The Missing Profiles and Co-Presencing: Finding a Horizon of Mutuality and Intersubjectivity for a Democratic Political Society in Husserl’s Phenomenology

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The Missing Profiles and Co-Presencing:
Finding a Horizon of Mutuality and Intersubjectivity for a Democratic Political Society in Husserl’s Phenomenology

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by
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents........................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgments........................................................................................................... ii
List of Abbreviations....................................................................................................... iv
Introduction..................................................................................................................... 1
Chapter 1: Subjective Reason and the Laws of Pure Thinking ....................................... 16
  1.1 Natural Attitude and Phenomenological Attitude: Intentionality and the Articulation of Meaning ................................................................. 17
  1.2 The Reductionist views of Natural Scientism and Psychologism’s μεταβάσις εις ἄλλο γένος ................................................................. 32
  1.3 Nomological Sciences and Logic as Theoretical Science .................................. 49
  1.4 Meaning-Intending, Meaning-Fulfilling, and the Identity of the Object .............. 62
Chapter 2: Self-Givenness of the Object and the Quest of Truth and Evidence ............... 72
  2.1 Intentionality and the Articulation of Meaning in Expression ............................. 73
  2.2 Parts and Whole: Presence and Absence as the Paradoxical Way in Which Givenness Occurs ................................................................. 93
  2.3 Variation and Modalization and the Unity of Meaning ....................................... 115
Ch. 3 Transcendental Consciousness and the Structures of the World .......................... 126
  3.1 εποχή, Transcendental Reduction and the Universal Horizon of Consciousness 127
  3.2 Time Consciousness and the Horizon of Unfulfilled Expectations ..................... 145
  3.3 Transcendental Subjectivity and World Constitution ......................................... 159
Chapter 4: Passive and Active Synthesis: The Genesis of the Truth of Predication and the Constitution of an Ethical and Political Community ............................................. 171
  4.1 Predication as a Striving Toward the Truth of Being ........................................ 173
  4.2 The True and the Evident: The Authority of Things-in-Themselves .................... 185
  4.3 The Foundation of the Predicative in the Pre-predicative .................................. 200
  4.4 Life-World and the Paradox of the Ego ............................................................ 216
Chapter 5: Monadology, the Primordial Hereness, the Inter-Monadic, Transcendental Intersubjectivity, and the Political World ............................................................... 234
  5.1 Monadology and Primordial Hereness: Owness as the Condition of Openness .. 236
  5.2 The Inter-Monadic: The Transcendental Primal I as a Transcending Ego .......... 257
  5.3 The Crisis of Understanding as a Crisis of Humanity .......................................... 276
    a. The Crisis of Science/Reason as a Crisis of Humanity .................................... 276
    b. The Crisis of Understanding as a Crisis of Humanity ...................................... 285
Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 300
Bibliography ................................................................................................................... 312
Works by Edmund Husserl’s ...................................................................................... 312
Works on Husserl and in Phenomenology ................................................................. 314
Other Works .................................................................................................................. 323
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To God the Principle and End of all things, eternal gratitude
List of Abbreviations

ACPAS: Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis
AL: Articles sur la logiques (1890-1913).
BPP: The Basic Problems of Phenomenology
CM: Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology.
EJ: Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic.
FTL: Formal and Transcendental Logic.
Ideas: Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy.
ILI: Introduction to the Logical Investigations
LI: Logical Investigations
PCIT: On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time
PCP: Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy.
SW: Shorter Works.
Crisis: The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology.
PL: The Paris Lectures.
PITC: The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness.
PI: Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität.
Introduction

The principle of all principles in Husserl’s phenomenology is that “we must go back to things themselves”, because consciousness is always consciousness of something. Such going back to things-themselves, he says, does not imply a naïve receptivity of that which is straightforwardly given in the natural world. If that were the case, we would not be able to know at all. For phenomenology, the world is an inalienable presence, but the affirmations of the natural attitude need to be put in abeyance in order to get at the givenness of the thing of which they speak. Even the objects of science must be taken as themes of investigation because what is categorically put in predications is an articulation of experience. Going back to things themselves is a return to the sense of things, to the meaning that both inhabits and transcends them. Through the phenomenological return to things themselves, we try to bring forth the sense and telos of reason itself as it grapples with givenness. Things are given through profiles and sides. They are always richer than their presentation in perception.

We will discuss the missing profiles in Husserl and their contribution to the construction of a public and political sphere as a democratic place of respect and participation. Profiles in Husserl’s phenomenology refer to the excess of meaning and sense that accompanies the givenness of objects. They refer thus to the open possibilities of the object, which are basically the possibilities of another subject. The discussion of profiles is a journey into the depth of things themselves in their core givenness that opens a possibility to a multiplicity of views. We will see how the missing profiles in Husserl's
Phenomenology carry a possibility of co-presencing and of the formation of a public and political sphere as a shared space. The idea of profiles can be presented as the way we know in our particularities and situations the world as universal horizon. Through profiles it is the fullness of the object in-itself that is given as a condition of the truthfulness of the knowledge. This idea of profiles runs through the whole of Husserl’s phenomenology under the titles of perspectives, sides, “whole and parts”, “presence and absence”, sedimentation of meaning, layers of givenness in inner time consciousness, phases of time, structures of givenness, etc.

