

The Transcendental and the Psychological

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Abstract This paper explores the emergence of the distinctions between the transcendental and the psychological and, correlatively, between phenomenology and psychology that emerge in *The Idea of Phenomenology*. It is argued that this first attempt to draw these distinctions reveals that the conception of transcendental phenomenology remains infected by elements of the earlier conception of descriptive psychology and that only later does Husserl move to a more adequate—but perhaps not yet fully purified—conception of the transcendental.

There can be no doubt that the little work we know as *The Idea of Phenomenology* (Hua II, Hua CW VIII) marks an important turning point in Husserl’s philosophy.¹ For many philosophers, both Husserl’s contemporaries, such as Johannes Daubert, Adolf Reinach, Max Scheler, Edith Stein, and Dietrich von Hildebrand, as well as our contemporaries, particularly Dallas Willard, Barry Smith, Peter Simons, and Kevin Mulligan, it marks a radical and objectionable turn from the descriptive realism of the first edition of the *Logical Investigations* (Hua XVIII–XIX/1–2, Husserl 1970b) to a metaphysical idealism. For others—myself included—*The Idea of Phenomenology* marks the turn from a descriptive psychology to a transcendental philosophy that remains distinct from any metaphysical idealism. This transcendental

¹ *The Idea of Phenomenology* comprises five lectures delivered as the introduction to Husserl’s 1907 course titled “Major Topics in the Phenomenology and Critique of Reason” and informally known as the “*Dingkolleg*” or “Thing-lecture.” The main body of this lecture course was published as Hua XVI and is translated in Hua CW VII.

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philosophy is rooted in a “turning” of our reflective gaze from objects in the world to the intentional correlation in which those objects are experienced. This “turning” marks not a departure from the *Investigations* but their extension, and *The Idea of Phenomenology* is the first attempt to state explicitly what is already latent in them (see Drummond 2002).

Characteristic of the psychologistic views against which Husserl argues in the “Prolegomena” to the *Logical Investigations* are, first, the incontrovertible claim that the objects of logical knowledge (for example, meanings, concepts, judgments, and logical laws) are thought by the mind, and second, the problematic claim that the laws that govern the relations among logical objectivities are the psychological laws that govern the acts of thinking in which these objectivities are thought. The “Prolegomena,” as is well known, argue against the psychologism embedded in the second claim. They argue, that is, against the view that logical objectivities are psychologically immanent and against the reduction of logical laws to psychological laws.

The incontrovertibility of the first claim—that the objects of logical knowledge are thought by the mind—means that Husserl must account for how this claim can be differently and non-psychologically understood. This is the task to which the main parts of the *Investigations* address themselves. Husserl seeks to clarify the relation between mind and logical objectivities while preserving the “ideality” of meanings, their combinations, and the laws that govern those combinations. Moreover, given Husserl’s belief that logic is ultimately concerned with truth, we can say, more comprehensively, that Husserl, like so many of Brentano’s students, seeks to clarify the relation between mind, meaning, and object.

Husserl originally conceives this task as an epistemological one. In both the “Foreword” to the first edition of the *Investigations* (Hua XVIII, 7; Husserl 1970b, 42) and in the “Introduction” to its second volume (Hua XIX/1, 12–13; Husserl 1970b, 254), Husserl speaks of the need to reflect on the relationship between the subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of what is known. Following Brentano, he thinks it is descriptive psychology that responds to this epistemological problem, and it does so by exploring the subjective structures of logical knowledge. Husserl, however, soon came to recognize that descriptive psychology is an inadequate response, and both his sense of the problem and his sense of the science that responds to it change.

