

**EDMUND HUSSERL'S ANTI- PSYCHOLOGICAL,  
TRANSCENDENTAL, AND OMNITEMPORAL  
THEORY OF MEANING:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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**I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions and no materials previously written and/or published by another person unless otherwise noted.**

## ABSTRACT

In this thesis I discuss Edmund Husserl's theory of meaning as it appears at three different stages of his work. In *Logical Investigations* Husserl seeks to divorce logic and meaning from its psychological interpretations and to establish a firm argument for the ideality of meaning. He achieves his goal, but the outcome provoked many further questions about the understanding of ideality and the actual process of meaning-constitution. In *Ideas* Husserl provides a comprehensive account of meaning as ideal noema given in conscious experience. He also clarifies the relation between ideality and reality by means of introducing a new phenomenological method of philosophizing. His advanced theory of meaning receives even more detailed elaboration in his last major work *Experience and Judgment*, where he demonstrates that the origins of every meaning are deeply rooted in our prepredicative experience. Relying on his theory of time-consciousness he also shows that meaning is omni-temporal, i.e. constituted within time-consciousness but existing over and above any act of constitution.

The purpose of my inquiry is, first, to clarify the development of Husserl's concept of meaning with regards to his changing views on the status of the science which has conceptual meaning as its object, i.e. logic (and phenomenology to a certain extent). The second aim is to demonstrate that his analyses of meaning are the crucial pivot of his epistemology throughout his works with a particular concentration on the three stages, namely, i) the justification of pure logic as a first *a priori* science and the refutation of psychologism (*LU*), ii) the shift to transcendental phenomenology (*Ideen*), in which logic plays only a preliminary role, and iii) the turn to transcendental aesthetics (*EU*) with an attempt to find a proper background for logic. The actual analysis does not aim to provide a complete account of Husserl's thought at any

of the stages, but to trace the development of a comprehensive theory of meaning underlying the problems which led Husserl to each subsequent stage and demonstrating whether and to what extent he provided a satisfactory answer to them.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
--------------------------	----------

<b>CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEMATIC EXPLICATION OF MEANING IN LOGISCHE UNTERSUCHUNGEN.....</b>	<b>6</b>
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<b>1. The Role of the Concept of Meaning within the General Task of the LU.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1. Husserl's Critique of the Psychologistic Approach to Logic.....	8
1.1.a Psychologism and its Varieties.....	8
1.1.b Critical Remarks.....	9
1.1.c Empiricistic Consequences of Psychologism.....	13
1.1.d The Necessity of Logical Truths.....	15
1.2 Pure Logic as a Science of Ideal Meanings.....	17
1.2.a Main Theme Of Logische Untersuchungen.....	17
1.2.b Husserl's Understanding of Knowledge and Truth.....	19
1.2.c Pure Logic: Its Justification and Tasks.....	24
1.3. Phenomenology as a Propaedeutics to Logic.....	29
1.3.a Object and Tasks of Phenomenology.....	30
1.3.b Principle of Freedom from Presuppositions.....	34
1.4 Conclusions.....	38
<b>2. Husserl's Anti-psychological Account of Meaning.....</b>	<b>39</b>
2.1 The Difference Between the Real, the Reell, and the Ideal.....	39
2.2 The Structure of the Meaning-Situation.....	41
2.2.a Act of Meaning: Meaning-Intention and Meaning-Fulfillment.....	42
2.2.b The Content of the Act of Meaning.....	44
2.2.c The Objective Reference.....	47
2.3 'Misunderstood Meanings.'.....	47
2.4 The Process of Meaning-Constitution.....	49
2.4.a The Simplest Case of the Constitution.....	51
2.4.b The Dynamic Constitution.....	53
2.4.c The Unity of Identity.....	54
2.4.d The Necessity of Fulfillment.....	55
2.5 Conclusions.....	58
<b>3. Categorial Intuition: Its Perceptual and Logical Grounds.....</b>	<b>59</b>
3.1 Categorial Meaning.....	59
3.2 The Ambiguity of the Term 'Intuition'.....	61
3.3 The Structure of a Categorial Act.....	62
3.3.a Sensuous Intuition and Its Role in the Constitution of Object of the First- Order.....	62
3.3.b Subdividing Acts.....	63
3.3.c The Synthesis of Coincidence.....	64
3.4 Intuition of Essences.....	65
3.5 The Freedom of Consciousness vs. the Ideal Laws.....	67
3.6 Conclusions.....	69
<b>4. Meaning as the Ideal Possibility.....</b>	<b>70</b>
4.1 The 'Dialectics' of Possible and Impossible Meanings.....	70
4.2 Husserl's Understanding of Possibility.....	72
4.2.a Compatibility and Incompatibility.....	72
4.3 The Context-Dependency of Possibility.....	74
4.4 Objections.....	76
<b>5. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>76</b>

<b>CHAPTER 2. TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY AND NOEMATIC MEANING. ....</b>	<b>82</b>
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<b>1. New Methodology of Phenomenology – Transcendental Reduction.....</b>	<b>82</b>
1.1 Epistemological Problems Posited in LU.....	82
1.2 The Idea of Reduction.....	84
1.3 Immanent Acts and Transcendent World.....	91
1.3.a Indubitability of Consciousness.....	93
1.3.b Relative Existence of the World.....	95
1.4 New Understanding of the Real and the Ideal.....	98
<b>2. Noesis and Noema.....</b>	<b>100</b>
2.1 Noema as the perceived as such. Gurwitsch's View.....	102
2.2 Noema as Ideal Meaning.....	104
2.2.a Føllesdal's Statement.....	104
2.2.b Smith and McIntyre's Approach to Noema. ....	106
2.3 Critical analysis of the Concept of Noema.....	108
2.3.a Complex Structure of Noema. ....	108
2.3.b Critical Note about the Term 'Meaning'.....	115
2.3.c Transcendental Constitution of Noema. Objectivity.....	117
<b>3. Phenomenological Notion of Evidence.....</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>4. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>128</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 3. MEANING OF PREPREDICATIVE EXPERIENCE.....</b>	 <b>133</b>
<b>1. Importance of the Investigation of Prepredicative Experience for the Science of Logic and Theory of Meaning.....</b>	<b>133</b>
1.1 Investigation of Phenomenological Concept of Evidence.....	137
1.2 Prepredicative Origins of Predicative Logic .....	140
<b>2. Receptive Consciousness and Passive Meaning-Constitution.....</b>	<b>143</b>
2.1 Methodological Difficulties.....	143
2.2 Attention and Interest.....	145
<b>3. Object-constitution in Time-consciousness.....</b>	<b>154</b>
3.1 General Structure of Prepredicative Experience.....	157
3.2 Contemplative Intuition as 'Passive Activity' of Consciousness.....	158
3.2 Synthesis of Explicative Contemplation.....	163
<b>4. Omnitemporality of Meaning.....</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>5. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>172</b>
 <b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	 <b>174</b>
 <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	 <b>184</b>







## Introduction

One of the central themes of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is a description of meanings understood as ideal entities *and* as constituted by acts of consciousness. In this dissertation I will investigate the genesis and development, alongside the progressing importance, of this concept within three of Husserl's works, his *Logical Investigations (LU)*, *Ideas (Ideen)*, and *Experience and Judgment (EU)*. Historically traced, meaning for Husserl was the category in terms of which his clarification of the logical and the eidetic occurred as opposed to a psychological interpretation of meaning that understands it as merely a part of a mental act. However, Husserl's primary concern was not the refutation of psychologism or arguments in favor of ideality of meaning *per se*, but the question of connection between objectivity, subjectivity, and ideality, which is ultimately a question of possibility of knowledge. I aim to show how Husserl deals with this question throughout his works increasing thereby the complexity and depth of his analyses. Theorizing on the ideality of meaning is at the core of his investigations, insofar it is meaning, through which subjectivity comprehends and refers to objectivity in its experience, making it thereby *meaningful*.

I choose these three major works of Husserl rather than others because they present us with crucial developments of his phenomenology (namely, the refutation of psychologism, the establishment of phenomenology as a transcendental science, and the investigation of the prepredicative realm of experience) that inevitably affect his theorizing on meaning pushing it to the next level of analysis. Indeed, his theory of meaning cannot be restricted to these three works, and one can find much on the subject in, say, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* or *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*. Nevertheless, it is in the three works I have chosen to analyze that we see arguable breakthroughs in phenomenology that directly result in serious changes in the theory of meaning.

I argue that a significant development occurs in Husserl's theory of meaning in each of

the aforementioned works. His earlier work is, nevertheless, not abandoned or rejected. On the contrary, we see that his oeuvre yields one consistent theory of meaning that Husserl develops throughout his life. It is given a strong anti-psychological basis in *LU*, then it receives a proper methodological elaboration and support in *Ideen*, and, finally, a demonstration of how meaning originates in the prepredicative sphere is provided in *EU*.

Husserl's theory of meaning has been thoroughly researched and there is a large number of books and articles on the subject. Nevertheless, they either present an analysis of one particular stage of Husserl's thinking<sup>1</sup> or take his theory of meaning at different times to be rather distinct theories that do not have much in common due to radical changes in Husserl's ontology and epistemology<sup>2</sup>. I am deeply indebted to the aforementioned analyses for providing valuable insights about Husserl's approach to meaning and I would like to contribute to this part of Husserlian scholarship with historical and thematic explication of this subject. What I aim to show is that there is continuity in Husserl's theorizing of meaning. Major changes do occur in his theory, nevertheless, they do not cross out his previous statements, but rather make them more defensible and developed or expand them to a wider context.

Meaning has not been addressed so far as crucial theme for Husserl's phenomenology *throughout* his writings, although each stage of his theory of meaning has been notably researched<sup>3</sup>. The reason for this is partly major epistemological and ontological differences that Husserl's phenomenology has undergone during the course of its development. At each

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<sup>1</sup>See e.g. Mohanty J.N. *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*. (Phaenomenologica 14) Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1970, Michalski, Krzysztof. *Logic and Time. An Essay on Husserl's Theory of Meaning*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, Boston (MA), London, 1997, McIntyre, Ronald; Smith, David W. 'Husserl's Identification of Meaning and Noema' In: *Husserl, Intentionality and Cognitive Science*. The MIT Press, Cambridge (MA), London, 1982, Kusch, Martin. 'Husserl and Heidegger on Meaning' In: *Synthese*, 77, 1988. Pp. 99-127, Welton, Donn. 'Verbindende Namen – verbundene Gegenstände: Frege und Husserl über Bedeutung' In: *Phänomenologie im Wiederstreit*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a.M., 1989.

<sup>2</sup>See e.g. Becke, Claus-Peter, *Bedeutung und Bedeutsamkeit. Untersuchungen zur phänomenologischen Bedeutungstheorie*. Traugott Bautz, Herzberg, 1994, De Boer, Theodore. *The Development of Husserl's Thought*. (Phaenomenologica 76) Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague, Boston (MA), London, 1978, Farber, Marvin *The Foundations of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the quest for a rigorous science of philosophy*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA), 1943.

<sup>3</sup>See note 1.

stage Husserl gives different importance to the concept of meaning, and, moreover, uses different vocabulary. For example, we cannot find many mentioning of 'meaning' in *Ideen* or *EU*. It takes a significant interpretative effort to see that there is essentially the same theory of meaning that has been discussed in *LU* that continues in analyses of *noema* and *positum*. Readers can be easily misled that Husserl is speaking about essentially different things.

Meaning is usually not made a subject of specific research in the works on Husserl's phenomenology that provide a historical analysis of its development.<sup>4</sup> They indeed pay considerable attention to the concept of meaning, but it has not been yet made the guiding line of the analysis. Moreover, main arguments in available historical analyses of Husserl's thought primarily point out changes that his approach to meaning has undergone, and do not trace the continuity in his theory of meaning.

I hope to show constancy and cohesion within historical development of Husserl's theory of meaning with the help of the main argument of my dissertation: Husserl understands the *ideality* of meaning as *possibility*. Possibility in the given context should be understood as pure possibility for consciousness to intend something meaningfully, regardless of actual existence of any consciousness or actual existence of a reference for the intended meaning. In other words, it is the ideal possibility of intentionality (being directed to something) of consciousness to be directed to something *with sense*. I argue that this major understanding of meaning is present at all three stages of Husserl's work that I discuss. The biggest challenge of this interpretation is to show that this idea is already present in the *LU*, while the majority of Husserl's scholars agree that at this stage he takes meanings to be mere species for particular meaning-intentions. I am going to demonstrate that even though Husserl himself refers to meanings as species in the *LU*, his analyses show that meanings serve as well as norms for our thinking (purely logical and by no means ethical norms), prescribing the conditions of possibility of knowledge. This clearly indicates of them being different from mere genera and

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<sup>4</sup>See note 2.

species. Moreover, as he explicitly states much later, each possible case of individuation of any meaning is identical to any other individuation of this same meaning. Thus we do not need abstraction to comprehend meaning, which is obviously not the case with genera and species. In short, I set forth an argument that the main points of Husserl's theory of meaning as possibility are present at the early stages of his work, albeit their actual articulation and proof of their plausibility took a long development of phenomenology as a science.

Husserl's work is not marked by many cross-references to his own findings and he very rarely shows explicitly, which part of his theory was developed earlier and what new contribution another book brings. Thus, I take this dissertation to serve as bridging the gap between Husserl's thinking on three separate and significantly different stages of the development of Husserl's phenomenology. I show the continuity of his theory of meaning and the internal logic of its development.

Another major contribution of this work to available Husserl scholarship is the argument that Husserl's understanding of meaning as it is presented in *LU*, *Ideen* and *EU* is the key to his phenomenology, not only historically, but also systematically. Every stage of development of Husserl's theory of meaning results in a set of problems that it cannot answer in its own terms, i.e. remaining at the present stage of phenomenological analysis. In this work I trace how introduction of the radical phenomenological method in *Ideen* solves problems for the theory of meaning posed by *LU*, and how, in turn, questions unanswered in *Ideen* become clarified with the help of the genetic phenomenology presented in *EU*. The general goal is to present the development of Husserl's theory of meaning as progressing consistently alongside the unfolding of his phenomenological thought, gaining more depth and elaboration while clarifying major ontological and epistemological problems that his phenomenology faced.

In the very beginning of the *Ideas* transcendental phenomenology is characterized as a science of essences as abstract entities. Historically, the theoretical occasion and context of

the Husserlian formulation of his doctrine of essence was the theory of meaning (and attendant philosophy of logic) developed within the *Logical Investigations* as a polemic against psychologism. After devoting the *Prolegomena* to the refutation of the psychologistic thesis that meanings are mental events, Husserl devoted his first Investigation to the thesis that meanings are intentional contents of ‘mental events’, i.e. they are universal entities instantiated by the mental acts. This thesis extends to linguistic meanings (propositions and concepts) and the mental events (speech acts) in which they are embodied, although the properties and, therefore, the identities of meanings are independent of embodiment in actual speech acts and expressions. Meaning understood in this way provides the basis of Husserl philosophies of both science and logic, as far as theoretical science is taken to be a structure of interrelated meanings, whereas logic was considered as a theory of a theory.

In the first chapter of my thesis I will show in detail Husserl's arguments for the ideality of meaning paying special attention to his refutation of psychologism. As a result, I argue that the theory of meaning in the *LU* accounts of meaning as of possibility, more precisely a possibility of an ideal entity to be instantiated in an act of consciousness. I point out that at this stage of the analysis we do not see yet how exactly subjective acts of consciousness and ideal meanings are connected, and that Husserl does not clarify the ontological status of the reality outside consciousness that led to the objection that his theory was solipsistic.

In the second chapter of this dissertation I aim to show how these problems were provided with a plausible solution by introduction of the radical phenomenological method in the *Ideen*. I stress that the new methodology clarifies Husserl's ontological stance and, among other achievements, enriches his theory of meaning with a precise clarification of what is meant by ideality and reality within a phenomenological framework. I pay special attention to Husserl's concept of noema that reveals meaning as a complex structure consisting of many layers, the central of which is ideal sense. I outline the famous Gurwitsch – Føllesdal debate

about the essence of noema, point out strong and weak points of both interpretations, and contribute to it with my detailed analysis of the concept that aims find a compromise between two aforementioned approaches and at the same time to show that the central core of noema is nothing other than ideal meaning spoken about in the *LU*, however, it is enriched with detailed analyses of noematic periphery.

The question posed in the *LU*, namely, how it is possible for ideal meanings to enter real mental states also gets investigated in the *Ideen* through Husserl's analyses of noetic-noematic correlations. I argue that the answer provided in the *Ideen* is still not unproblematic and is exactly what motivates Husserl's further endeavours.

In the third chapter I will show that Husserl's phenomenology, enriched with analyses of time consciousness and prepredicative experience, is able to provide a more detailed answer to the question of the intelligibility of meanings. In the third chapter of this dissertation I turn to Husserl's latest work, *Experience and Judgement*, and analyse his descriptions of prepredicative experience in detail. It will be demonstrated how his endeavours in the theory of logic and meaning led him to look beyond the logical into the prepredicative sphere of consciousness. It is this sphere that lays bare the foundations of meaning-constitution and shows how exactly ideal meanings enter real mental states. Another crucial outcome of this chapter is the demonstration of how Husserl's theory of meaning fits into his theory of time-consciousness and how the latter enriches the former by providing a comprehensive account of ideality as omnitemporality. Ultimately, I will show that only with the proper investigation of the prelogical realm of consciousness and its prepredicative experiences can the basics of a theory of meaning presented as early as in the *LU* be properly understood.

## **Chapter 1 The Problematic Explication of Meaning in *Logische Untersuchungen***



*The pure logician is not primarily or properly interested in the psychological judgment, the concrete mental phenomenon, but in the logical judgment, the identical asserted meaning, which is one over against manifold, descriptively quite different, judgment-experiences. (LU I 167/Hua XIX 8)<sup>5</sup>*

### **1. The Role of the Concept of Meaning within the General Task of the LU.**

The original task of the *Logical Investigations*, as Husserl indicated in the *Prolegomena*, was to justify pure formal logic as an *a priori* theoretical autonomous science, thereby ‘cleaning’ it of psychologism. The subject-matter of such a science is first and foremost the ideal, always identical to itself, meaning. This is precisely the subject with which Husserl is occupied throughout the *LU*. To explain this, we have to look more precisely at Husserl’s understanding of pure logic, science in general, and especially into his peculiar understanding of normativity with regards to logic, insofar it explains the task of normative science, and the sense in which Husserl’s account is divorced from an understanding of logic as merely a *Kunstlehre* or art of thinking. Having established what a pure science of logic is *per se* we will proceed to an inquiry of the procedure of the actual grasping of the laws of such a pure science by an individual consciousness, and, accordingly, of the ‘appropriation’ of the ideal subject of the pure science – meaning – in singular acts of consciousness.

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<sup>5</sup> References to the *Logical Investigations* are made to J.N.Findlay English translation (revised): Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, Vol.1, edited by D.Moran, London and New York, Routledge, 2001 and Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, Vol.2, edited by D.Moran, London and New York, Routledge, 2001, in the following: *LU*, volume, page number. They are followed by the traditional reference to the *Husserliana* edition: volume – page number.

### **1.1. Husserl's Critique of the Psychologistic Approach to Logic.**

Let us clarify, first, the main points of Husserl's critique of psychologism, so that it will be firmly established what logic *is not*, before we come to an inquiry into what it *is* according to Husserl.

#### **1.1.a Psychologism and its Varieties.**

What is psychologism? Psychologism in general is a philosophical position that regards empirical psychology as the most basic discipline. Therefore *all* other disciplines (logic, ethics, epistemology, mathematics, etc.) must be grounded upon empirical psychological findings. In Husserl's time, though, psychologism was a debated issue *only* in terms of its relevance to logic and theory of knowledge.<sup>6</sup> Thus, what Husserl attacks in the *Prolegomena* is *logical* psychologism<sup>7</sup>, represented mainly by such philosophers as J.St.Mill, T.Lipps, W.Wundt, Sigwart etc.<sup>8</sup>

It is common, though, to distinguish (at least) two different types of logical psychologism, namely, the strong and the weak version of it.<sup>9</sup> According to *strong logical psychologism*, psychological investigations in actual human mental processes are the *necessary and sufficient* conditions for logic. Therefore, logic is considered to be merely a branch of empirical psychology. The laws of logic acquire the status of descriptive laws of actual human mental processes hard-wired by induction from empirical observations (this

<sup>6</sup> See Mohanty J.N. *Husserl and Frege*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp.20-21.

<sup>7</sup> 'The *Logical Investigations* were preceded by an important preparatory work, which was concerned with [...] fighting against all empiricistic and psychological mixing up of the psychological contents of the acts of thinking with the logical concepts and propositions themselves'. (E.Husserl 'The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*' in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl's 'Logical Investigations'*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, p.198.

<sup>8</sup> '[They were] preceded by a long tradition of psychological, and even physiological, interpretation of the Kantian *a priori* – of which Fries and Helmholtz were the great champions.' (Mohanty J.N. *Husserl and Frege*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, p.20.)

<sup>9</sup> See Sukale, Michael, *Comparative Studies in Phenomenology*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976, pp.23-26; Mohanty J.N. *Husserl and Frege*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp.20-21; Hanna, Robert 'Logical Cognition: Husserl's Prolegomena and the Truth in Psychologism.' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Vol.LIII №2, June 1993. pp.254-58.

means a factual *a posteriori* character of the logical law). Accordingly, all logical propositions are regarded as not having a universal and necessary validity in themselves, but as stemming from human consciousness and being as contingent as human consciousness is. In other words, in order for any logical law to exist there must actually exist human beings possessing a mental capacity for logical thinking.

According to weak logical psychologism, psychological investigations in actual human mental processes are the *necessary* conditions for logic. Therefore, some essential theoretical foundations of logic, but by no means *all* of them, lie in psychology, and in order for a logical law to exist there need not necessarily exist a rational being who actually thinks it, although the *possibility* of such a rational being's existence is necessary. In other words, there cannot be any logical laws which are in principle unintelligible to the human (or other rational) mind, nevertheless no logical law is dependent upon or caused by the mind. Logic, according to weak logical psychologism, gives the rules and standards of the thinking process against which actual thinking processes can be measured. Thus it is a *practical* normative science.

### **1.1.b Critical Remarks.**

First of all, Husserl's attack on psychologism is *not* an attack on psychology as a science. He never criticized psychology as a valid and important part of scientific knowledge. Moreover he was indeed concerned with improvements of it as a science. What he actually argued against is the claim of empirical psychology to provide a plausible ground for the basic laws of logic and knowledge in general.

What we see in the *Prolegomena* is definitely an attack on *strong* logical psychologism<sup>10</sup>. Husserl, as we will see later, establishes logic as a pure formal *a priori* science and logical laws as valid in themselves without any reference to actual thinkers. Moreover, he claims that it is logic that grounds and justifies all other sciences which must rely on logical laws in their methodology. There is no direct attack on weak logical psychologism in the *LU*, nevertheless the thesis claiming that Husserl actually *supported* and expressed weak logical psychologism in this work<sup>11</sup> seems too strong and lacks justification. The ideality of meaning indeed entails the possibility of its being constituted and exemplified in a singular consciousness, but there is serious doubt whether this possibility is the same as the possibility of such a singular consciousness to exist. On the contrary, Husserl states in the *LU*:

There are therefore countless meanings which, in the common, relational sense, are merely possible ones, since they are never expressed, and since they can, owing to the limits of man's cognitive powers, never be expressed.' (LU, I, 233/Hua XIX 110)

In order to clarify this matter further we need to consider Husserl's account of possibility and meaning in detail which will be done in the last part of this Chapter.

A more powerful argument against the claim that Husserl was supporting weak logical psychologism consists in the following. According to weak logical psychologism, logic has the status of a *practical normative* science which gives us, conscious beings, the rules of correct thinking. We will see later that the normativity of logic is considered in a very different way in the *LU*, namely as a purely theoretical normativity: logic contains theoretical laws of knowledge in general, not the practical rules for correct human thinking. On his view,

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<sup>10</sup> See: Elmar Holenstein, 'Einleitung', in *Husserlia XVIII Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*, Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975, pp.xix-xx; Mohanty J.N. *Husserl and Frege*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, p.21

<sup>11</sup> As an example of this view see: Robert Hanna, 'Logical Cognition: Husserl's Prolegomena and the Truth in Psychologism.' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Vol.LI №2, June 1993.

it can be used for our practical purposes at most, but it does not exist solely as an instructive methodology of how one ought to think.

[Within the psychologistic paradigm] logical laws have first been confused with the judgments, in the sense of acts of judgment, in which we may know them: the laws as '*contents of judgments*' have been confused with the *judgments themselves*. ... If, however, the law is confused with the judgmental knowledge of the law, the ideal with the real, the law appears as a *governing power* in our train of thought. With understandable ease a second confusion is added to the first: we confuse a law as a *term in causation* with a law as *the rule of causation*. ... Logical laws already appeared as motive powers in thinking. They expressed how we must think in consequence of the nature of *our* mind, they characterized the human mind as a thinking mind in the pointed sense. (LU I 49/Hua XVIII 77-8)

In reply, Husserl argues that there is an unbridgeable gulf between normative and causal regulation, and that logical laws indeed serve as *norms* for our thought, but they are not the *causes* of our thinking logically. Logical apodictic necessity only entails the general rule, according to which, for example, the validity of the inferences yield by a human mind can be proved or disproved. We have to admit that in some cases we necessarily think logically, nevertheless this necessity is well explained by an appeal to real causes, not to the ideal laws of logic. Husserl provides us with an illuminating example:

The example of a computer (*Rechenmaschine*) makes the difference quite clear. The arrangement and connection of the figures which spring forth is regulated by natural laws which accord with the demands of the arithmetical propositions which fix their meanings. No one, however, who wants to give a physical explanation of the machine's procedures, will appeal to arithmetical instead of mechanical laws. The machine is no thought-machine, it understands neither itself nor the meaning of its performances. But our own thought-machine might very well function similarly..., ideal evaluation and causal explanation would none the less remain disparate. (LU I 50/Hua XVIII 79)

It should be clear at this point that Husserl does not support logical psychologism in any of its forms: he explicitly rejects strong logical psychologism and does not provide us with any evidence of sympathies to weak logical psychologism. One would ask a reasonable

question then, why at all Husserl devotes so much attention to logical psychologism in his work instead of straightforward explication of his own theory of logic and meaning?

An important remark must be made here: as Husserl claims, the psychological approach to logic, whether it is considered in its strong or weak form, failed completely to appreciate or handle the distinction between independent thought-content (which can be shared by different thinkers in different situations and times) or ideal meaning *per se*, as Husserl calls it, and the act of thinking (which is singular, individual and subjective). Thus, the psychological approach to logic does not account for the complete independence of this shared content from all our contingent psychological behavior. Psychologistic arguments against such a distinction are simple and can be even called ‘pragmatic’: it does not make sense to speak of anything independent from our thinking or from our consciousness, because once we start to speak (hence: think) about it, it immediately becomes a part of our thinking process. Thus, we do not have any possibility of thinking about something as if it is not thought of. We will consider Husserl’s response to such a line of argumentation a bit later. Here it is crucial to notice that the psychological line of reasoning does not allow (due to the aforementioned arguments) for a theory of *ideal* meaning, independent from the thinking subject. Thus, obviously Husserl had to refute psychologism as a strong counter-argument before he advanced his theory of meaning.

Before we proceed with Husserl’s critique of psychologism, let us say some words about the relevance of this critique to contemporary philosophical discussions. Husserl’s criticism has as its main target the very principle of logic’s dependence on empirical psychology and postulates instead logic as pure formal science which should serve as a basis for all other sciences, psychology included. This formal and general critique does not specify too strictly the notion of empirical psychology, therefore we are justified in understanding it not only as the associationistic introspective psychology which prevailed from the end of the

19<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also as any *physicalistic* psychology (which claims that all human mental processes actually are/dependent upon the physical structure and processes of the brain). By the same token, according to the physicalistic psychological approach, logical laws become descriptive laws of the human brain's physical processes and logic itself is considered to be a science whose theoretical foundations lie in the field of cognitive neurophysiology.

In this way Husserl's anti-psychological argumentation can be well used not only against the 'old' empiricist logical psychologism, but also against contemporary physicalistic logical psychologism (as well as against any view that treats the validity of logic as dependent on empirical investigations).

### **1.1.c Empiricistic Consequences of Psychologism.**

Husserl wants to show, that logical psychologism cannot elaborate its own reliable epistemology of logic. He sees no way to justify one's claims to *know* logical truths while remaining within the psychologistic paradigm of thought. Psychology, in any of its modifications, Husserl takes to be an empirical science, thus, its truths are based on the inductive inferences from observations of singular events. This kind of knowledge can be considered as merely probable, but by no means fully proved. The same is true of logic if we consider it to be based upon psychology. Husserl states that in this (absurd) case:

Laws of thought as causal laws governing acts of knowledge in their mental interweaving, could only be stated in the form of probabilities. On this basis, no assertion could be *certainly* judged correct, since probabilities, taken as the standard of all certainty, must impress a merely probabilistic stamp on all knowledge. We should stand confronted by the most extreme probabilism. Even the assertion that all knowledge was merely probable would itself only hold probably: this would hold of this latter assertion, and so on *in infinitum*. (LU I 48-9/Hua XVIII 76)

Logical truths cannot merely have probable status, argues Husserl. Indeed, when we assert any of them, for example, the law of contradiction, we ascribe to it an absolute certainty, leaving no room for a doubt. There is no possibility to justify this certainty within the psychologistic approach to logic, on the contrary, in order to claim that you know some truth with a certainty one should experience an act of inner evidence (*Evidenz*) or insight (*Einsicht*)<sup>12</sup>. We have insights into the basic laws of logic and these insights result in *a priori* (thus, strictly necessary and free from any reference to empirical realm) judgments.

[Third psychologistic prejudice:] All truth pertains to judgment. Judgment, however, is only recognized as true when it is inwardly evident. The term ‘inner evidence’ stands, it is said, for a peculiar mental character, well known to everyone through his inner experience, a peculiar feeling which guarantees the truth of the judgment to which it attaches. (LU I 115; Hua XVIII 183)

Here an important distinction should be introduced. Husserl does not claim that the truth of logical laws depends essentially on *our* actual grasping of these laws. Logic is a system of necessary truths, and their necessity does not depend on whether there is anyone grasping them. It is only the justification of our beliefs in logical laws that depends on our inner evidence.

It is ... inwardly evident that truths are what they are, and that, in particular, laws, grounds, principles are what they are, whether we have insight into them or not. Since they do not hold in so far as we have insight into them, but we can only have insight into them in so far as they hold, they must be regarded as *objective or ideal conditions of possibility* of our knowledge of them. (LU I 150; Hua XVIII 240; italics mine – M.T.)

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<sup>12</sup> Both concepts will be dealt specifically with in the section 1.2.2 of the present Chapter.



As Robert Hanna remarked, ‘Husserl does not confuse the epistemology of logic with pure logic; as he explicitly points out, it is simply incorrect to hold that the act of rational insight alone is criterial for a proposition’s being logically true.’<sup>13</sup>

Besides the fact that, according to psychologism, logical laws must result from empirical generalizations and are merely probable, they must also have an empirical content, i.e. they must refer to empirical objects. Insofar as they stem from psychological observations, and psychology is an empirical science of mental events (this means that it investigates mental events by means of empirical observations of the empirical consequences of these events), logical laws are, by implication, also about mental events, i.e. about actual thinking subjects and their thoughts. The relation between mental events and laws of logic cannot be described in this case without employing the notion of causality. The science of logic is *caused* by human mental activity. Husserl cannot agree with that. Logical truths are *necessary* truths, he argues, whereas thinking subjects are *contingent* beings. Logical truths are ideally valid in virtue of their logical form alone, without any reference to contingent events, and are not subject to the causal laws of the empirical realm. Needless to say, they can be actually grasped by consciousness, and we can even infer from Husserl’s writings that this possibility is essential for his theory of logic, nevertheless, it can be firmly established from what he has said that logical laws express ideal truths, which hold in themselves. To make this more clear and distinct, we turn now to the precise consideration of Husserl’s proof of the necessity of logical statements.

#### **1.1.d The Necessity of Logical Truths.**

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<sup>13</sup> Robert Hanna, ‘Logical Cognition: Husserl’s Prolegomena and the Truth in Psychologism.’ *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. Vol.LIII №2, June 1993, p.264.

Husserl regards psychologism as a ‘skeptical relativism’ (LU I Chapter 7). Insofar as psychologistic logicians hold that the truth of all logical statements depends essentially on the contingent psychological conditions of consciousness, all logical statements are treated by them as *relative* to the contingently judging subject. Husserl distinguishes between two forms of relativism: individual and specific. While *individual* relativism takes ‘the contingently judging subject’ to be an individual human being and, therefore, what seems true to an individual to be true, *specific* relativism considers as ‘subjective’ only what is specific for human beings *in specie*, thus on this account truth is what follows from the constitutive laws of human beings, true are the judgments, which human beings make in accord with their psychological<sup>14</sup> nature.

Husserl’s path of refuting<sup>15</sup> both cases of relativism is by means of a precise consideration of the concept of truth. He dismisses individual relativism quite briefly, stating that this doctrine is a “‘cheeky” (*frecher*) skepticism’, and it ‘has certainly not been seriously held in modern times.’ (LU I 78/Hua XVIII 123). It is nonsense to talk about ‘subjective truth’: even if a skeptic refuses to admit any concept of truth at all, she nevertheless uses the notion of ‘true for me’. The notion of ‘true for somebody’ presupposes the notion of true *per se*, because if someone takes something to be true for her, it actually means that she must allow for at least some notion of ‘truth per se’, and this is precisely what skeptics try to avoid. It follows that a relativist cannot hold a *theory* of truth without self-impeding. For to have a theory about truth is already to imply that something about truth is not just relatively true, but, as we might say, *just true*. Thus, either ‘subjective’ truth is equal to ‘objective’ truth, or there is no ‘subjective’ truth at all.

<sup>14</sup> Modern physicalism can well be considered as an example of specific relativism if we understand nature here in a biological rather than psychological way.

<sup>15</sup> It is worth noticing that Husserl admits that ‘to refute’ here does not mean ‘to convince’. Nothing, indeed, can persuade a skeptic to agree that there is an objective truth or that conditions of possibility of true scientific theory can be ever met. Nevertheless, it is quite possible to refute a skeptic, if refutation implies ‘the leverage of certain self-evident, universally valid convictions.’ (LU I 78/Hua XVIII 123)

As for specific relativism, it asserts that truth depends upon the specific conditions of beings who make (true or false) assertions. Thus, any assertion can be *both true and false at the same time*, if one species asserts and another denies it – this is clearly absurd.<sup>16</sup>

Husserl's refutation relies on the concept of 'ideal' truth, that is truth 'in itself', independent from any judging beings or any other contingent conditions. This is the very meaning of 'truth', Husserl argues, and any doctrine that hold the contrary misses this meaning completely, and cannot have the status of a *theory* (for the notion of a theory presupposes the notion of objective truth).

## **1.2 Pure Logic as a Science of Ideal Meanings.**

### **1.2.a Main Theme Of Logische Untersuchungen.**

Husserl's argumentation shows that psychologism cannot coherently state its position when such issues as *truth* and *theory* are concerned. This is due to the fact that within the psychologistic paradigm of thought there is no conceivable difference between individual (or species-specific) contingent acts of judgment and ideal contents (meanings) of these judgments. Such thought contents possess an 'ideality' that allow them to be instantiated in different thought processes of the same individual or in different individuals at different times. Thus Husserl claims in the *Foreword* that he feels himself 'more and more pushed towards general critical reflections on the essence of logic, and on the relationship, in

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<sup>16</sup> Mohanty makes a good point on this issue (in response to Føllesdal's and Meiland's critique of Husserl): 'To say that Husserl is thereby presupposing the validity of the principle of non-contradiction is to misconstrue the issue. The issue is not, insofar as the psychologistic logician is concerned, whether the principle of non-contradiction is valid. The psychologistic logician, insofar as he is a logician, accepts the principle, but insofar as his theory of logic is psychologism, gives a psychological theory of the origin of this principle. He therefore does not want to deny the validity of that principle. Husserl's point, then, is that the psychologistic logician's position involves a self-contradiction insofar as his theory contradicts the *sense* of 'theory' in *general*. Even psychologism as a *theory* has to be an objectively valid interconnections of propositions. (Mohanty J.N. *Husserl and Frege*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982, p.30).

particular, between the subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content known (*Subjektivität des Erkennens und der Objektivität des Erkenntnisinhaltes.*’ (LU I 2/Hua XVIII

7) Precisely these reflections are the main theme of the *LU* and the following works.

The problem, that the distinction ‘act of meaning – meaning *per se* (content of the act)’ poses, is considered by Husserl to be the basic question of epistemology: How is it possible that the objectivity is grasped in thought and, thus, becomes subjective? All our knowledge is aimed at objects and states of affairs, and the knowledge itself is subjected to the ideal laws of thought, whereas objects themselves remain within the laws of reality. Does it mean that an object that has its own independent being can be also given in knowledge? We are able to think in universal terms applicable to innumerable spatio-temporal circumstances and at the same time each of our thoughts correspond to a certain mental state and is impossible without certain psycho-physiological processes occurring in our bodies. How, then, does the ideality of general concepts enter into the real mental states of real physical objects, such as human beings?

Psychological analysis is only able to account for the subjective psychological ‘side’ of our thought process, while neglecting totally the peculiar ideal unity of thought contents expressing the same meaning, which Husserl recognized by his claim of the ideality of meanings. Thus, logic and mathematics as pure disciplines are in need of a thorough epistemological grounding carried out by a critique of knowledge (*Erkenntniskritik*) with an aim of elucidation of its objective ‘side’.

In the *Investigations*, then, Husserl aims at the very idea of meaning and the idea of knowledge – the systematic conception of the essence of meaning and knowledge, completely obscured in the psychologistic approach.

### 1.2.b Husserl's Understanding of Knowledge and Truth.

Science in general is, according to Husserl, concerned with knowledge, but it does not mean that it is simply composed of our individual acts of knowing, on the contrary, each science should provide certain preconditions for any act of knowing possible within its domain. In knowledge we possess truth, and in order to distinguish truth from the mere probable opinions and beliefs we have to lay bare the conditions of possibility of truth, the conditions of our *inward evidence* (*Evidenz*), which is **the** immediate intimation of truth itself. 'Knowledge in the narrowest sense of the word is the *being inwardly evident* that a certain state of affairs is or is not, e.g. that S is P or that it is not P.' (LU I 18/Hua XVIII 29, emphasis mine – M.T.) It is initially puzzling that Husserl tries to capture the notion of truth in terms of *inward evidence* rather than by reference to a certain scientific procedure of belief justification.