Our discussion thus will aim at grasping the thing-in-itself as the nucleus around which profiles gravitate and as the condition of objectivity and constitution of a healthy public and political community, as a community in which profiles are welcomed and respected. Phenomenology as “science of concrete issues” cannot make abstraction of politics as the most concrete thing in human existence. Politics is all about human dealings with one another, and as Merleau-Ponty puts it, “man is but a knot of relations. Only relations count for him.” We will show that the invariant structure of profiles finds its full realization from and in the monadic and inter-monadic world. Objective givenness refuses to be circumscribed by profiles, and as such constitutes the condition of a public sphere, as a political sphere for the discussion of issues.

Our discussion will follow the historical development of Husserl’s thought. The discussion of profiles occurs under different forms in Husserl’s phenomenology. On the static level profiles are mainly discussed in terms of whole and parts, presence and absence, and the constitution of the invariant structure. The main concern of static
phenomenology is to find an objective ground as the condition of scientific truthfulness. On the genetic and the generative levels of the development of Husserl’s thought, we see profiles discussed more in terms of the constitution of things in sedimented meaning. Objectivity is discussed and understood in terms of sedimentation of meaning in the life-world. Sedimentation refers to the fact that meaning is constituted through historical layers of givenness.

Profiles are thus layers of experience as they bring forth the ground for all knowledge and discussion of issues. Profiles are discussed as sedimentation of now-phases that follow and fall into one another in the formation of meaning. They are layers in the givenness of the thing-in-itself. Time and space, kinaesthesia and inner consciousness, play an important role in the formation of objectivity both in the static and genetic phenomenology. There is an organic continuity and a sedimentation of meaning that runs through the presence of profiles. The persistence of the core through time and through space constitutes the objectivity that we will need to be uncovered as the condition for the constitution of an ethical and political healthy community.

Through our consideration of the “chronological” development in Husserl’s thought, from the static to the genetic and generative, we will see that the persistent theme and the underlying preoccupation are the constitution of an intersubjective and healthy inter-monadic political community. Our first two chapters will discuss the main preoccupation in Husserl’s early work, namely his search for an apodictic ground for scientific knowledge. The assertion of objectivity and the detachment of science from subjectivity and relativistic/psychologistic views were the main preoccupation of the
Prologomena and the Logical Investigations. The main question in these chapters will be to discuss the laws of pure thinking in relation to the question of objectivity. Our focus will be to explore the notion of the apodictic character of knowledge. For Husserl, logical laws contain the laws of pure thinking. They do not merely deal with how we think in the here and now, but they stand as universal meaning-units and references. In this we will try to stay close to Husserl’s preoccupation which is to bring about a science of “careful description of all forms of making meaning and registering meaningfulness and hence the whole domain of subjectivity”1, which ultimately informs the intersubjective domain.

Husserl thus struggled to pull thinking outside of the “categorial mistakes” of both objectivism and transcendentalism. While objectivism advertises that the pre-givenness of the world is prime and that we should take for granted the existence of the world, transcendentalism thinks the pre-givenness of the world is a subjective construction through sense-bestowing acts. Phenomenology needs to rise above the one-sidedness of positive sciences by freeing itself from naïve positivism. It needs also to free itself from a naïve affirmation of the ego as a totalizing being from which everything else originates in the genetic sense. Phenomenology wants to articulate the transcendental ego as a constituting ego that is also constituted in its very act of constituting. It is an ego that is constituted through passion and action in a sedimented meaning. We will see how Husserl presents the ego as a lived body that is open to the possibility of the other. Through the constitution of the ego as a lived body, presented profiles are always accompanied by appresented ones. Such appresentation calls upon the presence of the

1 *LI*, I, p. xxvi
other as a co-presencing being. We will make a distinction between the act and its content, by establishing the difference and correlation between the noetic and the noematic in acts of givenness.

In our first chapter, will follow Husserl’s critique of subjective reason and his assertion of the laws of pure thinking. Husserl insists that mental acts are correlated to ideal objectivity rather than the reverse. The noetic is correlated to the noema; it does not circumscribe it. He asserts thus that we fall into categorial mistake when we reduce reality to its givenness in individual mental acts. The object is not a trace in the mind and truth is not relative to specific acts of thinking. The ideal laws of logic are not mere mental products. This discussion of the ideal laws of pure thinking and objectivity will be continued in the second chapter in terms of how the question for the true and the evident is correlated to the self-givenness of the object. Meaning informs and inhabits expressions without being circumscribed by any of them. The whole contains and exceeds its parts. This will lead us to the discussion of mereology, parts and whole, and of the theory of presence and absence, variation, modalization, visibility and invisibility.

In the second chapter we will insist on the fact that meaning is not dependent upon particular acts of utterance. This separation of meaning and truth from specific acts of meaning, and from subjective reason, is foundational for the creation of a public sphere as a sphere of profiles-sharing and confrontation of the diversity of perspectives and sides of reality. In the public sphere, we see that what-is rather than what ought to be according to individual interest is what modulates and gives consistency to discussions and constitutes the ground for agreement or disagreement. While subjective reason wants
to domesticate and subjugate objective and ideal ends to individual interests, the ideal meaning-unit orients discussions toward *what is-in-itself*. We will see how this is capital in the constitution of the public and political space, as a space of shared profiles.

