving, remembering, still-having-in-consciousness what has just been perceived, anticipating, wishing, willing, asserting predicatively, and so on. But if we take all this as transcendental reflection presents it, the basic difference we have already alluded to, namely that between objective meaning and manner of consciousness (or manner of appearance), becomes immediately prominent: each type reveals a two-sided-ness that precisely constitutes intentionality, consciousness as consciousness of such-and-such. Thus there are always two directions of any description.

It is therefore to be noticed that the transcendental *epoché* effected on the world, with all its variously experienced, perceived, recalled, thought, and judgementally believed objects, does not alter the fact that this world, that all those objects phenomenally experienced (but also purely as such, purely as *cogitata* of some given *cogitationes*) must remain a central theme of phenomenological description. But then what accounts for the deep-deep  
 15 distinction between phenomenological and natural-objective judgement about the world of experience? The answer can be formulated in this way: As phenomenological ego I have become the pure beholder of myself, and I take nothing as valid except what I find to be inseparable from myself—what I find to be my pure life and features inseparable from this life; and this finding occurs in the manner that originary and intuitive reflection reveals me for myself. As human being in the natural attitude, I myself was prior to the *epoché*, I inlayed my life naïvely into the world; experiencing things, I simply took to be valid the things experienced and with a view to these positioned myself in further ways. However, all this took place in me without my directing

myself to what was happening; *what* I experienced—things, values, purposes—located my interest, *not* the experiencing that is my life, not my being-interested, my taking-up-a-position, my subjectivity. Even as naturally living ego I was transcendental, but of this I knew nothing. To become aware of my absolute being-my-own-self, I had to exercise phenomenological *epoché*. With this *epoché* I do not exercise, as Descartes did, a critique of what's valid and what's not, in order to determine whether I should trust experience, i.e. the being of the world, apodictically. Rather, my intent is to learn that the world is for me, and then also *how* world is for me the *cogitatum* of my *cogitationes*. I do not want only to established overall that the *ego cogito* precedes apodictically the being-for-me of world; rather, I want to get to know fully and comprehensively my concrete being as ego, whereby I come to see this: As I am naturally engaged in the world, experiencing and living it, my being consists in a special transcendental life, one in which I naïvely and innocently undertake experiences, activate my naïvely acquired convictions about the world, and so on. Thus, the phenomenological attitude, along with its *epoché*, consists in *my gaining the ultimate standpoint of experience and cognition that can be thought, a standpoint whereby I become the detached beholder of my natural-worldly ego and its life*—a life that is then only a particular part or a particular layer of the transcendental life that is now revealed. I am detached in the sense that I “restrain” myself from all my worldly interests; I—the one philosophizing—place  
 16 myself above these interests and look toward them, take them as themes for description, all this belonging to my transcendental ego.

Thus what happens in the phenomenological reduction is a kind of ego-splitting: The transcendental beholder places himself above himself, looks at himself and thus sees himself also as the ego that is already immersed in the world—and thus both finds himself as a human being, finds this in himself as *cogitatum*, and finds the transcendental life and being that constitutes everything worldly, finds this as belonging to the *cogitationes*. If the natural human being (in whom the ego is ultimately transcendental, but who knows nothing of this) enjoys a world and a cognition of the world that is naïvely absolute, so the transcendental beholder, the one who has become conscious of his transcendental ego, enjoys

the world only as *phenomenon*, i.e. as *cogitatum* of some *cogitatio*, as what appears of some appearance, as a mere correlate.

If phenomenology has objects of consciousness for its theme—whatever their kind, whether real or ideal—it has these only as objects of some manner of consciousness; any description intending to apprehend the concrete phenomena of *cogitationes* in their fullness must constantly turn its eyes from the objective side back to the side of consciousness and pursue the interpenetrating interconnections. For example, if I take as my theme the perception of a hexahedron, I will notice, in pure reflection, that this six-surface object is given continuously as an objective unity in a multiplicity of manners of appearance, one to which many determinate figurations belong. It's the same hexahedron that appears—now from one side and now from another, now in one perspective and now in another, now as appearing nearby and now as appearing faraway, now in greater clarity and determinateness and now in lesser. As we set our eyes on any one viewed surface of the hexahedron, any one edge or corner, any one spot of color—in short, any aspect of objective sense—we notice for each one the same thing: each is a unity of a multiplicity with ever-shifting manners of appearance, a unity of its particular perspectives, its particular differences of a subjective here and there. Simply seen, what we find is a constantly identical, unchanged color; but, 17 reflecting on the manners of its appearance, we note that this color is nothing other, cannot be thought of as other, than what is presenting itself now in one and now in another shade. We always have unity only as a unity based on presentation, and the presentation is the presenting-itself of a color, or the presenting-itself of an edge.

Only in the special manner of the *cogito* is the *cogitatum* possible. That is, once we begin to take the life of consciousness in its concrete fullness, and to describe it constantly with a view to both its sides and to their intentional interconnections, a true infinity opens itself up and ever new facts emerge. Among these facts belong the structures of phenomenological temporality. This happens even if we remain within the type of consciousness we call “perception of things.” Any instance of such perception is alive inasmuch as it is a stretched duration, a temporally stretched stream of perceiving and being-perceived. This streaming

stretching-itself-along, this temporality, is something that essentially belongs to the transcendental phenomenon itself. Every division that we think into it again yields a perception of the same type of consciousness; of every stretch, of every phase, we say the same thing: the hexahedron is perceived [as a unit]. Yet this *identity* [of the thing] is an immanent descriptive trait of such intentional experience and of its phases; it's a trait of consciousness itself. The pieces and the phases of the perception are not glued together externally; they are unitary—just as consciousness is unitary over different moments, namely unitary in its being of the same thing. It's not that there are first things, and that these things then get stuck into consciousness, so that the same thing gets stuck into it now in one way and now in another; rather, these instances of consciousness, one *cogito* and then another, are bound together into one *cogito*, one that unifies them—one that, as a new consciousness, is again consciousness of something. Indeed, that we are conscious of something being one thing, and the “same” thing, is the accomplishment of *synthetic consciousness*.