Inner evidence is no accessory feeling, either causally attached, or attached by natural necessity, to certain judgments. ...Inner evidence is rather nothing but the 'experience' (*Erlebnis*) of truth. Truth is of course only experienced in the sense in which something ideal can be an experience (*Erlebnis*) in a real act. Otherwise put: *Truth is an Idea, whose particular case is an actual experience in the inwardly evident judgment. ... The experience of agreement* between meaning and what is itself present, meant, between the actual *sense of an assertion* and the self given *state of affairs*, is inward evidence: The *Idea* of this agreement is truth, whose ideality is also its objectivity. It is not a chance fact that a propositional thought, occurring here and now, agrees with a given state of affairs: the agreement rather holds between a self-identical propositional meaning, and a self-identical state of affairs. 'Validity' or 'objectivity', and their opposites, do not pertain to an assertion as a particular temporal experience (*Erlebnis*), but to the assertion *in specie*, to the pure self-identical assertion  $2 \times 2 = 4$  etc. (LU I 120-1/Hua XVIII 192-3)

It seems that here Husserl speaks only of *a priori* truths, of the truths of pure sciences, such as logic and mathematics, and not of the truths of empirical sciences, which, as it follows from this reasoning, are not truths in the pregnant sense of the word, but mere probable

propositions, based on contingent experience and induction. Nevertheless, insofar as he stresses that a particular case of truth should be an *actual* experience of the evident judgment we can infer that truth can occur even in the realm of our judgments based on perception. Not every truth, accordingly, has to be an *a priori* one, ‘And, as in the realm of perception, the unseen does not at all coincide with the non-existent, so lack of inward evidence does not amount to untruth.’ (LU I 121/Hua XVIII 193) Later on Husserl will divide all truths into *individual* and *general*<sup>17</sup>. The former are contingent, they regard the actual existence of the singular entities and possess a certain necessity only under specific circumstances. The latter serve as necessary *laws* for any of their possible applications, their proofs consist in more general laws, which lead in the end to the basic no further provable *a priori* laws, such as laws of pure logic and mathematics<sup>18</sup>.

What epistemology is such an understanding of truth supposed to yield? Let us quote again: ‘Truth is of course only experienced in the sense in which something ideal can be an experience (*Erlebnis*) in a real act. Otherwise put: Truth is an Idea, whose particular case is an actual experience in the inwardly evident judgment’. (LU I 120/Hua XVIII 192; emphasis mine – M.T.) Here Husserl sharply rejects any psychological interpretation of truth and sets forth the strict distinction between ideal truths and real things, which the truths relate to, but do not depend upon. If the kingdom of truths is ideal, then it should be autonomous and any correlation of truths, for example, any scientific theory, should receive its objective value solely from its internal coherence. From this it follows that any theory is true only by virtue of its own inherent laws.

In the case, e.g. of physics we distinguish between the pattern of connection of the mental states of the physical thinker from that of the physical nature that he knows, and both from the ideal pattern of connection of the truths in

<sup>17</sup> This distinction ultimately turns out to be none other than that of Leibniz, i.e. the distinction between *vérité de raison* and *vérité de fait*; see LU I 89-90/ Hua XVIII 141-2

<sup>18</sup> See LU I 146/ Hua XVIII 234.

physical theory...<sup>19</sup> The logical pattern of connection is the ideal form for the sake of which we speak *in specie* of the same truth, the same syllogism or proof, the same theory and rational discipline, by whomsoever these things may be thought. This unity of form is one of legal validity, of the validity of laws under which all these 'same things' stand, the validity, i.e. of the laws of pure logic, which accordingly overshadow all science, and do so, not in respect of the psychological or objective content of science, but in respect of its ideal meaning-load. (LU I 114-5/Hua XVIII 182)

How then can the ideal scientific truths enter into our mental states, in other words, become *evident*? All our knowledge finally rests on evidence which cannot be simply labeled as a natural gift of human intuition. Rather, evidence, our insight into ideal truths, can only be obtained through its own specific procedure. Husserl starts his analysis of evidence with his affirmation that evidence is an experience (*Erlebnis*) and the immediate intimation of truth. Such experience as evidence is inevitably a contingent psychological experience, thus it is not a criterion for any truth, rather it is a singular application to the contingent realm of things. The conditions for the experience of evidence are primarily real (*reelle*), i.e. they depend upon the acts of consciousness, not upon the ideal truths or real things, whereas the conditions for truths are entirely ideal.

Nevertheless, to say that evidence is conditioned by the domain of the *reell* is not the same as to say that it has its own *reell* object. The experience of evidence does not represent a specific class of intentional acts of consciousness in terms of having its own specific object (in comparison to such intentional acts as perception, representation, expectation, etc.). In acts of perception and the like a new object is always constituted, that is *what* we perceive, recall or expect. Evidence does not yield a new object (such as 'truth *per se*'; in order to yield it we need another complex act of consciousness, namely, the intuition of essences (*Wesensanschauung*) that will be discussed further on), it rather qualifies the already given (perceived, for example) object(s) in a certain way. So that evidence is by no means an

<sup>19</sup> This is a straightforward example of Husserl's distinction between the real, *reell*, and ideal realms. The distinction is of pivotal importance for his theory of meaning and will be treated at length in the section 2 of this Chapter.

intrinsic feature of objects themselves, it is not given, on the contrary, it is an achievement of activity of consciousness.

On the other hand, evidence is not conditioned by the *reell* events only, it primarily depends on ideal truths: without ideal truth there can be no real evidence.

[Logical laws] state, in relations to possible acts of judgment, and on the basis of their mere form, the ideal conditions of the possibility or impossibility of their inner evidence. Of these two sorts of conditions of the inwardly evident, the former relates to the special constitution of the sorts of psychical being which the psychology of the period recognizes, psychological induction being limited by experience. The other conditions, however, have the character of ideal laws, and hold generally for every possible consciousness. (LU I 119/ Hua XVIII 190)

Logical truths condition the ideal possibility of any evident judgment, but this ideal possibility should not be confused with its actual realization in a singular (human) consciousness. There might well be such ideal truths that exhaust the real capacity of human consciousness to grasp them.

What then does it mean for something to ‘exist truly’? This is an important phenomenological question insofar as only by proving the legitimacy of a claim to existence do acts of consciousness take on the character of knowledge.

It is here that one of the most essential aspects of phenomenological method appears. Husserl makes a sharp distinction between ‘empty intentions’ (or merely ‘signitive intentions’) and their ‘intuitive fulfillment’ (*anschauliche Erfüllung*) i.e. the acts by which we *mean* (think of, imagine, count etc.) an intended object, and acts in which the intended object is *given* (e.g. in sensual perception)<sup>20</sup>. In the latter case the meaning is fulfilled by an intuition, which is an immediate presence of the intended object. This distinction is of decisive importance, particularly for the understanding of the phenomenological conception of

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<sup>20</sup> The terms *meaning-intention* and *meaning-fulfillment* are explained in detail in the section 2 of this chapter. So far it will suffice to say that these are the two basic moments of each act of meaning performed by consciousness.



evidence. Truth, then, appears not to belong to the realm of ideal laws, but on the contrary, essentially dependent on the singular contingent act of consciousness which identifies the intended meaning with its perceived fulfillment, or at least truth can be understood as the ideal relation between a meaning and its intention. Nevertheless, even in the latter case truth would be a correlate of the fulfillment of a meaning-intention, and such a fulfillment can be realized by an intuition only. Let us, however, not forget about the very broad usage of the concept of intuition in the *LU*, it is by no means limited to a simple sensory perception, but represents any possible act in which an intended object itself is given to consciousness (to remain fair to the *LU* it needs to be noticed that in most cases this act is immediately founded on a sensory perception). Thus, evidence stems from recognition of the fulfillment/coincidence of the ideal meaning and real (*reell*) intuition, and truth in this case is the ideal correlate of such an evidence. It follows that to intend something does not yet mean to *know* in a strict epistemological sense. Acts that merely intend some objects are just acts of consciousness that legitimate the concept of the object meant as such. But the intention itself by no means guarantees knowledge. For example, something objective that is merely thought in an empty or signitive act is not the thing itself, more precisely, it is not yet given as the thing itself. Further acts of consciousness are needed - namely, those acts of intuitive fulfillment by which something meant obtains its material fullness and intuitive presence, and in this way becomes 'self-given' or 'itself-given' (*selbstgegeben*). The experience of evidence is then nothing other than the experience of the self-givenness of something. It is, nevertheless, not a singular act of intending, on the contrary, it requires a coincidence of an intention with its fulfillment. And if evidence is also the experience of truth, then truth must be understood as the objective correlate of the act of giving something as it itself is.

How can we reconcile Husserl's assertions that, on the one hand, all truths belong to the ideal realm with that, on the other hand, truths are correlates of the particular *reell* acts of

meaning-fulfillment? The answer to this question we will find in what follows in this Chapter. First, it will be shown that our analyses can rest only on an investigation of the *object of consciousness*, which is *not* a copy from an outside reality. There are no two objects, one in reality and one in consciousness, but just one, argues Husserl. He states that if we accept the opposite thesis then it would not be possible to explain how consciousness is ever able to recognize the copy of any object as the exact replica of the original which it does not know (insofar it know only its own object ), and the very notion of truth becomes suspended. Armed with this premise, we show in §5 the precise relation between the real (*reell*) and the ideal realm, as it is grasped by Husserl in the LU. So far it will suffice to say that the fact that truths are ideal and nevertheless correlate with the connection between real things and state of affairs is deeply rooted in the very nature of the correlation between the ideal and the real (*reell*) *per se*. Both realms, however different, are intentionally related and thus cannot be separated from each other. This extremely preliminary statement is crucial here because it stresses that according to our account Husserl didn't hold a Platonic theory of truth. According to this theory, truth has to be independent 'super-real' truth 'in itself', which cannot bear any connection to reality, whereas what Husserl actually stated with the utmost certainty is only that truth is indeed independent of contingent psychological empirical processes.

### **1.2.c Pure Logic: Its Justification and Tasks.**

Even the pure sciences need more than knowledge aimed at truth, they require necessarily a systematic coherence, a methodic elaboration, without which no science can be a science, but merely a set of isolated bits of knowledge. A proper scientific theory, according

to Husserl, can be only a *deductive* system, which has pure *a priori* laws as its grounds and is built strictly according to the laws of scientific inference. So that, each science needs its proper grounding foundations, according to which its truths can be combined and arranged properly. This systematic form, Husserl argues, is not simply a peculiar fashion of the human mind, as if it were just an aesthetic demand, but it is present in the things themselves, where we just discover it, never invent. This is why logic, as a theory of science is needed. Inner evidence can be felt immediately only in a limited group of primitive facts. We are able to grasp the rest of the true propositions only through the methodical validation of them as true. So that, there are innumerable truths which can be transformed into knowledge only with the help of certain methodical procedures, such as a theory of inference. Thus, it is pure logic's task to provide us with general norms for scientific methodical procedures, to establish what is scientific in general in terms of setting grounds for knowledge. In this sense logic gives each science its unity, its *essential unity*, understood by Husserl as the connection of truths which rests on what makes science a science, i.e. on grounded knowledge. The essential unity of science is the unity of explanation, and this is precisely the unity provided by pure logic with its genuine *a priori* laws which yield a homogeneous unity of explanatory principles.<sup>21</sup>

In this sense logic inquires into the *ideal conditions of possibility* of science,<sup>22</sup> i.e. of a deductive theory. These ideal conditions are divided into *subjective* or *noetic* ones, having their *a priori* ground in the idea of knowledge as such, and *objective* or purely *logical* conditions, grounded in the ideal content of knowledge, in the self-identical meaning of what can possibly be known<sup>23</sup>. Noetic conditions restrict the field of what can be possibly known in

<sup>21</sup> Each science also possess an extra-essential unity, that is, the unity of its object, due to which sciences can be respectively separated from each other, or, in other words, the whole field of science can be divided into biology, psychology, geography etc.

<sup>22</sup> Husserl surely admits, that each science needs also its *real conditions of possibility*, such as the actual existence of human beings possessing reason, and other causal empirical conditions which let them have the knowledge they do, but the investigation of these conditions belongs to the respective realm of psychology as empirical science.

<sup>23</sup> See: *Prolegomena* §32, where both distinctions, i.e. subjective – objective, and noetic – logical, are postulated. Cf. *Prolegomena* §65, where Husserl preserves only noetic – logical distinction.

principle, they condition what knowledge as such is, i.e. how can truth be evident. Logical conditions are about the self-identical content of every truth and the possible bounding together of these contents by means of relations of ground and consequent. These ideal conditions of possibility can be investigated, Husserl argues, without any regard to actual thinking subjects, insofar as scientific truths hold independently of whether we have any insight into them. To understand this, one must surely keep in mind the fundamental distinction between the subjective-anthropological unity of actual knowledge and the objective-ideal unity of its content. While psychology deals with the former, for example, with a particular conscious experience of passing a judgment or meaning something, logic is occupied with judgments as such (in this sense in logic ‘judgment’ has the same meaning as ‘proposition’), i.e. with the self-identical meanings of these judgments.

To utter the principle is to judge, but neither the principle, nor what it judges about are judgments. If someone says: “Of two contradictory judgments, one is true and one false”, he means [...] no law for act of judgment, but a law for the *content of judging*, in other words for the *ideal meanings* which we call ‘propositions’. (LU I 113)

Thus, logic does not speak about actual thinking, knowing or judging, but of thought, knowledge, and truth, in other words, it contains only *a priori* assertions about ideal possibilities of knowledge.

Logic, then, is a *normative* science in the sense that it seeks to establish the idea of science as such, basic scientific laws, and scientifically valid methods and procedures, and is able to measure *formally* all other sciences in respect of their agreement or disagreement with this idea. In other words, logic establishes purely formal general criteria for the science as such. Husserl admits that, so understood, logic can justifiably be called a *technology* of science, because it sets up rules for valid scientific methods, and lays grounds for the

avoidance of errors, therefore in this (but only in this) sense logic is also a *practical* discipline. This sense of normativity should be clearly distinguished from a psychological one: logic indeed elaborates universal definitions and laws for knowledge and judgment, but by no means in the sense that it actually prescribes how one should judge. The actual prescription is never a part of the content of any ideal logical law. ‘One must always distinguish between laws that *serve as norms* for our knowledge-activities, and laws which include normativity in their thought-content, and *assert* the universal obligatoriness to this normativity’. (LU I 101) Husserl denies that logical laws, such as ‘For every A it is true that either A or not A’, contain the slightest bit of normativity in the former sense. Obviously it can be used for normative purposes, nevertheless it is not a norm for our thinking in the sense that a proposition ‘Anyone *ought to* judge that for every A it is true that either A or not A’ is. Logic yields theoretical laws, not practical rules, although each of its laws permits of being transformed into a rule with the help of normativity which can be brought into a logical laws’ context, i.e. each logical law can have its practical application. Nevertheless, this transformation is not included in the very content of the laws of logic, which in their proper sense are theoretical, not normative truths.<sup>24</sup>

Logical study is then, a study of the theoretical judgments/propositions as such, and the meanings asserted by them, not the practical governance of manifold judgment-experiences and individual mental states. Logic deals with the general ideas that might be expressed in the concrete instances and apprehends them as abstract universal truths. Thus, the tasks of pure logic are, first, the definition of the most important concepts that make possible every knowledge and theory, such as concept, truth, object, number, relation, unity etc.; second, the establishment of the laws grounded in these concepts, which signify their objective validity and define truth or falsity of meanings purely on the basis of their categorial

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<sup>24</sup> It is also useful to notice that not every practical rule of human judging is derived from logical laws.

form (e.g. theory of inference, theory of pluralities and numbers etc.); third, the elaboration of the idea and of ideal conditions of possibility of science in general, that is the establishment of the *a priori* essential forms of theories. The last task includes also the indication of a possible field of knowledge appropriate respectively to every form of science.

Pure logic, wherever it deals with concepts, judgments, and syllogisms, is exclusively concerned with the *ideal* unities that we here call ‘meanings’. If we take the trouble to detach the ideal essence of meanings from the psychological and grammatical connections, if we try, further, to clear up their *a priori* relations of adequacy, founded in this essence, to the objective correlates that they mean, we are already within the domain of pure logic. (LU I 224)

Logic deals with meanings primarily insofar it is concerned with the ideal essence of science as such, and the theoretic content of each and every science is no more than the meaning-content of its statements and laws, cleared of all contingency, i.e. of all actual thoughts and utterances of these laws. When a thinker pronounces scientific propositions she, obviously, judges and asserts a thought. But the content of the thought is not her judgment, it is the correlated states of affairs expressed by means of the ideal meaning of her propositions. An objective unity of meaning thereby corresponds to her subjective thought-connections, and only the former is the scientific truth. Moreover, every science acquires its objective validity through the adequacy of meaning of its statements with the objective correlate meant in them. Thus, all possible theoretic coherence is a coherence of meaning, and pure logic should be a science of meaning, accordingly.

All theoretical science consists, in its objective content, of *one* homogenous stuff: it is an ideal fabric of *meanings*. We can go even further and say that the whole, indefinitely complex web of meanings that we call the theoretical unity of science, falls under the very category that covers all its elements: it is itself a unity of meaning. (*ibid.*)

This is how logic is described in the *Prolegomena*: normative pure science which object is ideal self-identical meaning, never the particular expression of any meaning. Thus, in the first volume of the *LU* we have two basic claims, first, that such objects as concepts, propositions and truths have an ideal being as unities of meaning, such as in their contents there is nothing of the psychic experiences of any individual consciousness of these objects. Second, there are pure ideal truths of logic which are not truths about the real world, but about ideal unities of meaning and their possible connections.

Pure logic [...] speaks about pure concepts and pure propositions, [...] in whose meaning not the least is said about the spatio-temporal, factual world. Irrespective of whether there is a world or not, the truth that  $2+2=4$  subsists in itself as a pure truth. It does not contain in its sense the least information about the real facts. [...] Ideal objects are not related to actual facts, but, in accordance with their meaning, are implicitly related to possible facts, to ideally possible or ideally conceived facts.<sup>25</sup>

### **1.3. Phenomenology as a Propaedeutics to Logic**

Given that logic is fully occupied with the objectivity of our thinking and the ideal content of our knowledge, and does not deal at all with the subjective part, i.e. with the actual thinking process, the main epistemological question still remains unanswered: How is the objectivity of a thought content connected with the subjective experiences of having such a thought content? How can we have insights into basic ideal laws of logic? How can an ideal self-identical meaning be grasped by an act of consciousness? These questions do not belong to the realm of logic, but to another science, namely *phenomenology*, or descriptive psychology, as Husserl still calls it in the second volume of the *Investigations*.

<sup>25</sup> E.Husserl 'The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*' in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl's 'Logical Investigations'*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, p.199.

In the second volume of *LU* Husserl admits that pure logic, given all its value, cannot in principle give us any insight into these crucial epistemological questions. In the *Introduction* he postulates the necessity of investigations which should precede any pure logical inquiry and epistemological criticism, and these investigations are labeled by him phenomenological. Accordingly, we should find out what phenomenology (of which there was no mention in the first volume of *LU*, devoted solely to the justification of pure logic and critique of psychologism) is taken to be, in what its necessity consists, and whether the second volume of *LU* presents us with precisely *logical* investigations or with *phenomenological* ones.

### 1.3.a Object and Tasks of Phenomenology.

In the *LU* phenomenology is still to serve as a propaedeutics for pure logic and by no means does it acquire the status of the first transcendental science as it will later in the *Ideas*. Nevertheless, it is an *a priori* science which deals with essences, not with empirical facts, therefore Husserl regretted later his labeling it as descriptive psychology which provoked quite a few contrary interpretations<sup>26</sup>. *Pure phenomenology of the experiences of thinking and*

<sup>26</sup> The most significant of these regrets is the crucial change which Husserl made in the second edition of *LU*, to the §6 of the Introduction to the second volume. In the first edition we read: 'Phenomenology is descriptive psychology. Epistemological criticism is therefore in essence psychology, or at least only capable of being built on a psychological basis. [...] It is *not the full science of psychology that serves as a foundation for pure logic*, but certain classes of descriptions which are the step preparatory to the theoretical researches of psychology. These in so far as they describe the empirical objects whose genetic connections the science wishes to pursue, also form the substrate of those fundamental abstractions in which logic seizes the essence of its ideal objects and connections with inward evidence'. (*LU* I 176 Translator's note) Thus, it is obvious that by this time Husserl did not regard phenomenology as an *a priori science*, but merely as a descriptive discipline, a possible branch of psychology dealing with consciousness' experience. In the second edition this attitude is completely changed: '... if psychology is given its old meaning, phenomenology is not descriptive psychology: its peculiar 'pure' description, its contemplation of pure essences on a basis of exemplary individual intuitions of experiences (often freely imagined ones), and its descriptive fixations of the contemplated essences into pure concepts, is no empirical, scientific description. [...] Phenomenology [...] does not discuss states of animal organisms (not even as belonging to a possible nature as such), but perceptions, judgments, feelings *as such*, and what pertains to them *a priori* with unlimited generality, as pure instances of pure species, of what may be seen through a purely intuitive apprehension of essence, whether generic or specific.' (*LU* I 175-6) Here it is clear that Husserl firmly divorces phenomenology with all kinds of empirical research, establishing it as a pure *a priori*, but nevertheless, descriptive science.



*knowing (reine Phänomenologie der Denk- und Erkenntniserlebnisse)* is conceived as a descriptive discipline whose object is the experiences of consciousness in their utmost generality. ‘Descriptive’ here means not only the expression of what is intuited in concepts constructed originally out of such intuitions, but also as far-reaching an analysis as possible, insofar as, Husserl argues, inner reflection is never a simple reflection, it has many strata and depth dimensions, so that inner experience is a multi-staged process of revealing concrete data. The complexity of the inner experience will be perfectly shown by Husserl in *Investigation VI*, where he will describe the multiplicity of acts yielding categorial or general meaning. What is decisive about phenomenology, as it is presented in the *LU*, is that it is concerned not with individual experiences as real natural facts, but with what is general in every experience, with its essence. Phenomenology is supposed to describe this general essence, as it is known in intuition; and its descriptive outcome, argues Husserl, bears an *a priori* validity.

...it is evident that if at all things like numbers, mathematical sets, propositions, theories and such others shall be subjectively given, or should be objects of consciousness in subjective experiences, these experiences which are necessary for that purpose must in all cases have an identical structure. In other words, as thinking subjects whether we consider us men, or we posit angels, devils or gods, or any being which enumerates, counts and mathematicises – the inner act of life of counting and mathematical thinking, if something logico-mathematical is to come out of it, should, with *a priori* necessity, have always the same essential structure.<sup>27</sup>

The task of phenomenology is to provide necessary clarity and distinctness for the understanding of pure logic, insofar as ideal objectivities of logic are essentially related to psychic experiences; it should lay bare the sources of the intelligibility of logical concepts, i.e. show how they can become objects of consciousness. ‘*Our task is now to bring the Ideas of*

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<sup>27</sup> E.Husserl ‘The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*’ in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl’s ‘Logical Investigations’*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, pp.210-11.

*logic, the logical concepts and laws, to epistemological clarity and definiteness.*' (LU I 168) It is supposed to fulfill this task by means of careful investigation of the generality of conscious mental states which enable us to give fixed meanings to all the fundamental concepts of logic. 'Such meanings will be clarified both by going back to the analytically explored connections between meaning-intentions and meaning-fulfillments, and also by making their possible function in cognition intelligible and certain'. (LU I 168) Phenomenology is to explain the process of meaning-constitution in consciousness, especially the constitution of logical concepts, which, as Husserl states, have been clarified in a very imperfect way, permitting of countless equivocations. All logical insights that we have are given to us in the imperfect shape of wavering meaning and confused intuitions, which permit of occasional equivocation distorting the sense of propositions of pure logic. Therefore if we rely blindly on the words only and do not turn to the 'things themselves'<sup>28</sup>, the actual thought-experiences and mental states behind the words, our ideational intuition (*ideierende Anschauung*)<sup>29</sup>, for which these experiences, (both sensible and non-sensible contents of them, or in other words, our sensations and our living-through of these sensations) provide a foundation, would never be completely confirmed. We would have to re-perform the abstraction each time a new thought-experience brings about a general concept. Phenomenology carefully investigates the mental states corresponding to acts of meaning-constitution and proves that the meaning of a word uttered in different acts corresponds to one and the same general notion (or disproves it in the case of equivocation). It also explores whether the function of a word is meaningful and

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<sup>28</sup> In the phenomenological context the expression 'things themselves' does not signify the *real* objects of perception, cognition etc. as such, or having an independent being, but these objects as *reel*, as they are given to consciousness, the objects as presented or intended. Thus 'the things themselves' have to be understood as 'objects of consciousness'. For the developed explanations of Husserl's understanding of the 'things themselves' see E. Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*, Berlin, 1970, and R. Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution*, Den Haag, 1970.

<sup>29</sup> The notion of ideational intuition or intuition of essences – the process by means of which general meanings are constituted – will be treated more precisely at the end of this chapter. Unfortunately, I cannot avoid mentioning it here in order to clarify the task of phenomenology insofar no other term will serve the purpose. As Husserl himself admits: 'The phenomenological founding of logic involves the difficulty that we must, in our exposition, make use of all the concepts we are trying to clarify'. (LU I 175).

plausible in a given context. Pure logic, on the contrary, does not have anything to do with the context of our expressions at all: it investigates only the pure meaning of the concept independent of any contextualization. Thus, only due to this phenomenological reassurance in the essential unity of thought-experiences do all the fundamental concepts of logic acquire their fixed meanings.

In this sense, phenomenology is also occupied with meaning, but not with meaning *per se* as an ideal entity, independent from its exemplification, but with meaning as it is constituted by consciousness. Its basic question is:

What are the hidden psychic experiences like, which are correlated to the idealities under consideration and which must run their course in the manner of completely determinate acts of production so that the subject may thereby be conscious of and have evident knowledge of those idealities as objects?<sup>30</sup>

Thus, Husserl admits, that the primary interest of a phenomenologist does not lie with the idealities, but with the multiplicity of subjective acts in and through which the idealities emerge in consciousness. Only by this close investigation of consciousness' experiences can we firmly distinguish two different, although related, bodies of data, the *a priori* and the empirical, and thus distinguish the logically objective from the psychological. Phenomenology, then, is a sort of a correlation research, insofar it investigates the correlative inner occurrences which make it possible for the logical to emerge objectively as a structured connectedness of propositions and as a whole science. Thus, phenomenology can be called a necessary propaedeutics to pure logic not only in the sense that it shows how logical concepts originate in consciousness (this task by itself is not necessarily required by logic, insofar its laws hold and its concepts are valid, as was shown above, even without their actual grasping and understanding), but it also gives a certain *ground* to logic by means of justifying it firmly

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<sup>30</sup> E.Husserl 'The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*' in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl's 'Logical Investigations'*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, p.201.

as the pure science, and proving the objective and ideal essence of its subject, namely, meaning.

Thus, it is phenomenology which is supposed to answer basic questions of epistemology, such as ‘How can the ideality of the universal *qua* concept or law enter the flux of real mental states and become an epistemic possession of the thinking person?’ (LU I 169) Questions like this cannot be separated from the justification of pure logic, insofar as the very task of clarification of basic logical concepts will necessarily lead us to them.

What was new, for one thing, was the task, and correspondingly the effort to inquire, radically and consistently, back from the categories of objectivities to the correlative modes of consciousness, the subjective acts, act-structures, experiential foundations in which the objectivities of the appropriate sorts come to be objects of consciousness and to evident self-givenness.<sup>31</sup>

### **1.3.b Principle of Freedom from Presuppositions**

Phenomenology, as each and every science, requires its method of inquiry, and the most crucial part of its method is a restrictive principle postulated by Husserl - the *principle of freedom from presuppositions* (*das Prinzip der Voraussetzungslosigkeit*). Within the task of yielding a theory of science and knowledge in general we need a firm justified ground of properly identified concepts to rely upon. These concepts can be identified only by a properly conducted pure intuition of essences performed on the basis of an actual manifold of experiences of thinking. This is precisely the task of phenomenology, as it was already pointed out, it describes the thought-experiences of consciousness insofar as they are directed at real singular objects with an aim to clarify and fix the ideal unified meanings involved in these experiences. ‘Phenomenology is accordingly the theory of experiences in general,

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.203.

inclusive of all matters, whether real (*reellen*) or intentional<sup>32</sup>, given in experiences, and evidently discoverable in them' (*LU* II 343). All statements which do not satisfy the requirements of the so-understood phenomenological description are unacceptable. Thus, such questions or presuppositions as that of the existence of a world transcendent to consciousness have to be excluded from a phenomenological theory. This might sound rather puzzling, insofar as the question seems to be an important one, but Husserl's rationale is that he is trying to provide the theoretical grounds for the theory of knowledge which precedes all empirical knowledge and all metaphysics.<sup>33</sup> We cannot justifiably ask an empirically oriented question unless the pure logical grounds and rules of knowledge as such are firmly established. Moreover, empirical knowledge is not needed at all for theoretical thinking, because no knowledge of facts about the world would change the basics of pure logic in the slightest way. Therefore, it will be highly implausible to inquire into the existence of real objective things which transcend consciousness and its possible experiences before the principles of any inquiry are generally set up. This is exactly what is expressed by Husserl's striking statement that the 'theory of knowledge, properly described, is no theory'. (*LU*, I, 178) Its task is not to render the theoretical explanation of singular facts of our thinking through general laws because it does not consider knowledge to be a factual occurrence in objective nature. It deals solely with the Idea of knowledge as such (or provides a firm ground for any possible knowledge, its constitutive elements and laws) regardless of the question whether any knowledge has ever occurred. This does not mean, of course, that Husserl argues against the positive value of empirical sciences and metaphysics. The task of science is to provide us with clarified systematized knowledge on the subject, which is possible only on the

<sup>32</sup> The distinction between the real and the intentional is also one of the crucial ones for the correct understanding of *LU*. It will be discussed specifically later in this chapter, but for the sake of clarity I will roughly define the intentional here as 'what is exactly meant in and by our real (*reelle*) experiences'. Husserl discusses these issues at length in the *Investigation V* §§16-21

<sup>33</sup> Metaphysics is understood by Husserl not exactly as a science, but rather as a set of (mostly unjustified) presuppositions which underlie all sciences concerned with empirical reality (e.g. about the existence or non-existence of external world, its spatio-temporal determination, and causality). See *LU*, I, 16

ground of the already elaborated theory of knowledge in general. Empirical sciences, then, simply would not in this rigorous sense be sciences at all (and to Husserl's mind in his time they were not) if they do not rely on the 'guiding lines' of the pre-established theory of scientific knowledge. Therefore, Husserl undertakes his work with the intention to establish firmly what makes science science, and claims that it is 'a certain objective or ideal interconnection which gives the acts [of thought] a unitary objective relevance and... an ideal validity'. (*LU I 144*). Insofar as this interconnection is ideal, we do not need any knowledge of empirical facts to elaborate the theory of science. But we surely need phenomenology to investigate these experiences in which the ideal entities and their connections can be given to us. The decisive point here is that phenomenology operates only with consciousness and its experiences and, thus, its statements, as statements about ideal truths as involved in consciousness' content, and about objects as and only as they are perceived and meant, are inwardly evident.

The state of affairs comes before us, not merely putatively, but as actually before our eyes, and in it the object itself, as the object that it is, i.e. just as it is intended in this act of knowing and not otherwise, as bearer of such and such properties, as the term of such relations etc. It is not merely putatively, but actually thus, and as actually thus it is given to our knowledge, which means that it is not merely thought (judged) but known to be such. Otherwise put, its being thus is a truth actually realized, individualized in the experience of the inwardly evident judgement. (*LU I 145*, emphasis mine – M.T.)

Given that we admit a principle of freedom from presuppositions, such basic concepts as truth, knowledge, and givenness change their respective meanings, they do not refer to any kind of external (to consciousness) objectivity and their relatedness to reality is strictly limited to the sphere of consciousness.

It has to be noted that this principle of freedom from presuppositions should not be misunderstood as the early postulating of the principle/method of phenomenological

reduction, which happens only in the *Ideas*. Although both aforementioned principles might seem indeed quite similar, they have (at least) one crucial difference. The aim of the principle of freedom from presuppositions is purely that of establishing the order of sciences, it seeks to provide us with the unmistakable account of ‘levels’ of our knowledge without attempting to say anything about the actual existence of the real objects of our cognition. It is a purely technical restrictive principle. It does not jeopardize possible considerations of empirical sciences about the world outside the mind, but only provides necessary (negative) conditions of it. On the contrary, phenomenological reduction should be understood as a crucial methodic requirement and, at the same time, as an ontological principle, by which much more is demanded than a simple temporary suspension of particular questions. Its ontology consists in the claim that all the things about which we can form our judgments are things of experience (*Erfahrung*). ‘The real world’ becomes then nothing else than the intentional world of consciousness, a world that is not mind-independent. These strong claims cannot be found in the *LU*, although the latter is very suggestive of being seen as a failed attempt to posit them<sup>34</sup>.

*The principle of freedom from presuppositions, thus, requires a strict distinction, between the empirical and the objective realms, in order to distinguish properly the accounts valid within phenomenology from the invalid ones (the latter being all the accounts of the external reality). Therefore, from a phenomenological point of view, it is forbidden to appeal to any real (external to consciousness) object of perception or thought. All objects have to be found in consciousness itself, in its inner evidence and truth, as perceived and intended.*

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<sup>34</sup> As an example of considering the *LU* a failure because of its unclear ontology see J.Mensch *The Question of Being in Husserl's Logical Investigations*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague, Boston (MA), London, 1981.

## 1.4 Conclusions

It follows that meaning in the *LU* is ambiguously defined in two ways, which can be roughly defined as objective and subjective, and presents a subject-matter of two sciences: pure logic and phenomenology. On the one hand, it is a self-identical ideal unity, and its being does not at all depend on any act of any possible consciousness, and in this respect it is investigated by logic. On the other hand each meaning has to be constituted in an act of consciousness according to the general laws of the latter, and this procedure has to be described by phenomenology. Husserl insists, in his critique of psychologism, which has reduced ideal logical necessity to a psychological causal necessity, that the meaning-contents of necessary and ideal logical judgments cannot be identified with contingent psychological mental experiences. Logical laws are not inductive generalizations based on observations of external events, and their truth does not depend on our actual grasping of them, just as the truth and validity of the Pythagorean theorem does not depend on whether any human beings had ever formulated and proved it. This strict distinction leads us to suspect that objective and subjective ‘sides’ of meaning are totally unrelated, which is absurd, insofar as we are definitely able to understand general concepts without any help of sensory perception and we grasp basic laws of logic and mathematics in their purity and generality. How then are the ideal norms of our thinking to be combined with subjective consciousness’ mental states? This is the most crucial question of the second volume of the *LU* and of our inquiry. In what follows I will try to show how to solve this problem by means of presenting an account of meaning as that of *ideal pure possibility* of becoming intelligible which can be actualized in consciousness according to its basic general laws. I will clarify what exactly Husserl means by ideality in general, insofar as his claim that meanings are ideal entities is indisputable, but can be interpreted in different ways, depending of what sense we ascribe to the ‘ideal’.



This large task has its necessary separate steps. First, the general Husserl's account of meaning and act of meaning has to be explicated, i.e. we have to lay bare the most general steps of the process of meaning-constitution in consciousness, including the analyses of the acts of constitution of simple and categorial meaning. This will necessarily require a separate inquiry into Husserl's complicated account of consciousness, insofar as it is the basic structure which yields a unity of experiences of meaning-constitution. Finally, on the basis of these steps, general conclusions will be made about the essence of meaning as possibility, the explanatory advantages that this understanding has, and the new problems which arise from it.

## **2. Husserl's Anti-psychological Account of Meaning.**

Husserl characterizes meaning first and foremost as ideal, '...the ideal objective and identical being of such objects as concepts, propositions, inferences, truths, true proofs, etc... This includes the thesis that these objects are unities of meaning of such a kind that in the content of the meanings themselves there is nothing of the psychic acts and other subjective experiences... Psychic acts, like their subjects, belong to the *real* world.'<sup>35</sup> To clarify this claim it is necessary to understand, first, what Husserl means precisely by ideality and reality and, second, what the difference is between a mental act and its content.

### **2.1 The Difference Between the Real, the Reell, and the Ideal.**

The sphere of the real, we are told, includes 'individual, temporally determined singulars,... empirical facts', whereas the ideal domain is 'general concepts... of the lowest specific differences,... ideal species'. (*LU*, I, 114) This distinction, however, as formulated by

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<sup>35</sup> E.Husserl 'The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*' in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl's 'Logical Investigations'*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, pp.198-9. By the term 'real' here both *reell* and *real* spheres are encompassed, representing respectively psychic acts and their subjects.

Husserl in terms of the ‘unbridgeable difference between sciences of the ideal and sciences of the real’ has proved recalcitrant to analysis and elucidation – and has as a result seemed to many to be both false and carelessly executed. It is certainly initially puzzling why Husserl believes the real and the ideal to be ‘never-to-be-bridged’ (*unüberbrückbar*) and any account of Husserl’s distinction must at least attempt to provide an answer to this question. It is clear from what Husserl says about reality that it includes what we would call singular objects of sensory perception and the ideality refers respectively to our general concepts. In what sense, then, are mental states that yield these concepts also claimed to be real?

To clarify this, a crucial distinction must be introduced between the terms *real* and *reell* (unfortunately both are translated into English as ‘real’)<sup>36</sup>. By *real* Husserl traditionally means the sphere of objective (mind-independent) reality. The *reell* is this reality *as it is experienced* by us, and exactly in the way it is experienced. The significance of the distinction between the two terms was not introduced rigorously enough in the first edition of the *LU*, which led, as Husserl himself noticed, its readers to various confusions. Therefore he added a substantial *Appendix* to the second edition devoted more precisely to this distinction and related matters.<sup>37</sup> Husserl’s claim, based on the distinction between the *real* and the *reell* is the following: we are able to perceive *real* things, but not the *reell* presenting sensations of these things. The latter are experienced (*erlebt*) or lived-through by us, but never perceived, in the sense that we never ‘pass judgments’ over them, over their evidence and inerrancy, which is taken for granted. Thus, we can be mistaken in our perception (even about the very existence of an object), but we simply cannot be mistaken about the existence and quality of the sense-contents which we experience. For example, I can hallucinate a white wall in front of me. Nevertheless, at the same time, I evidently live-through the image of this ‘wall’, and can say with the outmost certainty that I do have the sensations that I have. I can also, of course, make

<sup>36</sup> In what follows I will respectively write *real* and *reell*, in order to avoid misunderstanding.