Logic as the science of scientific rationality is a theoretical science. For Husserl, this theoretical aspect of logic is that which allows it to become the guiding principle of all normative science, without itself becoming a normative science. Logic is a theoretical science and as such the universal ground for the meaningfulness of all other sciences. It deals with ideal objects or objects in themselves, that are not just objects according to specific circumstances or individual interests. The objects of logic are detached from functionalist and manipulative reason in order to become universally available for all the acts oriented toward it. We will see that this constitution of the objectivity of logic is already an attempt to open up an intersubjective sphere in which the meaningfulness of discussed issues is connected to a universal ground for understanding. We will see that Husserl is already opening up, at the level of the static phenomenology, the ground for the intersubjectivity that he will more forcefully discuss at the level of the genetic and generative phenomenology.

The assertion of logic as carrying how things are and not how things ought to be according to particular circumstances will be of great importance in our discussion of the public space as a space where truth and objectivity are the guiding principles of discussions. In the political sphere where subjective and manipulative reason tend to reduce and reconfigure things according to their usefulness for particular interests and ideologies, the assertion of the truth of thing-in-themselves as presented by logic can
become an instance where truth saves from nonsense and meaninglessness. Along with the assertion of the objectivity of logic, we have the fact that the object cannot be reduced into being an object in the mind, as the psychologist would want it.

The object is not an individual property; it is not a trace in the mind and consciousness is not a container. Husserl’s critic of psychologism aims at detaching reason from subjective and manipulative reason, a sort of Pythagorean understanding of reality where “man is the measure of all things. Of things that are that they are and of things that are not that they are not.” For Husserl, ideal meaning cannot be reduced to individual occurrences, circumstances, representations, functions, interests, or contingencies. Truth is neither time-bound nor bound to acts of judging, even if it passes through them. It informs and conditions them all. Husserl will thus insist on the fact that logical propositions are to be understood as ideal meaning-units.

The object intended by consciousness is not a construction or reconstruction of the mind. Being conscious is thus not being aware of our state of mind, because consciousness is always directed toward objects. It is always consciousness of something. The intentional object is not a mental product, because if it were totally contained in consciousness, it would be clear through and through. Reality shows however that things have sides, profiles, aspects and perspectives. Thus, “Husserl’s primary concern [which] is with securing the foundations of knowledge in the most radically scientific fashion”² carries also a concern with opening up an objective space as a public space of reason. Through his discussion of psychologism and natural scientism, Husserl finds it important

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² Richard Stevens, *James and Husserl: The Foundations of Meanings*, p. 8
to clarify the connection between the subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content of knowledge. This leads him to the discussion of the correlation between the noetic and the noematic aspects of knowing. The object is always given in its meaning for us, but such meaning is also condition by the content as its objective correlate. The object is more than what the subject puts in it. The truth of knowledge sends us back to ideal contents.

The ideal laws of logic are thus the ideal “norms” of judgments. The truth of knowledge is not dependent upon individual mental state. Husserl is thus not so much preoccupied with questions of adequation or of how the inner psychological sphere makes contact with the external world. He is rather preoccupied with the question of “how the givenness of objects is intentionally constituted within a consciousness that embraces both the givenness of the empirical mind and the empirical world of which that mind is a part.”3 Husserl is preoccupied with going to the intentional structure of consciousness and to see thereby how intentionality does not so much rely on the existence or non-existence of transcendent objects.

Intentional acts aim at meaningfulness and truth. This is what the phenomenological endeavor wants to articulate. We will present this fundamental fact that all objects are objects for consciousness and yet, they are all independent of and transcendent to consciousness. In this, we will try, through modalization, to move “beyond” the spontaneity and naïveté of the natural attitude to the thematization of the taken for granted. We will then return to the modalized object itself and take it as a theme

3 IP, p. 9
of phenomenological investigation. We will see how psychologism fell into a categorial mistake by taking the modalized object as ideal content as such. In so doing, it carries forward the assumptions of the natural attitude. We will see that meaning is more than its profiles or sides grasped in the presentation of transcendent objects or in predication. Variation and modalization will give us a perception into this fact. We will see how the unity of the object is not circumscribed by particular act qualities.

The invariant structure of the object is independent from individual acts. The object carries possibilities that exceed individual acts, and that such possibilities are possibilities open to an intersubjective field. This is revelatory of the constitution of sense as preceding and exceeding the now-phases of the showing forth of the object. There is a sedimentation of sense and meaning in the being now of the object for subjectivity. The possibilities of the object are thus intersubjectively carriers of their own history and open to future acts. As we will see, the intersubjective field includes both the living and the dead. Our discussion of time consciousness and constitution will help us articulate this point. Inner time consciousness is fundamental in the constitution of the object, because it opens up horizons of unfulfilled expectations which are the horizons of the thing-in-itself. In our discussion of the constitution of transcendental subjectivity, we will see how the question of profiles, presented in terms of presence and absence, will be of a great importance. Passion and action inhabit the heart of transcendental subjectivity’s act of constitution.