Here, with this one example, we hit upon what's distinctive about synthesis as the basic property of consciousness. This property highlights the *distinction between the thingly and the ideational (simply intentional) contents of consciousness*. Phenomenologically considered, the object of consciousness is not a thingly piece in the perceiving, or in perception's streaming- 18 along, synthetically self-unifying perspectives, or in any other of the manifolds of appearance in perception. Two appearances that are given to me by virtue of synthesis as of the same thing are, in their thingly content, separate; as separate, they have, as regards the thing, no datum in common: at most they have similar and equivalent aspects. The hexahedron we see as the same is *intentionally* the same; what is given as something spatial-real is, in the manifold perceiving of it, something ideal-identical—something immanently identical within intention, within the various manners of consciousness, within acts of the ego—not as a thingly datum but as an objective meaning. Thus the *same* hexahedron can serve as the same *intentional* object for different remembering, expectations, clear or empty representations—the identical substratum for predications, valuations, and so on. This

sameness lies in the life of consciousness itself; we behold it by way of synthesis. *Thus the relation to objectivity [to objects] permeates the entire life of consciousness*, and this relation reveals itself as one feature that belongs essentially to every consciousness: its ability to take on ever new, extremely variable manners of consciousness while synthesizing these into a unitary consciousness of the same thing.

In connection with this last we see that there is no individualized *cogito* isolated within the ego. This is so much *not* the case, that all life, universal life — in its fluctuation, its Heracleitean flow — is a universal and synthetic unity. It is essentially thanks to this unity that the transcendental ego not only *is*, but *is for itself*, a concrete unity that we can survey as a whole, one taking on a unified life and constantly objectifying itself in ever new modes of consciousness, yet in a unified way and in the form of immanent time.

And not only that. Just as essential as the *actuality* of life is its *potentiality*, and this not as an empty possibility. Every *cogito* (e.g., an outer perception or a renewed memory, and so on) carries within itself, ready to be revealed, a potentiality, immanent to it, of possible experiences, ones that can be related to the same intentional object and be actualized by the ego itself. In every *cogito* we find *horizons* (to speak in the language of phenomenology), and this in various ways. Perception occurs as a progression, it sketches out an horizon of expectation, an horizon of intentionality, indicating in advance what's coming, and this as perceived, i.e. indicating future series of perception. Yet every perception also bears within itself potentialities like "I could look over there rather than over here" — I could direct the course of perception of the same thing one way rather than another. Every renewed memory directs me toward a whole chain of possible memories, right down to the present, and at each point of immanent time I am directed to co-presences yet to be revealed. And so on.

All these are intentional structures, ones governed by laws of synthesis. Every intentional experience lends itself to examination, i.e. I can penetrate into its horizons, lay them out; doing this, I reveal, on the one hand, potentialities of my life, and, on the other hand, I clarify the objective dimension of the intended meaning.

Thus intentional analysis is something totally different from analysis in the usual sense. The life of consciousness does not consist of a mere interconnection of data, it's neither a heap of psychic atoms nor a wholeness of elements unified by formative qualities (in parallel with transcendental phenomenology, introspective psychology knows this as well). *Intentional analysis is revelation of the actualities and potentialities in which objects get constituted as unities of meaning*, and every analysis of meaning itself unfolds in the transition from thingly experiences to the intentional horizons prefigured by these experiences of things.

This late-coming insight prescribes to phenomenological analysis and description a totally different methodology, one that jumps into action wherever object and meaning — wherever questions regarding being, possibility, origin, and justice — are to be seriously pondered. Every intentional analysis reaches beyond the given experience of the moment and of things at that moment as it takes place in the immanent sphere; revealing potentialities that are now themselves thingly and that are suggested within an horizon, such analysis works out manifolds of new experiences, and in these new experiences it becomes clear what was only implicitly intended and in this manner already intentional. Looking at a hexahedron, I immediately say: I actually and genuinely see it only from one side. Yet it is nonetheless evident that what I now perceive is more: that the perception includes in itself a view, although not intuition-based, by virtue of which the one side I see has its meaning as merely one side. But how does this view-of-more get revealed? How does it become genuinely evident that I view more? Answer: by way of a transition into a synthetic sequence of possible perceptions, ones I would have if I were to walk around the thing (as I can do). Inasmuch as it produces such meaning-fulfilling syntheses, phenomenology constantly dissects our viewing of things, namely instances of intentionality. To lay bare the universal structure of the transcendental life of consciousness in its enwrapping in and formation of meaning: this is the immense task assigned to [phenomenological] description.

Research naturally moves at various levels. It must not be hindered by the realization that it moves within the realm of

subjective flux and that it would be madness to adopt a methodology devoted to the formation of concepts and judgements so essential to the methodology of the objective exact sciences. To be sure, the life of consciousness is in flux, and every *cogito* is flowing, without ultimate elements and relations we could fixate. Still, a very well marked typology reigns within this flux. Perception is one universal type, remembrance another, then too consciousness of a vacuum—even retentional, as when I have a bit of a melody, a portion that I no longer hear but *still* have in my field of consciousness, precisely lacking intuition but remaining nevertheless this portion of the melody: these and others are universal, sharply marked out types that again divide into two types: *perception of things in space* and *perception of a human being*, i.e. of psycho-physical being.