<sup>37</sup> See *LU II Appendix*. External and Internal Perception: Physical and Psychical Phenomena. (pp.335-48)

these sensations themselves a new object of my attention, i.e. I can concentrate not on the wall which I hallucinate, but on the very sensation I have. This act can be called perception (Husserl explicitly allows for it, thus his terminology becomes a bit unclear), but we should note that this is not a perception of any external object. Therefore it possesses the same claim to evidence and leaves no room for doubt.

To doubt what is immanent (in consciousness), and is meant precisely as it is, would be quite evidently irrational. I may doubt whether any outer object exists, and so whether a percept related to such object is correct, but I cannot doubt the now experienced sensuous content of my experience, whenever that is, I reflect on the latter, and simply intuit it as being what it is. (*LU II*, 345)

Thus, whereas in the realm of our perception of the *real* we can always pass doubt on the adequacy of it, in the sphere of the *reell*, i.e. of consciousness' experiences and perceptions of these experiences, we immediately obtain inner evidence and truth. Therefore, within the domain of phenomenology which describes consciousness and its experiences only, we have *inwardly evident* statements as statements about objects as they are perceived and meant, i.e. about the *reell* realm with regards to its connection to the ideality.

## **2.2 The Structure of the Meaning-Situation.**

On what I take to be the traditional interpretation of Husserl's theory of the ideality of meanings they are understood as ideal *species*. An exemplary account of such understanding is presented by Dermot Moran:

In the *Prolegomena* Husserl has already established that meanings are ideal unities, now he wants to specify the relation between this ideal unity of

meaning and the expression which ‘means’ it, the significant or ‘meaning consciousness’ (*Bedeutungsbewusstsein*). Husserl’s claim (developed from Lotze) in the First Edition is that the relation is the same as that between species and individuals. Indeed for Husserl meaning is a kind of ‘species’ (*Spezies*) which is instantiated in a particular act. The traditional account says that we indeed the species (e.g., ‘horse’ as opposed to an individual horse) by abstraction from the individual.<sup>38</sup>

Whether and to what degree Husserl’s concept of meaning can be understood as that of species (i.e. a simple product of logical abstraction) can be determined by examining meaning *by itself*. But, on such an interpretation as this, Husserl’s (and our) obvious difficulty in providing any precise analysis of meaning is to be explained by the fact that any ‘access’ to meanings is to be found in the experience solely, to be discovered in consciousness’ introspection. Thus, we do not have any ideal meaning ‘at hand’, but what we can investigate is only the manifold of expressions carrying this unique ideal meaning.

In the *Investigation I* meanings are characterized as ideal in the sense of simply non-real, i.e. non-physical, non-spatio-temporal. Each meaning-situation consists of three parts, first, *meaning-endowing (or meaning-intending) and meaning-fulfilling acts*, second, the *contents* of these acts or their sense, and, third, the *reference* to the meant objectivity. These parts should be discussed more precisely.

## 2.2.a Act of Meaning: Meaning-Intention and Meaning-Fulfillment.

Meanings, as ideal unities should be strictly distinguished from the subjective *reell* acts of meaning, and consequently, from the contingent expressions which carry these

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<sup>38</sup> D. Moran, *Introduction to Logical Investigations*, in E. Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, London: Routledge 2001, p.liii

meanings. Each expression is a concrete (*konkret*) consciousness experience, which has its sense and its objective correlate. The sense is obviously preserved in the expression whenever and by whomsoever it is uttered, thus, the expression's meaning does not refer to any meaning-conferring experience, but remains identical in every occurrence of the expression. In this selfsame meaning there is nothing to be learned about the actual utterance or thought of it, so that the assertion as a psychological fact does not affect the ideal meaning at all.

My act of judging is a transient experience: it arises and passes away. But what my assertion asserts, the content *that the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point*, neither arises nor passes away. It is an identity in the strict sense, one and the same geometrical truth. (LU I 195)

Each expression, thus, is not merely a verbal sound or inscription, it expresses something and, therefore, refers to something objective. Husserl even insists that 'what we assert in a judgment involves nothing subjective'. (LU I 195). This obviously should be understood within a whole context of his anti-psychological argumentation. What is meant by 'nothing subjective' is precisely this: when someone utters a judgment she asserts some fact, e.g. that 'two plus two equals four'. This individual assertion is, of course, based on the fact that the one who asserts it judges so and wishes to express it. But it is precisely not what is meant in the judgment, and what is meant in it is an objectivity which does not depend on its occasional assertion or grasping. 'It is the same in the case of all assertions, even if what they assert is false and absurd'. (LU I 196) The objectivity expressed in judgments is usually understood as objects of intuition, imagination, representation or memory, but Husserl surprisingly claims that none of these is needed in a strict sense for an expression to be referred to an object. 'Relation to an actually given objective correlate, which fulfills the meaning-intention, is not significant to an expression' (LU, I, 199). Mere meaning-intention, i.e. the pure possibility of reference to an object is enough for an expression to function significantly. It is important to consider here that this possibility of intending should not be

understood as the pure linguistic (or image-like) possibility of denoting something, but rather as a possibility of something to be thought of, a possibility of existence of such a mental state that might lead to this expression. If a meaning-intention is fulfilled by means of a corresponding intuition, then it is a sense-giving act, in which the expression is confirmed to have an appropriate intuitive object; there is a ‘unity of coincidence’ (*Deckungseinheit*) between intention and its fulfillment. If an intention is not fulfilled, i.e. if an expression does not actually meet its object, it is called an empty intention, for example, in the case when such meaning as ‘round square’ is intended: no object can be provided for such an intention, nevertheless it does not follow that the expression ‘round square’ is meaningless; we can use it significantly in such statements as ‘Round squares do not exist’ and the like. In contrast, such an ‘expression’ as ‘ghjk;l,asdfg’ or ‘there or is’ does not have any meaning-intention at all, but is merely an empty ‘sound of words’. Thus, in every sense-animated (*sinnbelebte*) expression we experience unity and essential sameness of an objective item which is thought of and of an item present in intuition, in other words, ‘...the intentional essence of the act of intuition gets more or less perfectly fitted into the semantic essence of the act of expression’. (LU II 206) Thus, through each act of expression we mean something, and this meaning is not simply arbitrarily attributed to expression, but is discovered in it. Meaning-intending acts are essential to expressions in that they endow expressions with sense. Meaning-fulfilling acts are extra-essential to expressions; they actualize the objective reference, but do not prove or undermine expressions as having sense.

### **2.2.b The Content of the Act of Meaning.**

The content of the meaning-endowing and the meaning-fulfilling acts should not be confused with the meant (perceived, imagined) object. The object as it is meant is not the

object's ideal correlate, the fulfilling sense, the meaningful content. The term 'content' is used here by Husserl merely to indicate the self-identical meaning which can be grasped from the expression by any intelligent hearer even if she is not the actual perceiver of the meant object, or even if there can be in principle no intuition<sup>39</sup> corresponding to that meaning. One may not have perceptions that are identical to mine or may have no perceptions at all in order to understand what I mean by my expression 'This wall is white'. So that, the content of the acts is not the *real* object itself and not any *reell* particular part of this act, but the object's *ideal* correlate, the fulfilling *meaning per se*. In, for example, perception this is the identical intentional content, which belongs to the totality of possible perceptual acts which mean the same object. It is worth mentioning also that in the case of the synthesis of coincidence the contents of intention and its fulfillment are one and the same, and therefore, we can experience the meant object not as, on the one hand, intended, and, on the other hand, given (as in phenomenological analysis), but as essentially one.

At the end of the *Investigation I* Husserl claims that the essence of meaning consists not in the contingent meaning-conferring experience (*bedeutungsverleihenden Erlebnis*), but in its 'content', which presents an identical unity as opposed to a scattered manifold of possible experiences of speakers and thinkers. The term content here should not be understood as something *real* or *reell*, i.e. as some physical or psychic part of our experiences, because it is obvious that meanings are self-identical unities, whereas the psychic contents vary greatly between individuals (even in the same individual at different times) expressing the same meaning. Meanings as ideal unities should be strictly distinguished from the acts of meaning, because the former are not dependent in any way on our actual understanding,

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<sup>39</sup> Husserl's term 'intuition' when spoken in the context of the fulfillment of intention should be understood in a very broad sense, that is, instead of ordinary sensual perception this role can be played e.g. by imagination or memory which would not result in the lower 'degree' of meaning-fulfillment, but might change only the quality of the intentional act. In what follows the concept will be broadened even more, when I will speak about Husserl's notion of 'categorical intuition'.

expressing, or grasping of them. Thus, meanings' contents form precisely that part of our thought-experiences or of our singular meaning-intentions, which is not individual. When somebody intends a meaning 'my neighbor' there is a lot in this meaning-intention which can be labeled as individual or contingent, such as specific psychophysical circumstances of the one who intends a meaning, the particular intuition that fulfills the intention, the chain of thought which led to this intention, etc. Nevertheless, there is an ideal part, the unchangeable content (or sense) of the meaning 'my neighbor' which does not depend on any psychophysical circumstances and which remains the same within any occurrence of this meaning. Obviously, the fulfilling intuitions and objective references of different particular intentions of this meaning will differ respectively (two different persons can simply have different neighbors), but the ideal content, or 'what is meant by this meaning as such' (not 'what object is signified by it'!) is identical in every case. 'Multiplication of persons and acts does not multiply propositional meanings; the judgment in the ideal, logical sense remains single'. (LU, I, 229)

Thus, Husserl distinguishes between three senses of the term content, first, the content as an intending sense, or as sense, or as *meaning simpliciter*, second, the content as fulfilling sense (these two contents coincide in the cases when the intention is not empty), and third, the content as object of reference, and this latter sense Husserl prefers not to use at all, in order to avoid misunderstandings. He states: 'The essence of meaning is seen by us, not in the meaning-conferring experience, but in its 'content', the single, self-identical intentional unity set over against the dispersed multiplicity of actual and possible experiences of speakers and thinkers.' (LU I 228) Therefore, meanings, as they form the logical content of our concepts and propositions, are not parts of our *reell* contingent acts of understanding. The psychic experiences involved in grasping a meaning can vary greatly in different cases, nevertheless the ideal content remains the same.



### 2.2.c The Objective Reference.

The objective reference is signified by an expression through meaning. 'Each expression not only says something, but it says it *of* something: it not only has a meaning, but refers to certain *objects*.' (LU I 197) It is necessary to point out here that the objective reference should not be confused with the meaning itself, it belongs to the *real* world, it might be also *reell*, in case of imaginary objects, whereas meanings occupy the *ideal* domain, so that we should preserve the strict distinction between what is meant and what is spoken/thought of. Each fixed reference allows for the multiplicity of meanings, for example, one object can be well meant by both expressions 'the equilateral triangle' and 'the equiangular triangle'. In this case we have different meaning-intentions and different meaning-contents, but the objective reference is one and the same. On the other hand, the same expression carrying the same meaning can refer to different objects, as for example, the expression 'this wall in front of me', which reference depends on who is uttering it, where and when. In general, an expression can refer to its objects *only* because it means something, meaningless expressions cannot in principle have any reference. The connection between the ideal meaning and the meant objectivity is established in the very act of meaning, in the coincidence of respective mental states of meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment.

### 2.3 'Misunderstood Meanings.'

We have regarded so far the following pivots of Husserl's theory of meaning: first, an expression in a rigorous sense of the term must have a meaning; second, meaning constitutes the reference to an object, therefore to use an expression with meaning and to refer to an

object is one and the same thing; third, the actual existence of the object of reference is not important at all, what is important is only the pure ideal possibility of the intelligibility of this object and the expressed meaning. The last point, to my mind, provides an answer to Mohanty's question concerning Husserl's understanding of meaning<sup>40</sup>, 'What about meanings that are not understood?' (p.81). Mohanty writes that it seems that if ideal meanings do not depend in their existence at all on the contingent words or sentences by means of which they are expressed (just as physical objects do not depend on our contingent perception of them), then there will be no difference between my meaningful usage of the expression, and my mere utterance of words which I learned to articulate without understanding. Thus, the meaningfulness of the expression has nothing to do with the speaker's or hearer's understanding of it, and there are misunderstood meanings. Mohanty believes, that Husserl's theory does not provide a sufficient account of such cases. I do not suppose that a distinction between understood and misunderstood meanings is an important one for Husserl's theory, insofar as I believe that what indeed makes meaning to be meaning is its pure ideal possibility of being grasped and understood and not the actual occurrence of such an understanding (this also involves a mere possibility of speakers' and hearers', or, generally, thinkers', existence, and by no means presupposes that their actuality is necessary). For example, the *Investigation I* ends with a remarkable phrase: 'There are therefore countless meanings which, in the common, relational sense, are merely possible ones, since they are never expressed, and since they can, owing to the limits of man's cognitive powers, never be expressed.' (*LU*, I, 233). I believe that this statement contains the crucial point in Husserl's understanding of the sense of ideality as that of *possibility*. Nevertheless, in order to clarify the sense of ideality as that of possibility, we should turn to the precise phenomenological analysis of meaning-constitution, i.e. to show how is it possible that due to certain

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<sup>40</sup> J.N. Mohanty 'Husserl's Thesis of the Ideality of Meanings' in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl's 'Logical Investigations'*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, pp.176-82.

consciousness' mental states the synthesis of coincidence between the meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment occurs. This has been mainly explicated by Husserl in the First Section of the *Investigation VI*.

## **2.4 The Process of Meaning-Constitution.**

It is plain, states Husserl, that in most simple cases our constitution of meaning starts from intuition of an object. Therefore, the relationship between meaning and intuition<sup>41</sup> should be clarified: Is whether this intuition itself an act constituting meaning, and if not what precise relationship does it have with an act of meaning-constitution. If we consider an example 'I have just looked into the garden and now give expression to my percept in the words: "There flies a blackbird!"' (*LU II* 195), then the obvious question arises '*What is here the act in which my meaning resides?*' (Ibid) As it is already evident from what has been said about ideality of meaning above, this act of expression of meaning is not based on the perception, or at least not only on perception, insofar from the same percept a lot of other different statements carrying different meanings can result. On the other hand, the same statement could have been a result of a different perceptual set. Nevertheless, all these differences are not relevant to the self-identical meaning of the expression, - the percepts may even vanish, but it would not cause the expression to lose its meaning. Thus, between the perception and the expression an act (or a structure of acts) should be discovered – an act of meaning constitution, which is free from perceptual limitations: the expression-experience has, whether accompanied by perception or not, an intentional relation to something objective – to the self-identical meaning. It must be this mediating act which really serves as sense-giving, it is the essential constituent of the meaningfully functioning expression, and it provides that the

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<sup>41</sup> The attention should be drawn again to the fact that Husserl allows for a very broad understanding of intuition, by this term can be meant sensory perception (which has almost interchangeable use with intuition in *LU*), imagination, fantasy, etc.

expression's meaning is identically the same, whether a verifying perception may be associated with it or not.

Thus, perception indeed can contribute to the constitution of meaning of our judgments, it provides us with complete determinateness of the objective reference. But this does not imply that the contribution of perception is discoverable in the selfsame identical meaning. No part of meaning itself lies in the intuitive sphere. Considering the earlier example, when someone sees a blackbird and produces a statement quoted before, perception determines the relation of the statement to the particular object, but the meaning of the statement is not contained in perception. 'When I say "this", I do not merely perceive, but a *new act of pointing (of this-meaning) builds itself upon my perception, an act directed upon the latter and dependent on it, despite its difference. In this pointing reference, and in it alone, our meaning resides*'. (LU II 197-8). This means that without the perception the reference would be missing its definite differentiation. Therefore, the perception is 'responsible' for the realization of the possibility of intending something (a blackbird, for example) with its definite relation to the particular object of this perception, e.g., to the flying blackbird, but it does not constitute the meaning 'blackbird' itself, not even a part. This meaning remains the same, and even if instead of the perception we have any act among the manifold of imaginative presentations which present the same object in an identical manner. Moreover, once our meaning-intention is formed on the intuitive basis, it can be reproduced even without any help of perception or imagination, i.e. one can well understand the meaning 'blackbird' without actually representing the bird pictorially in imagination.

In the course of our perception its sensory content may vary to a certain degree, but throughout these variations and changes the same 'sense' or content of the same perceived object remains. Despite all nuances in perception we are conscious of the *same ideal meaning*, which transcends our *reell* experiences. This is possible, of course, on the basis of

consciousness' intentionality that has the ability to apprehend what is unique and universal in the manifold of sense-data. Without intentionality we would have this manifold only, but would never be able to perceive 'chairs' and 'tables' or refer to them with the help of meaningful expressions. Consciousness' intentions provide us with the 'form' of intention and its object, whereas our sense-data serve as a 'matter' for it. This is how, according to Husserl, meanings and their objects are constituted: by means of the objectivating interpretation (*objektivierende Deutung*) of conscious singular mental states. From this we can infer in what way the *reell* and the *ideal* realms are connected (we are not speaking here about the real realm due to the principle of freedom from presuppositions). Our consciousness is not entirely free in constituting a particular meaning and its object, it has to 'rely upon' the determined sense-data in each case. These sense-data brought to us by intuitions do not constitute meaning ('not even part of it', as Husserl notices (*LU*, II, 198)), but they play a certain role, that is of 'raw material', in the process of constitution. It is crucial to notice that ideal meaning cannot be derived or deduced from intuition, but only 'recognized' in it or, rather, recognized as firmly connected to it. Meanings, as ideal entities, entail their possible intending, but are not in any way dependent on it. The *reell* and the *ideal* have a certain 'parallelism', nevertheless, they are independent realms of being.

#### **2.4.a The Simplest Case of the Constitution.**

So, what happens in the simplest case of meaning-something on the basis of the sensual perception? Husserl gives us the example of the simplest possible case, when one sees the inkpot on the table and names it. There surely obtains a relation between the name and a thing named, but of what kind? This relation is descriptive, argues Husserl, the inkpot simply confronts us in perception. Looking at the matter more closely we see that we have a series of

perceptual experiences which are unified in one pattern, and this series undergoes a certain act of interpretation (*Auffassung*) endowing it with meaning. It is due to this interpretation that an *object* arises before our eyes instead of the fusion of sensuous experience. But what can bring these experiences into unity? Husserl calls this act the recognition (*das Erkennen*): the pattern of the perceived sense-data is recognized for an inkpot, which allows us to apply the word signifying of the meaning ‘inkpot’ to it. It is recognition which brings together our perceptual experiences with the experiences of naming something.

In all cases, argues Husserl, when a name is applied to an intuitively given thing, we should account for the presence of an act of recognition that mediates between the word-sound and the intuition of the thing. We should keep in mind, that no meaning is tied to any individual intuition, but belongs to a whole variety of possible intuitions. How can we account for this possible belonging? If, for example, we consider the meaning ‘red’, it is obvious that it can be possibly applied to any object which has red color as its part or moment. In this sense we can refer by the name ‘red’ to any of such objects, so that this name appears as belonging to the object. Considering this situation phenomenologically, we see that in order to constitute the meaning ‘red’ (or to refer to the object as to ‘red’, which is for Husserl *essentially the same*) we need a *unity* of the two acts: one of word-application, and another of setting up a thing. In other words, we need an underlying intuition of red unified in such a fashion that it is able to fulfill our meaning ‘red’, which we express by means of the word. This *recognitive* character of meaning–constitution allows us to build a significant relation between the constituted object (a *thing*, instead of the mere perceptual blend of images), and the ideal meaning, the intention of which this object fulfills. Thus, to the meaning ‘red’ corresponds the possibility of naming as ‘red’ all the red objects that might be given in possible intuitions<sup>42</sup>. The meaning itself is not bound to any of these objects, and is not

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<sup>42</sup> The same is the case even with the meanings of proper names: the object corresponding to the name ‘Berlin’ can be considered as one and unique, whereas its possible presentations are uncountable.

dependent on their existence, and on the existence of the respective acts of recognition and naming either, it just allows for the pure *a priori* possibility of recognitive acts of this kind.

#### **2.4.b The Dynamic Constitution.**

In contrast to the simple case described above, which Husserl calls *static* (insofar the related word and object coincide temporally with the act of recognition), he considers also the case of the dynamic unity of expression and expressed intuition, ‘where the expression first functions in merely symbolic<sup>43</sup> fashion, and then is accompanied by a “more or less” corresponding intuition’. (LU II 206) Here we can speak of consciousness of fulfillment – the intention, first empty, finds its fulfillment in the intuition which is disjoined with it in time, but fits into the semantic essence of the intention. We experience how the same objectivity is intuitively presented which was merely thought of in the symbolic act. The intentional essence of the act of intuition is adapted (more or less completely) to the meaning essence of the expressing act. Let us remember that, in the case of static relationships between the act of meaning and intuition, we pointed out the act of *recognition* of ideal meaning in the intuitive givenness. This act produces the significant relation of a meaning to what is given in an intuition *as meant*. But the meaning is not the same as the recognition. In the case of purely symbolic word-understanding the word means something to us, but nothing is recognized. The difference between static and dynamic unity consists not in the mere co-givenness of the intuition of what is named with the name, but in the phenomenologically peculiar *form* of unity. The meaning-intention is first given by itself, then the corresponding intuition enters in, and at the same time the phenomenological *unity* is produced, which is now manifested as

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<sup>43</sup> ‘Symbolic’ is used here by Husserl as a synonym to ‘signitive’, which serves for the most part to express the opposition to ‘intuitive’. The term ‘signification’, accordingly has the same function as ‘meaning’ for Husserl. Similarly, he often speaks of *significative* or *signitive acts*, instead of acts of meaning-intention, of meaning, and the like.

consciousness of fulfillment. It is the unity of the object, first, merely symbolically intended, and then given in intuition. Therefore, the words ‘knowledge of the object’ and ‘fulfillment of the meaning-intention’ express the same state of affairs, only from different standpoints. The former is from the standpoint of the meant object, whereas the latter considers the acts on both sides.

#### 2.4.c The Unity of Identity.

In both cases, that of static and dynamic unity, we can speak of *unity of identity*. The object of intuition is *the same* as the object of the thought fulfilling itself in it, or, expressed differently, the object is intuited exactly in the same way as it was meant. It is clear that this identity is not first brought in through a comparative reflection that is mediated by thought, but that it is there from the outset, that it is an experience, an unexpressed, unconceived experience. In other words: what we characterize phenomenologically, with regard to the acts, as fulfillment, is with regards to the objects on both sides, to the intuited object on the one side, and the thought object on the other side, to be expressed as an experience of identity, a consciousness of identity, an act of identification; the more or less complete identity corresponds objectively to the act of fulfillment, or ‘appears’ in it. For that reason, not merely the signification and intuition may be denoted as an act, but also the adequation, i.e., the unity of fulfillment, because it has an intentional correlate peculiar to it, an objectivity toward which it is directed. Another variant of the same state of affairs is expressed when one speaks of recognition. The circumstance that the meaning-intention is united in the manner of fulfillment with the intuition gives to the object appearing in the latter, where we are primarily concerned with it, the character of that which is recognized. Recognition as well as fulfillment – the former is only another word for the latter – may obviously be designated as an



identifying act. Identifying coincidence is experienced, even if the conscious intention towards identity, the relating identification, does not take place.

#### **2.4.d The Necessity of Fulfillment.**

What can we infer from Husserl's description of the meaning-constitution formulated in respect to our question, How precisely the *ideal* self-identical possible unities of meaning can have their actualization in the *reell* realm as a result of singular acts of consciousness? In other words, How can *ideal* meanings be constituted in our *reell* experiences? Every meaning is constituted in the appropriate act(s) of meaning, but does not depend on it, - this is what follows directly from Husserl's reasoning. The possibility of some self-identical content (the ideal meaning *per se*) to be intended does not depend on the actual intention of it, as it was shown above. Nevertheless, acts of meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment are acts of consciousness, and, therefore, depend on it. Every meaning-constitution is a double process, because both the *content* and the *object* of meaning should be constituted in it, and constituted precisely as identical i.e. the self-identical meaning-content should be explicitly intended in a singular intention, and the corresponding intuition (or set of intuitions) should be recognized as an object which fulfils the intended meaning. Meaning-intention coincides with meaning-fulfillment only if the object of meaning is constituted as given to us exactly in the same way as it is meant in the intention. This general scheme is, according to Husserl, applicable not only to cases when we have a direct perception (or when this perception is at least possible) of an object to fulfill the intention or any other intuition of it, but also to the cases of empty intentions, such as 'round square'.

... they are confusing the true meaninglessness mentioned above under 1  
[such as word-like sound-patterns and combinations of genuine expressions to

which no unified meaning correspond, as e.g. 'Green is or'], with another quite different meaninglessness, i.e. *the a priori impossibility of a fulfilling sense*. An expression has meaning in this sense if a possible fulfillment, i.e. the possibility of a unified intuitive illustration, corresponds to its intention. This possibility is plainly meant ideally. It concerns no contingent acts of expression or fulfillment, but their ideal contents; meaning as an ideal unity, here to be called 'intending meaning', on the one hand, and fulfilling meaning, standing to it in a certain relation of precise adequacy, on the other. We apprehend this ideal relation by ideative abstraction based on an act of unified fulfillment. In the contrary case we apprehend the real impossibility of meaning-fulfillment through an experience of the incompatibility of the partial meanings in the intended unity of fulfillment. (LU I 202).

Thus, in the case of empty intentions instead of experience of fulfillment (or admission of possibility of fulfillment) we have an experience of the impossibility of fulfillment. In order to apprehend the *a priori* impossibility of fulfillment of some meaning, we have, first, to intend its parts as possible (as in the case of 'round' and 'square') and then to realize that they are incompatible in the given meaning-context. Therefore, it seems to me that what 'fulfills' the empty intention is the unity of intentions, on the one hand, of its parts, on the other hand, the apprehended relationship of conflict between them. Accordingly, there can hardly be empty intentions of simple meanings (having no parts), insofar as these meanings are impossible to the extent that they cannot be even intended.

Fulfillment must happen in every case of frustration (*Enttäuschung*) or conflict (*Widerstreit*) of meaning, even in the case when the intended meaning is quite possible (such as 'red object'), but it cannot have its adequation in the intuition (presenting us with the green object). Every conflict, states Husserl, presupposes something that gives to the intention its *direction* toward the object of the conflicting act, and this direction can only be given to it finally by a synthesis of fulfillment. The conflict presupposes, then, a certain ground of agreement.

If I think A to be red, when it shows itself to be ‘in fact’ green, an intention to red quarrels with an intention to green in this showing forth, i.e. in its application to intuition. Undeniable, however, this can only be the case because A has been identified in the two acts of signification and intuition. Were this not so, the intention would not relate to the intuition. (*LU II 212*)

The total intention refers to an A that is red, and the intuition shows an A that is green.

While meaning and intuition correspond to each other with respect to the direction towards the same A, the unifiedly co-given intentional factors enter first of all into conflict, the meant red (that is meant as red of the A) does not agree with the intuited green. An intention is disappointed in the manner of a conflict only by being a part of a more comprehensive intention whose complementary part is *fulfilled*. Therefore, again, we cannot speak of conflict in the case of simple or isolated acts of meaning.

The decisive fact is that both parts of meaning-constitution, that are the intention and its object, must have the *same identical content* which belongs to the *ideal* realm, this content should be meant in the intention and respectively recognized in the intuitive fulfillment. This means that the question, In what way these universal objects (contents or meanings *per se*) are related to the *reell* particular experiences of consciousness is still left unanswered. Husserl does not problematize the *origins* of meaning-intention and its object, i.e. his analysis does not show, how the ideal objectivities can be ‘exemplified’ in a single consciousness’ mental states. The particular description of the process of recognition with respect to the analysis of the constitution of the intended objectivity out of the perceptual fusion is also missing. We have no hints at how the recognition can happen, except the statement that it is done by intentionality which partially relies on the sense-data material. Husserl’s precise analysis of intention and its object starts from the point when both are already constituted and the question under discussion is that of recognition only, i.e. of whether an objects fulfills the intention properly. This can tempt us dangerously to think that ideal meanings *per se* are nothing but merely helpful theoretical concepts, produced by means of generalization or

abstraction from our manifold experiences of expressing something (this is precisely what follows from viewing meaning as species). Husserl himself admits that ‘we even find ourselves compelled to say that the numbers are produced in the acts of enumerating, the truth under consideration is subjectively formed in the act of judging’<sup>44</sup>. Thus, the detailed explication of the process of our grasping of meaning cannot be found in the *Investigations*. This, obviously, makes Husserl understanding of the ideality of meaning even more obscure.

Nevertheless, we have found out one important aspect of the relation between the *reell* and the ideal objects. Each ideal meaning is related to a possible realm of *reell* objects, namely to psychic subjects and acts, by means of possible expressions signifying of our consciousness’ intentions of this meaning. The actual existence of the *real* objects as well as the actual *reell* intending of meanings is irrelevant in respect of meanings ideality.

## 2.5 Conclusions.

Husserl claims openly that ‘The genuine identity that we here assert is none other than the identity of the species. As a species and only as a species, can it embrace in unity, and as an ideal unity, the dispersed multiplicity of individual singulars.’ (*LU*, I, 230). Their ideality is the ideality of what is specific in general. Moreover, meanings, we are told, constitute a class of ‘universal objects’. It seems that the essence of meaning is declared firmly, so that we can do nothing but agree that what Husserl takes to be a meaning is an ideal species corresponding to various acts of meaning, just as redness in specie correspond to different red objects. Nevertheless, it seems to me that his following line of reasoning (in particular in *the Investigation VI*) suggests that the theory of meaning as species leads to

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<sup>44</sup> E.Husserl ‘The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*’ in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl’s ‘Logical Investigations*’, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, p.201.

some serious problems, which it cannot answer in its own terms<sup>45</sup>. To demonstrate this we should turn from the first-order meanings to that of the higher order, the categorial meanings and respective acts of their constitution. These acts play an extremely important role in the *Logical Investigations*. They aim at the explanation of the origin of logical categories and generic notions, which is, as already indicated, one of the main aims of pure logic, whose foundations Husserl tries to provide us with.

### **3. Categorial Intuition: Its Perceptual and Logical Grounds.**

#### **3.1 Categorial Meaning.**

We have described so far the process of the constitution of the type of meanings, intentions of which can be fulfilled by simple (sensuous) intuition, alongside with the relation of these ideal meanings to the *reell* objects<sup>46</sup>. The analysis of our expressions, nevertheless, suggests that there are meanings, for which mere sensuous intuition is not enough to serve as the ground for fulfillment. These are meanings expressed by such words as ‘is’, ‘many’, ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘not’, etc. What can serve as a fulfillment of these meanings? Husserl insists, that no kind of sensuous perception can fulfill them, because in our sensuous perceptions only objects and their parts are given, but not the being of objects, and not the relations between

<sup>45</sup> At the end of his career Husserl openly rejects his early understanding of meaning as species (see: E.Husserl *Experience and Judgment*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1973 pp.261-3), but in this chapter this circumstance will not be considered specifically, insofar the present subject of discussion is only the theory of meaning as posited in the *LU*.

<sup>46</sup> In the paragraphs devoted to categorial intuition (*Investigation VI, Chapter 6*), Husserl often lapses into talk about perception of *real* objects or direct givenness of *reality*. Nevertheless, it is implausible to suppose that he violates his principle of freedom from presuppositions, because in these very paragraphs he makes an important remark: ‘Naturally we are here only concerned with what constitutes the object *as* it appears in perception, and *as what* it appears in perception, and not with such constituents as may pertain to it in “objective reality”, and which only later experience, knowledge and science will bring out’. (*LU II* 287) On the basis of this statement, I suppose we can well understand that he does not deal here with the description of *real* objects, but with their appearances in our intuition, thus with their *reel* correlates. Indeed, it would be meaningless to talk about objects of first and second order while speaking of *real* things, insofar any real thing has its objective parts and relations to other things independently of our perception of it itself and these relations.

objects or between an object and its part. ‘... In the mere form of a judgment, only certain antecedently specifiable parts of our statement can have something which corresponds to them in [sensible] intuition, while to other parts of the statement nothing intuitive possibly can correspond. (*LU* II 275). If we look at the formal logical form of any expression (‘All S are P’, for example), we will see, that meanings able to be fulfilled by sense perception alone can occupy only the places indicated by letters (variables), whereas nothing in sense perception can give fulfillment to the supplementary formal meanings (‘all’ and ‘are’ in our example). Thus, those elements of every expression which are directly fulfilled by intuition are called elements of stuff (*Stoff*)<sup>47</sup>, all other meanings are the supplementary forms. For example, in the expression ‘This tree is green’ such meanings as ‘this’, ‘tree’ and ‘green’ can be fulfilled ‘immediately’ or ‘in one stroke’ by a sensuous perception. But the expression in question obviously means something else than the expression ‘the green tree’, it establishes the whole-part relation between the ‘tree’ and the property of ‘being green’<sup>48</sup>. What fulfills the meaning of this relation? It is unreasonable to look for this fulfillment in sense perception, insofar perceptions fulfilling both mentioned expressions can well be identical, and nevertheless, the expressions have different meanings. The relation just described is a categorial object, as well as any conjunction, disjunction, inherence, identity and the like. They are called objects of higher-order in comparison to simple first-order objects, such as ‘tree’, ‘green’ and the like. Likewise, categorial acts are supposed to be acts of a higher(second)-order, they should be grounded upon the lower constituent acts, i.e. those acts in which single meanings originate. Nevertheless, a categorial act is not simply a ‘sum total’ of several meaning-constituting acts of the first-order, on the contrary, it intends an object irreducible to objects fulfilling our simple intentions. The signitive intention of the categorial act does not intend what is

<sup>47</sup> Husserl does not want to use here the term ‘matter’, insofar it can be confused with the matter as contrasted with the quality of any of consciousness’ acts, i.e. confused with the ‘intentional matter’ or ‘interpretative sense’.

<sup>48</sup> Qualities are considered by Husserl as non-independent parts of objects. See *Investigation III*, §§2,3, and 7-10 in particular.

intuitively presented in the first-order acts, but a universal object, a particular example of which is documented in the intuition of simple objects. If this categorial intention is fulfilled by a categorial object, then it reveals an objective ideal possibility of the universal. But what object can fulfill such an intention?

### **3.2 The Ambiguity of the Term 'Intuition'.**

Knowledge, according to Husserl, always has the character of the identity of meaning-intention with meaning-fulfillment. If categorial acts of intending cannot be fulfilled by sensuous perception, then it is obvious, that they call for another type of fulfillment – for a ‘combination’ of perception with a pure logical form. The whole process of the constitution of categorial meanings and objects is called categorial intuition. This name sounds rather misleading, insofar an intuition of something which is in principle non-perceivable might seem absurd. Nevertheless, Husserl insists on calling this act an intuition arguing that the concept of intuition (and respectively perception, imagination, etc.) must be broadened to include non-perceivable objects as well, because he finds the essential homogeneity of the function of fulfillment between the cases of simple and categorial meaning: fulfillment means here the relation to their respective objects. ‘The object with these categorial forms is not merely referred to, as in the case where meanings function purely symbolically, but it is set before our very eyes in just these forms. In other words: it is not merely thought of, but intuited or perceived.’ (*LU*, II, 280) Thus, we cannot manage simply without usage of the term ‘intuition’, even if we are talking about cases to which sensuous intuition is not applicable, just as while talking about non-sensuous subject-presentation, we cannot avoid the term ‘object’. As pluralities, disjunctions, and states of affairs (*Sachverhalte*) are objects, so the acts through which they are given are intuitions. This unusual broadening of the concept

of intuition stems also from the fact that Husserl does not accept the Kantian strict distinction between intuition (*Anschauung*) as the ability to receive representations in a way the objects are directly given to us and the understanding (*Verstand*) as the ability to synthesize the manifold impressions under *a priori* given concepts (categories). In the *LU* both these roles are presupposed to be performed by consciousness (*Bewußtsein*) which embraces such capacities as perception, intuition, and constitution (of both single and complex meanings) by means of its respective experiences. Thus, the origin of categories should be, first, necessarily transferred from the sphere of the given to that of the constituted, and, second, correlated with the origin of the single intuitions insofar both originate in accord with the same laws of consciousness.

### **3.3 The Structure of a Categorial Act.**

#### **3.3.a Sensuous Intuition and Its Role in the Constitution of Object of the First-Order.**

In order to find out how exactly categorial acts are performed we need to compare them to first-order acts, the acts of simple meaning-constitution, in the simplest case based upon sense perception. As mentioned earlier, in sense perception the thing appears before us straightforwardly, i.e. its appearance does not require any founding acts. Perception of an object is always a homogeneous unity. Due to intentionality (the ability consciousness to be directed at an object as a unified single object), it appears as one unified thing, and not as the mere sum total of its properties. We intend the meaning ‘wall’ as a single meaning, and what is able to fulfill it is a single object, and not the mixture of properties such as white, solid, etc. Of course, these are all properties of a thing which appears (some of them can be perceived, e.g. ‘white’, some only presupposed, e.g. ‘solid’, if the wall is perceived from a distance), but



in the mere sense perception there are no specific acts which make them their respective objects in their own right. The object as a whole is given to us explicitly, but its parts – only implicitly, in the sense that they are not (yet) made objects of our explicit intention. Even if we experience a continuous perceptual series, argues Husserl, e.g., we go around a house thereby perceiving it continuously from different sides, we still have one perceived unity, it is always ‘this house’ that we perceive. We have a phenomenological unity of perception, which is not merely composed of fused manifold perceptual acts, but represents essentially one act (the perception of single selfsame object) which entails one concept.

This line of thinking might seem quite dubious. Would it not be more plausible to suppose that in our perception of an object from different sides we also have to perform some act of recognition (that the other side belongs to the same object) or identification (of both perceptual contents as belonging to one object) in order to achieve in the end a single concept? Husserl admits that some sort of identification has to be performed in such cases, but not explicitly, in the sense that it is not an identity as a relation which we mean by our expression ‘this house’ after looking all over it, but just this house, as a single object of our perception. There is a unity of identification in intending the meaning ‘this house’, but there is no unity of acts of identification, in other words, in our simple perceptions we perceive single objects, but not their identity with themselves. To perceive the latter we necessarily have to perform complex categorial acts of the higher order.