We will see in our third chapter how transcendental consciousness is related to the world as universal horizon. We will discuss the ἐποχή and transcendental reduction as
two important phases in the constitution of transcendental object. We stop taking the world for granted in order to raise questions about its meaning for us. Through such endeavor, we get back the world not as a mere transcendent object, but as a world that carries a structure and an internal horizon. The ἐποχή and the reduction that follows it allow for the unfolding of the essential structures of things. Such structures are constituted and unfold in inner time consciousness as the horizon of fulfilled and unfulfilled expectations. Time consciousness is that which gives us the object as holding together internally. With and in time consciousness, we discover transcendental subjectivity as the one that is operating the work of constitution, but also as the one that is constituted through such act. We will come to the affirmation that transcendental consciousness is the residuum, that which remains when everything else is bracketed. It is that which is operating the work of bracketing, reducing and ultimately constituting.

We engage the naïveté of our living in the world through a second look at the world. We have to distance ourselves from that within which we have been living peaceably in order to transform it into a phenomenological question. Transcendental phenomenology will thus lead us to raise the question of sense and givenness. It will bracket, reduce, and ultimately constitute the world as a world-for-the-ego. It will give us transcendental subjectivity as the one through which meaning is constituted. The world is meaningful through the constituting acts of the transcendental ego. The constituted meaning is both primordial and sedimented. We will discuss the origins of such meaning by raising the question of the apophantic and formal logic, and how they are structured in pre-givenness. Genetic and generative phenomenology, through the discussion of
predication, will thus help us understand the question of the objectivity of the invariant structure as the condition of a public discourse and constitution of an inter-monadic community.

We will discuss the fact that with genetic and generative phenomenology, logic is not just a matter of formulation of objective theories that ultimately become a binding force for sciences. We deal at this point with the question of the inwardness of the intentional act. As stated by Husserl,

> We must rise above the self-forgetfulness of the theorizer who, in his theoretical producing, devotes himself to the subject-matter, the theories, and the methods, and accordingly knows nothing of the inwardness of that producing – who lives in producing, but does not have this productive living itself as a theme within his field of vision. Only by virtue of a fundamental clarification, penetrating the depths of the inwardness that produces cognition and theory, the transcendental inwardness, does what is produced as genuine theory and genuine science becomes understandable. Only by virtue of such a clarification, moreover, does the true sense of that being become understandable, which science has labored to bring out in its theories as true being, as true Nature, as the true cultural world. Therefore: Only a science clarified and justified transcendentally (in the phenomenological sense) can be an ultimate science; only a transcendentally-phenomenologically clarified world can be an ultimately understood world; only a transcendental logic can be an ultimate theory of science, an ultimate, deepest, and most universal, theory of the principles and norms of all the sciences.4

This long quotation situates us on the necessity of transcendental phenomenology. Not only does inwardness help the phenomenologist understand his relationship to the world, but it is also foundational to all the rest. This is what bracketing and reduction take us to, as transcendental acts that allow us constitute world-meaning.

> Meaning is constituted through sedimentation. The act of constitution carries thus layers of a mixture of passivity and activity. Our fourth chapter raises the question of

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4 *FTL*, p. 15-16
passivity and activity in the sense of the necessity for the production of knowledge to go back to its origins in the life-world as the field of coexistence between passivity and activity. Predication is a striving toward the truth of being. It is an expression of a persistent meaning that will survive it. Such persistence of meaning is build upon the authority of things-themselves, as the conditions of predicative acts. The predicative is founded on the pre-predicative. The life-world is the ground for scientific achievements. We will see that this genesis of truth in the life-world is not only the condition for the constitution of a scientific truthfulness, but also the ground for the constitution of an ethical and healthy political community.

Scientific achievements are modalizations of straightforward experience of the life-world. The philosophy of the life-world deals with social world, culture and historical reality. We will at his point discuss the fact that meaning is not a private property. As such, it saves us from subjective reason and the irrationality of “enlightened” self-interests. Meaning occupies the thinker as much as it preoccupies him. It is not a private property, because it is the condition of private meanings. We will see at this point how the eruption of the crisis at the level of public sphere is an eruption of the crisis of understanding, as disconnectedness from the soils and origins of reason. Such soil is the truth that inhabits the life-world. Reason becomes alien to itself when it loses sight of its telos which is truth as such. When the telos of reason becomes just a technical success, there occurs a wandering of the ethical sense as a wandering of humanity.

The lost of sight of the telos of reason comes as a consequence of the absolutization of reason. Reason constitutes itself into a totality when it becomes blind to
human questions and preoccupations. For Husserl the crisis of the European humanity results in the fact that scientific reason dissociated itself from human preoccupation and forgot its genesis in the life-world. The imperialism of positive sciences shuts down the horizons of existence and coexistence. This, Husserl said, even decapitates philosophy and alienates it from culture and the sphere of human relationships. Scientific evidence has thus to be traced back to the truth of things themselves. If logic for instance were a mere technology of judging, inferring, thinking, knowing, etc., then logic will be reduce to a mere subjective game. If however it is an attempt into reaching the most perfect level of expressing things-themselves, than it will carry us beyond our particular expressions to the presence of things-themselves. Self coherence will not therefore be a matter of a perfection of a mind-game, but a mind’s faithfulness to a script that is inscribed in things-themselves as expressed in the life-world. The aim of predication is thus to be the expression of things-themselves.