Every such type I can examine for its structure, describing it universally. This structure will be intentional, since the type itself is intentional. I can ask how the one type transmutes into another, how it gets molded and alters itself, which forms of intentional synthesis necessarily lie within it, which forms of horizons it necessarily includes in itself, which forms of revelation and which forms of fulfillment belong to it. What results is then transcendental theory of perception, and that means intentional analysis of perception, transcendental theory of memory and of the  
 21 overall interconnection of intuitions, then too transcendental theory of judgement, theory of volition, and so on. In every case what's essential is not to verify mere experiences, not to analyze any datum of experience with a view to the *things* experienced, but rather to pursue the lines of intentional synthesis as they are intentionally prefigured, along with their horizon—whereupon we must ferret out and then also reveal the horizons themselves.

Since every single *cogitatum* is (owing to its transcendental-immanent stretchedness-over-time) a synthesis-into-identity, i.e. a consciousness of what's continually the same, the one [namely the perceived] object does have a role to play in guiding, transcendently, the discovery of the subjective manifolds constituting objects. But when we survey the most universal types of *cogitata* and their universal intentional descriptions, we discover again that it makes no difference whether the object is perceived, recalled, or whatever.

If we take as our theme the phenomenon of world (of which we are conscious as a unity throughout the stream of perceptions that flows on and on in a synthetic unity), or the wondrous type we call *universal perception of world*, and if we ask how we are to understand that a world is there for us, we then hold fast to the synthetic type of object we call *world*, this of course as *cogitatum*: we hold to it as *guideline for unfolding the infinite structure of the experiential intentionality of world*. And then we have to engage in the study of subordinate types. As experienced purely in the phenomenological reduction, the world is an organization of objects persisting each in its own identity. What does the special infinity of actual and possible perceptions pertaining to a object look like? The same question arises in regard to every universal type of object. What does the intentionality of an horizon—the intentionality without which an object cannot be an object—look like, now that we refer to the cohesion of a world, a cohesion that (as the analysis of intentionality itself shows) we cannot think-away from any object? And the same holds for any special type of object that may possibly belong to the world.

Holding ideationally fast to any intentional type of object entails, as we shall soon see, an organization, or an ordering,  
 22 within our intentional investigations. In other words: transcendental subjectivity is not a chaos of intentional experiences, but rather a unity of synthesis, a many-layered synthesis in which ever new object-types of individual objects are constituted. Yet every object signifies a *rule-structure for transcendental subjectivity*.

Raising the question of the transcendental system of intentionality (a system assuring that some nature, some world is always present for the ego, initially in experience as directly visible, graspable, and so on, and then by all kinds of intentionality directed to the world), we already stand in the phenomenology of reason. Taken in the broadest sense, reason and unreason do not signify incidental abilities or facts; rather, they belong to the most universal structural form of transcendental subjectivity itself.

Taken in the broadest sense of a showing-itself, of a standing-there-as-itself—as the full awareness of a circumstance, of a value, of whatever—evidence is no incidental event in transcendental life. Rather, all intentionality is either itself a consciousness of

evidence, i.e. the *cogitatum* as actually had, or essentially concerned about, directed to its givenness to itself, along with an horizon. Every clarification is already a making-evident. Every vague, empty, or unclear consciousness is from the start only consciousness of this or that insofar as it is *pointing the way toward clarification*, a path on which what's intended might be given as either actuality or possibility. I can examine every vague consciousness to determine how its object would have to appear. Of course it belongs to the structure of transcendental subjectivity that views will arise that, in the transition to possible evidence or to clear representation (as experience actually progresses, in actual transition from an opinion to the evident matter itself), grow not into what they are intended to view but into something else. Instead of confirmation, what happens then is dissatisfaction, termination, negation. But all this belongs to the whole realm of conscious life—it's the type-defined antithesis of fulfillment and disappointment occurring in alternation. As living, the ego is  
 23 always, and necessarily, in *cogitationes*, and its particular object is always either intuited (whether in consciousness, if it *is*, or in imagination, *as though* it were) or unintuited, removed from the matter. And with a view to this object we can always ask about the possible ways the ego can come to it either as an actuality or as an imagined possibility; also about the ways in which the object might show itself as persistently being (and might be reached in unanimous continuity of evidences)—or about the ways it might display its non-being.

An object exists for me: this means that it holds for me in my consciousness of it. But this holding-for-me, this validity *is* for me only so long as I presume that I could confirm it, that I could produce traversable ways (and that means procedural experiences and other evidences that I can freely activate) in which I could move right up to it and might have actualized it as *actually present*. This requirement remains even when my consciousness of the object is an experience, i.e. a consciousness that the object itself is already present and seen. For even such seeing points onward to further seeing, to the possibility of corroboration, the ability ever-again to re-set what has already been achieved back into the mode of progressive corroboration.

You should consider carefully the immense significance of this last remark—once we have placed ourselves on egological ground. From this standpoint we see that, for us, *that* something is present, and *how* it is so, have in actuality and in truth no other meaning than that its being lies in the possibility of its self-exhibiting corroboration. And we also see that these paths of corroboration and their accessibility belong to me as transcendental subjectivity, and have meaning only as such.

*Thus whatever truly is, whether real or ideal, has significance only as a special correlate of my own intentionality*—intentionality of something actual or prefigured as potential. Of course, such intentionality is not of an isolated *cogito*: for instance, the being of something real as a mere *cogito* of an isolated perception that I now happen to have. Rather, intentionality itself, along with its object in the manner of its intentional givenness, points me (by virtue of its presumed horizon) toward an endlessly open system of *possible* perceptions, ones that are not contrived but rather  
 24 motivated within my intentional life, and ones that can only then lose their presumptive validity when some opposing experience overrules them. These perceptions are necessarily presupposed as *my* possibilities, ones that (if not hindered) I might produce by approaching the object, by looking all around it, and so on.