### **3.3.b Subdividing Acts.**

Each act of simple perception can serve as a basis for new acts because it contains the implicitly perceived parts mentioned above. These parts can form a basis of new subdividing acts, in which they are perceived explicitly. In these subdividing acts we have a new

awareness of the object, we perceive it now as containing specific parts (or standing in a relation to other objects), and only in this new mode of interpretative perception do the connected parts of the object acquire the character of parts and wholes, or do related objects become envisaged as related. It is important, that these acts presuppose the initial first-order act essentially, in the sense that the object perceived in the first-order act does not ‘disappear’ from our attention, our consciousness is still directed at this self-same object, only the mode of this directedness has been changed. On the basis of the initial first-order act and subdividing acts synthesized together we, then, perform a final act of categorial intuition in which a new object emerges. The relation per se (part-whole relation, conjunction, disjunction etc.) is this object, and it is intuited by us as something that could not have been intuited by the foundational acts alone.

### **3.3.c The Synthesis of Coincidence.**

Every categorial act, thus, has a threefold structure: 1) the founding act of the first-order, that is the fulfillment of the simple meaning-intention by a corresponding perception, in which we grasp the object as a whole, whereas its parts and properties are meant only implicitly; 2) the subdividing acts, in which the intention is directed to one specific part/property, which is constitutive of the object, e.g. color, size, relation to another object etc.; 3) the synthesis of the categorial meaning by means of the apprehension of coincidence of the two founding intentions (the intention of the whole and of the specific part) and the constitution of the ideal categorial object. For example, we perceive first the tree as a whole, as an object fulfilling the intended meaning ‘tree’ straightforwardly. Then, in our second act of perception we focus on its green color, as its part or dependent moment that belongs constitutively to the tree. Only in this second act the tree is given explicitly to us as containing

the color green in itself. Finally, we unite these two perceptual acts not as just performed together or sequentially, but we synthesize them in a single act, through which only the part-whole relation *per se* is given to us, so we can express it by means of words ‘The tree is green’, using the universal logical formal relation that we just constituted. This final act is not perceptual but is built upon our intuitions which serve as the media helping to achieve the primary appearance of the constituted relation. The ideal categorial meaning achieved in this act should not be mixed with the *reell* location of the constituted relation. Categorial meanings are *ideal* like simple meanings. They can be meant unlimited number of times by unlimited number of speakers and thinkers, and they can be shared between them, without actual dependence on the acts of their intending. In the *reell* intuitions that we have all the categorial relations are present only implicitly, and they are capable of being made explicit only by means of the new founded acts.

### **3.4 Intuition of Essences.**

Another type of categorial act is that of the intuition of essences (*Wesensanschauung*) or universal intuition. ‘We now turn to examples from another set of categorial acts, in which the objects of the founding acts do not enter into the intention of the founded one, and would only reveal their close relation to it in relational acts.’ (*LU* II 292) The structure of this act of ideation is essentially the same as that of the categorial act: it is built upon our single perceptions of individual objects from which by means of a founded perception a new object is intended, a general Idea, like that of ‘redness’ or ‘the species four.’ The object of the act of ideation, just as of the categorial act is ‘the object of a higher order,’ which means that there can be no sense-data experienced by us on the ground of which we can directly perceive the essence but it should be constituted by a number of specific acts of consciousness. Just as in

the case of categorial intuition after the intending of the object as a whole, our attention is drawn to one particular aspect of this object. In the case of the intuition of essences the particular aspect (the being common to other items of the kind) is also ‘highlighted’. What follows is the synthesis of coincidence of the act of ideation, the ‘product’ of which is the essence. The universal itself is brought to consciousness and achieves its actual givenness in this way. On the basis of the manifold of individual examples of one particular kind this kind itself is meant. This is how we are able to constitute concepts, therefore our knowledge indeed can be a knowledge of universals (as pure logic is claimed to be) and not only of individual particular cases. Essence is also supposed to be a meaning, although a meaning of a particular kind - a general meaning to which no *real* object corresponds. Although Mohanty states that ‘all Husserlian essences are not meanings’, the arguments he provides for this extremely strong claim (the account of meanings (noemata) is possible within a phenomenological attitude, whereas account of essences belongs to an ontological attitude) refer to the *Ideas* only (in particular *Ideen III*)<sup>49</sup>, and cannot, to my mind, be found in the *LU*, where we do not have a concept of noematic meaning yet. What is even more important: in the *LU* we do not have the notion of phenomenological attitude yet (as I tried to show above in the context of the difference between the principle of freedom from presuppositions and phenomenological reduction). Therefore, I believe that speaking of essences as meanings within the theory of meaning as presented in the *LU* is still justifiable, insofar essences are described here as constituted in accordance with the general scheme of meaning-constitution. Eidetic intuition is presented as a particular form of categorial intuition, and the latter without any doubts results in the constitution of the categorial meaning. Indeed, ‘coloredness’ or ‘horseness’ cannot be perceived in principle. What fulfills the intentions of the acts of ideation is, then, ideal objects, the ‘species’. Husserl uses the term ‘species’ in this context, to my mind, for the

<sup>49</sup> J.N. Mohanty ‘Husserl’s Thesis of the Ideality of Meanings’ in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl’s ‘Logical Investigations’*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, p.78.

purpose of underlining that the object of the eidetic intuition is general, in comparison to the object of the simple intention. Nevertheless, he insists that the intuition of essences should be grounded upon the *reell* perception of objects, in other words, he argues for the impossibility of the constitution of meaning of ‘redness’ without an actual perception (imagination, memory) of any of the red objects, or the impossibility to understand what the ‘number three’ means without ever seeing a group of three things<sup>50</sup>. On the other hand, the perception alone is not able to fulfill the meaning of the general, so that the intending ideation performed by consciousness is needed.<sup>51</sup>

### **3.5 The Freedom of Consciousness vs. the Ideal Laws.**

We have seen so far that categorial and general meaning (essence) are founded on the acts of simple meaning-constitution, but require also quite different type of acts – the synthesis of coincidence of the founding and the partial meaning-intention which yields the categorial object. In these categorial acts a new significant feature of consciousness is revealed – its *freedom* of constituting categorial meaning. Let us remember, that the act of simple meaning-intention should be fulfilled by a corresponding intuition, and in order for the constitution to be authentic, this intuition should not be in conflict with the meaning-intention, for example, on the basis of the sense data of a green object, it is impossible to constitute the meaning ‘red’, the *reell* content of our consciousness does not allow for it. In the case of categorial intuition none of the categorial forms is necessarily given in the intuition, so that consciousness has its freedom to connect and relate the given contents, to ‘organize’ different groups and part-groups of them in many arbitrary ways. Out of the *same* given sensuous matter multiple categorial possibilities can arise, for example when on the basis of our sense-

<sup>50</sup> Peculiarly, we don’t need sensual perception of several objects of one kind to perform the eidetic intuition, because we can vary the presentation of only one object in imagination.

<sup>51</sup> For the illuminating account of the role of perception in the categorial intuition see: D.Lohmar ‘Husserl’s Concept of Categorial Intuition’ in D.Zahavi and F.Stjernfelt (eds.), *One Hundred Years of Phenomenology*, The Hague, Nijhoff, 2002, pp.125-145.

data we constitute the meaning ‘wall’, we are certainly free to form any categorial judgment regarding any particular part of it, i.e. we can direct our attention to its color, shape, etc., compare it with other objects with regards to its shape, size and so on. This freedom of consciousness is not unlimited, of course, there are some basic laws for the formation of categories, insofar as the constitution of the latter is founded on the first-order acts. ‘For how else could we speak of categorial *perception* and *intuition*, if any conceivable matter could be put in any conceivable form, and the underlying straightforward intuitions therefore permitted themselves to be arbitrary combined with categorial characters?’ (LU II 309) For example, we are free to constitute a whole-part relationship, but we cannot convert it in a way that the whole will be considered as a part and the part as the whole. Also we cannot change this whole-part relation into an identity or total exclusion. Obviously, we can merely intend the meaning of any relation between any set of terms, but in some cases our intentions will not be able to find their respective fulfillments, ‘we cannot *see* sensuous stuff in any categorial form we like, let alone *perceive* it thus, and above all not perceive it *adequately*’ (Ibid) This leads us to think that each founding act allows for a multitude of *possible* and, accordingly, *impossible* categorial forms that can be based on it. The analysis at the end of this chapter of meaning as possibility which is in a certain way dependent on the general ‘context’ of meanings will make this claim more clear<sup>52</sup>.

These laws governing categorial meaning are the basic laws of logic, and on them the normative regulation of possible signitive thought depends. ‘If, e.g., the statement “*w* is a part of *W*” is valid, then the statement of the form “*W* is a whole relatively to *w*” is also valid. If it is true that there is an *A* which is *B*, then it is also true that a certain *A* is *B*, or that not all *A*’s

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<sup>52</sup> Jumping a bit ahead of the planned discussion, we can now notice that this implicit idea of the freedom of consciousness will be developed further by Husserl and result explicitly in such crucial concepts as *fancy* (*Fantasie*) in the *Ideas I* and *creative spontaneity* (*erzeugende Spontaneität*) in the *EJ*.

are not *B*'s etc.' (*LU* II 313) Their subject is not the validity of any particular meaning, but the pure possibilities of the combination and transformation of ideal meanings.

Thus, the ideal laws which govern the constitution of categorial forms determine the ideally close set of their possible variations in relation to some definite intentionally identical matter (this surely allows for the particular examples of this matter to be numerically variable). These laws, consequently, are claimed by Husserl to have essentially a pure and analytic character, which is independent from the particularity of any concrete matter. They govern both the possibility of the acts of categorial intuition and of the objects of these acts.

That an object thus and thus categorially formed is possible, is essentially related to the fact that a categorial intuition [...] can set such an object completely before one's eyes, to the fact, in other words, that *the requisite categorial syntheses and other categorial acts can be really performed on the basis of the founding intuitions concerned* (even if the latter are imaginary). (*LU* II 310)

It is important to notice that these basic laws do not prescribe what categorial forms can be applied to any particular matter, but they only guarantee *a priori* that if a certain general matter is capable of acquiring a certain form, then it has a definitely limited set of other possible forms. Here we have again Husserl's claim that basic laws of logic governing ideal meanings are not the norms (in the sense of prescriptions) of a human being's actual thinking, but the pure norms of possible *a priori* relations of ideal meanings.

### **3.6 Conclusions.**

It is obvious now, that the account of categorial meaning is of crucial importance within the general context of Husserl's theory of meaning in the *LU* not only because it allows for the description of the constitution of categories (which is by no means unimportant), but

also and mainly because it demonstrates possible categorial relations of meanings that laws of pure logic govern. Within the analysis of the categorial meaning-constitution we can demonstrate precisely in what the freedom of consciousness' intentionality lies and to what extent it is limited by basic logical laws. Exactly at this point the double determination of consciousness (by ideal laws and *reell* sense-data) becomes apparent. Nevertheless, this determination requires a more precise analysis.

#### **4. Meaning as the Ideal Possibility.**

Now we can to our final question: What exactly is meant by the ideality of meaning? In order to clarify this peculiar sense of possibility in what follows I will refer mainly to Chapter 8 of the *Prolegomena* and Chapter 4 of *Investigation VI*<sup>53</sup>, where Husserl directs our attention to the distinction between possible and impossible meanings and to two different senses of possibility – the real and the ideal. The first distinction seems to presuppose that possibility is not applicable to all meanings, but it turns out that this is not so in the strict sense. As will become clear, the relation between possibility and impossibility is that of *reciprocity* provided that change in the meaningful content occurs.

##### **4.1 The 'Dialectics' of Possible and Impossible Meanings.**

Husserl asserts sharply that meanings can be divided into possible (internally consistent) and impossible (internally inconsistent). This refers to meanings as ideal unities and not to particular acts of meaning, and, by the same token, possibility and impossibility should also be understood in an ideal way, i.e. independent from any particular individual's

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<sup>53</sup> See *LU* I 101-20 and *LU* II 250-58.



actual grasping of their consistency or inconsistency. ‘This is true, at least, when possibility is given its ‘pure’, and therefore non-empirical sense’. (LU II 250) What is meant here by the pure non-empirical sense of possibility? Every mathematical truth, every law of pure logic, and every possible meaning in general have their ideal possibility independently from the actual grasping or from any inner evidence of them, which can emerge in consciousness. The proposition ‘A is true’ expresses this ideal possibility and it is not equal to the real possibility expressed by the proposition ‘It is possible for every consciousness to judge that A is true’. Obviously, in many cases the ideal possibility entails the real, i.e. compatibility or incompatibility of certain ideal essences results in respective compatibility or incompatibility of certain mental experiences. But there are certain contrary cases, such as psychologically impossible inner evidence of mathematical truths related to numbers with millions of places and the additions and multiplications of them. No one can actually grasp these truths or perform the mathematical operations with these numbers, nevertheless they are possible in the purely ideal sense. There can well be some meanings or laws which transcend human cognitive capacity, as some mathematical theorems which have never been proved, yet bear at the same time *a priori* validity. The Kantian Idea (*die Idee*) can serve as another example, argues Husserl: there is only ideal, but not real possibility to perceive at one stroke the whole world with all its multiplicity of beings. Thus, Husserl writes, ‘what is psychologically impossible may very well be ideally possible.’ (LU I 118) We always have to keep in mind this strict distinction between the psychological possibility of certain sorts of mental acts as the natural conditions of our experience (*Erfahrung*), and the pure non-empirical possibility of the independent realm of ideal objects as the ideal conditions of our experience. Accordingly, the realms of psychology and pure logic differ respectively.

## 4.2 Husserl's Understanding of Possibility.

In this non-empirical sense, possibility of meaning is defined in the following way: 'there is an adequate essentia (*Essenz*)<sup>54</sup> which corresponds to it in specie in the sphere of objectifying acts, an essentia whose matter is identical with its own, ... it has a fulfilling sense.' (LU II 250) I take this definition to express several thoughts. First, there can be some meaning-intentions to which respective meaning-fulfillments can correspond completely and exactly in a way that these meaning-intentions require (this does not entail, of course, any actual intending and fulfillment of meanings). Second, there is initially an ideal unity which and only which guarantees the possibility of itself being intuited in some individual case (or in multiplicity of cases provided that the intuitive matter remains the same) together with the possibility of the individual consciousness as intuiting it. Thus, again we have a claim that meaning as an ideal essence is ontologically prior to any possible intention of it, and precisely in this essence the ideal, necessary and sufficient criteria of possibility of any particular meaning-intention consists.

### 4.2.a Compatibility and Incompatibility.

To explain this claim Husserl starts with the example of complex meanings, stating that their possibility consists in the essential compatibility (*Vereinbarkeit*) or consistency (*Verträglichkeit*) of their partial contents. This compatibility is ideal in the sense that it belongs to these ideal contents themselves and not to the individual occasions of their actual unity or our contingent comprehension of such a unity. The latter may not occur at all, nevertheless, the contents still are ideally compatible. In Husserl we see an example of

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<sup>54</sup> 'Essentia' in Husserl's understanding is a notion very close to that of intentional matter. 'We shall say that two intuitive acts have the same *essentia* (*Essenz*), if their pure intuitions have the same matter. A percept, and the whole possibly existent infinity of imaginative presentations, which all present the same object with the same breadth of fullness, have one and the same essentia. All objectively complete intuitions with one and the same matter have the same *essentia*.' (LU II 249).

compatibility of such meanings as ‘redness’ and ‘roundness’. If there were no actual occurrences of objects being both red and round, this would not affect the ideal compatibility of the meanings ‘redness’ and ‘roundness’ and their pure possibility of being united together in one object (although, in German and English, at least, there is no word to express both redness and roundness in one object; this shows us again that unities of meaning do not necessarily coincide with linguistic unities). This line of thought seems unfortunate to me, although a perfectly valid one. It explains the particular case of two meanings which allow ideally for their possible unity. The question that remains is, how the possibility of a single ideal essence can be demonstrated, especially of such an essence which ‘definition’ hardly allows to be ‘broken’ into several more basic concepts, such as ‘being’ or ‘redness’ alone, to give an extreme example. There is only one slight mention of such a case in the paragraphs in question, namely: ‘In the limiting case of a simple content one can define the validity of the simple species as a ‘compatibility with self’’ (*LU* II 252). This ‘compatibility with self’ is a hardly graspable notion, especially in the case of the simplest meanings; most probably Husserl relies here on some intuitive understanding of the cases, in which some meaning is capable of being intended. If this is so, then we have to admit, that there can be no examples of simple impossible meanings, insofar, if something is recognized as a simple meaning, its possibility of being intended is already admitted<sup>55</sup>.

Impossibility (or incompatibility) of meaning, on the other hand, is claimed by Husserl to be an Idea equally important as that of possibility and by no means just a negation of the latter. Meanings are incompatible if they cannot possibly form a unity, as, for example, redness and greenness of one and the same bodily extension. Here a problem arises. The possibility of meanings can be easily confirmed just by one particular example of their actual

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<sup>55</sup> Obviously, this is not to say that there can be no empty intentions or meanings without references. ‘Spirit’ or ‘soul’ would be a perfect example for a physicalist. The meaning is graspable but nothing refers to it in the actual physical world.

unity (although it by no means depends on any example), whereas it seems that there can be no final proof in the case of the incompatibility of meanings. The failure of our contingent efforts to unite some meanings does not necessarily entail their ideal incompatibility. Nevertheless, Husserl insists that in our failing attempts to unite incompatible meanings we experience not only the failure of these particular attempts but the general ideal relationship between these meanings – the relationship of conflict (*das Verhältnis der Widerstreites*), which is independent from any particular empirical efforts.

### **4.3 The Context-Dependency of Possibility.**

In what follows we see the peculiar relativity of possibility and impossibility of meanings expressed by Husserl in a surprisingly dialectical fashion.

*A content of the sort q is never simply incompatible with the content of the sort p: talk of their incompatibility always relates to a definite sort of combination of contents W(a, b... p) which includes p, and should now include q as well. ...What is specific in the consciousness of conflict pertains to these Species, i.e. the generalization of the situation is actual, is realizable in an intuitively unified consciousness of universality, it yields a unified, valid ('possible') Species which unites p and q, through conflict, on the basis of W. (LU II 254)*

From this follows that the relationship of conflict also has an ability to unify meanings, and this peculiar unity of conflict is a unity of possibility. This 'second-order possibility', as I would like to call it, entails that in a given general context of contents it is possible to intend two or more meanings in question, and that these meanings will be incompatible with each other, in other words, there is a relationship of conflict between them

and, therefore, it is not possible to intend them in a single intention. Conflict and union, thus, are not mutually excluding notions in the absolute sense for Husserl, but only in a particular context, in a specifically determined correlation of meanings. I suppose that here we have already, although in a not explicitly formulated way, a notion of an intentionality having a horizon (*Horizontintentionalität*), which will be explicated and developed in the following works.<sup>56</sup> It is the specific make-up of the whole of contents on the basis of which we realize that some meanings are possible (compatible) and some are not, i.e. they are in possible conflict. Should this whole or horizon be changed, the very distribution of possibility and impossibility will alter. For example, the same redness and greenness which are incompatible with each other as simultaneous overlays on the same bodily extension are perfectly compatible if taken to be side by side within the same extension. Even the possibility of such meaning as ‘the point where parallel lines intersect’ can change depending on whether we regard it in the context of Euclidean geometry or not. Moreover, the incompatibility can also function as a unity, a unity between the conflicting character of relations of two contents, and these contents themselves. In other words, if there is a possibility of two meanings being intended within a given set of multiple contents, and if these meanings are unified with the necessity of their conflict in this set, then the impossibility of their being intended together follows. This leads us to an axiom of the convertibility of relations of possibility and impossibility: one can be changed into another provided that the general intentional set of correlated contents is also changed. What is most important here is that each ideal meaning or *essentia* should be regarded first and foremost as possible/impossible, and the same pertains to several meanings taken together.

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<sup>56</sup> See e.g. *Ideas I* §§80-2.

#### 4.4 Objections.

This is a very problematic point in Husserlian argumentation. If the most essential characteristic of meaning, i.e. its possibility, depends on the whole of contents in which this meaning is intended, then it becomes difficult to argue for the strict ideality of meanings, insofar the choice of general content can hardly be conceived as ideally given but arguably depends on the individual consciousness, its past and present intentions<sup>57</sup>. This gives way to psychologism which Husserl so vigorously tries to refute. In order to justify the concept of meaning as ideal possibility in the sense described above we need definitely a more elaborated notion of the whole set of contents, and the description of ideal conditions under which such a set can be formed together with the explanation of their correlation with the consciousness acts of intending this set. As far as I am aware, these explanations and descriptions cannot be found in the *LU*, which makes its anti-psychological theory of meaning seriously problematic. The possible way of dealing with these problems we can find in the *Ideen*, where the notion of intentionality in general and its horizon in particular are given precise attention.

#### 5. Conclusion

Now let us summarize briefly Husserl's account of meaning in the *LU* and the problems it poses. Meanings are claimed by Husserl to be ideal entities, which should not be confused with the multiple *reell* consciousness' acts of intending and constitution of meanings. Meanings as such form the subject matter of pure logic, which deals with *a priori* laws governing possible combinations of these meanings, not our actual usage of them. On the other hand, phenomenology investigates and describes the very connection between ideal

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<sup>57</sup> Another way of conceiving of such a content is to claim it to be intersubjective - this path Husserl undertakes much later, in the *Cartesian Meditations*.

unities of meaning and our actual intending of them on the basis of acts of intuition (both simple and categorial). Given this ‘division of labor’ between these two sciences, it seems that Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* contain not that much of *actual logic* in them. The *Prolegomena* indeed define and justify pure logic as the *a priori* science, but they do not contain the actual elaboration of this science, they rather provide only the necessary conditions for it. Out of the six *Investigations*, the first four are devoted to the questions of definitions of basic notions and matters of formal grammar. What the *Investigations V* and *VI* provide us with, I take mainly to be the *phenomenological* description, insofar their subjects-matters are respectively the analysis of consciousness and its acts. This is not surprising if we remember that Husserl openly claims that it is not idealities *per se*, with which he is primarily concerned, not even the logical laws (which are obviously known *a priori* to us, so that it is not necessary to restate them again and again unless one writes a textbook on logic; the only serious problem arises with the correct understanding of the ideal status of these laws, for which the *Prolegomena* were so crucial) but the interconnection of subjective consciousness acts through which the ideal objects are constituted.<sup>58</sup> Thus, our analysis circled around two basic questions, namely: How the ideality of meaning is to be understood? and How this ideal meaning can be constituted in *reell* acts of consciousness?

I argue that meanings (single, categorial, or essences) can be understood as ideal in the sense of pure possibilities of intending something or performing an act of meaning. On the one hand, they are not dependent on the real occurrences of the acts of meaning in consciousness, but on the other hand, they are not the ready-made empty forms which can be simply filled by different matter. Each meaning appears to come to being (more precisely, to be constituted) only within the actual performance of acts of meaning by consciousness on the ground of what consciousness experiences. Husserl states that the same identical meaning can

<sup>58</sup> See E.Husserl ‘The Task and the Significance of the *Logical Investigations*’ in Mohanty, J.N. (ed.) *Readings on E.Husserl’s ‘Logical Investigations’*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1977, pp.201-2.

be fulfilled in the multitude of distinct acts of meaning-intention. Nevertheless, to my mind, this does not mean that meanings pre-exist the actual intending of them performed by consciousness in the sense that they eternally exist in some alternative realm of perfect being as Platonic Forms. Rather, they may be said to 'exist' only as pure ideal possibilities of intending something. Each of these possibilities can be actualized an infinite number of times by an infinite multitude of speakers and thinkers. This does not mean, of course, that if there were no actual trees in the phenomenal world there would be no meaning 'tree'; rather that the possible meaning 'tree' can be actualized only if consciousness on the basis of its intuitive experiences (which can have the mode of actual sense-data or that of the imaginary) intends the object which fulfills the intended meaning 'tree.' There is an ideal possibility of such an intention insofar as such meanings as 'tree' is internally consistent, but in order for it to be actually intended there should be a real possibility of this intention as well, i.e. a particular consciousness should have certain experiences on the basis of which it can intend this meaning. From this it does not follow that meanings precede the actual process of their constitution or can exist without the realization of this process, they are 'merely' possible. All that consciousness deals with from the start are simple experiences of sense-data, out of which it can constitute an object to perceive and intend a meaning which this object is supposed to fulfill. But there is a limit to its intentions, this limitation is conditioned by ideal norms of any possible thinking. According to these norms, some meanings cannot be intended, or some cannot be united in one intention, but others are possible to be intended and fulfilled. The actualization of any possible meaning is a consciousness of identity, which builds a bridge between the *reell* and the ideal realms. In the coincidence of meaning-intention with meaning-fulfillment we see that consciousness intends a possible ideal meaning and fulfills it on the grounds of its *reell* experiences of an appropriate sensory content. In the very process of



meaning something or referring to some object the possibility of meaning is actualized as a *reell* event.

In general, my interpretation follows the line of the argument provided by many other researches<sup>59</sup>, but there is one crucial difference. While virtually every Husserl scholar agrees that meaning is understood in *LU* as an ideal entity that can be instantiated many times by various speakers and thinkers, most of researches follow Husserl's statement from the first edition of *LU* that meanings are ideal species and, accordingly, they do not pay much attention to the analysis of im/possible meanings that was substantially elaborated in the second edition of *LU*. My understanding is that, although Husserl does not explicitly reject species theory in the *LU* (the explicit statement is provided much later, namely in the *Experience and Judgment*), his analysis of the concept of possibility in relation to meaning and his statement that meanings serve as norms for our thinking makes the rejection of species theory of meaning plausible. More precise argumentation for rejection of species theory of meaning will be provided in chapter 3 of this thesis, where we will see that arguments put forward by Husserl in *EU* are perfectly applicable to his findings that already present in *LU*.

Gurwitsch<sup>60</sup> deals with Husserl's concept of possibility at length in his book on Leibniz where he compares the role this concept plays in Leibniz's and Husserl's works.

He states that ideal objects are pure possibilities for Husserl and points out that Husserl also calls them dependent essences or abstracta (insofar they have less determinations than any real entity so that every, say, real red circle has more objective properties than an essence 'red

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Ameriks, Karl, 'Husserl's Realism,' *The Philosophical Review*, 86, №4, (October 1977), pp.498-519; Benoist, Jocelyn 'Husserl's Theory of Meaning in the First Logical Investigation' in Dahlstrom, Daniel O. (ed.) *Husserl's Logical Investigations*. Kluwer Academic Publishers: Dordrecht, Boston, London. 2003. pp.17-35; Bernet, Rudolf, 'Husserl's theory of Signs Revisited' in Bernet, Rudolf and Sokolowski, Robert (eds.) *Edmund Husserl and the Phenomenological Tradition. Essays in phenomenology*. The Catholic University of America Press: Washington D.C. 1988 pp.1-24; Mohanty, J.N. *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964; Tragesser, R. *Husserl and Realism in Logic and Mathematics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

<sup>60</sup>Gurwitsch, Aron *Leibniz: Philosophie des Panlogismus* Berlin, Wlter der Gruyter 1974.

circle'). He is right to state that in case of meanings that we can grasp their possibility coincides with actuality. Thus he proceeds to a claim that meanings are, in fact, actualities and the domain of pure possibility is filled by meanings, intentions of which do not find proper fulfillment, such as round square. As it was shown, my argument significantly differs. I maintained in this chapter that possibility and impossibility for Husserl are a type of dialectical *ineinander* concepts when it comes to complex meanings and judgments. Possibility or impossibility of each judgment depends a lot on the compatibility of meanings that form it and the whole of contexts within which they are meant. As it was pointed out earlier, one of the main problems of theory of meaning presented in *LU* consists exactly in this claim. If the most essential characteristic of meaning, i.e. its possibility, depends on the whole of contents in which this meaning is intended, then it becomes difficult to argue for the strict ideality of meanings, insofar the choice of general content can hardly be conceived as ideally given but arguably depends on the individual consciousness, its past and present intentions.

In general, most researchers dealing with the theory of meaning in *LU* either engage in its comparison to theories of Husserl's contemporaries, especially to those of Frege and Brentano (Benoist, Bernet, Mohanty) or deal with a very ambiguous question of whether Husserl is a realist or an idealist at this stage of his investigations (Americas, Tragesser). It is not surprising that in the text of *LU* one can find plausible arguments to defend both realistic and idealistic position of Husserl. I tried to show that Husserl's ontology is not clear and unproblematic in *LU* and it was exactly this obscure status of consciousness, the world, and their relations, as well as unusual usage of terms 'real' and 'ideal' that motivated further development of phenomenology and led to a radical transcendental stance in *Ideen*.

Ideal norms of thinking coincide with consciousness' *reell* mental states due to consciousness intentionality, i.e. its capacity to refer to an object, to endow its singular

experiences with meaning. In each act of meaning-intention consciousness proves its capability to constitute, and in so doing, actualizes an ideal possible meaning in a single *reell* mental state. In each act of meaning-fulfillment consciousness constitutes an ideal object with an ideal content (or sense) in the form of the actualized intention, alongside the *reell* content of its experiencing of its object, which fulfills the intention. Thus, the intentionality of consciousness ‘ties together’ the *reell* realm of its singular experiences and the ideal realm of possible meaning by actualizing the latter in the former.

Needless to say, this interpretation, which, I believe, does justice to Husserl’s fundamental insights expressed in his *Logical Investigations* of the questionable relation between the real, *reell* and ideal realms, is not unproblematic. The biggest problem, which I see, is the problem of the origin of the respective ‘items’ of the *reell* and the ideal. The origins of consciousness’ constitution of the object of intention (i.e. meaning-fulfillment) can be more or less explained by an appeal to the real causes of perception, memory etc., although this might suspend Husserl’s principle of freedom from presuppositions. The origin of the content of the act of meaning, and the origin of the meaning-intention are even more problematic. Even if we accept them as merely possible, there will be still a need to explain the conditions of this possibility. Insofar they belong to the ideal realm, their possibility is not subject to causal determination. Thus, another significantly different type of explanation of their origin is needed. Moreover, the conditions of possibility of the meaning-intention are described by Husserl by means of appeal to the general context of meanings within which each meaning-intention is constituted. This general set of meanings, although each considered alone belongs to the ideal realm, is hardly graspable but is subjectively constituted, i.e. determined by the mental states of particular consciousness and, moreover, by a particular ‘history’ of conscious experiences. This determination does not allow for its analysis within the paradigm of static phenomenology. Thus, the theory of meaning as presented in the *LU* faces problems which it

cannot answer in its own terms. The necessary step which we have to undertake is to look at Husserl's later works, especially those where the genetic phenomenology is postulated, with an attempt to find an acceptable solution to the aforementioned problems.

## **Chapter 2. Transcendental phenomenology and noematic meaning.**

My object in this chapter will be to show that the account of meaning and the method of inquiry by which Husserl proceeds in his endeavors in his *Ideen I* is essentially different from *Logische Untersuchungen*. I will aim to show these differences and what important consequences for the essence of meaning and validity of phenomenology we may derive.

I would first like to bring to attention that despite the differences between Husserl's phenomenology of *LU* and of *Ideen* the latter stems from the former in the sense that *Ideen* present the radical solution to problems that originated in *LU*. This is accomplished mainly by the introduction of a new methodology, which is nothing else but the phenomenological reduction that brackets the realistic and the naturalistic standpoint.

### **1. New Methodology of Phenomenology – Transcendental Reduction.**

#### **1.1 Epistemological Problems Posited in LU.**

Recalling what was said in Chapter 1 about Husserl's account of meaning in *LU* we see that his analysis presents us with several serious problems. Ideal meaning was argued to be a pure possibility which becomes actualized in consciousness due to its intentionality. The understanding of consciousness within the framework of *LU* is indeed ambiguous. On the one

hand, the whole first volume of the work in question was devoted to overcoming psychologism and Husserl justifiably argued against the psychological interpretation of meaning as a product of the mental states of the human mind. On the other hand, consciousness as the sphere where these meanings are constituted or actualized (because in principle they exist only as pure ideal possibilities) was interpreted by Husserl in a way that is very suggestive of understanding it psychologically, i.e. as a human mind, which is bound to the body and whose knowledge is heavily dependent on bodily perceptions. The status of the world outside consciousness was also unclear in *LU*, the principle of freedom from presuppositions was not so much a solution to the problem as a suspension thereof. The actually existing real objects remained unconsidered in *LU*. Thus the question of the origin of our sensations which provide the ground for our meaning-intentions and meaning-fulfillments was left open. It has perplexed many of Husserl's followers and commentators. Some say that despite triumphantly overcoming psychologism in logic, Husserl's epistemology in *LU* is still based exclusively on psychologically immanent correlations, and that consciousness is understood along psychological lines.<sup>61</sup> I propose now to take a closer look at Husserl's new methodology introduced in *Ideen* and its ontological and epistemological consequences.

The passages in which Husserl sums up his position on this new method most plainly are to be found in the Introduction to his *Ideen*, and run as follows:

... pure or transcendental phenomenology will become established *not as a science of matters of fact, but as a science of essences* (as an “eidetic” science); it will become established as science which exactly seeks to ascertain ‘cognitions of essences’ and *no “matters of fact” whatever*. The relevant reduction which leads over from the psychological phenomena to the pure “essence” or, in the case of judgmental thinking, from matter-of-fact (“empirical”) universality to “eidetic” universality is the *eidetic reduction*. (Ideas XX/ Hua III 6)<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> See De Boer, Theodore, *The Development of Husserl's Thought*, The Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978, p.406ff.

The difference between sciences of matter of fact and sciences of essences is given in more detail in Chapter One:

The ground for a corresponding interrelation between sciences of matters of fact and eidetic sciences is the connection (itself eidetic) obtaining between individual object and essence, according to which an essential composition belongs to each individual object as *its* essence – just as, conversely, to each essence there correspond possible individual which would be its factual singularizations. There are *pure eidetic sciences* such as pure logic, pure mathematics, and the pure theories of time, space, motion, and so forth. Throughout, in every step of their thinking, they are pure of all positing of matters of fact; or equivalently: *in them no experience as experience*, that is, as a consciousness that seizes upon or posits actuality, factual existence, can assume the function of grounding. Where experience functions in them it does not function as experience.<sup>63</sup>

Now I will explore step by step the core of the science that Husserl calls pure or transcendental phenomenology, its proper object and method, and how these new accounts influence his theory of meaning.

## **1.2 The Idea of Reduction.**

The idea of phenomenological reduction, although explicated radically and consistently in the *Ideen*, originated much earlier than the text of the *Ideen* itself. In the spring of 1907 Husserl delivered a series of lectures published much later (1947) under the name *The Idea of Phenomenology* containing an extensive reflection on the methodological starting point of *LU*. Some light is shed on the new framework explicated more fully later in the *Ideen*. The very term *reduction* is also used there for the first time.

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<sup>62</sup> References to the *Ideen* are made to F.Kersten English translation: Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, Dordrecht/Boston/London, Kluwer Academic Publishers, in the following: Ideas, page number. They are followed by the traditional reference to the Husserliana edition: volume – page number.

<sup>63</sup> Ideas 16/Hua III 20-21

Let us recall the main problem Husserl is dealing with in the *LU*: how subjective experiences can justifiably yield objective meaning, how consciousness can possibly know things transcendent to it. The method of phenomenological reduction that Husserl introduces consists in the suspension of all judgments about the sphere of the transcendent and reducing the analysis to the absolutely given only. Transcendent here has one, strict meaning – transcendent to consciousness, everything that is beyond consciousness and its immediate experiences. Therefore, no hypotheses about such transcendent realities like ‘world’, ‘body’ or ‘mind’ are possible within the phenomenological account.

A small remark is necessary here to avoid a likely misunderstanding or confusion of the terms ‘consciousness’ and ‘mind’. The term ‘mind’ is used here in the sense of the brain’s conscious processes, and necessarily requires metaphysical presupposition of material reality and empirical ‘persons’ (even if they are reduced to brains only). Phenomenology does not deal with experiences of empirical persons, so that consciousness considered phenomenologically is understood strictly as subjective experience itself independent of whether there is any material ‘carrier’ of this experience or psychophysical unity as ‘human being’. What Husserl undertakes in the *Ideen* is a complete divorce of phenomenology from descriptive psychology, understood in the sense of analyzing the mental processes of empirical consciousness. It is not a natural step in thinking, and Husserl himself acknowledges the natural inclination to interpret consciousness in a psychological way, i.e. to confuse the pure phenomenon of consciousness with the psychological phenomenon of human mind. Mind can be an object of natural scientific psychology as it is a part of nature. Insofar as all metaphysical presuppositions about any part of nature are suspended, consciousness cannot be possibly regarded as a part of the ‘real world’ or as the psychic activities and the mental states of an empirical person.

While we remain in the ‘natural attitude’, whether in simple everyday perception or during complicated processes of the empirical sciences (the natural-scientific attitude), we are inevitably inclined to presuppose the existence of the world. We accept that material objects are there, around us in space and time, independent of our perception of them. We consider ourselves as well as other persons a part of this world, and presuppose that others are directed to the same world in the same way as we are. Consciousness is taken to form a unity with the body and is causally connected to material reality in general. Intentionality is interpreted as a causal relation as well, the one between the mental state and an external object. This existence and causality that we attribute to the world even prepredicatively has to be suspended, in Husserl’s terms ‘put in brackets’ (*Einklammerung*).

The reduction, then, appears to lead to a strictly descriptive analysis of what is given to consciousness with the aim to make the given manifest and by means of it to clarify the conditions of the possibility of knowledge and disclose the meaning of reality as such. What, then, is supposed to be suspended in the reduction? And what is this absolute given that remains after the reduction is carried out? ‘*What can remain, if the whole world, including ourselves with all our cogitare, is excluded*’?<sup>64</sup> Nothing other than ‘pure’ or ‘transcendental’ consciousness itself, not as a supposed substance, but as a stream of experience, acts of consciousness, seeing and direct grasping.<sup>65</sup> It is a more robust restriction than the principle of freedom from presuppositions of the *Logische Untersuchungen*. It is not only the suspension of judgment about the adequacy of conscious experience of the world, rather it is the opening of a new horizon of being. The world of the natural attitude is bracketed with an aim to show that the residue, pure consciousness, has a unique being of its own, whose indubitability

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<sup>64</sup> Ideas 63/Hua 57.