It is in this light that *The Idea of Phenomenology* takes on its importance. It occupies a central position—perhaps the central position—in the transition from the descriptive psychology of the first edition of the *Investigations* to the transcendental phenomenology of *Ideas I* (Hua III/1–2, Hua CW II) and beyond. Although the lectures making up *The Idea of Phenomenology* introduce a course more narrowly focused on perception, their central problematic is the same as that of the *Investigations*. As Husserl puts it:

What becomes problematic is the possibility of knowledge, more precisely, the possibility that knowledge can reach an objectivity which, after all, is what it is in itself. At bottom, what is in question is the achievement of knowledge, the sense of its claim to validity or justification, the sense of the distinction

between valid knowledge and knowledge that merely pretends to be valid. On the other side, likewise in question is the sense of an objectivity which is and is what it is whether it is known or not and which, nevertheless, as an objectivity is an objectivity for possible knowledge, [an objectivity] in principle knowable, even if as a matter of fact it has never been and will never be known, [an objectivity] in principle perceivable, conceivable, determinable through predicates in a possible judgment, and so forth (Hua II, 25; Hua CW VIII, 20–21, translation modified).

In a word—and it is Husserl’s word—the problem posed in *The Idea of Phenomenology* is “transcendence” (cf. Hua II, 34; Hua CW VIII, 27). Even more precisely, as Husserl later states it in *The Idea*, the problem is “the possibility of transcendence just in its possibility [*zwar nur ihrer Möglichkeit nach*]” (Hua II, 43; Hua CW VIII, 33).

While the critique of psychologism and the proto-phenomenology of the *Logical Investigations* revolved around the distinctions between the subjective and objective, the ideal and the real, and the a priori and the a posteriori, the major distinctions at work in *The Idea of Phenomenology* are those between, on the one hand, immanence and transcendence and, on the other, between the psychological and the transcendental. The distinctions are linked, of course, because the appeal to the transcendental is the response to the problem of transcendence. The distinction between the psychological and the transcendental became a life-long concern of Husserl right through the unfinished Part III of the *Crisis* (Hua VI, Husserl 1970a), and it is arguable that he never fully figured it out! In particular, it is arguable that his view of the transcendental remained infected to some degree by his original understanding of descriptive psychology. I shall argue that his initial statement of the distinction here in *The Idea of Phenomenology* is clearly so infected, and in arguing this, I shall suggest that the clarification and removal of this inheritance strengthen what is most novel and what is best about Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology.

The chief reason for the confusion between the psychological and the transcendental proper to phenomenology is that both psychology and transcendental phenomenology are sciences of the “subject.” Psychology, in both its explanatory and descriptive versions, treats the psychic or mental as a region of the world distinct from the region of material things that are the object of experiences such as perception. Husserl maintains this regional distinction between the psychic and the thingly throughout his career, and, I am claiming, it interferes with his attempts to clarify the nature of transcendental subjectivity as opposed to psychological subjectivity.

This regional conception of the mental clearly manifests itself in the descriptive psychology of the first edition of the *Investigations*. After identifying the essence of consciousness as intentionality and in describing its essential structures, Husserl distinguishes between “the real (*reellen*) or phenomenological (descriptive-psychological) content of an act and its intentional content” (Hua XIX/1, 411; Husserl 1970b, 576). This distinction raises serious problems for Husserl’s project. On the one hand, the equation between the really inherent content and the

phenomenological content means that in his phenomenological account of intentionality Husserl, as a matter of method, can rightfully appeal only to the really inherent contents of the act: the act-quality, the act-matter, and the sensory contents of the act. On the other hand, he cannot appeal solely to the really inherent contents if he is to avoid psychologism in his account of our apprehension of logical objectivities. The avoidance of psychologism requires that we account for how the “ideal” or intentional contents proper to (logical) objectivities are present to mind without being really inherent in mind. But, again, Husserl as a consequence of his identification of real (*reell*) content and phenomenological content cannot appeal directly to such “ideal” or intentional contents. But that is just what he does; he adopts the view that the really inherent components that are essential to the experience’s intentional reference to the object, namely, the act-quality and act-matter, are instantiations of what he calls an “intentional essence.”