Of course, this has all been stated very roughly. Very far-reaching and complex intentional analyses are necessary in order to lay out the structures of possibility as they relate to the horizons belonging specifically to each kind of object, and thereby to make the meaning of each kind of being intelligible. At the outset, evident is only this one guideline: whatever I take to be has validity as being for me, and every conceivable justification lies within me, contained in my immediate and mediated intentionality, in which then every meaning of being must be contained as well.

With these considerations we find ourselves engaged in the immense, indeed the overwhelmingly immense problems of *reason and actuality*, of consciousness and true being; these are, as we say in phenomenology, *constitutive problems*. Initially, they seem to be of limited phenomenological interest—if by actuality, by being, one has in mind only worldly being and thereby the

phenomenological parallel to what is customarily called epistemology or critique of reason, these being indeed normally directed toward objective cognition of reality. But in truth the constitutive problems encompass transcendental phenomenology in its entirety and point to a very universal systematic aspect according to which all phenomenological problems are ordered. What phenomenological constitution of an object entails is this: that we contemplate the universality of the ego from the viewpoint of the identity of this object, namely while questioning the systematic totality of actual and possible conscious experiences inasmuch as these experiences, relatable to the object, are prefigured in my ego and signify for my ego a firm rule of possible synthesis.

The problem of the phenomenological constitution of any given type of objects is initially the problem of its ideally complete and evident givenness. To every type of object belongs its own  
 25 typical manner of possible experience. What does such an experience look like, regarding its essential structures—if we think it as the object, think it from all sides and as ideally complete? And to this question we append another: How does the ego ever come to have such a system as an exploitable possession even though there is no actual experience of it? And finally: What significance does it have for me that objects are for me what they are without my knowing or having known about them?

Every object that *is* is an object in a universe of possible experiences; here we must only extend the concept of experience so that it becomes the broadest concept, namely evidence itself, rightly understood. To every possible object corresponds one such possible system. As already stated, the progressive array of objects is transcendental: it's an array provided by the universal structure of the ego, belonging to the ego in wholly determinate ways, according to the ego's actual *cogitata*, and according to its potentialities, its abilities. Now, it's the essence of the ego to be in the form of actual and possible consciousness, where being possible means being in subjective forms lying in the ego itself—forms of *I can*, of ability. The ego is what it is in its relation to intentional objectivities: it always bears on something that is, or possibly is. Thus it belongs to its very essence always to be configuring systems of intentionality, and to have already

configured them—the array of which includes objects viewed, thought, valued, handled, imagined and imaginary, and so on.

But the ego itself *is*, and its being is being-for-itself. Moreover, its own being, along with all that specifically belongs to it, is constituted in the ego itself, and keeps getting constituted for it. The ego's being-for-itself is being in constant self-constitution, and this it is that provides the foundation for the constitution of everything called transcendent, i.e. of worldly objectivities. And so the foundational task of phenomenology is to work out an egological theory within the doctrine of the constitution of immanent temporality and *immanent* experiences (those fitting such temporality). By way of this theory it will gradually become intelligible *how the ego's being-for-itself is possible and intelligible*.

26 Here we are struck by an equivocation in the theme of the *ego*: it is different at different levels of the phenomenological problematic. During the first, most general considerations we find, as a result of the phenomenological reduction, the *ego cogito cogitata*. Here, what's striking is the manifoldness of the *cogitata*—of the *I perceive, I recall, I desire*, and so on. And the first thing we here notice is that the various modes of the *cogito* have a point of identity, a centralization, inasmuch as I am the very one, one and the same, that first of all performs the act *I think* and then also the act *I judge to be illusion*, and so on. A double synthesis, a double polarization becomes conspicuous. Many (not all) modes of consciousness here transpiring are unified synthetically as manners of consciousness of the same object. On the other hand, every *cogitationes*, and especially every stand I take, have the structural form of (*ego*) *cogito*—they have *ego*-polarization.

But now we must notice that the centralizing ego is not an empty point or pole; rather, by virtue of a lawfulness of its genesis, the ego experiences, with every act that radiates from it, a determination that stays on. For instance, once I have decided, in an act of judgement, how some matter stands, this fleeting act passes but I am still the ego that has made this decision: I find myself staying on as the ego of those convictions of mine that stay on. So it is for every kind of decision, e.g. those regarding value or volition.

Thus we have the ego not as a mere empty pole but rather, in each instance, as the stable and enduring I of persisting convictions, of habitualities. It is only now, within the alteration of these, that the *unity of the personal I and its personal character constitutes itself*. But from this ego we must again distinguish the ego in full concretion, the ego that is only concrete in the flowing multiplicity of its intentional life along with the intended objects that get constituted for it. We here speak of the ego as a concrete monad.

Since, as transcendental ego, I am the one who finds myself present as ego in one or another of these senses and can become aware of my actual and true being, this too poses a problem—indeed, the most radical of constitutive problems.

27 Thus, in truth, constitutive phenomenology encompasses phenomenology in its entirety. However, it cannot start out this way but rather by showing the types of consciousness and their intentional development. Only such showing can eventually make apparent the meaning of the constitutive problematic.

In any case, the phenomenological problems arising from analysis of the essence of the constitution of objectivities that are real for the ego, and then also a phenomenological and objective epistemology, form an immense realm by themselves.

But before we confront this epistemology with its customary version there's need of a tremendous methodological progress. It is in order to allow the concretions to speak to you more easily that I come to talk about this progress only now. Each of us, having been led back, by phenomenological reduction, to *his own* absolute ego, found himself, in apodictic certainty, as factually being. Taking a hard look around, the ego found manifold, descriptively apprehensible types [of consciousness] awaiting intentional development and could soon progress in intentional revelation of its own ego. Yet it is no accident that the expression “essence,” or “essential,” kept sliding off my tongue: what's at issue here is a determinate concept of the *a priori*, one that only phenomenology will clarify. This much is clear: whenever we take a cognitive type like perception (and this includes what's perceived—similarly, retention and what's retained, assertion and

what's asserted, striving and what's striven after), lay it out and describe it as a type, we obtain results that remain stable no matter what the factum from which we abstracted them. The individuality of the factum we happen to take as an example—for instance, the momentary flowing perception of a table—is wholly irrelevant to the type; and even the universal—that I, this factual ego, happen to have among my factual experiences this particular type—is irrelevant: the description does not at all depend on the determination of individual facta, or on their existence. And so it is for all egological structures.