<sup>65</sup> See Ideas 64/ Hua 58.



remains untouched by even the strongest possible doubt. The principle of the reduction is that ‘every originary presentive intuition is a legitimate source of cognition’<sup>66</sup>.

This seems to be a Cartesian move: taking consciousness to be the first absolute datum regardless of its object. Husserl, though, goes beyond this traditional Cartesian account not only by means of expanding the sphere of the absolute given further, but also restricting radical doubt to a strictly *methodological* function. He explains:

One procedure, possible at a time, is the *attempt to doubt universally* which *Descartes* carried out for an entirely different purpose with a view toward bringing out a sphere of absolutely indubitable being. We start from here but at the same time emphasize that the attempt to doubt universally shall serve us only as a methodic expedient for picking out certain points, which, as included in its essence, can be brought to light and made evident by means of it.<sup>67</sup>

An epistemological problem arises from the presupposition that only immanent acts of consciousness are directly given to it and can be legitimate objects of phenomenological analysis. All these acts are ultimately singular and individual and no *a priori* knowledge is possible on the basis of such acts alone. Husserl eliminates this problem by his methodological claim that reduction means not the suspension of all that is transcendent to consciousness but the suspension of what is not given to it. The criterion for the reduction appears to be then not the strict immanence, but the possibility of consciousness to intuit (in the most general sense). The crucial remark here is that within this intuition no distinction should be posited between what is intuited as intuited and the intuited thing itself, because it is the former only that shapes the matter of phenomenological account. Thus it is possible to conceive of the givenness of essences, and accordingly of the possibility of forming *a priori*

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<sup>66</sup> Ideas 44/Hua III 43.

<sup>67</sup> Ideas 58/Hua III 54.

judgments. This is precisely why Husserl claims that phenomenology is a science of essences, not matters of fact. It is an eidetic description of immanent experiences.

If the sphere of phenomenology is to be understood as what is given to consciousness, then we have to recall the distinction that Husserl had already made in the *LU*, i.e. the distinction between the act of consciousness and the content of this act. It is indubitable that acts of consciousness are immanent and directly given to it. The content of an act, though transcendent, is also given to consciousness, insofar it is exactly what consciousness intuitively in its acts, even if not adequately. The question of adequate and inadequate intuiting is exactly what is suspended by the method of reduction.

Phenomenology concerns only what is given to consciousness and just in the way it is given, so that no distinction between appearance and what appears is legitimate. So that, if we have to recognize as objects of phenomenology everything that shows itself to consciousness as given, then it is clear that the content of the act, the intentional object, is also a certain datum for consciousness.

Let us say that without any intuition, I think that 2 times 2 equals 4. Can I doubt that I am thinking this arithmetical proposition, and that what is thought does not concern today's weather, for example? If this is evidently so, is there not something like a datum here? And if we go this far, nothing can prevent us from recognizing that the nonsensical, the completely absurd, is also 'given' in a certain way. A round square does not appear to me in imagination as a dragon appears, nor does it appear in perception as some external thing, but an intentional object is still obviously there. I can describe the phenomenon 'thinking of a round square' in terms of its genuine content, but the round square itself cannot be found there; still, it is evident that it is thought in this mental act, and that roundness and squareness as such are objects as such, are thought in the object so thought, or that the object of this thought is both round and square.<sup>68</sup>

So far we have discovered what the sphere of phenomenological research consists of, namely, acts of consciousness, and the contents of these acts, both singular and essences.

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<sup>68</sup>Hua II, 73.

Another important distinction that Husserl introduces at this point is the one between acts directed immanently and those directed transcendently. When consciousness and its object present the unity of one and the same experience, such an act is truly immanent. Such experiences as thinking, doubting, or intending can serve as perfect examples of such an immanence: the perception of thinking cannot be isolated from its object, and does not present an independent aspect of experience. In general, all acts in which the perceived is given in the absolute way, that is without a possibility to doubt it. 'Here the perceiving includes its Object in itself in such a manner that it only can be separated abstractly, only as an *essentially non self-sufficient* moment, from its Object.'<sup>69</sup> Thus, immanent perception necessarily guarantees the existence of its object, and any insight that it does not exist is impossible in principle.

Transcendentally directed acts have objects 'outside' pure consciousness, these are the acts, in which individual things or essences are given. Such objects can never form a part of consciousness and are transcendent to it in a principal sense. The world of individual things is nothing other than a correlate of multitude of transcendent perceptions that are ordered in a certain connection. Its being Husserl calls 'merely intentional.' 'It is a being posited by consciousness in its experiences which, of essential necessity, can be intuited and determined only as something identical belonging to motivated multiplicities of appearances: *beyond that it is nothing*'.<sup>70</sup> Acts such as recollections of past immanently directed acts are also directed transcendentally: there is a possibility of recollecting the experience of thinking that happened in the past without this thinking existing in present. Thus there is no essential unity between the act (recollection of experience of thinking) and the transcendent object (the act of thinking experienced in the past).

We discover an unbridgeable difference in the mode of givenness of consciousness' acts and that of objects of consciousness. The former is given in an absolute way, directly,

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<sup>69</sup>Ideas 79-80/Hua III 68.

<sup>70</sup>Ideas 112/Hua III 93.

without a possibility to doubt it. The latter has only presumptive givenness without any bearing of apodicticity. Nevertheless, Husserl insists on the givenness of the objects of transcendent perception to consciousness and states that every given is originally justified as such. He is not denying the reliability of transcendent perception, rather he is stressing the relativity of this reliability. We can doubt our perceptions of individual things, not as perceptions *per se*, but only in their claim to apodictic evidence of the external world.

To sum up, it is consciousness' experiences and the phenomena given in these experiences that compose the object of phenomenology. The precise connection between any act and its content, the description of how anything can be given to consciousness, and how knowledge is possible is yet to follow. Here it is crucial to understand that the transcendental reduction is not a purely negative procedure, and its aim is not only to bracket some realm of being just for the sake of limiting the sphere of analysis. The purpose of the reduction is the discovery of a totally new sphere of being and a science of this being. 'Our purpose is to discover a new scientific domain, one that is to be gained *by the method of parenthesizing* which, therefore must be a definitely restricted one'<sup>71</sup>, writes Husserl in the Chapter One of the *Ideen*. This being, the absolute being of consciousness, is inaccessible to us in the natural attitude. It remains obscure because it is not investigated in its purity, but rather only in its relation to the world. Consciousness itself is not investigated in its immanence and the objects that are given to it are not studied as given, but as an independent reality. Within the methodological paradigm of *epoche* we have a specific object of inquiry considered in a specific way, namely, pure experiences of consciousness, whereas the contents of these experiences are understood precisely as sheer contents. The sphere of the experience of consciousness and that of the given in these experiences - is the new realm of being studied by a new science, transcendental phenomenology. Husserl himself admits that *epoché* is by no

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<sup>71</sup> Ideas 60/Hua 56.

means an easy procedure and actually contradicts one's natural inclinations, precisely because the temptation to fall back into the natural attitude is always strong, and supported by almost everything one learns in the course of one's life.

Experiences of consciousness do not form a whole with most of their contents (with the exception of immanently directed ones). Husserl states explicitly that a thing or essence can never form a part of the stream of consciousness.

Not only does the perception of the physical thing not contain the physical thing itself as part as part of its really inherent composition; the perception of the physical thing is also *without any essential unity with it*, its existence, naturally, being presupposed here. *The unity of the stream of mental processes is the only unity determined purely by the essences proper of the mental properties themselves...*<sup>72</sup>

### **1.3 Immanent Acts and Transcendent World.**

How, then, can consciousness 'reach' the things, make them contents of its own acts, if their respective modes of being are totally different? Husserl begins answering this question by turning to the sphere of outer perception, because in these acts consciousness and things are obviously connected. An object given in perception is not to be identified with the perception of the object itself. Here Husserl's analysis of perception follows the line he has already taken in *LU*: every thing is given in the multiplicity of sensations, each experience is *adumbrated*. A physical thing is an essential unity, identical to itself, whereas it is given in the mode of multiple sensations which interpenetrate with one another. Consciousness joins these adumbrations together, performing the unity of constitution, the syntheses of identification in order to achieve the perception of a unified physical thing as a whole. Thus we see an essential difference between the spatial thing and the mental process in which this thing can

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<sup>72</sup> Ideas 80/Hua III 69.

be given. ‘The adumbration [...] of essential necessity is not the same genus as the one to which the adumbrated belongs’<sup>73</sup>. There is always a possibility that the thing perceived does not in fact exist, it is perfectly conceivable that future perceptions can always ‘correct’ the past ones or even ‘cross them out’. This is impossible in the immanent perception. Every experience of anything immanent necessarily guarantees its object. Thus Husserl calls the sphere of consciousness ‘the sphere of absolute positing.’<sup>74</sup> Consciousness, then, enjoys an absolute reality which cannot in principle be doubted, whereas everything given to it in the mode of a thing possesses only a relative presumptive reality. This entails the essential separability of the domain of consciousness from that of the natural world.

The perceived world turns out to be dependent on consciousness in its existence. Insofar as perceived things do not need to exist in order to be an object of perception (the possibility of hallucination cannot be ruled out in principle), the whole totality of the perceived, the world, does not need to exist either. It achieves a status of being merely a correlate of consciousness, and should be considered as only ‘one special case among the multitude of possible worlds and surrounding worlds.’<sup>75</sup> The main eidetic conclusion one can draw from looking at the result of transcendental reduction is that the existence of the real world is not necessary for the existence of consciousness. It is the world that depends on particular acts of consciousness in its constitution. Within a phenomenological paradigm it is nonsense to speak of a thing that cannot in principle be perceived, because phenomenological analysis remains strictly within the sphere of the given. Nevertheless, the opposite experience is conceivable: it might be the case that the multitude of experiences that form the totality of the world do not fit together harmoniously. There will no longer be a world then, but it doesn’t affect the existence of consciousness. Therefore Husserl calls the being of the world

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<sup>73</sup> Ideas 88/Hua III 75.

<sup>74</sup> Ideas 98/Hua III 83.

<sup>75</sup> Ideas 106/Hua III 88.

and things in it merely phenomenal, or merely intentional, relative being, being *for* consciousness in comparison to the absolute self-contained being of consciousness ‘into which nothing can penetrate and out of which nothing can slip, [...] which cannot be affected by any physical thing and cannot exercise causation upon any physical thing...’<sup>76</sup> This attitude is the opposite of the natural attitude that absolutizes the world and takes consciousness to be dependent on it.

### 1.3.a Indubitability of Consciousness.

Is this a radical idealism that Husserl advocates in the *Ideen*? On first glance it appears to be so. Consciousness is claimed to possess an absolute and necessary being, and the material world is dependent wholly on it in its existence. We have to inspect more closely the consequences of the methodological procedure of *epoché* to realize that this is not exactly the case. *Epoché* is a method aimed at establishing an indubitable ground for knowledge by means of finding and investigating a new region of being, which cannot be revealed in the natural everyday or scientific attitude. Implementing the *epoché* methodologically, i.e. bracketing everything that is not given to consciousness, leaves us with the residue consisting of conscious acts and the contents of these acts. In other words we see that consciousness indubitably exists (Husserl says ‘absolutely’) and the world of material things may exist *for* consciousness as well, although its existence is not necessary. I suppose that even such strong terms as ‘absolute’ and ‘indubitable’ by means of which Husserl characterizes the being of consciousness do not directly imply the *necessity* of consciousness’ existence. We can rather infer that the only thing Husserl says about the actual existence of consciousness is that it is possible and perfectly conceivable that consciousness exists, and if it exists then it exists

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<sup>76</sup> Ideas 112/Hua III 93.

necessarily. We look into what is given to us directly and immanently and find a multitude of immanent perceptions that cannot be doubted. We see a wide range of acts of consciousness and conclude from this that if there are acts then they must have an ‘agent’. Nevertheless, this does not imply the necessity of these acts or of the ‘agent.’ Otherwise put, if consciousness is perceived then it must be posited in the absolute way. But this is not to say that it does exist. The absolute being of consciousness that Husserl insists upon in *Ideen* is nothing other than the necessity of a *fact*, not an *eidetic* necessity. The positing of consciousness is based on an individual immanent perception (such as an indubitable ‘I think’), which is indeed a fact, but not a necessary fact. This immanent perception is given in an absolute way in its existence, but its necessity is not given together with it. While we have this perception it is inconceivable to think that it does not exist, but inconceivability does not entail the absolute impossibility. It is not the logical absolute necessity of being that consciousness enjoys, rather the necessity only of the indubitable fact. As such, a fact it is not something spatial, but an ever-changing stream of experiences in immanent time<sup>77</sup>.

Such an account of consciousness brings one crucial consequence, namely, that consciousness understood phenomenologically is free of any psychological interpretations, with which Husserl struggled in *LU*. It is transcendental, absolute consciousness, which does not have to bear any relation to the body, and is not understood primarily and for the most part as a moment of a complex psychophysical human being. Consciousness is not founded in matter, rather it itself provides the grounds for existence of material reality. This is what Husserl means when he insists that the bracketing of the world includes myself. If we are to suspend the natural character of the material world, then we inevitably have to abandon the naturalistic interpretation of consciousness, thus revealing its transcendental ground, and overcoming the psychologism. Only in the natural attitude does consciousness form a psycho-

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<sup>77</sup> Although the doctrine of internal time-consciousness was elaborated by Husserl as early as in 1905, there is no analysis of temporality of consciousness in the *Ideen*.



physical unity with the body. In transcendental phenomenology every perceived thing, and the body as well, is an intentional correlate of consciousness. There is no principal difference between the perception of one's own body and of any other physical thing as maintained in the *Ideen*. Husserl's views on this subject indeed undergo a serious change in later works, nevertheless there is nothing in the *Ideen* that would suggest that our relation to our own body is not on a par with the relation to any other perceived object. We must consider our body as a thing like any other thing in the world, not giving the perception of our own body any privileged status in cognition.

### 1.3.b Relative Existence of the World.

Having established that consciousness has only a factual necessity that Husserl calls absolute, let us now turn to the question of the being of the world which is said to be dependent on consciousness. It follows from Husserl's thought that that the existence of the world presupposes the existence of consciousness and that the reverse is not the case. At this point it is crucial to remember that while we want to remain with our considerations within the purely phenomenological framework it must be kept in mind and observed that the 'world' we speak about is only the world given to consciousness in its transcendent perceptions.<sup>78</sup> All judgments about what 'stands behind' or causes these perceptions, if anything, should be suspended, as well as all judgments about the adequacy of these perceptions. Thus, the world we talk about phenomenologically is the world that consciousness constitutes and is exactly as constituted. There is simply nothing else given to consciousness except what is given. This is, again, a factual necessity, which does not deny

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<sup>78</sup> Let us remember that the analysis in this chapter is limited to the *Ideen* only, unless it is specifically indicated otherwise. The concept of the world was to undergo a strong development and transformation in Husserl's later thinking.

the possibility of presuppositions of various kind about what can serve as a condition for consciousness' perceptions being such and such, but these presuppositions would not have any validity in phenomenology.

The real world of the natural attitude is bracketed by the *epoché*. This is not to say that its existence is denied, but it is simply 'provided with an index,'<sup>79</sup> labeled as not given to consciousness, and therefore it should not play a role in the phenomenological account. The world is not 'annihilated' for us by means of reduction; yet a new field of extra-mundane experiences is open for transcendental consciousness. In other words, the being of the world and all empirical subjects within it are first revealed to us in their purity as the constitutive achievements of consciousness.

It follows, that the world given to consciousness (the world that might bear some connection to the real world or might not) has consciousness as a necessary condition for its existence simply because it is nothing but a product of conscious constitutive activity. It does not yet imply that it is a sufficient condition. Husserl uses the term *constitution* when he refers to the procedure by which consciousness posits the world; and it does not mean 'making' or 'creating' out of nothing. It is left open in Husserl's theory if there is another condition that would constitute the world, a condition other than consciousness. To do Husserl justice we have to admit that this question in principle cannot be answered within the phenomenological framework which, as stressed, deals with the sphere of the given only. If there is anything that gives consciousness the transcendent impressions it has, it is not given to it in an evident way. We cannot appeal to any reason not given to consciousness in our attempts to explain why it has the contents it has and not any other content or why its experiences are harmonious. Nevertheless, we have to remember that the 'world' the *epoché* permits us to investigate is not

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<sup>79</sup> Ideas 171/Hua III 142.

reality in the traditional sense but our perception and interpretation of it, *reality as given* to consciousness.

It has been shown that in the transcendental phenomenological paradigm the world constituted by consciousness does not exist necessarily. There is no necessity attached to the harmony of experiences of consciousness. Nevertheless, if consciousness happens to have harmonious transcendent experiences, the existence of the world follows necessarily. In this way we are justified in saying that the existence of the world strictly depends on consciousness. Thus, consciousness is the necessary and sufficient condition for the existence of the world, in the sense of the world given to consciousness, as harmony of what it perceives.

We even have to admit, as a matter of fact, that it is very unlikely, although not impossible, that there would mostly be doubt when our perception of things and the constitution of the world is concerned. Experiences of consciousness usually confirm one another, the corrections that future experiences bring about are normally of a minor importance, and thus there is no real reason to doubt. This is precisely the ground for the natural attitude and the difficulties in abandoning it. There remains a strong basis for universal belief in a harmonious world. Our actual intuitions give no support to the claim that the world is ‘falling apart’ in irresolvable conflict of various experiences. So that, Husserl admits that we cannot actually doubt the existence of the world insofar our experiences are in harmony, but what transcendental reduction brings about is the essential *possibility* of such a radical doubt, the principal conceivability of the world’s annihilation. Thus, transcendental phenomenology does not in fact deny the existence of the world, rather it jeopardizes the claim of its absolute indubitable existence, the natural belief that reality is simply there and present. *Epoché* frees both consciousness and world from unjustified interpretations and

reveals their true being by recognizing the absoluteness of the former and relativity of the latter.

If anyone reading our statements objects that they mean changing all the world into a subjective illusion and committing oneself to a “Berkeleyan idealism,” we can only answer that he has not seized upon the *sense* of those statements. They take nothing away from the fully valid being of the world and the all of realities [...] The real actuality is not “reinterpreted,” to say nothing of it is being denied; it is rather that a countersensical interpretation of the real actuality, i.e., an interpretation which contradicts the latter’s *own* sense as clarified by insight is removed.<sup>80</sup>

We see that ‘consciousness’ and ‘world’ acquire totally different interpretations in phenomenology from what they have in the natural attitude. This is inevitably reflected in language of phenomenology. The terms usually used for description of reality will inevitably be deficient for a phenomenological account. Husserl tries to avoid this problem by introducing new terms and reserving such meanings for traditional ones, that are in no way co-extensive with their traditional meanings. This is unavoidable because all the readily available expressions must be purified of their ‘naturalistic’ sense, if we are following the method that brackets the natural attitude and refers us to transcendental consciousness.

#### **1.4 New Understanding of the Real and the Ideal.**

We can now see what new meanings such terms as reality and ideality acquire within this new ontological account. Let us remember the basic difference between the real, the *reell*, and the ideal realms of being as presented in the *Logical Investigations*. All the objects of the world aside from consciousness were called ‘real’ by Husserl. This is the sphere that phenomenology sets aside as in accordance with the principle of freedom from

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<sup>80</sup> Ideas 129/Hua III 107.

presuppositions. The same objects as given to consciousness, as intended and meant by it were called *reell*, so that it is precisely this sphere which earns the primary attention of phenomenology. The realm of meanings that can be grasped by consciousness and are independent from this grasping was called ideal.

In the *Ideas* we see a different use of these terms. This is extremely important to clarify in order to avoid terminological confusion. Husserl's analysis proceeds on two levels: the phenomenological and the ontological one. Where phenomenological investigation of consciousness is concerned, it is of crucial importance to distinguish between the act of consciousness and the object of this act. This distinction was already present and sharply advocated in *LU*, nevertheless, Husserl believed that these matters should be clarified further, insofar as these two realms of being compose the sphere of the given – the sphere that phenomenology deals with.

Phenomenologically everything is divided into two basic realms of being, the *reell*, inherent to an act of consciousness, and the *irreell*, correlate to an act. Thus, acts of perception that consciousness performs are to be called *reell* acts, whereas objects that are given in these acts are respectively labeled as *irreell*. Such an unusual spelling is meant here to underline and to help to keep in mind that each time we speak only about the sphere of the given as given without any presupposition of any reality behind it, that our analyses remain strictly within the sphere of phenomenological reduction and, thus, don't refer to world and consciousness conceived as in the natural attitude.

We know that both essences and individual things can serve as the correlate of an act of consciousness. To distinguish between them Husserl uses such terms as real and ideal. Ideal is the sphere of essences and meanings, and individual things given in consciousness are simply real. What is crucial in this account is to keep in mind that both terms (real and ideal)

fall under the sphere of *irreell*, i.e. not to be understood as anything beyond or different from intended contents.

Distinction between *reell* and *irreell* realms of being is consistently made the central theme of phenomenology insofar as these two are precisely the only types of being possible to investigate under the method of reduction. In *Ideen* they also acquire the names *noesis* and *noema*. It is to these terms that our precise attention will be turned from now on.

## 2. Noesis and Noema.

In §88 of *Ideen* devoted to the distinction between inherent and merely intensive components of acts of consciousness Husserl calls this distinction the most universal and fundamental one.

On the one side therefore, we have to discriminate the parts and moments which we find by an analysis of the really inherent pertaining to mental properties, whereby we deal with the mental process as an object like any other, inquiring about its pieces of non-self-sufficient moments really inherent in it which make it up. But, on the other side, the intensive mental process is consciousness of something, and it is so according to its essence, e.g., as memory, as judgment, as will, etc.; and we can therefore inquire into what is to be declared as a matter of essential necessity about the side of this “of something.”<sup>81</sup>

The intensive mental process, every act of consciousness of something, Husserl calls *noesis*, or noetic process. It is characteristic of every noesis ‘to include in itself something such as a “sense” and possibly a manifold sense.’<sup>82</sup> This means that every noesis points to something, which is different from it, the ‘sense,’ the ‘noematic correlate’, or, simply, *noema*. In every perception something is perceived, in every judgment something is judged about, every thought is a thought of something. The simplest definition of noema, then, would be

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<sup>81</sup> Hua III 181/Ideen 213.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

that it is what is intended and meant in the act of consciousness, i.e. in the noesis, exactly as it is intended and meant. This definition is, obviously, not unproblematic and requires a lot of further clarification. Husserl's attempts to explain what exactly noema is are indeed ambiguous, especially because he uses many terms which are very likely to be understood as synonymous to noema, such as *intentional object*, *intentional sense*, *object as it is intended*, and the like. This confusion has provoked different interpretation of Husserl's followers that sometimes contradict each other in explicit ways.

So far it is clear that noema is what is given in an act of consciousness, therefore it doesn't belong to the bracketed 'world' and presents itself as a valid object of a phenomenological inquiry. It is not immanent to the act itself, thus it is not any *reell* momentary state of consciousness. Most of interpreters agree that it is an ideal entity, which is correlative to conscious acts.<sup>83</sup>

The first dilemma we are faced with is that it is not clear whether noema is the same as an *intentional object just as intended*, the *what* intended in a particular act of consciousness with all its peculiar singular determinations, this, e.g., particular table at the corner that I see now with all its characteristics that I notice at the moment, in other words, this table as it is given to me here and now; or is noema rather an *objective sense* of the act, i.e. the meaning as conceived of in *LU*, an ideal entity, in virtue of which consciousness meaningfully intends its objects. The first view is advocated by Aron Gurwitsch<sup>84</sup> and his followers, and the latter has

<sup>83</sup> See, e.g., Føllesdal, Dagfinn, 'Husserl's Notion of Noema,' McIntyre, Ronald and Smith, David Woodruff, 'Husserl's Identification of Meaning and Noema,' Dreyfus, Hubert L., 'Husserl's Perceptual Noema' in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982. Kersten, Frederick, 'Husserl's Doctrine of Noesis-Noema,' in Kersten, F. and Zane, R. (eds.), *Phenomenology: Continuation and Criticism*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1973.

<sup>84</sup> Gurwitsch, Aron, 'Husserl's Theory of Intentionality of Consciousness,' in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982; On the Object of Thought,' *Studies in Phenomenology and Psychology*. Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1966; *The Field of Consciousness*, Psychological Series 2, Pittsburgh, Duquesne University Press, 1964.

become prominent in writings of Dagfinn Føllesdal<sup>85</sup>, as well as in works of Ronald McIntyre and David Woodruff Smith<sup>86</sup>.

It is to these interpretations I turn now in an attempt to see the argumentation behind them, their strong and weak sides, and to clarify the notion of noema.

### **2.1 Noema as the perceived as such. Gurwitsch's View.**

Gurwitsch reads Husserl's statement that noema is *the object just as it is intended* quite literally and states that noema is nothing else than a concrete sensuous appearance given in every respective act of consciousness. Thus, it is different from the *object which is intended*, the sense that is ascribed to the object. Gurwitsch presents us with an example that Husserl uses himself:

In hearing the name "Greenland," each one of us has a certain thought or representation of that island, that is to say, the island presents itself and is intended in a certain fashion. The same holds for the arctic explorer. Both he and any of us intend the same object. However, Greenland *as* intended and meant by some of us, with our sketchy, highly vague, and indeterminate representation obviously differs from Greenland *as* meant by the arctic explorer, who has been to the island and knows it thoroughly.<sup>87</sup>

Thus, in Gurwitsch's view, one and the same thing can always be given to us in a somewhat different mode, one can have a different perception of one and the same thing at different times, and accordingly, one and the same concept can also be given to us in a different way, e.g. when our knowledge on the essence in question is broadened, hence, it is

<sup>85</sup> Føllesdal, Dagfinn, 'Husserl's Notion of Noema,' Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982; *Husserl and Frege*, Oslo, I.Kommisjon Hos H., Aschenhong and Co., 1958.

<sup>86</sup> McIntyre, Ronald and Smith, David Woodruff, 'Husserl's Identification of Meaning and Noema,' Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982; *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, Dordrecht, Boston, Lancaster, D.Reidel Publishing Co., 1984.

<sup>87</sup> Gurwitsch, Aron, 'Husserl's Theory of Intentionality of Consciousness,' in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982. p.62.



still the same concept that we know, just our knowledge includes new components now. Every act of consciousness is unique, and the perceived as perceived in it is also unique. This ‘perceived as such’ Gurwitsch takes to be what Husserl meant by noema, and we see that it is not the object that is intended in the act of perception, not the self-identical ideal meaning, but the precise ‘this’ object as it is given to us ‘here and now’, in any particular case. It is ‘not only a perception of a certain thing but also a determinate perception of that thing,’<sup>88</sup> ‘loaded’ with all the nuances that the thing bears as given in this particular act of consciousness.

Our perception of a certain thing and the subsequent memory of this perception would also have different noemata, according to Gurwitsch. The core, noematic nucleus is the same in both cases, the noematic character, though, the precise ways in which the thing is given, e.g., perceived, recalled, imagined, etc., are, nevertheless, different. Such an understanding of noema might lead us to a conclusion that all noemata are essentially singular entities, and it should be arguable that any two numerically different distinct acts of consciousness cannot in principle have one and the same noema. This is surprisingly not Gurwitsch’s view. He insists that noemata are ideal entities, or ‘meanings understood in the broader sense,’ and that a multiplicity of acts can correspond to the same noema.<sup>89</sup> This seems implausible, because it is difficult to imagine two distinct acts of perception that will differ from each other *only* numerically. Even if one happens to look at the same table or chair from exactly the same angle one would have different sensual perceptions as a result of these acts (because of e.g. slight difference in light, or the fact that a headache is accompanying the perception and prevents focusing one’s eyes properly). It seems that Gurwitsch has in mind that some ‘important’ qualities of the given object make it a distinct noema and the ‘unimportant’ ones do not. For example, ‘white table’ and ‘blue table’ would obviously be considered as two different noematic meanings, whereas ‘white table given in clear bright light’ and ‘white table

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

in darkness' are merely different representations of the same noema. This line of reasoning leads considerable confusion and many possible interpretations of what exactly is to be considered 'important' quality of perception as well as what can be the criteria for distinguishing cases of different noemata from cases that present one noema given in different ways.

Even more crucial is the fact that consciousness, according to Gurwitsch's description, must be defined as a noetico-noematic correlation, and nothing beyond it. It is a correlation between two realms of being: a mental one (the act), and the extra-mental one (its noematic correlate). Its inherent property of intentionality connects consciousness to the world 'outside,' so that 'consciousness can no longer be interpreted as a self-sufficient and self-contained domain of interiority.'<sup>90</sup> This is not a phenomenological reasoning that establishes consciousness as the only self-sufficient valid sphere of research and description that is left after transcendental reduction, but rather the way of describing the line of thinking characteristic for the natural attitude.

This is not to say that Gurwitsch's analyses cannot be considered phenomenological in general or that his line of thinking is implausible. It is just a perfect demonstration of Husserl's statement that the transition to phenomenological attitude from a natural one is very difficult and unnatural procedure that has certain 'traps' at every step. Even a perfectly valid phenomenological description of acts of consciousness and their contents can slip back into natural attitude, as, e.g., describing the world as something that has substantial existence and not as merely a sphere of the given.

## **2.2 Noema as Ideal Meaning.**

### **2.2.a Føllesdal's Statement.**

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<sup>90</sup> Gurwitsch, Aron, 'Husserl's Theory of Intentionality of Consciousness,' in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982. p.66.

A different view on the essence of noema is advocated by Dagfinn Føllesdal. He starts with the question raised by Husserl in *LU*: if every act of consciousness is an intentional act, i.e. it is directed at something, what is the object of this directedness in the case of non-existent objects, such as centaurs or round squares? Having in mind the procedure of phenomenological reduction introduced by Husserl, we can justifiably broaden the same question by stating that the whole world possesses only relative being and is always a subject of possible doubt. Nevertheless, something is definitely given in the acts of consciousness; they are directed at this something. This is where the notion of noema becomes crucial. ‘To be directed is simply to have a noema.’<sup>91</sup> Thus Føllesdal takes noema to be the object which is intended in any act of consciousness. He claims that noema is nothing other than the extended notion of meaning, as described in *LU*, the ideal abstract entity which is not the object towards which the act is directed, but the object *through* which consciousness relates to the outside reality signified in its act. For example, there is an act of a simple perception of a table. The noema of such an act would be not the actually or possibly existing table, but the meaning ‘table’ that is instantiated in this act. Through this meaning consciousness is able to refer to the manifolds of its adumbrated impressions of a certain object and to ‘make sense’ of them, i.e. to refer to them meaningfully.

A noema has two components: (1) one which is common to all acts that have the same object, with exactly the same properties, oriented in the same way, etc., regardless of the “thetic” character of the act – that is, whether it be perceiving, remembering, imagining, etc., and (2) one which is different in acts with different thetic characters.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Føllesdal, Dagfinn, ‘Husserl’s Notion of Noema,’ Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982.p.74.

<sup>92</sup> Føllesdal, Dagfinn, ‘Husserl’s Notion of Noema,’ Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982.p.75.

It means that besides the meaning proper, the nucleus, each noema also has a certain 'quality' indicating the precise way in which this meaning is given to consciousness. Thus e.g. an act of sensual perception of an object and that of recollection of the same object will have different noemata despite the fact that it is one and the same object given in both acts. The noematic nucleus might be the same, nevertheless, two distinct act will have different noemata in virtue of the different ways in which one and the same object is given in these acts. It is also possible for two numerically distinct acts to have one and the same noema. This is the case when several acts are directed towards one and the same object in one and the same way and these acts bear the same thetic characters.

Noemata are in principle non-perceivable entities, states Føllesdal. They are abstract and ideal. How, then, can they be known to consciousness? Føllesdal gives a vague answer to this question stating that noemata are known through a special kind of reflection, namely, phenomenological reflection, the direct grasping of meaning. He does not go into details describing what this reflection is and how meanings are grasped through it. In order to look for an answer let us turn now to works of Smith and McIntyre who hold the view on the essence of noema, which is similar to Føllesdal's view.

### **2.2.b Smith and McIntyre's Approach to Noema.**

Smith and McIntyre think that in *Ideen* noematic meanings are abstract essences correlated with acts of consciousness, not properties or parts of these acts. Thus, they are ontologically independent of consciousness. They tie noema to linguistic expression of meaning as closely as possible, thus in their view, noema becomes almost identical with linguistic meaning:

In assertion we *express* the noematic Sinn of, say, a judgment. This meaning, in virtue of its being expressed, is called a “linguistic” meaning or *Bedeutung*. But Husserl believes that acts and their meanings are not intrinsically linguistic. One may judge something without *saying* anything at all. Indeed, *every* act, “publicized” or not, has a meaning, the same meaning it would have if it were put into language. It is this general notion of meaning, expressed or not and pertinent to all acts, that Husserl calls “Sinn.”<sup>93</sup>

Smith and McIntyre set forth an *expressibility thesis*: Any noematic nucleus (*Sinn*) can be possibly expressed in language. This thesis doesn’t mean that all noemata have actually been expressed, neither does it suggest that actually existing human languages are rich enough to exhaust all the possible noemata. What is at stake here is that what is actually expressed in language and what is meant or intended in the act of consciousness is actually one and the same entity. Even the thetic character or the ‘way of givenness’ of any act of consciousness can find its expression in language. In such expressions as ‘I see that *p*,’ ‘I remember that *p*,’ or ‘I doubt that *p*,’ *p* is essentially the same meaning or noematic nucleus expressed, and at the same time each expression points out to a different thetic character of this meaning.

Thus, Smith and McIntyre suggest that noemata are actually more familiar to us than we can imagine. We have a practical everyday acquaintance with numerous linguistic meanings, thus we are familiar with noematic *Sinne* as well. ‘Even in the absence of a clear description of *how* noemata are grasped, the expressibility of *Sinne* assures us that they *are* familiar and that we *do* grasp them all the time’.<sup>94</sup>

In later Husserlian scholarship researches tended to side with one of the approaches just presented and argue either in favor of Gurwitsch's interpretation (Dreyfus<sup>95</sup>) or following

<sup>93</sup> McIntyre, Ronald and Smith, David Woodruff, ‘Husserl’s Identification of Meaning and Noema,’ in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982. p.87.

<sup>94</sup> McIntyre, Ronald and Smith, David Woodruff, ‘Husserl’s Identification of Meaning and Noema,’ in Dreyfus, Hubert L. (ed.) *Husserl. Intentionality and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1982. p.91.

<sup>95</sup> Dreyfus, Hubert L., ‘The Perceptual Noema: Gurwitsch's Critical Contribution,’ in Lester Embree (ed.) *Life-World and consciousness. Essays for Aaron Gurwitsch*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972, p.112

Smith and McIntyre lines (Sokolowski, Bernet<sup>96</sup>). Some of them argued mainly about the possibility of reconciliation between the two approaches, Welton, Bernet, and Mohanty<sup>97</sup> being in favor of it and Drummond opposing it strictly. It is noticeable that whichever side any of the aforementioned researchers take, the question about the precise way noemata are grasped still remains unanswered. Gurwitsch and his followers are not concentrating on this question in particular, and Smith and McIntyre show us that noemata are graspable indeed and this is evident through the language, but it is the grasping of noemata that results in their expressibility, not the other way around. Let us, then, turn to the close analysis of Husserl's *Ideen*, in particular Chapter Three 'Noesis and Noema' with a hope to clarify the notion of 'consciousness of something,' which is, as Husserl himself admits is 'something obviously understandable of itself and, at the same time, highly enigmatic,'<sup>98</sup> and to find out what is peculiar to any intensive mental process, what is general and universal about it. This should be done having firmly in mind the phenomenological basis and the transcendental attitude that were described above.

### **2.3 Critical analysis of the Concept of Noema.**

#### **2.3.a Complex Structure of Noema.**

In the transcendental attitude, a distinction between the intensive mental processes *per se* and their intentional correlates becomes crucial. The former are 'really inherent to consciousness,'<sup>99</sup> they are directly and indubitably experienced or lived-through by

<sup>96</sup>Sokolowski, Robert, 'Intentional Analysis and the Noema,' in *Dialectica* 38, 1984, p.113-129;

<sup>97</sup>Welton, Don, *The Origins of Meaning: A Critical Study of the Thresholds of Husserlian Phenomenology*. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983; Rudolf Bernet, 'Husserls Begriff des Noema,' in Ijsseling, Samuel (ed.) *Husserl-Ausgabe und Husserl-Forschung*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990. pp. 61-80. Mohanty J. N. Husserl and Frege. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1982.

<sup>98</sup> *Ideen* 212/ Hua III 180

<sup>99</sup> *Ideen* 214/Hua III 181

consciousness, and the latter, let us repeat, are given the status of correlates only, and should be investigated as just given and exactly as they are given. This is the most general statement that can be allowed about the noesis-noema distinction. Every mental process is a ‘consciousness of something,’ whether this process is a statement, a judgment, or a desire. There is always something the statement, judgment or desire is about. Let us say, then, that noema is simply this ‘something’, i.e. it is an intentional correlate of any intensive mental process. This is exactly how the term is introduced in Husserl’s text.

Corresponding in every case to the multiplicity of Data pertaining to the inherent noetic content, there is a multiplicity of Data, demonstrable in actual pure intuition, in a correlative “*noematic content*” or, in short, in the “*noema*” – terms that we shall continue to use from now on.<sup>100</sup>

Thus, Husserl states that *noema is something that inheres immanently in any mental process*, be it perception, remembering or judging, and it should be conceived of as it is exactly given to us in these mental processes when we inquire into them purely, without any additional presuppositions pertaining to the natural attitude. For example, when we perceive a glass of water standing on a table and have a definite feeling of thirst as a result of looking at it, we are inclined to say, while we remain in the natural attitude, that there is a real glass full with water placed on the table, it exists in transcendent spatial actuality, and the feeling of thirst accompanying our perception of this glass is a natural physical feeling of a real human being. Thinking along these lines we posit a *real relation* between two physical things in the spatiotemporal world: the existence of a glass with water and our perception of it with other feelings attached to this perception, such as feeling thirsty.