Predication can however occur from a specific perspective that takes upon itself the responsibility of articulating the universal. Our fifth chapter will deal with the question of the importance of the first perspective stance as a means into the articulation of the universal. We will thus discuss Monadology, the primordial hereness, and the inter-monadic and transcendental intersubjectivity. It is always from a here that I articulate and understand the thing-in-itself that is given in the universal horizon. It also only from here that the openness to a thereness is rendered possible. The fifth chapter thus will allow us to articulate the political implications of this work by bringing into the discussion the specific case of the political wandering in Chad as a reason that does not
understand sufficiently the necessary correlation between the primordiality of the self and that of the other. The self, as a flesh, appears to be bearer of a surplus meaning that throws him into otherness. The primordial ego is a transcending ego, and presence is always situated in the field of co-presencing. Primordial givenness always appears loaded with its historicity. The crisis of understanding the correlation of the self and the other appears thus to be a crisis of humanity as such.

It is thus important that before discussing the political implications of the fact that thinking has to be the expression of things-themselves, we discuss egology and Monadology. Husserl discussed transcendental subjectivity as the condition of the constitution of the world. He however finds that the ego is to be linked to a lived-body. Ego is a flesh that is experienced from a primordial here that constitutes the world from such primordial position. The hereness of the ego as lived body is that which allows it to open to the thereness of the other. Primordiality is understood by Husserl as the ground for the constitution of the inter-monadic. We will see how the fact that the intuition into the thing-in-itself or of essences does not merely dwell in the individual here, but also points at the other’s possibilities, is the condition for the constitution of a public sphere and a political society.

Our task then will be to see how we can apply this to the case of Chad and see how we cannot break the logic of war, violence and domination into which the country is thrown, as the consequence of a lack of a space for a genuine dialogue. Such dialogue can only be based on truth as its condition. This would mean to trace the predicative to its pre-predicative condition of givenness. Since the main question is that of dialogue
between interest-groups or ethnic groups, the dialogue here would mean going both to the understanding of what ethnicity means and what politics mean. In this sense, it is my contention that we cannot reduce politics to mere reactions to historical contingencies or necessities. We will not thus content ourselves with listing the problems Chad is facing politically, but through discussion of profiles, perspectives, constitution of meaning, Monadology and inter-monadology, etc. we will try to find the conditions or principles that should underlie a political dialogue. I think that if that is not the case, the aiming at the truth in discussions will be reduced to being a mere rhetorical matter where individual interests will speak louder than the necessity of truth as such. The presupposition of the discussion at this point is thus that the possibility of addressing the political crisis of Chad must rely on understanding as the getting at the truth of being as such. Truth is truth and only truth can makes us one and free and responsible for the other and for the common good.
Chapter 1: Subjective Reason and the Laws of Pure Thinking

Subjective reason is a reason that is reduced to its mere performativity or to the pursuit of self-interests. For the subjective reason, objects are either the offspring of reason or tied up to specific functions and interests. Subjective reason is a technological reason that deals merely with means and ends. The main thing in this chapter will be to see how through his critique of psychologism’s sceptical relativism and the scientist’s naturalization of reason, Husserl comes to establish the objectivity of truth as a guiding principle for all knowledge. The main question of this chapter will be that of truth. How do we come to truth? Husserl wants to answer this question through the articulation of the phenomenological attitude, the critique of psychologism, and the assertion of the ideality of logical laws. We will thus try in this chapter to answer the question of how mental acts correlate to ideal objectivities, and to see laws governing such correlations. We will thus be immersed in the analysis of the structures of consciousness as it grasps objects. The question comes down to that of the affirmation of objective truth as such: “What is logically valid is a priori applicable to all worlds.”

1L.I., I, p. xliii
1.1. Natural Attitude and Phenomenological Attitude: Intentionality and the Articulation of Meaning

There is a strong faith in reality in the natural attitude. We just take things for granted in the natural attitude. Husserl sets as an imperative for philosophy the return to things themselves: “Meaning inspired only by remote, confused, inauthentic intuitions – if any intuition at all – are not enough: we must go back to the things themselves.”\(^2\) The “things themselves” are the ground for all theory of knowledge. For Husserl, “the principle of all principles” is this going back to things themselves, because “the final measure’ of all theory is that which is ‘originally’ given in simple seeing. The term ‘original’ applies to that which can be experienced in direct observation; the ‘originally given’ is something that is ‘naively’ meant and possibly given as existent.”\(^3\) In the natural attitude, we stand in a “dogmatic attitude”, in which one is “unable to effect criticism on oneself; one is just accepting what is given in natural attitude regardless of evidence. It is just accepted by natural inclination.”\(^4\) Natural sciences take the natural world as a presupposition for their endeavor. In this sense, phenomenology is a presuppositionless science; the natural world becomes for it a theme.