For example, should I undertake to analyze the type “sensory experience of a thing in space” and proceed systematically into a constitutive contemplation of how such experience would be able to develop, would have to develop if one and the same thing is to show itself completely, according to what all must be assigned to  
28 it as a thing,—should I do this, I come upon the monumental realization that, *a priori* and necessarily, whatever can ever truly be a thing for me, as an ego, submits to the essential form of a structural system of possible experience, a system determinately germane to the thing and having an *a priori* manifold of specifically germane structures.

It is evident that I am able to re-imagine my ego very freely, to contemplate the types as purely ideal possibilities of an henceforth merely possible ego, of any ego whatsoever, namely as free variation of my factual ego. I then obtain *essential types, aprioristic possibilities, and essential laws belonging to these*. In this way, I obtain essential universal structures of my ego as something that can be thought—structures without which I cannot think myself at all or *a priori*, since they would evidently have to subsist for every free variation of my ego.

Thus we rise into a methodological insight—an insight that, after the genuine method of phenomenological reduction, is the most important one in phenomenology—*that the ego*, as our forebears said, *has an enormous inborn a priori* and that phenomenology in its entirety, or the methodically pursued pure self-recollection of the philosopher, is revelation of this inborn *a priori* in its infinite multiplicity of facets. Here lies the genuine meaning of inbornness, a meaning that the ancient and naïve concept of it was, so to speak, yearning for but could not apprehend.

Much more belongs to this inborn *a priori* of the concrete ego (*of my monad*, to speak with Leibniz) than we were able to discuss. To it also belongs (what can only be indicated very briefly) the special meaning of the ego's *a priori* that determines the threefoldness of the term *cogito* [i.e., *ego cogito cogitatum*]: the ego as pole of every specific position or act of the ego and as pole of the affects that, streaming from already-constituted objects onto the ego, motivate it to become attentive and to take up a position. Thus the ego has a double polarization: the polarization directed toward manifold objective unities and the ego-polarization, a centralization permitting all intentionalities to bear on the identical ego-pole.

29 However, in a certain way even the ego-polarization indirectly takes on many facets in the ego by way of its empathies—these as “mirrorings” of other monads with their own ego-poles, mirrorings that arise only in the effort to make them present. The I is not merely a pole of positionings that come up and pass away; every positioning finds something persistent in the I, namely a *conviction* that stays on until revised.

The systematic disclosure of the transcendental sphere as the sphere of absolute being and constitution to which everything thinkable must be related—this disclosure poses immense difficulties. Only in the last decade have the methods and the levels of the problem taken on clear order.

One special case: it was only very late that access to the problems of the universal and essential lawfulness of phenomenological genesis were disclosed—a genesis that, at its deepest, is *passive* in the formation of ever new intentionalities, and of apperceptions in which the ego plays no active part. Here a phenomenology of association emerges, the concept and origin of which receive an essentially new face, above all from the at-first surprising realization that association is an out-sized name for an essential lawfulness, an inborn *a priori* without which the ego is unthinkable as ego. Then, too, there's the problematic of *higher-level genesis* in which, by acts of the ego, validity-configurations emerge and, in unison with these, the central I takes on specific ego-properties such as habitual convictions and acquired characteristics.

It is the phenomenology of genesis that makes the ego intelligible as a infinite coherence of synthetically interconnected *performative accomplishments*—constitutive ones that bring out as valid ever new levels of objects at various levels of relativity. It becomes intelligible how the ego only is what it is in a genesis through which worlds, both real and ideal, become intentionally the ego's own—over and over again, whether provisionally or lastingly; these worlds become the ego's own from its own extraction of meaning, become its own by *a priori* possible and intrusive corrections, then too by eliminations of the nothingnesses and the illusions that emerge immanently no less than do the formations of meaning based on types. In each case, the factum is 30 irrational; but the form—the immense system of forms comprising constituted objects and the correlative system of forms comprising the intentional constitution of these objects— is *a priori*, an inexhaustible infinity of the *a priori* that gets revealed under the rubric of phenomenology and that is nothing less than the essential form of the ego as ego, revealed, and ever yet to be revealed, by my recollection of myself.

All levels of reality and ideality belong to the performative accomplishments of meaning and being. Thus when we count and calculate, when we describe nature and world, treat matters theoretically, form propositions, inferences, proofs, theories and form these theories into truths, and so on—what we are here doing is creating for ourselves ever new configurations of objects, ones now ideal, ones that endure in their validity for us. Provided we have undertaken radical self-recollection, i.e. have returned to our absolute ego (each to his own), all this happens as formations of the freely operative activity of the ego, formations ordered into levels of egological constitution, where each one of those ideals [countings, calculations, etc.] is what it is as an array pointing to the constitutive system of the ego. Here, too, I bring out the validity of all those intellectual disciplines that unfold in my own thinking and knowing. Their naïve validity I have, as ego, suppressed. But in the context of my transcendental self-revelation as detached beholder of my performative life, these disciplines, just as already the world of experience, reappear in their validity—but now purely as a constitutive correlate.

We now pass on to the task of relating the egological-transcendental theory of the constitution of being (the theory setting out all things that *are* for the ego as configurations arising in synthetic motivation of its own intentional life of passive and active performance) to customary *epistemology* or *theory of reason*. Then, too, this broader context will allow us to become fully aware of a missing piece in phenomenological theory, a piece that will overcome the appearance of solipsism — whereupon a fitting addition to our theory can settle this issue.