If we switch to a transcendental phenomenological attitude, then the actual existence of the transcendent physical world must be placed in parenthesis. What is left is only our

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

particular perceptions, seeing something, having a feeling of thirst etc. Therefore, any presupposition of a real relation between physical things has to be excluded from the picture, nevertheless a certain relation remains, namely, the pure relation between the perception itself and ‘the perceived’, what is given in perception. In this case we don’t ask a question whether the perceived thing actually exists or do we simply hallucinate it: ‘Concerning hallucinations, illusions, and perceptual deception of whatever sort, it may be that phenomenology has something to say, and perhaps even a great deal: but it is evident that here, in the role which they play in the natural attitude, they undergo exclusion’.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, what we have as an object of perception, as the thing perceived is essentially the same glass of water with all its qualities and characteristics, such as color, shape, the ability to inspire thirst in us. We are able to notice and distinguish all the specific features of the glass no less ‘skillfully’ than while in the natural attitude. It is only the presupposed actual existence of the object perceived that becomes suspended.

In *Ideen*, as well as in *LU*, Husserl firmly states that we should avoid the danger of thinking in the paradigm of two objects, the actual one that exists in transcendent reality and the perceived one that is inherent to the mental process. We should not fall into the difficulty of distinguishing between two realities or comparing them. Within the phenomenological attitude it is only one reality that is possible, namely, the reality given in the acts of consciousness. We do not postulate a distinction between the immanent and actual object. Every positing of something transcendent is bracketed in every act, whether perception, judgment or valuing.

As *phenomenologists* we abstain from all such positings. But on that account we do not reject them by ‘not taking them as our basis,’ by not ‘joining in’ them. They are indeed there, they also essentially belong to the phenomenon. Rather we contemplate them; instead of joining in them we make

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<sup>101</sup> *Ideen* 215/Hua III183



them Objects, take them as component parts of the phenomenon – the positing pertaining to perception as well as its components.<sup>102</sup>

Yet Husserl insists that there is a radical modification of sense that happens when we adopt the phenomenological paradigm, even if we have no means for actual expressing this modification other than using the inverted commas when we say ‘I see a “glass”,’ ‘This glass is a “material thing”,’ and so forth. By doing this we indicate that the things mentioned are not taken as belonging to the realm of Nature, that they are just things perceived and should be considered only as internal content of acts of consciousness, outside of which they have no reality. ‘The tree simpliciter can burn up, be resolved into its chemical elements, etc. But the sense – the sense *of this* perception, something belonging necessarily to its essence – cannot burn up; it has no chemical elements, no forces, no real properties’.<sup>103</sup> Thus, we see that noema is nothing other than what appears in the act of thinking (perceiving, remembering, etc.) taken exactly in the way it appears, in other words, in the way it is intended. This way, to my mind, includes virtually everything that can be noticed about the thing given in the particular act of givenness, for example, the particular side from which the object is viewed, emotions accompanying the given thing (as the feeling of thirst in the aforementioned example with the glass), or the meaning of the judgment in case of the judging act. This gives us, on the one hand, a very broad notion of noema as everything that can be given in principle, a concept, a judgment, a perceived thing, etc, but, on the other hand, this notion is restricted by mentioning that in each and every case noema of every act is only what is given in *this* act only. Turning back to the example with a glass of water let us notice that it might be the case that when looking at the same glass from the same angle next time we would not experience any desire to drink this water. The perceptual content can remain identical and still the noema of this act of perception would be different, because the desire-component would be missing.

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<sup>102</sup> *Ideen* 220/Hua III 187

<sup>103</sup> *Ideen* 216/Hua III 184

Similarly, viewing the same glass from a different angle would yield another noema, regardless of whether in both cases our perception would lead us to recognizing one and the same concept behind the perceptual field. Full noema, then, is what is given in any act of consciousness when taken with all its peculiarities pertaining to the particular act. In what follows we will see that within this fullness we can distinguish between different components of each noema, the most important of which is the noematic nucleus, or ‘sense.’

Each intensive mental process necessarily includes in itself a moment of sense-bestowal. Each full noema can consist of numerous noematic moments, but it necessarily has a central core, the noematic nucleus to which other moments properly belong. It is the glass of water that we see on the table, imagine in our fantasies, or think about as of a concept etc. In each case there is one and only sense or meaning established by each respective act, although the way of its givenness may differ, as well as many other aspects, such as whether we see the glass clearly or the image is blurred, whether it evokes some particular feelings in us etc. There is a similar core-stratum in all these experiences and further moments are essentially founded in this ‘*one* central concept.’<sup>104</sup>

Turning to the sphere of predicative judgment we should think along the same lines. In each experience of judging there are two essential sides, namely, the act of judging, the noesis, and corresponding to it the judgment itself, which is the noema in this case. It is essential not to confuse these parts of experience. The noematic nucleus of every judgment has a pure logical form, such as *S is p*, and it is possible to have different noemata with essentially the same nucleus. In this case such judgments would be considered as identical from the point of view of pure logic, because their sense is identical, nevertheless ‘there is wide room for phenomenological differences in other respects.’<sup>105</sup> Phenomenologically speaking any judgment can be possibly expressed with an evidence attached to it, or be

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<sup>104</sup> *Ideen* 222/Hua III 189

<sup>105</sup> *Ideen* 229/Hua III 196.

considered as merely probable or even doubtful. This signifies of the possibility of the existence of several different noemata with the identical nucleus but different peripheral components. They would also have different noeses corresponding to them, such as judging-evident, judging-possible or judging-null.

We find the same disposition in the sphere of emotions and value-judgments. When such a judgment is formed on the basis of, say, perception, we have to distinguish between the object evaluated, the process of judging and evaluating, and the formed value judgment itself (the meaning of it). The latter represents the noema in the case of experiences of valuing. Thus, if we encounter an object and then form a value judgment about it, then we have to admit that there is a more complex act built upon a simple perception and it leads to a more complex noema involving the value in it. Noemata of such different acts as watching the flower and judging it to be pleasant to watch are also respectively different. The noema of the latter act would be ‘the judged as judged’ i.e. the flower as pleasant to watch. We can also go onto a higher level and concentrate on our act of valuing in the next step, making the act itself the object of our attention, and turning this act thereby into a noema of this experience.

Seeing that noema has a complex structure that consists of many ‘layers’, the central of which is the nucleus, the ideal sense or meaning *per se*, helps us to reconcile Gurwitsch – Føllesdal debate. It seems to me that speaking of ‘noema’ Gurwitsch means the whole of what is given to consciousness in the act, including all the peculiarities of this particular perception (or imagination, or memory). It gives him the right to insist that noema is the object *just as intended* and we can not reduce it to abstract ideal sense only, but have to pay attention to the particular mode of its givenness and all the peculiarities that accompany the central concept that is intended. This is a crucial insight that is supported by what Husserl writes himself in *Ideen*. Nevertheless, there are certain problems with Gurwitsch’s account (I described them above), the main one being the interpretation of the world given to consciousness from a

realistic, not a phenomenological point of view and insisting at the same time on the ideality of noema.

When we turn to Føllesdal's account of noema (and Smith and McIntyre's accordingly) we see that 'noema' they have in mind is rather noematic nucleus only, and thus their interpretation of noema as abstract entity or the object *through* which consciousness refers to what is given to it makes perfect sense. The question arises whether the noematic nucleus or sense of any experience is necessarily given in a conceptualized form (and thus, as Smith and McIntyre argue, can be expressed in language), whether only a *concept* formed by means of a particular perception (thinking, hallucination, remembering) can be properly called 'sense'. I suggest a somewhat premature but negative answer to this question: in such experiences as prepredicative ones no concept is formed and nevertheless something is surely intended in such experiences, they have their noema, although it is not conceptual. This question will be treated at length in the third chapter of this work, where the attention will be drawn to Husserl's analyses of prepredicative experiences in *Experience and Judgment*. So far it will suffice to say that in *Ideen* all that Husserl says clearly indicates that he is interested only in the intentional acts that can yield conceptual meaning, that have noema with a nucleus, which can be called sense.

To conclude, two views on the concept of noema described above are not essentially contradictory if we admit that Gurwitsch and Føllesdal speak about different things in their works. Gurwitsch refers to the whole complex structure of noema, whereas Føllesdal analyses noematic nucleus only. In what follows I will analyze Husserl's notion of noema keeping in grasp both aspects, namely, that noema has a central core and that it presents us with an object in the 'how' of its determinations. I hope to show and underline that consciousness relates to *both* its particular impressions that present hyletic data different in each and every particular

case, and ideal meanings that it 'recognizes' in this data. Therefore, while full noema presents us with the object *just as intended*, its nucleus represents *the meaning ascribed to the object*.

### 2.3.b Critical Note about the Term 'Meaning'.

At a first glance it is striking that in his analyses of noetic-noematic structures Husserl very rarely uses the term 'meaning' (*Bedeutung*), although it is clear that it is meaning he inevitably deals with while describing intensive mental processes. He himself explains that it is the fear of a possible misunderstanding of a non-traditional use of the concept that leads him to invent a new vocabulary and be more inclined to use words such as 'noema,' 'sense,' or 'signification' instead of 'meaning.'

The scope of our present observations is the broadest extension of the essential genus, "intensive mental process." "Meaning," on the other hand, is normally spoken of in referring to narrower spheres which, however, function as substrata for other phenomena in the wider sphere. As technical terms, therefore, this word and cognate expressions should be used only with reference to those narrower spheres. In referring to the universalities involved, we are undoubtedly better served by our new terms and the attached analyses of examples.<sup>106</sup>

Thus, we see clearly that it is meaning that Husserl has in mind speaking about noema and its composition, but his intention is to go beyond the strict formal logical understanding of meaning and present us with a phenomenological understanding of it. This can be achieved by the precise analysis of the noetic-noematic structures and set of problems pertaining to them.

The differences in the 'peripheral' noematic moments are conditioned by what Husserl calls the pure Ego's mental regard or *attention*. Each meaning can be given in a series of

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<sup>106</sup> *Ideen* 233/Hua III 199.

ideally possible changes, for example, the meaning of ‘glass’ can be constituted on the basis of sensual perception, remembering or imagination. At the same time identical perceptual fields can yield different meanings: by looking at the glass of water standing on the table we can concentrate on the glass, on some particular part of it, on its shape or color, on water in it, on the table, on the fact that the glass is placed *on* the table (as is shown by Husserl’s analysis of categorical intuition in *LU*) or we can have a much more complex chain of associations that start from the simple perception of the glass. ‘The ray of the pure Ego’s regard sometimes goes through one noetic stratum and sometimes through another, or (as, e.g., in the case of recollections within recollections) through one encasement-level or another, sometimes straightforwardly, sometimes reflectively’.<sup>107</sup> Each experience of consciousness is a potential source of numerous possible noeses and corresponding noemata. This attention is never a stable fixed process; on the contrary, it presents us with a constant dynamic of changes and alterations of its modes. In one moment it is one part or quality of the object being straightforwardly attended to, in another moment it is already another one. In the next moment attention can switch to a totally different object within the perceptual field and so on.<sup>108</sup>

While attention remains within the sphere of one certain object (whether a perceptual object or a pure concept) we deal with one and the same noema and attention can be compared to a spotlight that makes visible different parts of the object while the rest remain not so perfectly seen, and some might be invisible at all.

Husserl states that this essential possibility of dynamism in attention clearly indicates subjectivity, the fact that the Ego ‘lives’ in its acts and that there is a certain ‘freedom’ in the

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<sup>107</sup> *Ideen* 223/Hua III 190.

<sup>108</sup> Husserl also speaks of moments of complete inattention presenting us with a ‘dead consciousness of something’ (ibid). This should be the cases such as staring through the window (and clearly seeing what is there) while having our mind on totally different things without being able to remember afterwards what we have seen.

position taken in regards to the objects of attention. There is a multiplicity of manners, by which consciousness as the ‘free being’<sup>109</sup> lives through its mental processes.

From what has been explicated earlier we are able to draw a general conclusion that noesis is nothing other than but intentional consciousness, consciousness of something, and this ‘something’ is called noema by Husserl. Let us take a closer look at these essential moments of mental processes in order to make understandable their relation and inner structure as well as important phenomenological consequences that can be drawn from such an understanding.

### 2.3.c Transcendental Constitution of Noema. Objectivity.

As we established in the beginning of the current chapter, there are only two realms of being taken into account within the phenomenological paradigm, namely, consciousness and its inner ‘life’, processes happening within it, on the one hand, and the transcendent world considered as constituted by consciousness. Such acts as thinking, perceiving, remembering are inherent to consciousness, and the world is taken essentially to be a non-inherent reality, something transcendent, different from what consciousness is. Let us see how this disposition fits into the explication of noetic-noematic structures undertaken above. We can go back to our example of perceiving a glass of water on the table. The glass is not given to us directly in perception, and the same can be said about any of its particular properties. What consciousness is faced with are the continuously changing adumbrations of perception. The color of the glass, for example, is adumbrated by a continuous multiplicity of sensed colors. We are also able to change the focus and the duration of our attention and this adds to the multiplicity of perceptions. The ever-changing *hyletic* data<sup>110</sup> and our perceiving of them are

<sup>109</sup> *Ideen* 226/Hua III 192. This expression is used by Husserl with inverted commas.

<sup>110</sup> This term Husserl uses already in *LU*. It can be roughly ‘translated’ into modern philosophical vocabulary as *sense-data*, but we have to keep in mind that according to Husserl hyletic data serve as the basis not only for

the really inherent moments of consciousness acts. They are given directly, in an immediate way to it. When all possible nuances of adumbrations are ‘put together’ by consciousness so that a particular object appears as a result of the act, the noema corresponding to the noesis emerges, we are faced with a non-inherent moment of the mental process, with an object constituted as object belonging to transcendent reality. ‘[...] *everything hyletic* belongs in the concrete mental process as a *really inherent* component, whereas, in contrast, what is “presented,” “adumbrated”, in it as multiplicity belongs to the *noema*’.<sup>111</sup>

Noema is transcendently constituted on the basis of the hyletic material inherently belonging to consciousness and consciousness’ noetic activity, thus it is called ‘given’, but we have to keep in mind that this sense of givenness is totally different from the sense in which hyletic data and acts of consciousness are given to it; noema is given as something transcendent, essentially different from consciousness, even if this givenness possesses evidence. In the acts of consciousness something is given which is something over against consciousness itself, something fundamentally different from it. It is due to the givenness of the transcendent that Husserl characterizes all mental processes as transcendental. ‘This is the primal source in which is found the only conceivable solution of those deepest problems of cognition concerning the essence and possibility of an objectively valid knowledge of something transcendent’.<sup>112</sup>

Thus we discover that there are two essentially different regions of being, namely consciousness and an objectivity belonging to it. Intentionality as the process that yields objective knowledge is essentially two sided: to the multiplicity of possible *noeses* corresponds a multiplicity of *noemata*. The noematic side cannot be divorced from the noetic completely, but it is important to keep in mind that ‘*the phenomenological problem of the*

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sensual perception, but for imagination and memory as well.

<sup>111</sup> *Ideen* 238/Hua III 203.

<sup>112</sup> *Ideen* 239/Hua III 204.



*relation of consciousness to an objectivity* has primarily its noematic side'.<sup>113</sup> The further investigation of noema and its structure can lead us to answer Husserl's main phenomenological question: How consciousness has 'access' to its object, which is essentially different from consciousness itself and which can possibly be given in manifold acts with a very different context. (Such a simple meaning as 'dog' can be given in pictorial presentation, verbal description, or even hearing of a sound of barking, for example. Needless to say, each of the aforementioned ways has in its turn a manifold of particular ways to be implemented). So, what does the claim that consciousness is related to its object properly signify?

Each noema, says Husserl, has a content (also called *sense* or noematic *nucleus*) and refers to its object by means of this content. This content is simply the 'what' of noema, what is given to consciousness through it. It is everything that is *meant* in noema cleared of all the subjective expressions. Thus, seeing a blossoming tree in the garden entails a noema with a content of blossoming tree (or a multiplicity of noemata each having a slightly different sense, such as 'blossoming tree from this particular side', or 'roughness', 'pleasant smell', 'white color' etc.). This content should be freed from all the subjective modes, in which it is an object of consciousness, such as 'given,' 'clearly perceived', 'remembered' etc.

If we try to 'clean' the noematic content even further we will see that during the course of perception (understood in the most broad sense here) we acquire more and more new determinations of the object (for example, we see the tree in more details, or from another side, or we move closer and start to feel the smell) while some other determinations may be lost or crossed out (we thought that the smell of the flowers is pleasant but then it becomes too intense and almost unbearable). These predicates are in a constant flux while the perception continues. Nevertheless the central sense of our perception ('tree') remains the

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<sup>113</sup> *Ideen* 308/Hua III 266

same despite all the changes. ‘The identical intentional ‘object’ becomes evidently distinguished from the changing and alterable predicates’.<sup>114</sup>

Here one of the most important Husserl’s expressions ‘unity of identity’ comes into play again. We already saw that each object is given to us in the multiplicity of cognitive acts, which can be of similar or different nature (several acts of perception or perception alongside recollection and imagination, for example). Each of these respective acts has its own noesis and noema, and in order to have a single definite object as a result of these acts instead of a multiplicity of different objects, the noemata of these acts form a harmonious unity with each other, they are joined together in the unity of identity, provided that their central sense is the same. In this way we have a consciousness of essentially one and the same object determined in different ways at different moments.

It follows, that in each noema there is, on the one hand, an inherent point of unity, i.e. *the object simpliciter*, the sense it yields, and on the other hand the ‘*object in the How of its determinations*’<sup>115</sup>, i.e. given in the precise and definite mode of this particular noema. For example, the blossoming tree can be given with all its details in a series of perceptual acts, and as a verbal description. The very sense or core of noemata in both cases would be the same, whereas the ‘how is it given’ of the objects would differ significantly. The examples can be given in cases of the sensual perception of different trees, or the same tree from different angles and distances etc. The central sense of noema is then a sort of an abstract form that is inherent in it and without which no noema can possibly exist. In every noema there should be a central point of reference, something that this noema is about, even if it is virtually indeterminable and can be referred to as simply ‘anything’. A noema can have something very vague at its core, something resisting conceptualization, but it cannot have an empty core. Each and every act of consciousness is directed to something, and the utmost

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<sup>114</sup> *Ideen* 313 /Hua III 271

<sup>115</sup> *Ideen* 314/Hua III 272

center of this ‘something’ is the noematic sense. As was said earlier, there is a strict parallelism between noeses and noemata, so that it is impossible to have noetic acts without corresponding noemata. Consciousness is not only directed, but it has to be directed to something.

Husserl introduces a new term, *noematic positum*, to designate the noematic sense together with the *how* it is given<sup>116</sup>. Thus we can have simple *one-membered posita* in cases of perceptual intuitions and *synthetical posita* in cases of judgments involving predication. Obviously there are liking-posita, wish-posita, doubt-posita, and many other modalities of noematic variations. It is by virtue of the noematic positum that consciousness refers to its object, recognizes it in the multiplicity of hyletic data given in an unstructured way and ascribes sense to it together with a particular way it is given. Let us not forget that in the framework of transcendental phenomenology an *object* strictly means *an object of consciousness and for consciousness* only, i.e. not the object of the mind-independent reality, but merely the object constituted by consciousness. Husserl writes:

Just as every intensive mental process has a noema and therein a sense by which it is related to an object, so, conversely, everything which we call *object*, of which we speak, which we confront as actuality which we hold possible or probable, no matter how indeterminately we think it, is precisely therefore already an object of consciousness; and that signifies that whatever world and actuality taken universally may be called, they must be represented in the framework of actual and possible consciousness by corresponding senses or posita filled with more or less intuitive contents.<sup>117</sup>

Phenomenology puts in brackets any actual positing of reality, thus every time we speak about an *object*, the sense of which is grasped by means of noema, we remember that it is not an object of mind-independent reality we talk about, but an object constituted by consciousness. All possible real and ideal objects are represented in phenomenology by means

<sup>116</sup> In *LU* this was respectively labeled as *matter* and *quality* of an act of consciousness.

<sup>117</sup> *Ideen* 322/ Hua III 278.

of possible noematic posita. Every object of ‘nature’ is understood as the constellation of all possible senses and posita as correlations of respective noetic mental process that can possibly yield such an object. We see that it is not a one-one relation between an object of consciousness and a noematic sense that corresponds to it. Each object has a multiplicity (sometimes infinite) of possible senses together with the posita that signify of it. If we take such a simple object as a table, for example, we immediately see the multiplicity of ways in which it can be constituted by consciousness, starting from differences in the modes of givenness (perceptual, memorial, imaginative, verbal) to differences in particular perceptions (round table, 4-legged table, black table, etc.) to differences in the distinctness and clarity of perceptions (table seen in darkness, table seen in broad daylight, picture of a table seen on bad computer screen and so on) to differences in senses ascribed to it (‘table’, ‘piece of furniture’, ‘solid object’, ‘wooden thing’). All these possible posita can designate one and the same objective actuality. On the other hand, to the same actuality a multiplicity of possible noetic acts corresponds operating with the multiple hyletic data in question and yielding the multiplicity of senses and posita.

“The unity of the physical thing stands over against an ideally infinite multiplicity of noetic mental processes of a wholly determined essential content and which can be surveyed despite the infinity, all of them united by being consciousness of the “same thing””<sup>118</sup> Let us note here how Husserl puts the expression ‘same thing’ in quotation marks changing the attitude from the natural one to the phenomenological. i.e. emphasizing that the ‘thing’ we are talking about is the ‘thing for consciousness’ without any presuppositions of its reality.

### ***3. Phenomenological Notion of Evidence.***

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<sup>118</sup> *Ideen* 323/ *Hua* III 279.

A serious question arises from the considerations presented above: Can one legitimately speak of truth and evidence<sup>119</sup> in the transcendental phenomenological context? If everything that consciousness deals with are hyletic data and noetic-noematic correlation without any possible reference to mind-independent reality, are we not obliged to assume that all judgments yielded by consciousness are necessarily true unless they contradict basic logical laws? In other words, what is true for consciousness is true in general, because there is no other criterion for truth rather than consciousness itself and what is given to it. How can we legitimately speak of truth and evidence within the phenomenological attitude?

First and foremost we have to admit that despite the fact that Husserl prefers to speak, throughout his works, of mental processes in the most general sense (including sensory perception, grasping a concept, associative thinking etc.), and constantly underlines that they all have essentially similar noetic-noematic structure, he still insists on a certain ‘hierarchy’ within these processes. There are mental processes, in which the posited object is *originarily* given to consciousness, and those, in which it is not given in such a way. Thus a sensory perception of an object bears more originality than the memory of this perception. In the sphere of conceptual thinking our act of actual counting that five plus five equals ten is, in turn, more original than the simple reproduction of this result when we memorized it from earlier occasions of counting. In both examples we see that the noematic sense is the same in case of the original presentation and the remembrance. ‘The difference concerns *the mode in which the bare sense of the bare positum is or is not the fulfilled sense or positum*’.<sup>120</sup> In case of sensory perception it matters whether the given object is given in the originary presentative mode (in Husserl’s terms), i.e. in the simple straightforward intuition or not. In case of

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<sup>119</sup> Husserl uses the notion of evidence (*Evidenz*) in the sense different from the ordinary understanding. Evidence for him is not a ground for belief or proof of judgment, but what we would rather call self-evidence or inward evidence (the last term is used sometimes in translations of Husserl’s works and stands for *Evidenz*). The concept is explained in detail in section 1.2.b.

<sup>120</sup> *Ideen* 327/ Hua III 283.

intuiting a table we have a fulfilled sense ‘table’, and the crucial moment is that this sense is fulfilled perceptually, we have a ‘first person’ consciousness of a table with its color, shape and other peculiarities. We do not have all of these with the same clarity in case of memory or imagination.

By the same token, other types of mental acts can also be completed with or without a certain level of clarity. Wishing something to happen and remembering this wish, or judging something and recalling this judgment definitely have different levels of clarity of fulfillment for the object of wish or judgment. In the case of complex theoretical judgments and intuition of essences we also have different levels of what Husserl calls *intellectual seeing*. We can have full clarity of the concepts we use and full certainty of believing when we, for example, state that water is H<sub>2</sub>O. However, if we forgot the basics of chemistry and have a very vague idea of what H<sub>2</sub>O stands for and only remember that this string of symbols should signify water, we can produce the same judgment and it would be obviously no less true, but for us it would involve much less intellectual seeing. Husserl calls this a ‘blind position’, when all the conceptual significations are used on the basis of obscure evidence, and the rational character of the judgment is obviously lacking. This does not exclude a secondary rational character for us in making this judgment (in the end we clearly remember that H<sub>2</sub>O stands for water, although have forgotten why is this the case), but the representation of eidetic cognitions is obviously imperfect in this case.

*'The posited characteristic has as its own a specific rational character, as a distinguishing mark accruing to it essentially, if and only if it is a position on the basis of a fulfilled, originally presentive sense and not merely on the basis of just any sense'.<sup>121</sup>* Thus, in case of the intuition of essences and forming judgments about them we need the unity of a rational position with 'that which essentially motivates this position.'<sup>122</sup> Not only must our

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<sup>121</sup>Ideen 327/Hua III 283.

<sup>122</sup>Ideen 328/Hua III 284.

judgments be in accord with basic logical laws of judgment-formation, but also there has to be a motivation for us to judge the way we do. This motivation is nothing other than the relation between noesis and noema, or more precisely, between noetic positing and the noematic positum. Only in the case when this relation has the mode of fulfillment are we justified in speaking of evidence and truth.

We see that evidence in transcendental phenomenology is nothing else than a positional and adequately presentive consciousness, i.e. consciousness of the inability to judge otherwise. When we have a clear rationally based idea of which elements compose water, we are simply unable to doubt our judgment 'Water is  $H_2O$ .' The positing of this judgment is motivated by an adequate givenness and thus is essentially an act of reason. Same applies to the example of counting that five plus five is ten. The case of seeing a table and forming a judgment 'There is a table here in front of me' is different. It presents us with the originary evidence of sensual perception (which we do trust in most cases), but not with the *Wesenanschauung*. Husserl writes that, strictly speaking, there is inadequate evidence in the latter case, as in all cases when we deal with something individual in contrast to essences. There is always room for doubt whether our perception is clear enough. Let us recall that we remain in the transcendental phenomenological attitude, thus we do not 'compare' our perceptions to some presupposed mind-independent reality. Nevertheless there can always be doubt whether the result of our perception can be corrected in the future, i.e. when we move closer to the table and see it in more detail. Indeed there is a structural difference between a perception of an individual physical thing, however distinct, and an intuition of an essence. Still, Husserl insists that assertoric seeing and apodictic intellectual seeing belong to one essential genus, to *rational consciousness whatever*. Thus we are justified in using the term 'seeing' in both cases. This justifies as well, according to Husserl, using the term 'evidence' in

both cases as the most universal concept, within the scope of which we can further differentiate assertoric and apodictic evidence as well as pure and impure evidence.

The term 'impure evidence' is in need of further clarification, because at first glance it (as many other of Husserl's expressions) presents a contradiction in itself. In fact Husserl means only the cases when we make necessary judgments in the pure logical sense, but these judgments are about individual things, which themselves cannot be adequately given with pure evidence. An example would be: 'If there is a table in this room then there is a material object in this room. There is a table in this room. Therefore there is a material object in this room'. The logical reasoning here is unassailable, but the evidence of the second judgment is not pure. A table or any other physical thing can always be given to us only one-sidedly and it is possible that subsequent perceptions will cancel all the previous ones. Only in this sense are posita grounded in perceptual intuition not fully adequate. Nevertheless, in most cases, they are not ruled out by perceptions that follow. Thus, different one-sided appearances blend together and are recognized as referring to one and the same object, making the continuation of experience possible. Husserl speaks about judgments gaining *weight* in 'the course of experience in which the empty places of the previous appearance are filled out, the indeterminacies are more precisely determined and thus always in the manner of a *thoroughgoing harmonious fulfilling with a steadily increasing rational power*'.<sup>123</sup>

In short, every evidence we have is either impure, thus susceptible to further strengthening or weakening or pure and adequate and cannot become stronger or weaker. We see a dangerous broadening of the concept of evidence here, and it indeed looks like that every experience of consciousness is evident to a greater or lesser degree. However generalizing and unjustified this statement might seem at face value, it is arguable that this is exactly what follows from the phenomenological point of view. Let us remember that the only

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<sup>123</sup>Ideen 332/HuaIII 287.



thing taken into phenomenological account is the residue of *epoche*, i.e. consciousness of something, noetic-noematic correlations. There is no room to compare experiences of consciousness to anything 'outside' it, because every 'outside' is strictly excluded from the phenomenological account. Moreover, every act of consciousness and what is given in this act cannot be doubted in principle while we remember that they must be considered only and precisely as they are, as phenomena, given to consciousness only in the way they are given. Thus each and every noetic-noematic correlation cannot but possess evidence, and the only thing that can give it less evident character lays within the same sphere, namely, it is another noetic-noematic correlation, improving or negating the previous one (just as in the example of seeing something in the dark and being convinced that it is a man while realizing later that it was a tree trunk). It would be absurd to claim that each and every positum has the same degree of indubitability, and that the intuition of essences and grasping of logical laws yield similar evidence as sensual perception. Therefore Husserl speaks of different levels of 'weight' of evidence. It is important to remember, though, that every act of consciousness together with its noematic correlate bears a certain degree of evidence necessarily, due to the simple fact that it is directly given to consciousness.

The concept of evidence will play a great role in later works of Husserl and in what follows we will see that this understanding of evidence made possible by the phenomenological method will play a great role in theorizing prepredicative experience of consciousness, because evidence understood in this particular way is essentially prepredicative itself.

#### 4. Conclusion.

We have considered in depth Husserl's account of meaning in *Ideen*. It was shown that the radical change in phenomenological methodology and the establishment of phenomenology as transcendental science answers many questions considered in *LU* and shows new directions for the development of theory of meaning. Let me summarize the most important points of this chapter.

The unclarified status of both consciousness and the world of material objects as presented in *LU* resulted in a vague understanding of what exactly the proclaimed ideality of meaning actually means. Phenomenological description of the way objectivity becomes subjective, i.e. how consciousness can relate to the world outside it by means of meaning-constitution was suspended due to the aforementioned difficulties with understanding both 'sides' of the process. A radical breakthrough in phenomenological method was introduced by Husserl and named phenomenological reduction or *epoché*. Reduction essentially is bracketing or suspending of any judgment about the actual existence of the world outside consciousness. As a result of the phenomenological reduction we find that the only remaining sphere for phenomenological investigation is what is given to consciousness exactly in the way it is given. After a thorough examination we see that these are only acts of consciousness (immanent indubitable content) and contents of these acts (transcendental content).

Consciousness (its acts) exist necessarily, it cannot be doubted in principle. The 'I think,' 'I perceive,' 'I wish,' and similar acts are available to consciousness immediately and indubitably. The contents of these acts, on the other hand possess only relative existence. It lays at the core of phenomenological method that they have to be understood as contents of acts of consciousness only, without any presuppositions about any relation to the 'world outside.' Thus, the only 'world' available for phenomenological investigation is the world of

pure consciousness, its acts and contents of these acts. Taken precisely as such it is also not subject to doubt. We cannot doubt the perceptions that we have, and any question about whether they are in accord with the outside reality is bracketed. All we can have doubt about is whether the next set of perceptions will rule out the previous one, or will confirm it.

These two realms of being available for phenomenological inspection are called by Husserl noesis and noema. The act of consciousness is noesis and its intentional correlate is noema. Noemata encompass both, real and ideal entities, i.e. essences and meanings given to consciousness, on the one hand, and individual things, again, as given only, on the other hand. To get a thorough account of meaning, then, we necessarily had to pay most attention to the concept of noema.

After the analysis of debates around the concept of noema, the following was shown. Noema is the essential correlate of every intensive mental process, and it should be considered as such a correlate only, without any question of any relation to the possible reality outside consciousness. There can be an infinite number of noemata and it is arguable that to each and every different act of consciousness there corresponds a different noema, because the latter includes in itself virtually every aspect of what is given in this act, including its general meaning, every individual aspect, and modality. There is a central core of every noema, its nucleus, or meaning per se, and this nucleus can be the same for many possible noemata, exactly like every object can be given in virtually innumerable different ways. In perceptual acts noemata are constituted on the basis of multiple dynamic hyletic data.

Another essential feature of noema is that it is always given as something transcendent to consciousness, something that consciousness is not. The evidence that we have in acts of consciousness is never of the same purity as with contents of intensive mental processes. Nevertheless it is the investigation of noema that gives us an answer to how objective content can enter subjective intensive mental processes.

The complex structure of noema gives us an answer. There is a noematic core, nucleus in each noema that can be essentially understood as the identical meaning described in the *LU*. Nevertheless, in *Ideen*, in contrast to *LU* we see that there is more to the objective side of the mental process. There is a peripheral part of every noema, thus every ideal meaning given to consciousness can possibly be given in manifold ways that can differ from each other not only in a slight insignificant mode of their appearances (more and less clear picture of an object), but also in the principal mode of givenness. We can grasp the same meaning through a pictorial presentation, thinking of a concept or recollecting any of the above. Thus, to constitute an 'object in the *how* of its determinations' consciousness relates to both its particular impressions that present hyletic data different in each and every particular case, and ideal meanings that it 'recognizes' in this data. We see that noeses, acts of consciousness, are nothing other than complex acts of comprehending and sorting out the multiplicity of singularities, uniting and organizing them around the central ideal core.

We see that Husserl relies for the most part on his investigation of meaning elaborated in *LU*, and this allows him not to undertake anew the precise analysis of the noematic nucleus. The nucleus is the ideal meaning described in the investigations, but in the *Ideen* we see that this ideality is essentially connected with a particular mode of its givenness in each and every act of consciousness. Due to the introduction of the new methodology in *Ideen*, Husserl can speak at length about peripheral aspects of noemata bracketing the question of their relation to objective reality in traditional sense. The transcendental reduction gives phenomenological analysis freedom from eternal doubt about adequacy of what is given to what is, and ensures that the sphere of the given possesses evidence.

The problematic question of the origin of meaning-intention and meaning fulfillment as presented in *LU* takes a new turn in *Ideen* (where it might be reformulated as a question of the origin of noesis and noema) and becomes much less problematic. We take everything

given to consciousness simply as given with evidence, and, although there can be different degrees of evidence, and new experiences can completely rule out previous ones, the main presupposition remains: every noetic-noematic correlation is given with evidence. This shows that by means of methodological limitation of the sphere of the investigation to what is given to consciousness exactly in the way it is given we are simply bound to deal with the given as given without questioning it or asking about the origin further. We are entitled to speak about the origin only within our sphere of investigation, i.e. sphere of consciousness. We can have a close introspection of what is happening 'within,' for example, how noemata are constituted on the basis of hyletic data, or whether one part of our experience correlates with another. By the same token this introspection is done exclusively by consciousness and within its sphere. It is useful to remember here, that this phenomenological limitation should be taken in the positive sense, i.e. not as a violent exclusion of some valid region of being from our account in order to escape certain problematic issues, such as the existence of the world. It is the only methodology that is available to us, insofar consciousness 'knows' only what it is and what is given to it as transcendent content of its acts, including the ability to presuppose the world outside. Thus we see that Husserl's theory of meaning acquires a strong methodological and ontological basis in his developed phenomenology. The phenomenological description of the constitution of concepts and judgments as given in *LU* gets incorporated into general theory of acts of consciousness, and broadened by means of a thorough analysis of noetic-noematic correlations. These correlations, being the only valid sphere of research, have been proven to possess genuine evidence, Therefore, once the general theory of the structure of knowledge acquisition has been presented, the analysis can go deeper into the investigation of the origin of experience of consciousness.

In this chapter I tried to show how Husserl's theory of meaning elaborated in *LU* is sharpened and enriched in *Ideen*, by recognition that the ideal meaning-possibility of his early

works has also a periphery and only together they yield an object *just as intended* or full noema. Noema is one of the most central and at the same time ambiguous concepts in Husserl's phenomenology, and it is not surprising that it has inspired interpretations of many researches. We have already seen the main dilemma associated with noema, namely whether it is the object of intention with all its particular moments and parts or it is a sense ascribed to the object and, possibly, expressed in language. I tried to contribute to this debate providing reconciliation in terms of statement that the notion of full noema encompasses both of the aforementioned interpretations, although none of them is fully unproblematic in itself.

My main intention in this chapter, apart from the clarification of the concept of noema, was to show how Husserl's theory of meaning is strengthened by elaboration of phenomenological method, and what new horizons it opens, namely the possibility to investigate deeper into how consciousness 'meets' its object with all its peculiarities. This possibility is partly realized in *Ideen* but the major work in this direction happens in later Husserl's work. I tried to show how the theory of meaning in *LU* is enriched by the analysis of noetic-noematic structures in *Ideen* while remaining essentially the same theory and how it is in need of further clarification of the process of meaning-constitution that happens in later works. In my opinion, Mohanty tries to do the same in his work<sup>124</sup>, although he does not explore precisely the connection between noema and meaning leaving the whole meaning-problematic of *Ideen* out of his focus. Michalski<sup>125</sup> traces the development of Husserl's theory of meaning from *LU* to *Ideas* and further, although he is more concentrated on the problem of the connection of meaning and language in the *Ideen*, and thereafter he turns to such topics as historicity of meaning, its intersubjectivity and ability to be shared and enriched through generations of speakers and thinkers, and do not specifically consider the problematic of the origin of meaning-intention and noetic-noematic correlation. I, on the contrary, tried to remain

<sup>124</sup> Mohanty, J.N. *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964.p. XXVII

<sup>125</sup>Michalski, Krzysztof *Logic and Time, an Essay on Husserl's Theory of Meaning*. Springer Netherlands,1996.

within epistemological problems that Husserl's theory of meaning in *Ideen* poses and show why it is in need of deeper analysis of more primordial levels of the origin of meaning.

The actual introspection of what is happening in noetic-noematic correlations can take different directions. In the second volume of the *Ideen* we see, for example, an in-depth analysis of the constitution of the physical thing and elaboration of the concept and theory of Nature. *Cartesian Meditations*, on the other hand, present us with an analysis of intersubjectivity and investigation into the way it is constituted. For present purposes, it is valuable to look at one of his latest works, namely *Experience and Judgment*, where he deepens his analysis of noetic-noematic correlations to the most basic level possible and tries to explicate the origin of perceptual noemata through analyzing their hyletic basis. We will investigate consciousness at the level that precedes the formation of concepts, namely, at the level of prepredicative experience.