Let us examine this doctrine a bit more closely. Husserl in the first edition of the *Investigations* identifies three senses of “intentional content”: (1) the intentional *object* of the act, and he further distinguishes this sense into the intentional object as the object “which is intended” and the intentional object “as intended”; (2) the “matter” of the act; and (3) its intentional essence (Hua XIX/1, 413; Husserl 1970b, 578). The first sense of intentional content captures that *to* which the intending act is directed whereas the second and third senses refer to that *by* which the act is directed to its intentional object. So, there is a double ambiguity in the first sense, that between “which is intended” and “as intended” and, regarding the object as intended, that between “to which” and “by which,” and Husserl cautions us not to use this sense because it is ambiguous (although it is only the first ambiguity that he clearly has in mind).²

More important, because the intentional object intended does not and cannot fall within the really inherent contents of the act, Husserl must set the first sense aside. The important senses of “intentional content” for our purposes are, then, the second and third. The act-matter determines the manner in which the object is intended in the act, and it stands opposed to the act-quality that makes the act the kind of act it is. The act-matter is “the content which stamps [the act] as the presentation of this presented, as the judgment of that judged, etc.” (Hua XIX/1, 425–26; Husserl 1970b, 586, translation modified); it is “*that which in the act first gives it relation to an object* and, in fact, gives this relation so fully determined that through the matter is fixed not only the object in general that is meant but also the manner in which it is meant” (Hua XIX/1, 429; Husserl 1970b, 589, translation modified). The matter, in yet another formulation, “determines as what the act apprehends the object, which properties, forms, relations it attributes to it” (Hua XIX/1, 430; Husserl 1970b, cf. 589, translation modified). It is for this reason that Husserl in the *Investigations* also describes the matter as “the *sense [Sinn] of the objective apprehension*” (Hua XIX/1, 430; Husserl 1970b, 589, translation modified), a point to which we shall return below.

² See Smith and McIntyre (1984, 108–23), who claim—incorrectly, I believe—that Husserl’s distinction between the object which is intended and the object as intended is a forerunner of the later distinction between the intended object to which the act is directed and the intentional object (noema) by which it is directed; cf. Drummond (1990, 26–31, 54–57).

Now what does it mean to say that the act-matter is that which in the act first gives it relation to an object? The difficulty, we have seen, is that act-matter, just insofar as it is intentional content, does not belong to the phenomenological content—the real, descriptive-psychological content—of the act. Given the fact that different acts can be directed to the same object in the same determinate manner, Husserl claims that what is common to these acts is an identical intentional essence that is instantiated in the individual acts, and by virtue of that instantiation, an act of a certain quality is directed toward an object in a certain manner³. The instantiated essence, including the matter, is really inherent to the individual act and that by virtue of which the act is “really” intentional, but the intentional essence itself is not really inherent to the act; it is the act’s ideal or intentional “content.” The objective content or objective sense of the act is understood not as a psychological reality but as an ideal species, and it is this species that is the logical objectivity—the meaning as such—to which logical cognition directs its attention. Husserl avoids psychologism, then, by making the really contained, intentional apprehension of the object the instantiation of an essence that is not itself a psychological essence.

This is an ingenious solution to his problem, but it is one that Husserl must and does abandon. The claim that something must be common in different acts of a single subject or in the acts of different subjects, all of which are directed to the same object in the same manner, requires postulating an essential act-matter to underlie that commonality only because one is barred from appealing to the intentional object of the experience. The identity of content in these acts could be explained just as easily—and more plausibly—in terms of the identity of the shared object itself—not the intended object *simpliciter*, but the intended object just as intended, just as experienced in the context of a set of psycho-physical conditions and “historical” determinants that affect the object’s manner of givenness to those experiencing it (see Drummond 1990, 146ff.). Husserl, however, precludes this

³ That this is Husserl’s view is confirmed by the fact that Husserl claims that the “semantic” essence of acts that give meaning to expressions, i.e., the correlate on the side of the act of the ideal meaning of the expression, coincides with their intentional essence (cf. Hua XIX/1, 435; Husserl 1970b, 592–93). Just as the meaning of a particular expressive act is the instantiation of a meaning-essence (Hua XIX/1, 106; Husserl 1970b, 330), so too the particular meaning-giving act is an instantiation of an intentional essence which determines *in specie* the meaning of the expression. And, by extension, any particular act is an instantiation of an intentional essence that determines *in specie* the object as intended in a determinate manner and as the object of a certain kind of act.