The problem of traditional epistemology is that of *transcendence*. Even when empirical and basing itself on customary psychology, it does not want to be a mere psychology of cognition: epistemology wants to cast light on the very possibility of cognition. The problem arises in the natural attitude and  
 31 receives further treatment within this attitude. I come across myself as a human being residing in the world, and at the same time as experiencing the world and knowing it, as well as myself, in a intellectually disciplined fashion. I then say to myself: everything that is for me *is* thanks to my cognitive consciousness — it is experienced in my experiencing, thought in my thinking, theoretized in my theorizing, detected in my detecting. It is for me only as an intentional objective-ness of my *cogitationes*. As a basic property of my own psychic life, intentionality names a property belonging in reality to me as a human being — to *any* human being in regard to his or her purely psychic innerness. Already Brentano moved this property into the center of the empirical psychology of human being. For this, we have no need of phenomenological reduction: we are, and we remain, on the soil of the world given to us. And so we quite naturally say: *Everything that is and holds for human being, for me, does so in one's own conscious life*, a life that remains entirely bound up with itself, no matter what it is conscious of and no matter what it has accomplished intellectually. All lines I draw between genuine and deceptive experience — and, in experience, between being and illusion — run their course in the sphere of my consciousness; so too when, at higher levels, I distinguish between insightful and un insightful thinking, between what's necessary and nonsensical *a priori*, between what's empirically correct and empirically false. Actually in evidence, logically necessary, nonsensical, logically possible, probable — these

are all characteristics arising in the domain of my consciousness as I am intending an object. Every demonstration — justification for something having truth and being — runs its course entirely within me, and its termination is a characteristic within the *cogitatum* of my *cogito*.

And now we see the big problem. That, in the domain of my consciousness, I happen to come upon certainties, even compelling evidences, within the context of motivations determining me thereto — this makes sense. But how can this game, running its course entirely within the immanence of conscious life, achieve *objective* reference? How can any evidence (any *clara et distincta perceptio*) lay claim to anything more than to being a characteristic in my own consciousness? Here's the Cartesian problem that the divine *veracitas* is supposed to solve.

32 What does the transcendental self-recollection of phenomenology have to say about this? Nothing else than that this whole problem is nonsensical, a nonsense into which Descartes had to fall only because he missed the genuine meaning of the transcendental *epoché* and of the reduction to the pure ego. But the customary post-Cartesian attitude is much cruder. We ourselves ask: Who is this ego that can properly pose transcendental questions? Can I do this as a natural human being? Can I, in this capacity, seriously, indeed transcendently ask, "How do I get beyond my island of consciousness? How can what arises in my consciousness as an experience of evidence achieve objective reference?" *In the same way that I, as natural human being, apperceive myself, I have already in advance apperceived the spatial world*, i.e. I have apprehended myself in the space in which I have, precisely, an outside-myself! Does not the very meaning of the question not already presuppose the legitimacy of our apperception of world — while only the answering of the question is supposed to provide its objective validity? What's needed, then, is a conscious enactment of the *phenomenological reduction in order to achieve that ego* (and conscious life) *to which transcendental questions regarding the possibility of transcendental cognition are to be directed*. Should one, instead of fleetingly undertaking a phenomenological *epoché*, set oneself the task of revealing one's entire field of consciousness, and thereby also oneself, one will come to see that whatever *is* for oneself is constituting itself *in* oneself — and also that every

manner of being has its own special constitution, including that manner of being that we characterize as transcendent.

*Transcendence is an immanent characteristic of being, one that gets constituted within the ego.* Every thinkable meaning, every thinkable being—whether called immanent or transcendent—belongs to the domain of transcendental subjectivity. It makes no sense to talk about anything outside of this subjectivity. Such subjectivity is itself absolute concretion. There's no sense in talking about the universe of true being as something outside the universe of possible consciousness, possible cognition, possible evidence—  
 33 two relating to one another in a merely external way by some rigid law. By their very essence, the two universes belong together, and things essentially belonging together are also concretely one, i.e. united in absolute concretion: in *transcendental subjectivity*. This subjectivity being the universe of possible meaning, any outside is an unmeaning. Yet every unmeaning is itself a mode of meaning and has its unmeaningness within insightfulness. This holds not only for the merely *factual ego* and for what is factually accessible to it as being for it. Phenomenological self-exposition is an *a priori* affair, and therefore everything it discovers holds for every possible, every thinkable ego, as well as for everything thinkable and therefore for all thinkable worlds.

Genuine epistemology is accordingly only meaningful as a transcendental-phenomenological theory of cognition. This theory, instead of engaging in nonsensical inferences from a supposed immanence to a supposed transcendence (to any kind of *thing in itself*), devotes itself exclusively to the systematic clarification of cognitive performance. By such clarification, this performance becomes intelligible as through and through intentional. And precisely then every kind of being, whether real or ideal [e.g., trees faced or trees counted] becomes intelligible as a configuration, constituted in this performance, of transcendental subjectivity. This kind of intelligibility is the highest thinkable form of rationality. All distorted interpretations of being stem from naïve blindness for the horizons co-determining the meaning of being. Conscious of its proper horizon, the pure self-exposition of the ego, carried out in pure evidence and thereby in all concretion, leads to a *transcendental idealism*. However, this idealism has an essentially *new meaning*. It is not a psychological idealism, i.e. not one aiming

to derive a meaningful world from meaningless sensory data; it is not a Kantian idealism, that believes it can hold open, at least as a limiting concept, the possibility of a world of things in themselves. Rather, it is *an idealism that is nothing more than a consistently pursued self-exposition unfolding in the form of a systematic and egological intellectual discipline*—an exposition of each and every meaning of being that can ever make sense to me, the ego. This idealism is precisely no configuration of playful arguments, no trophy to be achieved in the dialectical conflict with realisms.