### **Chapter 3. Meaning of Predicative Experience.**

The realm of meaning is, as such, nonlinguistic; but, if it is to be a *realm of meaning*, it is directed toward articulation in language. To this extent meaning is *prelinguistic*. (Lothar Eley *Afterward to, Experience and Judgment: Phenomenology and Philosophy of Language*; 402) <sup>126</sup>

#### **1. Importance of the Investigation of Predicative Experience for the Science of Logic and Theory of Meaning.**

Predicative apophantic thinking and logical judgment was one of the main subject of Husserl's investigations throughout his life. It was only in his latest works, though, that he

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<sup>126</sup> References to *Experience and Judgment* are made to James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks translation: Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, revised and edited by Ludwig Landgrebe, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1973, in the following way: *EU*, page number.

turned to the analyses of the prelogical grounds for logical thinking, i.e. to prepredicative experience of consciousness that are founded in essentially passive predispositions that make possible conceptual knowledge. In what follows I will be explicating and analyzing Husserl's arguments for the necessity of studying the prepredicative sphere in order to gain a full understanding of the process of concept and judgment formation.

This thesis does not seem very obvious. Indeed most philosophers (starting with Aristotle) who have theorized on the subject of logic, conceptual thinking, and judgment have started their analyses from the simplest concepts but hardly looked 'beneath' the conceptual. This seems right, insofar as what cannot be yet conceptualized cannot be properly expressed in language. Nevertheless, it was Husserl's firm conviction that in order to lay bare the foundations of logic and meaning we have to trace its rootedness in what precedes it, i.e. prepredicative experience.

Husserl undertakes this task in his last important work *Erfahrung und Urteil*, which was put together and edited by his disciples and published after his death. So far this work has not gained much precise attention of scholars of phenomenology, despite its deep insights on the nature and origins of predicative knowledge. It can be explained, in part, by the debatable authorship of the book itself. While virtually nobody denies that it is based on Husserl's manuscripts over a twenty years period, it remains debatable how much Husserl's colleagues, especially Ludwig Landgrebe, added to the original, and whether their attempts to clarify and summarize his insights do not contain ideas alien to those of Husserl. In any case, it seems that there is a consensus among researchers, that the Introduction to *EU*, namely sections 1-14 were written exclusively by Landgrebe. It is questionable whether Husserl would recognize it as restatement of his own ideas<sup>127</sup>. Thus, in what follows there would not be much discussion

<sup>127</sup> More on this discussion is available in David Carr, *Philosophy and the Problem of History*, Northwestern University Press: Evanston, 1979, section 9; Dieter Lohmar, *Erfahrung Und Kategoriales Denken : Hume, Kant Und Husserl Über Vorprädikative Erfahrung Und Prädikative Erkenntnis*, Kluwer Academic publishers (*Phenomenologica* 147). p.229ff.



the issue of life-world (a central one in the *Introduction* of *EU*); our analysis will concentrate on the realm of prepredicative consciousness and the origin of meaning and predicative judgment.

Due to the fact that there is very little research on *EU* in general, and theory of meaning expressed in this work in particular, this chapter does not contain any polemic with existing interpretation, but rather serves as one of the first attempts to assess late Husserl's theory of meaning, trace the development that genetic phenomenology and theory of time-consciousness contribute to it and establish the continuity in Husserl's thinking. Some important points in available scholarship still need to be mentioned here.

Don Welton does not analyze *EJ* precisely but he points out that static phenomenological analysis has its limits, namely, it unable to account neither for perceptual composition of a meant object (because it is given to us gradually, not in one stroke), nor for progressive constitution of an object, which happens in time-consciousness. He is right to claim that the turn to genetic analysis of consciousness was an *immanent* demand of the accomplishments of static analyses with an aim to reveal the temporality of subjective acts, their structure and the fundamentals of experience (*Erlebnis*).<sup>128</sup> I would add to it that the same immanent demand has driven Husserl's thought to inquire deeper not only in the temporality of consciousness and genetic structure of its acts, but also into the origins of logic and meaning that lie in the prelogical and prepredicative sphere.

After his detailed analysis of meaning and linguistic expressions in *LU* Mohanty talks about *EJ* in the last chapter of his book 'Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning' mainly stressing two facts. First, it has happened only in the *EJ* that Husserl has explicitly rejected meaning-as-species theory, and second, in *EJ* Husserl sharply divorces concepts of 'meaning'

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<sup>128</sup>See: Welton, Don The Origins of Meaning. The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers. 1983. *Phaenomenologica* 88. p.30ff.

and 'essence'. 'Essence' remains an ontological concept, while 'meaning' became a phenomenological concept tied to 'intentionality.' He even stresses (referring to the late Husserl's theory of meaning: 'To be is to be a possible object of reference. Any entity that we admit into our ontology must be such that it can be referred to.'<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, the claim that to be means to be a possible object of reference does not lead him to the claim that I advocate, namely, that meaning can be interpreted as an ideal possibility of this reference. I already mentioned that despite the well-known fact that Husserl openly rejects the interpretation of meaning as species in *EJ* only, his earlier works also give us a reason to think that he was never satisfied fully with this theory, and even *LU* contains many passages that do not fit into such an interpretation. Thus, I hope to show that Husserl rejects the species theory of meaning in *EJ* by saying explicitly what has been already implicitly contained in his earlier works. In addition, as have been demonstrated in the previous chapter, meaning became a phenomenological concept rather than ontological already in the *Ideen*, where Husserl's analyses of intentionality are presented as explication of noetic-noematic correlations. Therefore, my analysis will proceed with an aim to discover what *essentially* new is contained within *EJ* in respect of the theory of meaning, and my idea is that it is indeed genetic phenomenology and investigations of temporality that influenced further development of this theory. Therefore, we have to look into prepredicative constitution to see why meaning is called *omnitemporal* by Husserl.

According to Husserl, the traditional concept of predicative judgment occupies the center of the science of formal logic. Nevertheless it is evident from his late works that he came to believe that the origin of logic need to be clarified phenomenologically and that such an analysis is to show that the sphere of logical consists of several layers, some of which have not won the attention in philosophical tradition which has investigated for the most part only

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<sup>129</sup> Mohanty, J.N. *Edmund Husserl's Theory of Meaning*, The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964.p. XXVII

the upper ones. It is the deepest layers, though, that conceal the ground for the true understanding of the upper ones.

### **1.1 Investigation of Phenomenological Concept of Evidence.**

It has been firmly established in the logical tradition that the main type of judgment is the one that has the 'S is p' form, i.e. the one that binds subject and predicate by means of a copula. Every judgment, then, presents us with an object and tells something about it. Husserl's question concerns the source of this givenness of an object, insofar it is obvious that consciousness must have an object to be able to make it a subject of a judgment. This translates, in the language of *LU*, as fulfillment of meaning-intention, and accordingly, as the noetic-noematic correlation in the paradigm of *Ideen*. Moreover, this object should be given to consciousness in a special way that allows it to become a *hypokeimenon*. In order to yield knowledge it is not enough for just any objects to be given to consciousness in any indeterminate way and then be arranged into judgments according to formal logical rules. If we speak about *evident* judgments then it is important to understand that the objects of these judgments must also be given with *evidence*.

Let us recall the phenomenological concept of evidence in the previous chapter. Evidence is the inability of positional and presentive consciousness to judge otherwise. Two immanent experience of consciousness, i.e. experience of its own acts, the noetic 'side' is always given with evidence. The noematic 'side' has evidence as well, but so-called 'evidence with caution.' Husserl uses the term 'impure evidence' in this case. Insofar as evidence of judgment is based on the adequacy of its givenness, we can notice certain gradations in this adequacy. Basic logical laws are grasped with apodictic evidence, whereas there is always a

room for doubt when it comes to judgments based on perception. Moreover, within the latter there are different degrees of evidence, depending on the mode of the judgment, whether it is based on direct sensual perception, or on recollection, or on imagination. Still, there is a valid reason that allows us to use the term evidence in each and every case when we speak about the experience of consciousness. They are evident precisely as experiences of consciousness, and everything over and beyond it that can cancel their validity is bracketed by the phenomenological reduction. Therefore, each experience is evident and the purity of this evidence depends only on the possibility of this experience being corrected or negated by subsequent ones. This is implausible in cases of experiencing laws of logic, but very plausible when it is an experience based on perception.

The evidence that Husserl speaks about is the evident givenness of an object to consciousness. One cannot doubt that consciousness has an object that it experiences or that it has it in some other way than the way it is given. Thus, evidence turns out to be an essential feature of every conscious experience. In transcendental phenomenology the question of this experience being adequate can be posed in principle only in regard to other experiences, but not to any other realm of being, i.e. what we experience cannot be measured against 'what really is.'

The evident givenness of objects is not necessarily perceived predicatively. An object can be given with evidence without being made the subject of a predicative judgment. Evidence is usually not something, to which consciousness brings special attention, and it is rarely made a theme of a special judgment. When we see a glass of wine on the table it is likely for us to have the judgment 'There is a glass of wine on the table,' but special circumstances are needed to judge explicitly 'It is evident for me that there is a glass of wine

on the table'. Thus, evidence turns to be in most cases a prepredicative awareness on the part of consciousness of its own experiences.

Let us recall that no evident predicative judgment is possible when its subject is not itself given with evidence. This is obvious in case of judgments based on perception, but also Husserl states that the same applies to every possible predicative judgment, including first logical principles possessing apodictic evidence. The fact that the latter make a ground for all possible knowledge is based not only on their pure form, but also on the evident way their subjects are given. It testifies that Husserl is interested in evidence not from a psychological point of view, and he will not describe it as a *reell* moment of our subjective cognition, but rather as an identical immanent moment that belongs to every possible givenness of an object and to every possible judgment.

On the other hand, Husserl underlines that he is going to approach evidence in a phenomenological, not in a pure logical way. The latter bears only a formal character and does not tell us anything about the object of a judgment itself, but only presents us with a categorial form of a judgment in question. We do not learn anything about an object presented to us as simple *S* or *p*, besides the position it has in a judgment.

An analysis of evident judgment should definitely start from the simplest cases, which are judgments about individual things. Thus, Husserl starts with a question about experience of consciousness in cases of the evident givenness of individual objects.

Even in the simplest cases we already find *the essential ambiguity between the passive and the active*. On the one hand, 'sense data' indicate the original passivity of consciousness, on the other hand there is always an active objectifying orientation towards these data, otherwise they could not serve as the basis for the constitution of objects. Passive pregivenness always coincides with an active orientation of consciousness. Husserl states that

this happens not only in cases of sensitivity, but also in other modalities of experiences, such as wishing, liking, evaluating etc. 'The activity of perception, the perceptive orientation toward particular objects, their contemplation and explication, is already an active performance of the ego. As such it presupposes that something is already pregiven to us, which we can turn toward in perception'.<sup>130</sup> This 'something' is not an object yet and not a constellation of objects, it is rather a non-homogenous field of experience, some parts and moments of which constantly excite us and drive us to perception. Husserl prefers to call this field a *field of prominences* (*Abgehobenheiten*) without any further specification. He deliberately avoids calling this field a 'world' or an 'environment', explaining it by the misleading effect such a naming might have. Even simply calling something a world is very suggestive of implications of the world of objective reality outside consciousness, whereas Husserl wants to remain true to his pure phenomenological ground and *epoche*,<sup>131</sup> so that all the presuppositions of the material reality that affects consciousness from outside are bracketed.

## **1.2 Prepredicative Origins of Predicative Logic**

In the *Formal and Transcendental Logic* Husserl says that logic is supposed to be a self-explication of pure reason, where 'pure reason' is understood as containing nothing empirically factual, material or hyletic. Logic is a formal system of principles of a theoretical science and knowledge. Insofar as knowledge is judgment-based, logic is primarily concerned with a formal theory of judgment. Nevertheless in *EU* Husserl insists that we must investigate

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<sup>130</sup> *EU* 71-2.

<sup>131</sup> Despite the fact that he has already spoken about intersubjective life-world at length in *Cartesian Meditations* and provided a justification for it (non an unquestionable, but arguable one).

deeper into the origins of logic, judgments, and concepts, i.e. look at their prepredicative origin.

*The disclosure of the foundation of the predicative self-evidence (Evidenz) in prepredicative represents not merely the genealogy of certain kinds of predication and predicative self-evidence but the genealogy of logic itself in one of its fundamental elements – precisely because all self-evidence, even that of the logician himself, has the foundation of its sense in the conditions to which the possible making self-evident of the ultimate substrates of the act of judgment is subject.*<sup>132</sup>

An obvious question would be how then the grounding of logic with the help of the phenomenological investigation of prepredicative experience is possible if logic, as stated above, contains nothing from the field of receptivity? To clarify the question: if the realm of the logical starts from our apophantic judgments, or, even if genetically earlier, i.e. from the constitution of concepts, then how it can be related to, not to speak of justified by our pre-predicative experiences (*Erlebnisse*)? On the other hand, our sense impressions definitely play a role in the formation of simple concepts and judgments in consciousness, which in turn results in more complicated operations, such as the constitution of categories and abstract concepts, the composition of judgments of a higher order, in which the roles of subjects and predicates are played by already constituted judgments. Needless to say, it is a task of phenomenology as a science of experience of consciousness to describe in detail this process of transformation of our sensual experience into an experience of concept constitution. It is also a task of phenomenology to find out the conditions of consciousness' active elaboration on its passive impressions of the world. The problem is whether we, staying within the framework of such a phenomenological analysis, would really find in the pre-predicative realm a ground (*ratio*) for our constitution of conceptual meaning, and predicative thought.

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<sup>132</sup> EU 128.

It is tempting to state, judging from what Husserl himself says in the *EU*, that consciousness' ability to constitute concepts and judgments depend solely on its creative spontaneity, and that the realm of the given in our perception data does not play any significant role in the process, but only that of raw material, out of which consciousness can receive predicative results (in the form of concept, judgment, or set of judgments etc.). Still it can be argued that this is not so. I will explain why in what follows.

In order to clarify the relation between prepredicative knowing (*vorprädikative Kenntnis*) und predicative knowledge (*prädikative Erkenntnis*), it is very important to consider specifically another crucial pair of concepts, namely *passivity* (*Passivität*) and *activity* (*Aktivität*) of consciousness and their flexible relations.

It was already said that even in the sphere of passivity, in the sheer givenness of the fundamental substrate there is always at least a minimal activity of consciousness: an act of objectification which involves an actively believing cognizance of that of which we are aware, this something which is one and continuously the same, is identified in distinct acts which form a synthesis.<sup>133</sup> It is this activity taking place in prepredicative experience, which constitutes the lowest level of judgment. With every prepredicative, objectifying turning-toward an existent, it is already necessary to speak of an act of judgment in the broader sense. Further, even passive reception of sense data also involves a bestowal of meaning on this allegedly ultimate object-substrates; or, to put it another way, even the lowest level of experience involves its own horizon.

This means that the process of judgment constitution does not start from the predicative realm, but is rooted genetically deep in the structures of receptivity, which already involves the lowest level of activity. It is a continuously flowing activity or a continuous stream of activity, which is possible only while the sense impressions are *im-Griff-behalten* to

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<sup>133</sup> *EU* 62.



us, but it is definitely an *act* of consciousness already. Only given these passive-active *Im-Griff-behaltens* can the object of the sheer perception be grasped as a persisting object, i.e. as the one which does not exist only in the particular now, but has been essentially the same while we perceive it, and is expected to remain the same. Only in this way, i.e. with the help of such a lower level of activity of consciousness can an object be constituted as a persisting object of perception, i.e. as a possible substrate for judgment constitution and logical thinking understood in the traditional sense.

Therefore, phenomenological analysis is necessary to show us how exactly the lowest level of activity of consciousness proceeds and it proves that the ground for predicative knowledge is deeply rooted in the activity of consciousness, which can be already found in seeming passive receptivity.

## **2. Receptive Consciousness and Passive Meaning-Constitution.**

### **2.1 Methodological Difficulties.**

It is not an easy and natural task to ascertain the most basic level of consciousness, i.e. pure receptivity. In fact, we never experience it in its purity, because whenever we try to look upon our experience it turns out to be already based on the multiple layers of previous experience, on our being familiar with perceptions, concepts, and judgments, on the memories of constituting objects and predicating something of them. Thus, there is a world of familiarity and trustworthiness that surrounds us in the natural attitude. The phenomenological method of bracketing and limiting our analysis to experience of consciousness helps in this respect, but there are certain difficulties even within the phenomenological method when it comes to investigating the most basic level of conscious

activity. We need to concentrate on the perceptual field given to consciousness before any objectifying activity takes place and before any operations of sense-bestowal have been carried out. The most obvious difficulty associated with this task is getting access to the experiences of this level. Most of the experiences on the predicative level can be formalized in the way of concepts and judgments we utter, and thus manifested. Prepredicative level is essentially prelinguistic, therefore it cannot be articulated meaningfully.

One possible way of dealing with this obstacle is to take signals and reactions of the body as manifestations of experience of consciousness. Such examples as an immediate turn of the head after hearing some noise, or walking along a familiar route without actual thinking about this route (and probably thinking about different things instead) are arguably present us with evidence of the experience of consciousness without (or before) actual thinking and conceptualizing happens. On the other hand, if we remain on the grounds of a 'first-person perspective' (that is usually called introspection by phenomenologists), we have to agree that all these experiences can be analyzed only *postfactum*, i.e. after they actually happen, and, more important, after they have been grasped conceptually. It remains an open question whether prepredicative experience can be articulated in its purity, without any additions that predicative thought brings to it. In addition, our analysis has to start from the most basic occurrences of prepredicative receptivity, such as the passive reception of the visual field, and in this case we will hardly have any visible bodily manifestations of this experience, especially such manifestations that provide us with any valuable data about the experience in question.

Here is a suggestion that probably does not go along with Husserl's line of thought. Investigation into prepredicative experience is one of the crucial points where phenomenology should seek out a possible cooperation with cognitive science, especially with such aspects of the latter as experimental neuropsychology and psychopathology. These are disciplines that

can to present us with valuable descriptions of prepredicative experience, whether it records of the activity of the brain, or observations of the behavior of infants or descriptions of pathological changes in self-awareness and intentionality. It is well known that the naturalistic approach of positive science and the transcendental stance of phenomenology are based on different methodological and metaphysical grounds; nevertheless during past decades we have witnessed repeated attempts to reconcile the two and path a way to a productive and fruitful exchange.<sup>134</sup> It is not within the scope of our present investigation to discuss the possible benefits and compromises of such a cooperation, so it will suffice just to point out that if there are certain advantages for phenomenology in the use of empirical findings of modern science then they are located foremost in investigations of receptivity and prepredicative experience. Phenomenology, essentially based on rational predicative thought, may find itself at a loss when it comes to consciousness gaining a greater intimacy with its own experiences of the prepredicative level and articulating them in a way that does not add much conceptualizing absent from the experiences themselves, and does not impose predetermined theories on the level that proceeds any theoretical categorizing. Thus, it would be extremely useful to employ the achievements of cognitive science for (at least) obtaining the data concerning prepredicative experience of consciousness, even if not the scientific explanation thereof.

## **2.2 Attention and Interest.**

What is contained in our field of passive receptivity before any conceptualizing of experience takes place? This is definitely not a field of objectivities insofar as there is no

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<sup>134</sup> See: Aikin S.F. 'Pragmatism, Naturalism, and Phenomenology,' *Human Studies* 29 (2006), pp.317-340; Gallagher S. 'Mutual Enlightenment: Recent Phenomenology in Cognitive Science,' *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 4/3 (1997), pp. 195-214; Gallagher S., Zahavi D. *The Phenomenological Mind: An Introduction to Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science*, London: Routledge, 2008; , J.-M., Petitot, J., Pachoud, B., and Varela, F.J. (1999). 'Beyond the Gap: An Introduction to Naturalizing Phenomenology.' In J. Petitot, F.J. Varela, B. Pachoud, and J.-M. Roy (eds.), *Naturalizing Phenomenology*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, 1-83.

object selected yet (the latter would involve a basic conceptualizing or active objectifying operation). On the other hand, it is not pure chaos that we experience, it is a field of sensuous data, which are already unities of identity, but on a very primitive level.

The first type of unity that consciousness constitutes in its passive comprehension of any sensuous field, visual, acoustic or sensory, is a *unity of homogeneity*. It constitutes a basis for any further experiences such as *heterogeneity*. It is within a homogeneous field only that a particular element can be exposed as standing out and contrasting with the field, in Husserl's example, a red patch on the white wall. In order to avoid an impression that all the passive impressions of consciousness lay primarily in the visual field, we can add to this such examples as hearing some noise in silence, or sensing a cold spot on a warm surface. Basically all our prepredicative impressions start with this duality: homo- and heterogeneity, we either experience the similarity (yet undetermined) or the difference. Husserl states that both are based on the phenomenon of *association*, although he does not use this term in its ordinary psychological sense. Association in this context means that some impression comes to prominence on the basis of another impression. We are able to recognize similarity (before any thinking and conceptualizing) when we look at the white wall and nothing stands out for us in this sensual experience, one part or moment of which is in complete accordance and can be associated with any other part or moment. On the other hand, there is a certain 'disturbance' when we come to observe a red patch on this wall. The difference becomes prominent as a result of previous experience of the similar. 'Homogeneity and heterogeneity, therefore, are the result of two different fundamental modes of associative unification'<sup>135</sup>.

We see the intrinsic activity on the most passive level of consciousness apprehension of the world. Particular parts of homogenous background come to prominence and are associated with other parts. This is the synthesis of coincidence on its most basic level that is

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<sup>135</sup> EU 75.

undetermined coincidence of similarities and differences. It is usually a perception of difference that strikes us and draws our attention, and it proves that the ability of consciousness to be affected is manifested on the deep prepredicative level. Once again, the similarities and differences are not yet conceptualized and articulated, they are just noticed and manifest themselves in the change of attention focus. Our gaze is directed naturally to the bright patch on the otherwise homogeneous surface or our hearing is concentrated on an unusual sound within otherwise identical background noise. It is usually the intensity of a particular datum that makes it stand out for us from the multiplicity of other data that affect us simultaneously. The 'obtrusiveness' of the difference should be of considerable degree, and the more it stands out from homogeneity the greater the chances that it will affect our attention.

Husserl draws a parallel with predicative thought here. Certain thoughts can also be obtrusive and persistent and stay in our mind for longer than other, seemingly without or against our will to concentrate on them, they force themselves on our consciousness.

Even on this most basic level of consciousness' affection we are able to distinguish two essential sides of it that should not be confused. It is *that which drags our attention* and the *attention itself*. It is the prepredicative analogous of noetic-noematic correlation. The crucial thing to point out is that even on the most basic level of consciousness' activity (which is for the most part passive) the two-sidedness of any process is already present. Consciousness itself, even when essentially passive, should never be confused with what is given to it, and, accordingly, passive data themselves are essentially different from the receptivity, by means of which they are given. Nevertheless, we cannot apply the terms 'noema' and 'noesis' to the prepredicative level with full justification, because there is still not enough determinateness on both sides, there is no object proper yet, just the stimulus, and no

determinate grasping of the object, just the passive (involuntary) directedness of attention.

Husserl notes:

It is once again necessary to remind ourselves that, when one speaks here of an object (*von einem Objekt, einem Gegenstand*), the term is not being used properly. For, as we have already pointed out several times, one cannot yet speak at all of objects in the true sense in the sphere of original passivity.<sup>136</sup>

Thus, we observe the essential two-sidedness of each prepredicative process. It consists in the obtrusion of consciousness and the tendency of consciousness itself to be affected. The active part that consciousness plays in this seemingly purely passive process of being affected consists in its compliance with this tendency that can have different strength and tempo. Husserl provides us with an example of a locomotive whistle, which can be a powerful stimulus and direct our attention without our will. It cannot pass totally unnoticed, but the way consciousness notices it can vary. If we are engaged in a very important and interesting conversation, for example, it is very likely that we will be diverted from it only momentarily and involuntary, and will not concentrate on the loud whistle so that it is given a chance to become a proper object of our attention. It can happen that we will not remember that there was any distraction even a few minutes after it happened. On the other hand, in different circumstances the whistle would be given our proper attention, brought to the foreground of the mind, and even cause our attentive turning to its source and lead to a different chain of thoughts. The latter case Husserl calls 'being properly awake for something', so that we direct our regard to it, turn to it actively and bring it from the background. We see that consciousness can be active even at the level of pure receptivity. Not only does it have the given data in itself, but it can push this data into prominence and apprehend the objects inside the data field.

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<sup>136</sup> EU 77.

The core of our prepredicative experience is *attention* that Husserl defines as *tending of the ego toward an intentional object*<sup>137</sup>. Let us look more closely at this definition. It tells us that even at the most basic level of consciousness there is always a tendency to 'put things together', to make sense of a blend of appearances, of constituting an object, in contrast to simple reception of everchanging prominences. There is an inclination to concentrate on something that stands out, and make it an object for consciousness.

When we concentrate on an intentional object (or on an intentional object coming into existence), what is it exactly that we concentrate on, asks Husserl. The trivial answer 'exactly on the object in the way it is given' appears not so trivial, when we underline that it is an *object itself* that consciousness directs attention to, not the *existence of this object*. It is indeed more easily demonstrated on the level of predicative experience, and thus not surprising that Husserl provides us with examples that are applicable to this level only, such as the pleasure we experience contemplating the beauty of a painting which is the pleasure given by painting, not by our belief in its existence. Likewise, being immersed in some exciting activity we pay attention to the activity itself and our involvement in it, not to our belief in the reality of our actions. It would not be less convincing, though, if examples were drawn from the realm of prepredicative consciousness. When a noisy sound attracts our attention on the prepredicative level, we do not conceptualize that it is a sound, or concentrate on its properties, and definitely do not contemplate where could it possibly come from, it just captures our attention in a somewhat violent way. There is definitely no separate thought of the existence of this noise attached to our comprehension of it. It is not the actual (or imaginary) being of the noise and its source that causes attention of consciousness, it is the noise itself. Something stands out within the perceptual field and brings about the directedness of consciousness to this object. What follows is a possible continuous synthetic process of constituting an object

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<sup>137</sup>EU 80.

throughout the coincidence of meaning-intention and meaning fulfillment, or noetic-noematic correlation, but even before that, at the prepredicative level, a general tendency of consciousness to be directed toward intentional objectivity is manifested.

Our observation that it is objectivity itself that consciousness is affected by, not the actual existence of this objectivity, has one important phenomenological consequence. It shows that on the very basic level when we start to apprehend an object, there is no question about its actual existence attached to our perception. An object should be constituted first in order to indulge in the question about its real existence. This looks like what Husserl has called the 'natural attitude,' i.e. our common belief in the existence of the world outside consciousness is an attitude that does not necessarily come together with either our attention to something that has potential to become an object, or with our apprehension of a constituted object. The 'natural attitude,' i.e. the positing of mind-independent reality, is posterior to constitution of objectivity. This helps us to understand Husserl's thesis '*Zu den Sachen selbst!*' (To the things themselves!) that was meant to make manifest the essence of phenomenology. In performing the phenomenological reduction and bracketing our judgments about the existence of reality outside consciousness we return to the attitude of consciousness that has its *cogitatum* and comprehends it attentively, possibly ascribing meanings to sets of adumbrated impressions and forming judgments about them. Consciousness deals with things given to it as with the given, and the question of their independent existence comes later if at all. In any case it is not possible that a question of real mind-independent existence of an object arises before the object is constituted. Turning to the things themselves, then, means for Husserl a return to the state of consciousness when things are just constituted, simply are they are, before questioning their source of existence. The justification of this methodology was elaborated in the chapter 2 of this work, but it is here, in the analysis of the late stage of Husserl's work, that we see the real meaning of his arguably most famous claim.



It is the prepredicative stage of consciousness' involvement with the given that is supposed to give us a clue as to how something meaningful arises from a mere perceptive field where nothing but homo- and heterogeneity can be distinguished at first glance.

We have already established that it is the attention of consciousness that picks out certain heterogeneities within a perceptual field, and that this attention has its passive and active sides.

The active side of attention Husserl calls *interest*. Interest is an activity with a motivation, a striving. We can arguably interpret it as striving for knowledge, a tendency of consciousness to turn something into a proper object, grasp and define it. The given field of sense-data is simply a field that cannot be but perceived and this field-perception, in which objects are simply held in view, undistinguished, is the passive side of prepredicative consciousness. At the same time, consciousness turns toward an object that cannot be considered as purely passive, it manifests a certain interest in getting to know its object. We strive to perceive this object in an uninterrupted way that would give us a necessary continuity of a multitude of appearances, which compose a synthesis of coincidence and yield a proper object for consciousness. 'There is an intention that goes beyond the given and its momentary mode of givenness and tends toward a progressive plus ultra.'<sup>138</sup> [This beyond-going intention is both having an object firmly in grasp through the multitude of its momentary appearances, and striving towards new appearances and details to ensure complete fulfilment. Due to the intrinsic interest of consciousness in its object, it is not only able to grasp it as an undetermined unity, but to divide it into its constitutive moments. The latter procedure is crucial for meaning-constitution, insofar as consciousness has to establish a certain order of the properties of its object, i.e. distinguish between essential and non-essential ones to intend a proper meaning that the perception of an object is supposed to fulfill.

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<sup>138</sup> EU 82.

It is interest that aims to gain more and more appearances of an object to get a full picture, to investigate it from every possible side in order to get a clear 'image'. The word 'image' can be used only in the relative sense here, because, we obviously speak not only about objects from the visual field, but include acoustic and sensory ones as well. A particular smell or taste can be an object of interest accordingly, or, as in most cases, perceptual field contains a 'mixed object' that is constituted by, say, vision and taste, or vision and hearing.

To clarify these matters, let us bring forward an example not involving a visual comprehension of an object. Suppose we perform a blind tasting of wine (with strict rules, so that even a the is opaque and we do not see the color of wine), so that it is only our senses of smell and taste that present an object to us. While tasting, consciousness expresses a certain interest, a strive for new alterations of the sensual appearances of an object, exploring the complexity of taste and letting it evolve, while going from entry to midpalate and then to finish, at the same time preserving the identity of an object that presents itself in its different modes. Thus an object, a taste in our case, or to be more accurate a complex of tastes, is being constituted in the synthesis of multiple taste sensations that come to coincidence. Due to a synthesis an experienced taster can pronounce its verdict, say, confirm that this is indeed wine in the glass and not some other beverage and then continue the bestowal of meaning upon the object giving different taste-notes, cherry or grapefruit, for example, and then possibly proceeding to a judgment about a type and origin of wine, and pronouncing a judgment of taste about its quality. She might be right in identifying the sort of wine, in this case we witness an accomplished synthesis of coincidence and a fulfillment of intended meaning. In the case of a taster with an inexperienced palate there can be a wrong guess about which sort of grape is used in the wine or where has it originated from. Nevertheless, a judgment of taste, i.e. about the pleasantness of wine, will necessarily be evident, and true to the experience of this particular taster.

Husserl claims that exploration of various aspects of an object, to which our attention is drawn, is essentially a *practical* possibility. The fact that an object appears in the horizon does not depend on consciousness. Even initial attention to an object can be explained 'from an object side', for example in case of a loud sound, or an irritatingly bright patch of color, that 'violently' draws attention to itself. It is not preconditioned by an object itself, though, that consciousness will continue to have an interest in it, and not in other objects, that it will purposively explore its parts and moments. There is a freedom of consciousness that allows it to browse different sides of the same object, getting to know it in a more and more determinate way. This is clearly manifested in bodily reactions, the observation of which, as we remember, can provide us with the access to the prepredicative consciousness. We turn our eyes and heads to the object of interest, change the position of the body and so on. In these *kinaestheses*, says Husserl, that are not voluntary actions in the strict sense, our genuine interest is manifested even before it taken account of consciousness itself. We jump on our seats and turn our heads to the source of the loud noise immediately, without thinking about these movements or planning them through a complicated process of decision-making.

The interest of prepredicative consciousness in its object should not be confused with an ordinary concept of interest that can be found on the predicative level. The interest Husserl speaks about here is not the kind of voluntary interest of a scientist in a subject of experiment or of, a reader in a book. There is no deliberate positing of goals to know facts about an object, but only a certain striving that accompanies any perception. It is an interest in a very general sense (not a *thematic* interest in Husserl's words) and it does not have any specific reason behind it (in contrast to a case, for example, when someone is interested in reading a book, because it is useful for her scientific endeavours). Neither does, prepredicative interest signify any particular pleasure that an object evokes either (this might be the case, but not necessarily).

### 3. Object-constitution in Time-consciousness.

We have seen so far that the constitution of an object on the prepredicative level of consciousness does not happen in one stroke, but is a complicated process consisting in working out our interest by achieving new modes of the givenness of the same object. Husserl insists that such a striving is never blind, even on the prepredicative level, but they go together with intentions of anticipation. ‘Every phase of perception is thus a radiating system of actual and potential intentions of anticipations.’<sup>139</sup> The way Husserl describes the dynamics of consciousness on the prepredicative level closely resembles his description of time-consciousness.

The theme of time-consciousness, one of the most crucial in understanding Husserl's philosophy, is left outside this dissertation. Nevertheless, at this point it is necessary to recapitulate the basics of Husserl's theory of time-consciousness in order to achieve an understanding of his descriptions of prepredicative consciousness since the latter directly follows the pattern of the former.

The most prominent analysis of time-consciousness we can find is Husserl's *Lectures on the Phenomenology of Internal Time Consciousness* published in 1928 (although major parts were written as early as in 1905). There he makes an important distinction between objective time (for the most part left out of phenomenological analyses according to principles of phenomenological reduction), subjective time of experience (the main source of our investigations of temporality), and time consciousness. By stating that consciousness is essentially time consciousness, i.e. it is temporal and presents itself more as a process than as a substance (as noted in the previous chapter in our analysis of *Ideen*), Husserl provides a ground for investigating subjectivity as rooted in temporality. Insofar we do not deal here

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<sup>139</sup>EU 87.

closely with Husserl's notion of (inter)subjectivity, it will suffice to explicate only briefly the basics of time consciousness.

The obvious object for Husserl's investigations would be an explicitly temporal object, such as a melody consisting of different notes following each other in temporal order. It is a tricky question how can we perceive a melody as a whole while at any given moment we hear only one tone? It does not help to think that past tones are simply preserved in the memory, then we would recall all tones at once and end up with a perception of cacophony. Past tones are indeed preserved in consciousness by the special ability called *retention*. Retention is a preservation of the past moments in the 'now,' and in such a way that they are preserved as past moments. All tones are retained in consciousness one after another, thus we are able to have a consciousness of a whole melody without hearing more than one tone of it at a time. A strict sequence of retentions is preserved by consciousness and thus we are able to comprehend any melody without mixing past tones. Retention is the key concept in Husserl's analysis of time consciousness and so far it has received much more attention of philosophers than a concept closely related to it, namely, *protention*. In hearing a melody we do not expect that it will stop at any given moment, on the contrary, we anticipate that it will continue in a certain way. This anticipation goes 'beyond' our actual perceptions; it projects the perceived melody into the future preparing the actual perception of the following tones. It is the notion of protention that characterizes consciousness as essentially active, always ready to perceive and constitute an object, not simply copy it out of given hyletic data.

Time-consciousness consists of an ever-changing perception of the 'now' encapsulated in the net of coherent retentions and protentions. Of course, this does not apply to music only. Every perceived object is an object in time and precisely so it is constituted.

This way of constitution is manifested on the prepredicative level. In our interested perception of an object we retain it in time consciousness and keep 'alive' all the past moments

of our perceiving. Even more crucial is that we have protential anticipations of an object, e.g. regarding the sides not yet seen. This mostly happens on the prepredicative level, for example, when we look at a carton box we expect and anticipate (without making it an explicit theme for consciousness) that it will look similar from the other side, that we will see the back of the box, but not an empty space, a flower, or anything else. Every perception is a continuous process of fulfilling (or disappointing) expectations that results in more and more precise determination of an object. Interest, discussed above, ensures that we will have a continuous flow of protentions that will be actualized in the moment of 'now' and then turned into retentions. Thus, every prepredicatively constituted object is essentially an object in time, constituted by a perception that has duration.

Obviously not every anticipation is fulfilled, sometimes the opposite is the case. Trying to see the back of a box we may find for example that it is not a real box but a holographic image of a box and thus it is impossible to perceive it from any other side. There are different modalities of certainty, not only complete fulfilment. Expecting the box to be the same colour, say, red on every side, we can find out that one of them is actually green and thus our anticipation will be negated. Moreover, there can be a lasting consciousness of doubt and possibility, such is the case, e.g. when we cannot decide whether a figure we see in darkness, is a man or a tree.

We have pointed out several features of the process of meaning-constitution on the prepredicative level. First and foremost, we have a complete trust in the hyletic data given to consciousness and apprehend them with *evidence*. Anything that can lead to consciousness of doubt lays within the same field of perception, in other words, it is only new incoming hyletic data that can cancel our previous anticipations and lead to new ones.

We are now aware that perception necessarily has a duration - it is a continuous process of apprehending new aspects and appearances of an object (technically speaking,

there can be nothing essentially new in the following moments of comprehending an object, nevertheless, it is important, then, that later appearances confirm the former ones).

The ongoing process of object perception and constitution is possible due to a peculiar ability of consciousness to demonstrate a certain level of spontaneity and activity on its passive levels. This activity manifests itself in the *interest*, a striving to apprehend an object, to get to know it, and to reach the highest level of familiarity and certainty possible. Thus, looking at, for example, a table with several objects scattered on it, we do not simply scan its surface with indifference, but our eyes get 'stuck' on certain object that stand out because of its colour or shape, or anything else that can be found striking (say, a glass of red wine stands out on an otherwise white surface of the table) and the process of full apprehension begins and may involve other types of sensual perception except vision (say, tasting the wine).

These features, namely, evidence, duration, and interest are essential for prepredicative experience. I turn now to the complex structure of the process of prepredicative meaning constitution.

### **3.1 General Structure of Prepredicative Experience.**

Obviously, it is easier to look inside the process of object constitution if we start from the simplest cases, i.e. when our anticipations are satisfied and no obstruction takes place. This process has a threefold structure, according to Husserl. The first stage is the lowest level of objectifying activity, namely, simple contemplative intuition. No explication is involved at this stage. All we have is simply a consciousness encountering its object as an object *per se* without any further specifications.

The next stage involves explicative contemplation of an object. Here protentional expectations are awakened and an object presents itself at a certain level of familiarity, however vague it might be. It is perceived as an object of an already familiar type, even if the

type is not determined and named properly. There is an awakened interest to apprehend what this object is, to encounter its parts and moments. All this happens within a dynamic framework of a synthetic unity of retentions and protentions that together constitute a total temporal apprehension of an object. *'Explication is penetration of the intentional horizon of the object by the direction of perceptual interest'*.<sup>140</sup> If no obstruction takes places during the course of the encounter with the object and it reveals itself just as anticipated we can speak of original givenness.