For discussions of Husserl’s view that the meanings present in individual acts of meaning are instantiations of meaning-essences, see Willard (1977) and Mohanty (1977). Smith and McIntyre (1984, 116–17) also take the view that in the first edition of the *Investigations* the real content of an individual act is an instantiation of the act’s intentional essence, i.e., that the relationship between the act’s ideal, intentional content (where “intentional content” does not refer to the intentional object of the act) and its real content is the relationship of instantiation rather than the relationship of possession of a common, abstract part. While this view of meaning is correct for the first edition of the *Logische Untersuchungen*, it has already changed by the time of the publication of the second edition; indeed, in *Ideen I*, Husserl essentially discards the language of intentional essence, and its inclusion in the second edition of the *Logische Untersuchungen* is largely a consequence of Husserl’s decision not to rework the *Logische Untersuchungen* in their entirety. As Husserl’s views mature, there is no longer a need to describe ideal or intentional content in terms of “species” or “essences”; in its place will come the language of *irreell*, the “ir-real,” which is also ideal or abstract. Furthermore, this abstract component of an intentional experience can be shared by various acts because it is intentional as the objective correlate of these acts rather than as their essence; see Drummond 1990, *passim*.

option by the way in which he distinguishes phenomenological and intentional contents.

Husserl's motive for abandoning the view of the first edition of the *Investigations*, however, is not the illegitimacy of the *deus ex machina* appeal to the notion of intentional essence after having excluded intentional content from the domain of phenomenological content. His motive arises from his concern for the relation of logic to truth. As Husserl develops his theory of fulfilling intentions, he recognizes that the fact that they involve the direct presence to consciousness of the intended object just as intended requires that he somehow make room for the intended object itself in his response to the problem of the possibility of transcendence. To put the matter another way—and a way that Husserl would probably not put it—his account of intentionality in the *Investigations* is an account of transcending, of the self-transcending nature of consciousness, but it is not yet an account of transcendence, of accomplished transcendence, of a transcendence that truthfully grasps the object itself.

Whereas Husserl in the *Investigations* was concerned to show how ideal meanings were related to possible minds, he does not directly question the very possibility of genuine knowledge as such. Husserl in *The Idea of Phenomenology* raises just this question. It is this more general critique that leads him to the methodological device of what he there alternately calls the “epistemological reduction” and “phenomenological reduction,” an alternation that itself is revelatory of a problem. The importance of this methodological device is that it incorporates the intentional object into its understanding of phenomenological content and of the proper object of philosophical reflection. In performing the reduction, he says, “this wonderful correlation between the *phenomenon of knowledge* and the *object of knowledge* reveals itself everywhere” (Hua II, 12; Hua CW VIII, 68). The significance of this he states as follows:

If we then disregard the metaphysical purposes of the critique of knowledge and attend solely to its task of *clarifying the essence of knowledge and known objectivity*, then it is a *phenomenology of knowledge and known objectivity*, which forms the first and fundamental part of phenomenology in general (Hua II, 23; Hua CW VIII, 19).

Husserl here introduces a distinction between the metaphysical purposes of critique, to which he has earlier explicitly tied the epistemological purposes of critique, and the clarifying purposes of the critique of knowledge. However, he does not seem to have sorted out the differences and relations among these various purposes. For his epistemological concerns with critique lead him in a direction quite different from focusing on clarifying the intentional correlation of knowledge and known objectivity. Given his epistemological concerns, he is concerned to identify a kind of knowledge that is secure and that can provide a firm “foundation” for philosophy. And in this endeavor, he returns to his descriptive-psychological tendencies and focuses on the really (*reell*) inherent contents of possible experiences.