34 It's the exposition of meaning, carried out, by actual labor, in the transcendence of nature, culture, and world altogether — a transcendence already experientially available to the ego. That is, it's systematic revelation of intentionality as constituting meaning. The proof of this idealism lies in exercise of phenomenology itself.

But we must now face the one consideration that is truly disturbing. When I, the meditating I, reduce myself, by way of *epoché*, to my absolute ego, and to the ego that is constituting itself thereby, have I not become a *solus ipse*? And is not all this philosophy of self-recollection just a pure solipsism, even if a transcendental-phenomenological one?

Before we take sides on this and seek recourse in useless dialectical arguments, it is essential to carry out the concrete phenomenological labor far enough, and systematically enough, that we see how, within the ego, the *alter ego* manifests and confirms itself as a givenness of experience—i.e. see what kind of constitution this *alter ego* has for its own existence so that it must arise as an existence within the circle of my consciousness, within my world. For I do indeed actually experience others, and I experience them not only along side nature but as integrally intertwined with nature. But at the same time I experience others in a special way: I experience them arising not just in space and intertwined psychologically with nature, I experience them as also experiencing the very same world I myself experience — I experience them experiencing me experiencing them. I experience each and every thing in myself, in my transcendental conscious life, and I experience the world not merely as my private world but as an intersubjective world, one given to everyone and making its objects available—a world in which others as others are at the

same time there for one another, for everyone. How can we clarify all this, since we cannot call into question that everything that *is* for me can only achieve meaning and corroboration within my intentional life?

Here we stand in need of a genuinely phenomenological exposition of the transcendental performance of *empathy*. And, so long as this is in question, we must suspend, abstractly, the validity of others and of all those levels of meaning in my circum-world that emerge from the experienced validity of others.

35 Such suspension entails a separating out, within the domain of the transcendental ego (i.e., in the domain of its consciousness), of specifically private egological being, i.e. of my concrete individuality, and it is this individuality whose analogue [i.e., another ego] I then (from motivations of my ego) empathize with. I experience directly and authentically my own conscious life — this as *it itself* is, but I do not directly and authentically experience that of others: their sensation, their perceiving, feeling, thinking, willing. But in myself I do co-experience all this in a secondary sense, i.e. in a peculiar apperception of similarity — I find it thoroughly arrayed and thereby clearly corroborated. As Leibniz would say: the monads of others are mirrored within my own original being as my apodictically given monads, and this mirroring indicates others in a thoroughly corroborative manner. What is here indicated is a transcendental subjectivity of others — provided only that I undertake a phenomenological self-exposition, inclusive of an exposition of what is rightly indicated. The transcendental ego posits in itself, not by choice but by necessity, a transcendental *alter ego*.

In this way, transcendental subjectivity expands into *intersubjectivity* — into *intersubjective transcendental sociality*, the *transcendental basis for intersubjective nature and world overall*, no less than for the intersubjective being of all ideal objectivities [e.g., *shared* perception of *ten* trees arranged in *triangular* form]. The first ego to which the transcendental reduction leads still dispenses with the distinctions between what's intentional, what belongs originally to the ego, and the *mirroring*, in the ego, of the *alter ego*. In order to reach transcendental subjectivity we need a concrete phenomenology that progresses further. But here again it becomes clear that, for the one who meditates philosophically, his ego is the

originary ego, and that, in the sequel (for every conceivable ego as *alter ego*), intersubjectivity is only thinkable as a mirroring in this first ego. In this clarification of empathy it also becomes clear that there is a deep-deep difference between the constitution of nature (which for the abstractly isolated ego already makes sense as being, although this sense is not yet intersubjective) and the constitution of the spiritual world.

36 *Thus phenomenological idealism reveals itself as a transcendental-phenomenological monadology* — except that it is no metaphysical construction but rather a systematic exposition of *that* meaning the world has *prior* to all philosophizing, a meaning that, philosophically, can only be distorted, not changed.

The whole path that we have traversed should be a path having the Cartesian goal firmly in mind, namely the goal of a universal philosophy, a universal intellectual discipline absolutely founded. We may say that this is what Descartes had in mind, and we can already see that it is feasible to actualize it.

Everyday practical life is naïve. It takes the form of moving into, thinking into, valuing into, acting into the world as it is pre-given. Already here all the intentional performances of experience take place that allow the things simply to arise as they do. These performances take place anonymously, the experiencer knows nothing of them. Knows nothing either of the performative accomplishments of thinking: numbers, predicative matters of fact, values, purposes, works — all these arise thanks to concealed performances, building themselves up piece by piece, and they alone remain in view. It's no different in the positive sciences: these are naïvetés of a higher level, configurations of a clever theoretical technique, without the intentional performances getting exposed from which everything they accomplish ultimately arises.

A science does indeed require that it be able to justify its theoretical steps, and it everywhere rests on critique. But *its critique is not ultimate critique of cognition*, not study and critique of the originary performances, not revelation of all its intentional horizons. And it is only by way of these latter that the range of evidences can be grasped and, correlatively, the essential meaning

of objects, of theoretical constructs, of values and purposes be assessed. Lacking this, we have foundational problems, incongruities precisely at the higher levels of the modern positive sciences. The *basic concepts* that, running through all science, determine the meaning of its sphere of objects and its theory have *sprung up naively*; these concepts have indeterminate intentional horizons, they are constructs emergent from unknown intentional performances practiced only in rough naïveté. This holds not just for the positive specialized sciences, but also for traditional logic with all its norms. Any attempt to move from historically emergent sciences to a better foundation, to a better reflexive understanding in regard to meaning and performance, requires a bit of self-recollection on the part of the scientist. However, there is only *one* radical self-recollection, namely the phenomenological one. Yet being radical is here inseparable from being fully universal — inseparable from the genuine phenomenological method of the self-recollection taking the form of universality of essence. But universal and essence-directed self-exposition entails mastery over all ideal possibilities *inborn* to the ego and to a transcendental intersubjectivity.