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\(^2\) *L.I.*, I, p. 168


The natural attitude, as dogmatic attitude, contents itself in affirming things without assessing their meaningfulness. The phenomenological ego however neutralizes the natural attitude’s dogmatism in order to come to genuine grasping of the object. Phenomenology recognizes natural experience, but it wants however to distance itself from the dogmatism of the natural attitude. Consciousness is always consciousness of something. It always has an intentional object. The return to things is thus a return to objects as given in natural life, but it also is a stopping to take such objects in their straightforward givenness as absolute measures of truth. Phenomenology, as a radical philosophy of essences, is preoccupied with the phenomena, that which appears and is meant by consciousness. The object meant by consciousness is the object-in-itself in the reality of its givenness. The thing in itself “can be brought to consciousness as the same in a variety of forms.”\(^5\) The object is thus not merely a physical thing. We need in phenomenology to know whether we are dealing with sensuous or categorial, real or ideal objects. We raise question about straightforward givenness of objects and their meaningfulness for consciousness.

As stated by Natanson, “what is ‘natural’ about the natural attitude is the spontaneous complicity of consciousness with its orientations.”\(^6\) The taking-for-grantedness is the characteristic of the natural attitude. In the phenomenological attitude, we put into brackets our natural relation to things in order to turn toward them as themes of investigation. The givenness of things occurs through their profiles, sides, aspects.

\(^5\) \textit{LH}, I, p. 276  
\(^6\) Maurice Natanson, \textit{Edmund Husserl: Philosopher of Infinite Tasks} (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973) 40
Such givenness entails a complexity that needs to be phenomenologically examined. Thus knowing implies closure and openness, finitude and infinitude, limit and unlimitedness. The relation of consciousness to its objects is not a relation of embeddedness. It is a relation built upon proximity and distance, presence and absence. Things are not simple. The return to things themselves goes with a breaking off of our natural and spontaneous allegiance to the world that is straightforwardly given. The phenomenological attitude is thus a repositioning of the self in its relation to a world that is always there. We take distance from the natural attitude on different levels, the most important of which is putting into brackets the straightforward givenness of objects. In this attitude, we do not doubt the validity of the world that is put between brackets. The main thing Husserl is aiming at is as formulated by Cobb-Stevens, to direct our attention to the correlation between intentional acts and attitudes, and the modes of presentation of things. The objects of the natural attitude become objects of thought.\(^7\)

In the natural attitude, there is a coincidence of the object with that which is merely there. We are not much preoccupied in the natural attitude with the relationship between objects. In the phenomenological attitude, we make the decision to describe relationships and to take objects as themes. We raise the question of the horizon of givenness of objects. We see such horizon as “a framework in which experience occurs”\(^8\), and as a point from which objects are meant by an ego. The object is not just there in and of itself. The relationship between the noetic and the noematic dimensions of intentionality is important in our grasping of objects. Objects are meant in acts of thought

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\(^7\) Richard Cobb-Stevens, and al. *La Phénoménologie aux confins* (Mauvezin : Editions T.E.R., 1992) 19

\(^8\) *PCP*, p. 150
that do not necessarily circumscribe them. Another instance where Husserl takes his distance from the natural attitude is the question of the articulation of inner and outer perception. Descartes asserts the clarity of inner perception and the doubtfulness of outer perception. For Husserl, perception brings more than what it directly gives. The dialogue between the inner and the outer is a never interrupted dialogue. Husserl deepens all this in the question of modalisation and variation. We will discuss this in our next chapter. In this discussion, Husserl brings in the reality of apperception. The main thing in the intentional movement is to reach the invariant structure, which is given through the different modes of presentation of objects. The object is never exhausted by its particular presentations. The object of sense-perception is thus not what we are primordially interested in at the phenomenological discussion.

At the level of sense-perception, the perceived object of the natural attitude appears always to be a “homogeneous unity.” It gives the thing as a whole, not as a fragmented piece. As Husserl puts it, “In sense-perception, the ‘external’ thing appears ‘in one blow’, as soon as our glance falls upon it. The manner in which it makes the thing appear presents it straightforwardly: it requires no apparatus of founding or founded acts. To what complex mental process it may trace back its origin, and in what manner, is of course irrelevant.”

In phenomenology, we deal with the “sphere of objects, which can only show themselves ‘in person’.” The thing in itself is that which is given in the phenomenological act. The permanence of identity of the object through the different act-qualities of presentation raises the question of the object as being more than its givenness

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9 LI, II, p. 283
10 LI, II, p. 283
in perception. Phenomenology raises the question of how we know in “one blow” that which can only appear through its perspectives. How do we get the unity of the thing itself and not its profiles as present to the senses?

In correlation to sense-perception, we have positing and non-positing acts. In positing acts, the object confronts us directly, not as an imaginative thing, but as something real that is there. Positing acts present directly their objects: “the really existent S” is that which is given. When we stay in this position we cannot reach the ground upon which we can speak of knowledge. The natural eye does not perceive the identity and depth of the object because it is solely preoccupied with the transcendent. It does not see that different acts intend the same object over and over again, because it is immersed in the object given straightforwardly. Phenomenological viewing sees that the fact that perceptual acts found novel percepts and that these percepts themselves found novel percepts is revelatory of the depth and unity of the thing. It goes from simple perceptual object to the identity of the object itself, to the object as meant in the different acts. It is thus of essential necessity that phenomenology clarifies the relation between the “subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{11} What allows subjectivity to grasp the object in itself?