We can discern this in the fact that, on the one hand, when Husserl speaks of the fruits of the reduction in terms of the distinctions between appearances and the

object which appears and between phenomenon and the object itself, he typically speaks of the appearance of the object and the phenomenon of knowledge solely in relation to these really inherent contents. Note, for example, how Husserl identifies the appearance or phenomenon with the really inherent experience within the stream of consciousness: “What is then actually given is the appearing of the house, this *cogitatio*, emerging in the stream of consciousness and eventually flowing away” (Hua II, 72; Hua CW VIII, 53), and again, “The relating-itself-to-something-transcendent, to refer to it in one way or another, is an inner characteristic of the phenomenon” (Hua II, 46; Hua CW VIII, 35). He also speaks of “the distinction between the quasi-givenness of transcendent objects and the absolute givenness of the phenomenon itself” (Hua II, 45; Hua CW VIII, 35), and remarks that we must “restrict absolute givenness to the phenomenologically singular givenness of the *cogitatio*” (Hua II, 50; Hua CW VIII, 38).

On the other hand, Husserl insists that the reduction makes possible conceiving transcendental subjectivity as inclusive not only of the really inherent components of the experience but of its object as well: “We must guard ourselves,” he says, “against the fundamental confusion between the *pure phenomenon* in the phenomenological sense and the *psychological phenomenon*, the object of psychology as a positive science” (Hua II, 43; Hua CW VIII, 33). Husserl exploits the ambiguity of the terms “phenomenon” and “appearance” in order to sharply contrast the psychological and transcendental attitudes. For example, he says,

The phenomenology of knowledge is a science of the phenomenon of knowledge in a twofold sense: of knowledge as appearances, presentations, acts of consciousness in which these or those objectivities are presented, become objects of consciousness, either passively or actively; and, on the other hand, of the objectivities themselves as objects that present themselves in just such ways. The meaning of the word “phenomenon” is twofold because of the essential correlation between *appearing* and *that which appears*. ‘Φαινόμενον’ proper means ‘that which appears’ and yet it is predominantly used for the appearing itself, the subjective phenomenon (if one is allowed to use this misleading expression in a rough psychological sense) (Hua II, 14; Hua CW VIII, 69).

It is this “proper” meaning of “phenomenon” as that which appears that reflects the motive of incorporating intended objectivities into phenomenological reflection.

We see this motive explicitly at work for the first time in *The Idea of Phenomenology*, but it is not there thoroughly and consistently developed. We can understand how much Husserl was struggling with these issues of immanence and transcendence and the transcendental and the psychological from his 1908 lecture course on the theory of meaning. There Husserl distinguishes what he calls the “phanological” concept of meaning, which is the view he had offered in the first edition of the first logical investigation and which identifies the “subjective” conditions of meaning, from the phenomenological concept of meaning, which provides an account of the “objective” conditions of meaning. What is interesting is that the phanological concept of meaning disappears from Husserl’s later thinking,

while the phenomenological account comes to the fore. At stake here is that in its fully developed form the transcendental turn focuses our attention on the intentional correlation whose essential structures underlie the possibility of experience itself. The sense of subjectivity is fundamentally modified; transcendental subjectivity does not depend on or involve the isolation of the worldly region “psychic” investigated by the psychological sciences. The sense of “transcendental subjectivity” is enlarged beyond what is really inherent to any possible experience to “include” the object experienced just as it is experienced, just as the object of possible experience. What is clear, however, is that this sense of “subjectivity” radically transforms the senses that terms like “subjectivity” and “include” have in psychology.

We find evidence of the more fully developed shift to the transcendental in the second edition of the *Logical Investigations* and in *Ideas I*, both of which were published in 1913. There is a crucial change in the treatment of intentionality in the second edition of the *Investigations*, a change whose significance is barely noted in the text itself and that reflects the train of thought finding its first detailed statement in *Ideas*. In the *Investigations* Husserl now distinguishes within the phenomenological content of an act between its real and intentional contents (Hua XIX/1, 411; Husserl 1970b, 576). The intentional content that in the first edition was outside the bounds of a descriptive psychology is now in the second edition within the bounds of a phenomenological description, and the entire account of intentional content can now be recast in a new light. Husserl confirms this understanding in a footnote that refers us to the detailed account of the noesis–noema correlation presented in *Ideas I* (Hua XIX/1, 411; Husserl 1970b, 576).