Thus any phenomenology thoroughly carried out construes *a priori* (but in strictly intuitive necessity and universality of essence) the *forms of conceivable worlds*, and these within the framework of conceivable forms of being and their stratification. But it does this originally, i.e. in correlation with the constitutive *a priori*, and that means in correlation with the *a priori* intentional performances constituting those forms.

Such phenomenology has within its procedure no pre-given actualities or concepts of actuality, but rather obtains its concepts at the start from their origination in performance (this last being grasped in its originary concepts); furthermore, owing to the necessity of revealing all horizons, it masters all distinctions of range, all abstract relativities. For this reason it must start from itself in order to arrive at the conceptual systems determining the basic meaning of all intellectual constructs. These are the concepts that prefigure all formal demarcations forming the idea of a possible world of any sort; accordingly, they must be the genuine basic concepts of all intellectual disciplines. In these concepts there can be no paradoxes.

The same holds for all basic concepts that concern the construction and constructional form of intellectual disciplines as they bear (or might yet bear) on diverse regions of being.

We can now say this as well: owing to phenomenology's research into correlations, all *a priori* intellectual disciplines arise, in their ultimate justification, within *a priori* and transcendental phenomenology; taken in this their origin, these disciplines belong, as its systematic ramifications, within a universal *a priori* phenomenology. This system of the universal *a priori* can therefore also be characterized as systematic unfolding of the universal *a priori* that's inborn in the essence of transcendental subjectivity, and this includes intersubjectivity—the unfolding of the *universal Logos of all conceivable being*. To formulate it once again: systematically and fully developed transcendental phenomenology would *eo ipso* be the true and genuine universal ontology—not merely an empty and formal ontology but also one containing all regional possibilities of being, and according to all the correlations belonging to these.

This universal concrete ontology (or logic of being) would thereby be the very first universe of intellectual discipline based on an absolute foundation. Next, the very first of the philosophical disciplines would be *solipsistically* limited egology, and only thereafter, by way of extension, intersubjective phenomenology, and all this in a universality treating the universal questions that only then branch out into the *a priori* sciences.

This universal *a priori* would then be the *fundament for genuine sciences of fact and for a genuine universal philosophy in the Cartesian sense, namely a universal science based on an absolute foundation*. The rationality of any factum lies, of course, in the *a priori*. *A priori* science is science of the principles to which sciences of fact must recur if they are to be ultimately justified, i.e. justified in reference to principles. But then we cannot allow the *a priori* sciences to be naïve; they must rather emerge out of ultimately transcendental-phenomenological sources.

Finally, in order to avoid misunderstanding, I would like to point out that, in phenomenology, we exclude not every metaphysics, but only the naïve kind, the metaphysics working

with things that are in themselves nonsensical. What first of all counts as being, the being preceding and supporting all worldly objectivity, is transcendental inter-subjectivity, the All of the monads that communalizes itself in various forms. But, within the 39 factual monadic sphere, there arise all the problems of incidental facticity—of death, of destiny, of individual and communal life in the special sense where possibility is *meaningfully* required—and therefore also the problem of the *meaning* of history, and so on. We can also say this: these are ethical-religious problems, but now placed on the soil in which everything must be placed that should be able to have possible meaning for us.

*In this way the idea of a universal philosophy gets actualized—much differently than Descartes and his age thought, guided by the new natural sciences. It gets actualized not as a universal system of deductive theory, as though everything that is could stand within the unity of calculation, but rather as a system of phenomenological and correlative disciplines—ones fundamentally based not on the axiom *ego cogito* but on universal self-recollection.*

In other words, the path necessary for proceeding toward a cognition that is, in the highest sense, fully grounded—i.e., toward philosophical knowledge—is the path of *universal self-knowledge*, at first monadic and only then inter-monadic. The Delphic precept γῶθι σεαυτόν, “know thyself,” has taken on a new meaning. Positive science is science lost in the world. One must first lose the world by way of *epoché* in order to get it back in universal self-recollection. *Noli foras ire*, Augustine says, *in te redi, in interiore homine habitat veritas*: “Don’t yearn to go outside, return to yourself, truth resides in the inner man.”

## Translator's Afterword

Philosophy was born as the art of starting ever again at the beginning; other disciplines are born as arts of working from one or another beginning henceforth presupposed. In philosophy we learn to return at every dawn, night having undone every achievement of the day before; in other disciplines we learn to build each day upon the achievements safely stored away. As philosophers we work alone and for others; as “scientists” or “technicians” we work with others and for ourselves.

Immediately for Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and others, later for Immanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida and others, Husserl's person and work recalled once again the rebirth of philosophy. The two lectures I have here translated might engage more recent readers in this rebirth.

Perhaps those most originally inspired by Husserl's work lodged their own in the tension indicated in the last three paragraphs of the printed text, where Husserl proposes again that “universal self-reflection” rather than Descartes' “I think” serve as the basis of intellectual discipline of any sort. But how are we to understand the return to self-reflection, to the Delphic “know thyself,” if not as a return to the metaphysical centrality of the ego?

Husserl concludes both his *Introduction to Transcendental Phenomenology* and his much more extensive *Cartesian Meditations* by citing a passage from Augustine's *On the True Religion*: “Don't yearn to go outside, return to yourself, truth resides in the inner man.” In the Preface to his *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), Maurice Merleau-Ponty gently but expressly takes issue with Husserl: “Truth does not ‘reside’ only in the ‘inner man,’ or, rather there is no inner man, man is in the world, knows himself in the world.” Husserl's lectures themselves unfold in tension with this counter-thought.