It is through the articulation of our percepts and the relation of their objects with one another, that we see the unity of continuity, the identity of the object, emerge. Phenomenological intuition “is not synonym for immediate contact with empirical facticity; rather the fullness of intuition designates the ideal term of a process by which

objects are brought to essential givenness.”12 We leave the sphere of the mere sensible to enter the sphere of phenomenological seeing, where we grasp the core of the object that was straightforwardly given. The object articulates itself in the different levels and modes of its givenness. In the same way, we see that the mere grasping of dispersed objects transforms itself into the grasping of state of affairs. We move at this point from a mere disparate objects to a state of affairs, and then from mere a state of affairs to judgment on state of affairs. In all these different movements, we see the articulation of the object or state of affairs as being more than what is straightforwardly given. The propositional attitude thus turns mere state of affairs into judgments. It is a second look at the object.

Husserl’s phenomenology is preoccupied with the thing in itself, in what constitutes its core reality. It wants to discover the meaningfulness and unity that underlies the mere givenness of objects. The return to things themselves is a move from a naïve to a reflexive relation to things. Objects are always so for the ego, and they stand before it, as meaning units. The relation among objects is always relations for the ego. While the world of the natural attitude is a world that is just lived through, phenomenology takes us to the world as meant. The natural world is filled with objects that are there “on hand” and with value characteristics.

[The world of natural attitude] is continually ‘on hand’ for me and I myself am a member of it. Moreover, this world is there for me not only as a world of mere things, but also with the same immediacy as a world of objects with values, a world of goods, a practical world. I simply find the physical things in front of me furnished not only with merely material determinations but also with value-characteristics, as beautiful and ugly, pleasant and unpleasant, agreeable and disagreeable, and the like. Immediately, physical things stand there as Objects of

use, the ‘table’ with its books,’ the ‘drinking glass,’ the ‘vase,’ the ‘piano,’ etc. These value-characteristics and practical characteristics also belong constitutively to the Objects ‘on hand’ as Objects, regardless of whether or not I turn to such characteristics and the Objects.\textsuperscript{13}

The object of the natural attitude is thus reduced to its function. We do not raise in the natural attitude the question of the relation between immanence and transcendence. In other words, we do not yet raise the question of how the immanent can know the transcendent. We do not raise the question of the relation of consciousness to objects.

In the phenomenological attitude we stop our natural and spontaneous movement toward the world. We have to discover the organic unity that runs through objects of consciousness. The phenomenologist tries to grasp this internal articulation of the object or state of affairs; he tries to see the unity that runs through sequential givenness. The ego’s relation to objects is an act of attending to them and passing “judgment on” them. We have thus to establish, as said above, the relation of the immanent to the transcendent: How does ego know things that are transcendent to it? In correlation to the unity of the sequences there is the unity of consciousness that accompanies it. The object is not just the sum of its sequences; it is always more than what it is, because its givenness goes hand in hand with a movement of retention and protention. The object is always \textit{more} retentionally and protentionally. The intentional correlation of the noesis and the noema thus points us to the constitution of meaning in the object in itself. The object as meant, as noema, is always richer than its givenness in the transcendent and objective now.

The way phenomenological attitude operates in the narration of a historical event can help us illustrate the point we are trying to put forward here. While the faithful

\textsuperscript{13} Ideas I, p. 53
chronicler is more interested in the sequential unfolding and laying out of events, the critical writer of history tries to see connections and issues in the unfolding of a historical event. Thus, for a chronicler, events like Rwandan or the Darfur Genocides would be just sequences of events that have as their culmination human killings. The atrocity of the event can appear, but the articulation of it may not necessarily appear. Phenomenology creates a sort of uneasiness with the event. Its main preoccupation would be the unfolding of the unity or logic that runs through what happened. Instead of just being immersed in the event, the phenomenological attitude wants to discover the essential knots of the event, the structure that runs through its sequences. The work of Theweleit\footnote{Klaus Theweleit, \textit{Male Fantasies}, Vol. I and Vol. II. (Translated by Stephen Conway in collaboration with Erica Carter and Chris Turner. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1987, 1989). Beyond practical decisions and actions conducted during Nazi Germany, Theweleit saw a common thread or unity running through them that is deeper and far reaching in the history of Germany. The main thing is the understanding of relationships and a configuration of bodies. All that in Nazi Germany did not embody strength and Germanness did not belong to the body of the nation. Nazi Germany saw in everything that is carrier of entropic principles a threat to the body of the nation. What characterized and defined the nation was thus a worked body that was clean and fearless in the defense of the fatherland. The main thing is thus an understanding of relationship build around the notion of steel body – the body of the true Aryan soldier male. It is only from this perspective that we can understand the nation in Nazi Germany. The body within the nation is a steel, sexless male body that strives for the reterritorialization of the fatherland. The nation as a whole is thus the people dominated by the male soldiers. We cannot thus genuinely discuss Nazi Germany unless we understand this reconfiguration of bodies around the ideology of a fatherland.} on Nazi Germany is a clear example of the phenomenological reading of the event. Things do not just happen. They are results of a logic and understanding of the world. There is a thread that runs through them and that makes them “coherent”. There is a unity, a stream, which runs through the sequences.