The third stage of perception is an expansion of the original intentional horizon of an object. Objects that are co-present are taken into account as well. Thus, the object in question is comprehended together with its relative determinations, such as relations to other objects. The original object still remains the centre of attention and other objects come into play only as additional relational determinations of the main one. For example, we can apprehend a sound as 'coming from outside' or 'louder than other sounds.' It is one object that we are striving to get to know at the given moment, and all other objects are singled out from the perceptual field only to help the main one achieve a more precise determination.

### **3.2 Contemplative Intuition as 'Passive Activity' of Consciousness.**

An encounter of consciousness with its object is by no means a simple unitary process. Simple apprehension is a complex structure with a multiplicity of moments that together constitute an immanent temporal unity. Let us go back to our example of wine tasting. Suppose we just look at a glass of wine and make it an object for consciousness. For the sake of simplicity, let us assume that this object appears unchangeable to us, i.e. the glass does not move and the light in the room does not change. Nevertheless, what we experience is a

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<sup>140</sup>EU 105.



temporal flow and continuous change of its phases despite the fact that the perceived data remain invariable at any given moment. We perceive an object that endures in time and each moment gives us a new now-point of perception together with outstretching horizons of continuous past and future. The now-point is in an ever-changing continuous flux and both horizons change in the flow of perception accordingly. Our past perceptions (same color of the wine, same transparency of the glass, same proximity of the glass to our own body) belong to the retentional horizon and our expectations (we believe that the glass will continue to look the same, that the color will not change, that it would look similar from another side) form the protentional horizon of perception. This unity of duration is passively pregiven to us, this is the only way time-consciousness is able to encounter its object, namely as *durable* objects (even if they appear for just a single moment, it is always possible to divide this moment into phases, hardly noticeable to consciousness itself).

It is crucial to emphasize here that our apprehension of an object is never limited to a given 'now' of this object, on the contrary, what is perceived in pure receptivity is always a consciousness of endurance, an object with a double horizon. Consciousness holds in view all the past phases of its perception of an object, exactly as past, and anticipates the future phases. We are not turned toward the momentary present, but toward a *continuously changing present* that we perceive through and beyond it, toward a 'now' as an ever-changing flux of moments passing from the anticipated future to the lived-through past.

Consciousness does not meet its object in a moment, take a 'snapshot' of it and then ascribe meaning to it. The process of meaning constitution necessarily has its duration and happens in time consciousness such as always to perceive an object within its two ever-changing horizons, of past and future. Even at the most passive level of encountering an object there is a certain level of activity of consciousness that manifests itself in retaining previous phases of its givenness and projecting new potential expectations upon the object.

The object is constituted as a continuous transitional flux even if there is seemingly no change occurring in this flux, as happens in the case of simple perception of a glass. Even in such case a *now* never remains as such, each *now* is first anticipated in the horizon of protentions and then becomes retained as 'just having passed.' In order to constitute meaning, consciousness undertakes the inner work of active perception of an immanent unity in the flux of appearances. Obviously, this activity of consciousness is much more noticeable when an object undergoes significant changes during flux and is still perceived as one and the same object. Melting wax, or a chameleon changing colors, or a complicated melody would be good examples for such case. The object remains as one and the same in the continuously active grasp of consciousness. Thus, in consciousness' passive encounter with its object we witness a flowing unity of activity that corresponds to the flow of moments, in which the object is given. A *dynamic* noetic-noematic correlation takes place. This is an activity of unification that we are able to comprehend only if we understand consciousness as essentially time-consciousness that together with grasping a 'now' of an object always has an anticipating foregrasp together with the still-in-grasp retentions.

We see that the activity of the apprehension of a concretely enduring sound has a complex structure founded on the laws of constitution of living duration. Accordingly, there is not only passivity *prior* to all activity, as passivity of the originally constitutive temporal flux, which is only *preconstitutive*, but also passivity erected on the contemplation of this flux, i.e. passivity which is truly objectifying, namely, one which thematizes or co-thematizes objects; it is passivity, which properly belongs to the act of consciousness itself, a kind of *passivity in activity*.<sup>141</sup>

Once again we see here that Husserl uses the terms 'passivity' and 'activity' in a flexible way. They are not opposed to each other, but most of the time they are inseparable

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<sup>141</sup>EU 108.

and even at the deepest, seemingly purely passive receptive levels of time-consciousness we find an original activity, without which no constitution of meaning is possible.

When it comes to retentional horizon of a contemplated object, it is necessary to remark that this horizon is essentially different from the case when an ego turns successively to different objects, each of which evokes a separate interest. There can be a book beside a glass of wine on the table, to which our attention turns after contemplating the glass, and then we can concentrate on the table itself and so on. In this case an image of an object that just ceased to be our interest is not abandoned completely. We do not speak of the horizon of retentions here, as in the case when consciousness concentrates upon one and the same object, but the object is also 'held in grasp', although in a modified way. This holding in grasp does not coincide with the current perception of an object, but its retentional reverberation remains alive for consciousness. In contrast to impressional retaining in grasp of an object, which is in continuous givenness, there can also be a *nonimpressional* retaining in grasp that still persists after the original givenness of an object comes to an end. Only on this ground the third phase of perception, i.e. comprehension of an object together with its relative determinations, is possible. This happens when consciousness turns to a new object while still retaining the one that was given first before, say, redirecting its attention and interest from a glass to a book. If it did not have such capacity of retaining in grasp previous objects of attention it would never be possible to comprehend a second object as related in a certain way to a first one, i.e. to grasp a book as being next to a glass. Here we see how important the basic features of primary prepredicative consciousness are for its higher levels, such as the formulation of predicative judgments.

Another way of still retaining in grasp the object of previous attention can happen when an object has ceased, for example, a sound that we no longer hear. We can still concentrate on this sound, although in the mode of 'just heard' and retain it in grasp

without actually perceiving it, for example, trying to remember who has composed this melody, or simply guessing where this sound might have come from.

This modification belongs to the regularity of the original constitution of immanent temporality, in which every impressional having-consciousness of an original momentary now is constantly changed into still-having-in-consciousness of the same in the mode of the just-past (the just-having-been-now).<sup>142</sup>

It follows that every consciousness of any present moment is originally filled with retentions of the past moments regardless of whether the latter have any connection to the former or are significant for its determinations. It can happen that consciousness jumps randomly between objects that bear no connection to each other, such as in the case of looking at the wall and then turning one's gaze to a view through the window on another wall. In other cases the objects might be closely connected and retaining the past in grasp can actually help in comprehension of a present, as when we concentrate on a blackbird flying and retain in grasp a loud sound that we have just heard, then it helps us to conclude that it was that sound that probably scared the bird.

To conclude our considerations of the simple apprehension of an object we should state that all phenomenological data appear necessarily in the *stream of consciousness*. Every act of consciousness is already loaded with its previous impressions that are retained and this act itself is included in the temporal field as temporally constituted datum. This retaining in grasp as well as anticipating of the future manifests the activity of consciousness that emerges at the most passive level, i.e. on the level of pure contemplation. Consciousness is never purely passive; on the contrary it elaborates on the given data-field and comprehends it as a temporal structure.

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<sup>142</sup>EU110.

### 3.2 Synthesis of Explicative Contemplation.

The second stage of perception of an object is explicative contemplation. It is crucial for our analysis because it is exactly the stage where meaning originates. It is the place of origin of both individual meanings and logical categories. Despite the fact that the logical categories in the proper sense emerge on the level of predicative judgment only, Husserl shows that 'all categories and categorial forms are erected on the prepredicative syntheses and have their origin in them'.<sup>143</sup> Thus, explication is a central stage of our analysis that has a goal, as was stated before, to trace and explicate the way meaning originates in the prepredicative realm.

In general, *explicative contemplation is such an orientation of perceptual interest towards an object and its horizon so that an object is properly determined in its essence as a polythetic unity of its determinations* (parts and moments). It is the tendency of consciousness contemplating an object to push its interest beyond simple passive (with a certain level of activity as was shown above) contemplation and engage in active determination of the object in question making it familiar to consciousness.

It has to be noted, though, that every contemplated object is already somewhat familiar to consciousness, it is essentially given within a horizon of familiarity, apprehended more or less as an already determined type. Consciousness remembers its previous experiences and retains in grasp the most recent ones, thus no new impression is completely new to it, and on the other hand every new impression falls and takes its place within consciousness' intentional horizon of familiarity. This is not to say that consciousness cannot in principle encounter new things and learn about new object, in fact it does so regularly, but all the objects, however unfamiliar, are still given within the horizon of what is already experienced and explicated by consciousness. A trivial example would be seeing a new animal in the zoo,

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<sup>143</sup>EU 115.

say, a kangaroo, and if we imagine that someone has never heard of this animal before there is still a lot of familiarity involved in the first encounter, it is the general context of being in the zoo and remembering features of other animals while comparing them with the new one etc. (Obviously finding a kangaroo in your own room after waking up in the morning would be a more difficult example, but even in this case we can find a certain evidence of familiarity that previous experiences provide us with).

What is the basic structure of any explication of an object? The core of it is to bring to light a general essence of an object thereby clarifying its parts and moments. The crucial part here is to distinguish an object proper from its mere determinations and comprehend it in a way that these determinations never have an equal status with an object proper but serve only the purpose of getting to know the object *per se*. What exactly makes an object the general theme for consciousness, and how it can be properly distinguished from its parts? In every object-constitution a twofold constitution of meaning happens: an object is brought to explicit intuition and constituted as a *substrate* and, alongside with it, its determinations are constituted precisely as determinations.

We see an overlapping of two apprehensions here, and this overlapping is necessary for the constitution of an object as an object proper, having its parts and moments. The object itself is apprehended as a unity in a synthesis of coincidence of all its momentary appearances in the flow of now-points with their retentional and protentional horizons. At the same time together with this synthesis, other syntheses are taking place, namely, the syntheses of parts and moments of this object. In the apprehension of parts and moments the substrate does not disappear, it is not pushed to the background of consciousness, and it is not simply retained in grasp. On the contrary, the substrate is comprehended alongside, as all the time here, and its parts and moments are not given separate from it. This coincidence of attention to the substrate and to its different parts as merely parts Husserl calls a *single double ray* of

attention. For example we observe a glass of wine on the table, our eyes scan it, at one moment we are fixed on its shape, at the other on its transparency (obviously we perceive both at the same time, but our attention is concentrated on certain properties of the object at different moments). Then the strikingly bright color of the wine redirects and drags our attention. In the next moment we start to perceive the smell of it, and so on. In all these changes of attention we are continuously oriented toward the object proper, the glass itself. One of its peculiarities after another receives our privileged interest, nevertheless, it is always the object itself as a whole that remains our primary focus and the attention that each of its parts receives is loaded with the general context of the substrate that we are encountering. It is the glass that we look at, regardless of whether we concentrate on its bowl or stem, its color or shape. Partial apprehensions coincide with the total apprehension in such a way that the whole is always vividly present to consciousness.

In contrast to the first stage of perception, namely, contemplation, where we have only an initial apprehension of the whole without consideration of its parts as parts, thus having in grasp an undifferentiated unified object, in the second stage we, despite remaining directed to the entire object, apprehend all its determinations thereby making this object more and more known to us in detail. In every step of apprehension a new detail emerges thus making the main object more and more clear and familiar to us, more and more determinate. We have a coincidence of whole and partial intentions here: while apprehending the object as a whole, it is through its parts and moments that we are familiarising it to us by means of enriching its content. Both types of active apprehension emerge in a permanent unity. Our consciousness is active in the apprehension of the whole substrate and at the same time is occupied with a series of its determinations. Thus we see that intentional explication is a constant movement. An object, while remaining essentially one and the same unity, acquires more and more determinations in the process of being encountered by consciousness. This movement consists

of a series of discrete steps, namely explication of an object's properties one by one (we cannot concentrate on both roundness and transparency of the glass at the same time, but we can retain the already explicated properties in firm grasp as belonging to the central object of attention while we are busy with new properties that emerge for consciousness).

What is given to consciousness in the end of such contemplation is a basic logical structure of substance and its predicates. It is not comprehended abstractly, which is yet to occur at the stage of predicative thinking, but the essential givenness of the meaning of substrate as well as its determinations is already achieved in its fullness in prepredicative consciousness.

#### ***4. Omnitemporality of Meaning.***

We have seen how consciousness perceives its object on the prepredicative level. The most important conclusions of our investigations are so far the following

i) the perception of an object is a complex process that involves several stages and occurs in time-consciousness;

ii) any perception of an object is performed by a motivated consciousness that experiences a genuine interest in its object (at the same time there is initially something striking and standing out from the perceptual field in the object itself that directs attention to it);

iii) an object is contemplated first as a flux of now-points with its ever-changing protentional and retentional horizons;

iv) the next stage of perception is contemplation that presents us with an object-substrate alongside with its determinations;



v) an object of receptivity is fully constituted on the prepredicative level in passive pregivenness and active time-consciousness.

Now we turn to predicative consciousness with a task to find out how general concepts originate and how can they be ascribed to objects constituted on the predicative level, in other words, how a constitution of a judgment *S is p* is possible.

It is clear that meanings are totalities of a higher level than those given through receptivity, thus they belong to a specific region of being. They do not have their origin in receptivity only, hence they cannot be purely passively pregiven. A certain activity of consciousness is needed for their constitution as well. This is a different activity than what we witness on the prepredicative level of the constitution of perceptual objects, i.e. activity manifested by attention and interest of consciousness as well as its temporality. An activity constituting meanings and judgments Husserl calls *predicative spontaneity*.

In both aforementioned contexts we can speak of a productive activity, but consciousness' activity in forming meanings and constituting judgments at the predicative level is essentially different from that of perceiving singular objects. First and foremost, receptive apprehension is *nonessential* to consciousness in the sense that it indeed involves a certain activity but on the other hand having an object before our eyes can be completely involuntary. This is the reason for Husserl's insistence that the givenness of objects is essentially on the passive side. The activity of consciousness manifested in it, such as structuring the field of data into retentional and protentional horizons and turning its regard to this or that part of perceptual field sometimes does not involve any explicit priority of consciousness, as in cases when we are simply staring at the window, or walking along a familiar street without noticing consciously what is going on around us. It is a completely different case with the constitution of individual and generic meanings and judgments. In this case consciousness is voluntarily active in the constitution of new objects, i.e. meanings, for

example, recognizing an elephant in an object or judging that elephants are animals. Consciousness is not compelled by the perceptual field to produce judgments of any sort and its own productive spontaneity brings about the constitution of judgments. 'Spontaneity' indicates that judgments produced by consciousness are mostly unpredictable. This is to say that no perceptual field with individual objects given in it can fully determine which exact judgment is going to be constituted in each particular case. Recalling an old example from *LU*, seeing a flying blackbird through the window can result in such judgments as 'This is a blackbird,' 'There flies a blackbird,' 'This blackbird is flying fast,' or 'This bird has been scared by something' and so on. Even in the simple attribution of meaning to an object there can be spontaneous results. For example an observation of a glass of wine on the table can yield such statements as 'There is something in the glass,' 'There is some liquid in the glass,' 'There is wine in the glass,' etc.

The crucial difference between the types of activities that consciousness is involved in while constituting objects of perception and general meanings consists in the mode of temporal constitution. Real<sup>144</sup> individual objectivities are constituted as temporal, i.e. they have their duration in time and can be distinguished from each other on the basis of their position in time. It is exactly this fact that makes it so tempting to think of them within the scope of the natural attitude, i.e. is to perceive them as belonging to real world outside consciousness in the flow of objective time. Ideal meanings, though, are not perceived in the same way as real things, they are not bound to objective time in any way. Nevertheless, Husserl insists that they are not deprived of all temporality but bear a certain relation to time. It sounds surprising, if we recall that starting from his early works Husserl repeatedly insisted

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<sup>144</sup>'Real' here is used in the same context as explicated in the Chapter 2. This context was introduced in *Ideen* and since then Husserl was mostly consistent in usage of the terms *real* and *ideal*. Both refer to intentional correlates of acts of consciousness, not to things in the presupposed world outside it that is bracketed by phenomenological reduction. Thus, both realms are *irreell* in this sense. *Irreell real* objects refer to objects of individual givenness, and *irreell ideal* objects are meanings and essences.

on meanings being ideal unities that are not located neither in time nor in space and do not come into being or ever cease to be. This means they are strictly placed outside any temporal context. Let us see how the understanding of consciousness as essentially time-consciousness changes his theory of meaning accordingly.

If consciousness is understood as time-consciousness it means that every experience of consciousness is a temporal unity and can be constituted only in the form of temporality. Every object is constituted in immanent time, and thus should bear a certain relation to temporality. Meanings are constituted in consciousness as well as real objects, but their ways of constitution differ and so do their relations to time.

Any individual meaning or judgment is constituted, and thus manifests itself as being constituted at a certain moment of time, or rather during a certain period of time. We know that it was, for example, yesterday that we realized that this is a glass of wine in front of us on the table, or that it is happening now that we constitute a judgment 'This wine is delicious.' Nevertheless there is a fundamental difference between two kind of modes that temporality has as the form of objectivity in cases of the givenness of individual things, on the one hand, and noematic givenness, on the other hand.

Meaning can be constituted at the same time when an individual object is constituted, as in the case when we perceive a flying bird prepredicatively and formulate a predicative judgment 'There flies a blackbird.' This judgment is constituted as referring to the present moment or to a certain temporal extension. It may or may not coincide with the duration of the individual object, to which it refers to. The same judgment, for example, can be constituted again when the bird is far beyond our grasp already, i.e. on the basis of recollection. In both cases the judgment would be one and the same. One and the same identical judicative proposition can be constituted on the basis of multiple acts occurring at any point of time and being given in different time-frames, as present, past, or anticipated

future. The meaning of a judgment acquires its original givenness as a temporal contingent act and thus occurs at a certain moment of time. Nevertheless it is not bound to its givenness and therefore not bound to any temporal location. It has no duration in time as real objects do. Meaning is ideal in the sense that it can appear in individual acts located in time as temporal, but apart from its actual and possible appearances it is referred to at all times and at none in particular. Meaning sustains no temporal differentiation, although it is contingently, i.e. through its contingent constitution in consciousness, *in time*. In its essence it has no duration and is the same at any time.

As it was established in early Husserl's works and explicated in chapter 1, meaning can be constituted simultaneously in any number of spatial locations by any number of thinkers and speakers. Nevertheless it remains identical to itself. It is localized in space and in time due to the location of the subject that constitutes it. But it is 'valid' (essentially possible) regardless of these localizations, so that even though it is never instantiated meaning still exists as irreal entity. It follows that it is in principle not tied to any verbal expressions, although it is through these expressions that it can be manifested in the life-world.

Such irreal mode of existence Husserl calls an *omnipresent existence*. In all possible instantiations happening in objective time and space meaning would remain the same. Recalling what has been said in *LU*: there are countless meanings that have not been yet constituted, such as very complicated mathematical objects. They have never been experienced, but it is possible in principle for them to be 'discovered', i.e. constituted in time-consciousness. Moreover, meanings that have already been constituted open a horizon of possibilities of constitution of other countless meanings based on the already experienced ones. We need not elaborate on this topic, because it was covered in the chapter 1 of this work. To sum up, once a meaning is constituted in consciousness it achieves its temporal location in consciousness' inner time and in 'objective' time constituted by this consciousness

alongside the constitution of the world as a whole. This localization, however, does not individualize meaning, it does not add anything to it by means of instantiating it in space and time by a particular consciousness. Husserl calls this ideal existence of meanings a privileged form of temporality, or *omnitemporality*. This is to underline that meanings exist outside of time-consciousness and the presupposed objective time of the world, but it is essentially possible for them to be instantiated in any given moment of time, and at any moment they remain the same. Any judgment that we make would be given to us in the mode of being thought of at a particular moment, nevertheless this moment does not affect the judgment in any way, does not attribute anything to the judgment<sup>145</sup>.

So far we have a theory of meaning that goes along the lines of *LU* (meanings being ideal possibilities, essentially non-temporal, but able to be instantiated in time, although this possible instantiation is not crucial for them). It is only in *EU*, though, that Husserl explicitly rejects the assumption that this account of meaning signifies their being genera and species. ‘The irreality of objectivities of understanding must not be confused with generic universality’.<sup>146</sup>

There is an essential difference between, on the one hand, many red things that belong to one generic essence ‘redness’, and on the other hand, many identical propositions with the same meaning asserted on a number of occasions by different subjects. One meaning can indeed refer to an infinite number of acts of consciousness, in which it is intended. Nevertheless, this generality of meaning does not signify a generic universality of the species. In the case of species we see that a generic universal gets exemplified in a number of cases, each of which has its own individuality. For example, we can have many shades of the color red, as well as many very different specifications of the species ‘tasty’ etc. We apprehend the

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<sup>145</sup> Husserl makes an exception here concerning the truth of judgment. It can happen that a truth of a judgment depends on the time of its singularization, such as in the case of judgment ‘The automobile is fastest means of travel.’ Nevertheless, the meaning of judgment remains the same regardless of its being true or not.

<sup>146</sup> *EU* 261.

species by means of comparing the individual instantiations and figuring out what is common to all of them. Genera and species exist only as abstractions from their individual exemplifications, and not on their own.

The situation is different with meanings. When, for example, we apprehend the meaning of the proposition ‘The glass is on the table’ or ‘Two plus two equals four,’ we do not need to use abstraction and we do not need to encounter several instances of propositions of this kind. There is nothing unique in any instantiation of such meaning as ‘The glass is on the table.’ In every case it will intend and mean *identically one and the same thing*. All the differences that exist between the instantiations of this judgment apply to its noetic side only, without affecting its noematic content. A judgment can be intended in a different time and space on the basis of different perceptual data (direct sensual perception, imagination, or recollection), can have a greater or lesser amount of evidence, but it does not change its meaning that remains identical in each case. We see that Husserl’s repeated statement that one should never confuse acts of consciousness with their contents (or noesis and noema) acquires crucial importance here. The act itself has its own peculiarities and individualizes the intended judgment, but the meaning of this judgment is not individual in any case and cannot be distinguished from its other instantiations.

The proposition itself is, for all these acts and act-modalities, identical as the correlate of an identification and not general as the correlate of a comparative coincidence. The identical sense does not become particular in individuals; the generic universal in coincidence has particulars under it, but the sense does not have particulars under it.<sup>147</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen that the origin of ideal irreal objectivities of understanding, i.e. meanings, can be traced to prepredicative experience. At this most passive

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<sup>147</sup> EU 263.

level of consciousness we have experiences given with evidence (as prepredicative awareness). In these experiences of time-consciousness, objects are constituted through passive contemplation and explicative contemplation of moments that stand out from the prominent field of givenness. Consciousness is motivated in experiencing its objects further and due to this motivation they become more and more clarified in the ray of attention. This motivation consists on the predicative level in the form of predicative spontaneity. Consciousness undertakes the activity of predication due to its interest in cognition and this leads to conceptualizing thought and formation of generalities. Ideal meanings that are constituted in this process are omnitemporal in the sense that they can be instantiated in any given moment, and yet do not belong to any of these moments. The ideality of meaning is manifested through its possibility to appear in different realities (instantiations of judgments and essences) as *identical*, not merely similar. Meanings can be ‘embodied’ and ‘temporalized’ in the real world<sup>148</sup> but they do not acquire individual specifications due to this individuation. Every judgment has its meaning and different instances of one the same judgment have *the same identical* meaning.

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<sup>148</sup> Let us not forget that by ‘real world’ we mean here the world in phenomenological paradigm, i.e. as it is given to consciousness.

## Conclusion

It was my intent in this dissertation to show, through a detailed analysis of the concept of meaning in Husserl's works, that his approach to meaning has undergone a significant development that essentially reflected his major phenomenological findings. I aimed to demonstrate that the changes in his theory of meaning were motivated by the attempts to solve the problems that his earlier stages of investigations have posed. I showed that the significant pivots of Husserl's theory of meaning (such as the ideality of meaning, and the essential distinction between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment) remained the same throughout his works, but were developed and clarified in many important respects.

Thus, it was demonstrated that it is justifiable to speak of Husserl's *theory* of meaning, not of his *theories*. The essential understanding of meaning remained unchanged since its introduction in *LU*, and what we see in the further development of the theory are important clarifications, attempts to resolve the problems posed by the theory, and deepening of the analysis to new levels. Husserl does not reject his earlier findings despite the major historical changes in his understanding of phenomenology, its task and method. His intention was rather to aim at the ever more detailed, precise, and deeper level of analysis of pertaining problems, developing the theory and making it more comprehensive and elaborated.

In order to provide a structural picture of Husserl's account of meaning and to show the crucial role it plays in the idea of the phenomenology as such I devote a first part of this dissertation for the analysis of Husserl's early theory of meaning as it is presented in the *LU*. I showed that Husserl claims that meaning is an ideal essence, which is ontologically prior to any possible intention of it. He strongly rejects psychologistic approach to meaning that claims that meaning is merely a part of mental act. Husserl argues that psychologism failed completely to appreciate or handle the distinction between independent thought-content (which can be shared by different thinkers in different situations and times) or ideal meaning



*per se*, and the act of thinking (which is singular, individual and subjective). Thus, according to Husserl, the psychological approach to meaning does not account for the complete independence of this shared content from all our contingent psychological behavior. Meanings, he states, form the subject matter of pure logic, which deals with *a priori* laws governing possible combinations of these meanings, not our actual usage of them. On the other hand, phenomenology investigates and describes the very connection between ideal unities of meaning and our actual intending of them on the basis of acts of intuition (both simple and categorial).

Meanings (single, categorial, or essences) are understood by Husserl as ideal in the sense of pure possibilities of intending something or performing an act of meaning. On the one hand, they are not dependent on the real occurrences of the acts of meaning in consciousness, but on the other hand, they are not the ready-made empty forms which can be simply filled by different matter. Each meaning appears to come to being (more precisely, to be constituted) only within the actual performance of acts of meaning by consciousness on the ground of what consciousness experiences. All that consciousness deals with from the start are simple experiences of sense-data, out of which it can constitute an object to perceive and intend a meaning which this object is supposed to fulfill. But there is a limit to its intentions, this limitation is conditioned by ideal norms of any possible thinking. According to these norms, some meanings cannot be intended, or some cannot be united in one intention, but others can be intended and fulfilled.

Ideal norms of thinking coincide with consciousness' *reel* mental states due to the intentionality of consciousness, i.e. its capacity to refer to an object, to endow its singular experiences with meaning. In each act of meaning-intention consciousness proves its capability to constitute, and in so doing, actualize an ideal possible meaning in a single *reel* mental state. In each act of meaning-fulfillment consciousness constitutes an ideal object with an ideal content (or sense) in the form of the actualized intention, alongside the *reel* content of

its experiencing of its object, which fulfills the intention. Thus, intentionality of consciousness ‘ties together’ the *reel* realm of its singular experiences and the ideal realm of possible meaning by actualizing the latter in the former.

This analysis of meaning presents us with a number of problems. The main one is the problem of the unclarified status of consciousness and its relation to the experienced reality of the physical world and the ideality of meaning. A radical breakthrough in phenomenological method was introduced by Husserl in *Ideen* and named phenomenological reduction or *epoché*. Reduction essentially is bracketing or suspending any judgment about the actual existence of the world outside consciousness. As a result of the phenomenological reduction we find that the only remaining sphere for phenomenological investigation is what is given to consciousness and exactly in the way it is given. After a thorough examination we see that these are only acts of consciousness (immanent indubitable content) and contents of these acts (transcendental content).

These two realms of being available for phenomenological inspection are called by Husserl noesis and noema. The act of consciousness is noesis and its intentional correlate is noema. Noemata encompass both, real and ideal entities, i.e. essences and meanings given to consciousness, on the one hand, and individual things, again, as given only, on the other hand.

After the analysis of debates around the concept of noema, the following things were shown. Noema is the essential correlate of every intensive mental process, and it should be considered as such a correlate only, without any question about any relation to possible reality outside consciousness. There can be an infinite number of noemata and it is arguable that for each and every different act of consciousness there corresponds a different noema, because the latter includes in itself virtually every aspect of what is given in this act, including its general meaning, every individual aspect, and modality. There is a central core of every noema, its nucleus, or meaning per se, and this nucleus can be the same for many possible

noemata, just as every object can be given in virtually innumerable different ways. In perceptual acts noemata are constituted on the basis of multiple dynamic hyletic data.

Another essential feature of noema is that it is always given as something transcendent to consciousness, something that consciousness is not. The evidence that we have in acts of consciousness is never of the same purity as when we deal with contents of intensive mental processes. Nevertheless it is the investigation of noema that gives us an answer as to how objective content can enter subjective intensive mental processes.

It is the complex structure of noema that gives us an answer. There is a noematic core, nucleus in each noema that can be essentially understood as the identical meaning described in the *LU*. Nevertheless, in *Ideen*, in contrast to *LU*, we see that there is more to the objective side of the mental process. There is a peripheral part of every noema, thus every ideal meaning given to consciousness can be given in manifold ways that can differ from each other not only in the insignificant mode of their appearances (more and less clear picture of an object), but also in the principal mode of givenness. We can grasp the same meaning through a pictorial presentation, thinking of a concept or recollecting any of the above. Thus, to constitute an 'object in the How of its determinations' consciousness relates to both its particular impressions that present hyletic data different in each and every particular case, and ideal meanings that it 'recognizes' in this data. We see that noeses, acts of consciousness are nothing other than complex acts of comprehending and sorting out the multiplicity of singularities, uniting and organizing them around the central ideal core.

We saw that Husserl relies for the most part on his investigation of meaning elaborated in *LU*, and this allows him not to undertake anew the precise analysis of the noematic nucleus. The nucleus is the ideal meaning described in the *Investigations*, thus it is understood as an ideal possibility for consciousness to intend something meaningfully. Nevertheless, in the *Ideen* this possibility is essentially connected with a particular mode of its

actualization, i.e. givenness in each and every act of consciousness. The emphasis of analysis has shifted from the possibility *per se* to its multiple actualizations in various acts of consciousness. It is not meaning alone that interests Husserl, but meaning as essentially paired with an act of meaning, which is labeled in *Ideen* as noetic-noematic correlation. Due to the introduction of the new methodology in *Ideen*, Husserl can speak at length about peripheral aspects of noemata bracketing the question of their relation to objective reality in traditional sense. The transcendental reduction gives phenomenological analysis freedom from eternal doubt about the adequacy of what is given to what is, and ensures that the sphere of the given possesses evidence.

The problematic question of the origin of meaning-intention and meaning fulfillment as presented in *LU* takes a new turn in *Ideen* (where it might be reformulated as a question of the origin of noesis and noema) and becomes much less problematic. We take everything given to consciousness simply as given with evidence, and, although there can be different degrees of evidence, and new experiences can completely rule out previous ones, the main presupposition remains: every noetic-noematic correlation is given with evidence. This shows that by means of the methodological limitation of the sphere of the investigation to what is given to consciousness exactly in the way it is given we are simply bound to deal with the given as given without questioning it or asking about the origin further. We are entitled to speak about the origin only within our sphere of investigation, i.e. sphere of consciousness. We can have a close introspection of what is happening 'within,' for example, how noemata are constituted on the basis of hyletic data, or whether one part of our experience correlates with another. By the same token this introspection is done exclusively by consciousness and within its sphere. It is useful to recall here once again, that this phenomenological limitation should be taken in the positive sense, i.e. not as a violent exclusion of some valid region of being from our account in order to escape certain problematic issues, such as the existence of

the world. It is the only methodology that is available to us, insofar as consciousness 'knows' only what it is and what is given to it as transcendent content of its acts, including the ability to presuppose the world outside. Thus we see that Husserl's theory of meaning acquires a strong methodological and ontological basis in his developed phenomenology. The phenomenological description of the constitution of concepts and judgments as given in *LU* gets incorporated into general theory of acts of consciousness, and broadened by means of a thorough analysis of noetic-noematic correlations. These correlations, being the only valid sphere of research, have been proven to possess genuine evidence. Therefore, once the general theory of the structure of knowledge acquisition has been presented, the analysis can go deeper into the investigation of the origin of experience of consciousness.

In one of his latest works, namely *Experience and Judgment*, Husserl takes his analysis of noetic-noematic correlations to the most primordial level and tries to explicate the origin of perceptual noemata through analyzing their hyletic basis. He investigates consciousness at the level that precedes a formation of concept, namely, at the level of prepredicative experience.

We see that the perception of an object is a complex process that involves several stages of time-consciousness. Any perception of an object is performed by a motivated consciousness that experiences a genuine interest in its object (at the same time it is an object itself that provokes this interest, usually something striking stands out from the unified whole of perceptual field and direct attention to itself). First, an object is contemplated as a flux of now-points with its ever-changing protentional and retentional horizons. The next stage of perception is contemplation that presents us with an object-substrate alongside with its determinations.

The crucial difference between the types of activities that consciousness is involved in while constituting objects of perception and general meanings consists in the mode of

temporal constitution. Real individual objectivities are constituted as temporal, i.e. they have their duration in time and can be distinguished from each other on the basis of their position in time. Ideal meanings, though, are not perceived in the same way as real things. They are not bound to objective time in any way. Nevertheless, Husserl insists that they are not deprived of all temporality but bear a certain relation to time.

Every experience of time-consciousness is a temporal unity and can be constituted only in the form of temporality. Every object is constituted in immanent time, and thus should bear a certain relation to temporality. Meanings are constituted in consciousness as well as real objects, but their ways of constitution differ and so do their relations to time.

Each meaning acquires its original givenness as a temporal contingent act and thus occurs at a certain moment of time. Nevertheless it is not bound to its givenness and therefore not bound to any temporal location; it has no duration in time as any real object does. Meaning is ideal in the sense that it can appear in individual acts located in time as temporal, but apart from its actual and possible appearances it is referred to all times and none in particular. Meaning sustains no temporal differentiation, although it is contingently, i.e. through its contingent constitution in consciousness, *in time*. In its essence it has no duration and is the same at any time.

It was as early as in *LU* that Husserl stated that a meaning can be constituted simultaneously in any number of spatial locations by any number of thinkers and speakers, while remaining identical to itself. It is localized in space and in time due to the localization of the subject that constitutes it. But it is ‘valid’ regardless of these localizations, so that if it is never instantiated it still exists as an irreal entity. It follows that it is in principle not tied to any verbal expressions, although it is through these expressions that it can be manifested in the life-world.

Such unreal modes of existence Husserl calls in *EU* an *omnipresent existence*. In all various possible instantiations happening in objective time and space one meaning would remain the same. Recalling what has been said in *LU*, there are countless meanings-possibilities that have not been yet constituted, such as very complicated mathematical objects. They have not ever been experienced, but it is possible in principle for them to be ‘discovered’ and actualized, i.e. constituted in time-consciousness. Moreover, meanings that have already been constituted open a horizon of possibilities for the constitution of other countless meanings based on ones already experienced. Once a meaning is constituted in consciousness it achieves its temporal location in consciousness’ inner time and in the ‘objective’ time constituted by this consciousness alongside the constitution of the world as a whole. This localization, however, does not individualize meaning, it does not add anything to it by means of instantiating it in space and time by a particular consciousness. Husserl calls this ideal existence of meanings a privileged form of temporality, or *omnitemporality*. This is to underline that meanings exist outside of time-consciousness and the presupposed objective time of the world, but it is essentially possible for them to be instantiated in any given moment of time, and at any moment they remain the same. Any judgment that we make would be given to us in the mode of being thought of at a particular moment, nevertheless this moment does not affect the judgment or attribute anything to it in any way.

We see that in *EU* the theory of meaning that originated in *LU* becomes much more developed and clear: the account of ideality as omnitemporality is provided, the detailed description of how ideal possibilities become actualized in acts of consciousness (starting from the most primordial prepredicative level) is given, and a full justification of account of meaning as not species is finally provided. Achieving this task has taken no less than establishing phenomenology as a proper science with its original method, elaborating a theory

of time-consciousness and undertaking detailed analyses of conscious experiences on various level.

My aim in this dissertation was to explicate Husserl's theory of meaning as consistent and having its own internal logic of development. I demonstrated how new steps and turns in his theory of meaning were essentially motivated by problems that his earlier endeavours posed, and how new developments within Husserl's phenomenology contributed and enriched his analyses of meaning. This investigation by no means encompasses all sides of Husserl's theory of meaning. The obvious step to further development of the analysis would be investigation of Husserl's notion of intersubjectivity with an aim to see how the meanings can be shared and communicated between thinkers and speakers. The analysis in this thesis has taken into account only consciousness as an isolated subject with its 'own' world given to it. We might achieve a deeper insight into the questions how ideal meanings correlate with subjective mental states if subjectivity is understood as intersubjectivity and the word as *Lebenswelt*, as a product of 'cooperative constitution.' One of Husserl's main claims, namely, that ideal meanings can be shared by an infinite number of speakers and thinkers would achieve its proper explication.

Another path that the future research might take is looking into other phenomenological (or not only phenomenological) accounts of meanings in order to see how Husserl's theory can be enriched by his successors. For example, we might inquire whether the possibility theory of meaning would be enriched by Merleau-Ponty's discussions of linguistic meanings animated and engendered by gestures, or by his claim that, despite the fact that meanings signify of things in the world, they are in turn, after being expressed in language, influence our perception of the world that depends on the structure of a particular language.



To my mind, the most valid development of the presented investigation of Husserl's theory of meaning would be the possible outcome of its application to contemporary cognitive science, especially in the part dealing with neuropsychology and behaviorist research. Some suggestions of this kind have already been mentioned in this work during the discussion of prepredicative experience. Despite the seemingly unbridgeable gap between transcendental phenomenology and empirical cognitive science, it is possible to see the value of precise and detailed description and thorough analysis of prepredicative activity of consciousness that Husserl's theory provides when they are enriched with empirical data supplied by science. Some findings of science in the sphere of processes happening in the brain engaged in concept-formation or investigations of behavior patterns of subjects involved into cognitive activity can hardly be ignored by phenomenology if it wishes to remain true to 'things themselves.' Empirical data supplied by science can enrich and stimulate transcendental phenomenological analyses and provide new questions for it.

In general, investigations in the sphere of meaning are far from being exhausted, regardless of whether one approaches linguistic meaning solely, or takes an empirical position, or a transcendental stance. To the latter, I hope, this thesis partially contributes.

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