Since the problems in Husserl’s original account of meaning as well as the reformulated distinction in the second edition of the *Investigations* incline us toward including the intentional object within the phenomenological contents of the act, and since the language of “matter” and “intentional essence” is virtually absent from *Ideas I*, we should try to understand the sense in which the intentional object can be included within what can be described phenomenologically. Whereas Husserl’s original understanding of phenomenology as descriptive psychology required him to explain the object as it appears exclusively in terms of the intending act and its real (*reell*) contents, his subsequent understanding of the transcendental field opened for reflection by the phenomenological reduction allows an appeal to both real and intentional contents, including the intentional object. The object which is intended just as it is intended remains within the scope of that upon which we phenomenologically reflect. This is the new view stated in his reformulation of the distinction between real and intentional contents, or, in the language of *Ideas I*, in the distinction between the noesis and the noema.

The whole upon which Husserl now reflects is not simply the transcending act but the intentional correlation itself, that is, the intending act with its intentional correlate. Husserl uses the term “noesis” to refer to those features really (*reell*) or immanently contained in the act by virtue of which the act is intentionally directed to an object, that is, those moments of the act which “bear in themselves what is specific to intentionality” (Hua III/1, 192; Hua CW II, 203, translation modified). Husserl uses the term “noema” to refer to the intentional correlate of the act, that to

which the intending act is directed, but he explicates the noema in multiple ways. These varied explanations have generated much spilt ink, much of it by me, about how best to interpret the noema. I shall not enter into all the details of this controversy here, but shall try in what follows to take all the ambiguities into account.⁴

Husserl characterizes the noema at once as: (1) the intended as intended; and (2) a sense: “Perception, for example, has its noema, most basically its perceptual sense, that is, the perceived as perceived” (Hua III/1, 203; Hua CW II, 214, translation modified). How is it that the noema can be both a sense and the intended objectivity itself? Husserl distinguishes three moments in the noema: the thetic characteristic (the noematic correlate of the act-quality), the noematic sense (the assimilation of act-matter into the newly conceived intentional content), and the determinable *X* (the “innermost moment” of the noema) (Hua III/1, 205–6, 297–304; Hua CW II, 216–18, 309–16). When we think of this structure as a whole and, as it were, in reverse, from the inside out, we can see that the noematic account makes clear how it is that in performing the reduction we turn our attention from the domain of objects *simpliciter* to that of objects in their significance for us.

Husserl uses the image of a core to distinguish the noematic sense from the full noema (the union of noematic sense and thetic character). To get to the core, however, we have to work through the outer covering and disclose the core lying within. In a similar manner, Husserl now identifies what we might think of as the

⁴ This controversy was first characterized by Hubert Dreyfus (1972, 135; revised 1984, 98) as a debate between those who view the perceptual noema as a concept (Føllesdal) and those who view it as a percept (Gurwitsch). But the debate was not limited to a debate about the perceptual noema, and it came to be more broadly characterized as one between content-theories of intentionality (and of the noema) and object-theories, or between mediator-theories and object-theories, or between the Fregean interpretation and the non-Fregean interpretation, or between propositional and transcendental readings, or between west-coast and east-coast readings (or yet others—indeed, there might be more ways of characterizing the debate than there are positions in it!).

Gurwitsch (1964, esp. 228–79; 1966a, 332–49; 1966b, 124–40; 1966c, 175–286; 1966d, 3–55; 1967, 24–57), while recognizing that the noema is also a sense, emphasizes the noema or intentional object as the intended objectivity itself simply as intended. This identification of the object which is intended with the object as intended, i.e., with the noema as sense, raises the questions of how to explicate, first, the difference and, second, the relation between the object intended and the object as intended. Gurwitsch’s responses to these questions were united in his claim that the intended object itself is a whole of noematic parts or presentational moments or senses.

Føllesdal (1969, 680–87; reprinted 1984, 73–80; 1990, 263–71), on the other hand, emphasizes the noema as sense, as an abstract intensional entity which semantically mediates the act’s reference to the object. Føllesdal’s view remains very close to the position Husserl enunciates in the first edition of the *Investigations*. His students Smith and McIntyre (1984, 143) revised this position somewhat, arguing that the noema was not an instantiated essence or tokened type, but an abstract particular which is the correlate of the noesis. Hence, intentional directedness is analyzed by them as a triadic relation: the act entertains a noema (i.e., a sense) and thereby prescribes an intended object which might or might not actually exist. An act’s entertaining a sense refers the subject of the act to an object in a determinate way in much the same way that a word’s expressing a sense refers the speaker (or author) and audience to an object in a determinate way. The sense is a determinate manner of presenting.

Some authors have adopted an irenic approach to the controversy. See e.g., Mohanty (1981; 1982, 70–79), Welton (1983, §§4.1, 5.4, 6.4, and chap. 7) and Larrabee (1986, 209–30). For a brief overview of the controversy, see Drummond (1997, 494–99), and for criticisms of both Gurwitsch and Føllesdal, as well as of the irenic approach, see Drummond (1980, 9–21; 1990, esp. chaps. 4–5; 1992, 89–109; and 1998, 89–126).

core of the core, an innermost moment which we disclose only by working through the core (the noematic sense) to uncover the determinable *X* lying within it. Hence, Husserl can characterize the noema both as: (1) that in which we find the identical object itself; and (2) that through which the act intends an object. The language of “through” does not posit an instrumental entity ontologically distinct from the intended object. The noema is not a mediating species or entity that takes us through and beyond the sense to the object. We instead go “through” the noematic sense by penetrating it and finding its “innermost moment,” the objective something to which the act is directed:

...we become attentive to the fact that, with talk about the relation (and specifically the direction) of consciousness to its objective something, we are referred to an innermost moment of the noema. It is not the just designated core, but something which, so to speak, makes up the necessary central point of the core and functions as ‘bearer’ for noematic peculiarities specifically belonging to the core, namely for the noematically modified properties of the ‘meant as meant’ (Hua III/1, 299; Hua CW II, 311, translation modified).

The determinable *X*, therefore, carries the sense of “the identical” in different appearances, in different senses referring to the same object.

Moreover, we can also speak of the act intending the object “through” the noematic sense in another way. The horizontal structure of experience and its noematic correlates explains transcendence; the object is always more than what is directly given in any one phase of experience, and one phase refers retentionally and protentionally to other phases presenting the identical object. Over the course of a temporally extended experience, we become aware of the different dimensions and aspects of an object or state of affairs. We become aware of the multiplicity of senses that are at work in our comprehending apprehension of the object, and we seek those appearances and those senses that respond to our practical attitudes and interests toward the world. In this way, the determinable *X* is understood not merely as the formal carrier of identity, as in *Ideas I*, but as a teleological notion that draws our experience along until we reach an appropriate fulfillment given our practical attitudes and interests. Intentional transcendence, then, has both vertical and horizontal dimensions.

This looking backward and forward from the perspective of *The Idea of Phenomenology* yields the more developed sense of the transcendental, which is distinguished from the psychological in a three-fold manner: (1) transcendental reflection is not grounded in a region, but encompasses all regions; (2) transcendental reflection does not consider experiences in their being as real, mental events of an existent, psychological subject but considers them as possible intentional experiences of any possible experiencing agent; and (3) transcendental reflection does not consider objects *simpliciter* in their worldly, causal relations to other worldly entities, including psychological subjects, but considers them in their significance for us. The first respect is what leads Husserl to speak of transcendental subjectivity in metaphysical terms as an absolute being, but the point, I take it, of this language is not so much ontological as phenomenological. Transcendental subjectivity is characterized by a completeness that is lacking in psychological

subjectivity, which is merely a region of the world, and it is not “relative” to the world but “prior” to it as the medium of access thereto.

Transcendental phenomenology, then, reflects upon the transcendental subject in its achievement of making sense of the world and clarifies the essential structures of the various ways of making-sense of the world and, thereby, of rationality itself in all its dimensions. It is this distinction between the transcendental and the psychological and this understanding of transcendental philosophy that emerges for the first time in *The Idea of Phenomenology*.

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