Consciousness always stands in a dialectical tension before its objects. It is always consciousness of something, and things appear to it in-themselves. There is thus a
double transcendence happening in the grasping of the object. Things-in-themselves show up and consciousness is called to go toward that which thus appears. Intentionality reveals to the ego its own self. Through the movement of consciousness,

we can evidence the way things are; when we do so, we discover objects, but we also discover ourselves, precisely as datives of disclosure, as those to whom things appear. Not only can we think the things given to us in experience; we can also understand ourselves as thinking them. Phenomenology is precisely this sort of understanding: Phenomenology is reason’s self-discovery in the presence of intelligible objects.\textsuperscript{15}

Genuine knowledge is not thus a mere presence of the self to the self, but it involves a self transcendence toward the object. The ego in its intentional act is not just intending a subjective trace – as the psychologist would want it – but things in themselves.

Consciousness is always a transcending act. Cognition does not happen solely inside the mind of the intending person. The ego intuits and intends things themselves and not states of mind. Consciousness is always a relation of an intending subject to an intended object that is not contained in it. The content of consciousness is an ideal content. The phenomenologist put the natural attitude and its existential thesis out of action. The world becomes a “datum for consciousness.”\textsuperscript{16} Instead of going along with the \textit{fiat} to the natural world, the phenomenological attitude turns the acquisitions of the natural attitude into objects \textit{for} consciousness. The ego needs thus to constitute the object in the sense of letting it emerge in its full meaningfulness, as object-in-itself. At this point, Husserl brings in the εποχή, which is the bracketing of the validity of the natural attitude, as a necessary means to the constitution of the object.

\textsuperscript{15} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Introduction to Phenomenology} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 4
\textsuperscript{16} Victor Velarde-Mayol, \textit{On Husserl}, p. 48
In his critic of the psychological empiricism and naturalization of reason, Husserl does not reject subjectivity as such. The noetic and the noematic are essential components in the act of knowing, in the intentional act. In order for knowledge to be arrived at, there must be a subjective condition for such knowledge. There are essential subjective structures that allow the dialogue between the noetic and the noematic moments of knowledge. The noetic side, the subjective, is thus very important in intentional acts. “By subjective conditions of possibility, we do not here mean real conditions rooted in the individual judging subject or in the varied species of judging beings (e.g. human beings), but the ideal conditions whose roots lie in the form of subjectivity as such, and in its relation to knowledge.”17 On the noematic side, we have the “objective unity of truths or propositions bound together by relation of ground and consequence.”18 These truths themselves have their foundations in the “theoretical unity.” There are specific angles through which the object gives itself. The meant object is always meant within some specific relational possibilities of any theory whatsoever. These relational possibilities are carried by notion of truth, proposition, object, relation, and ultimately content as such. A thesis that stands against these relational possibilities is self-destructive.

As we will discuss it in our next chapter, the εποχή, abstention or bracketing, opens a door to the phenomenological reduction that stop the naïve movement toward the world, the movement of taking-for-grantedness that infuses the natural attitude. In the εποχή, by suspending the dogmatic movement toward the world, we start the movement of thematization of the world. The importance of the εποχή comes from the fact that it is

17 *Li*, I, pp. 75-76
18 *Li*, I, p. 76
“only by removing all traces of the natural attitude in regard to our cognitive achievements that their true essences can come into view in an undistorted manner.”19

Putting into brackets the “existential belief” and withholding assent to the “existence or non existence of some objects or events in experience”20 is important in the unfolding of the object in itself. The main thing that emerges from the εποχή is the intendingness of consciousness toward its objects-themselves. The main purpose here is to go beyond fluctuation in order to mean things just as they are. This helps have a ground upon which knowledge can be shared and truth can be a reality that is objective and not just tied up to individual beliefs or ideologies, as is sometimes the case in the dogmatic assertions of the natural attitude.

The directedness or aboutedness of consciousness toward its objects is what interest the phenomenologist. Intentionality is directed toward objects, either real or virtual, or even impossible. Experiences such as love, perception, thinking, and seeing need objects as the direction of their intending. We account for them as love of, thinking of, seeing of, perceiving of. Something presents itself to the intending person. The object is not however reduced to its empirical givenness. There is always more involved in intentionality. Presence and absence are the characteristics of objects. For the natural scientist, the thing is in its being there, in its givenness for science. For the phenomenologist however, the thing-in-itself is that which matters. Perceptual or material givenness does not exhaust what the object is. The intentional object “is not exhausted by a percipi, but rather in opposition to it, is an In-itself. An In-itself comes to givenness.

19 LI, I, p. xxxix
20 Maurice Natanson, Edmund Husserl: Philosopher of Infinite Tasks, p. 58
And yet it is in principle never given in an absolute way. Its meaning is always only an opinion in the sense that it always stands in need of evidence that can never be given definitively.\(^{21}\) The ego’s grasp of things is not total because things have profiles and the ego has a body. Objects are thus always richer than their presented sides. This density of the object refers us to that which stands at the core of the object as such, its constitutional structure, that which is invariant in the object that is seen under different acts. The object is never one-sidedly given.

In his functionalist preoccupation, the natural scientist applies rules that lead him to the most effective results. He does not bother himself with questions about the invariant structure of the object; he does not raise the question of the principles upon which his rules are based. Natural scientists are not preoccupied with exploring “the principles on which the success of their methods repose. The incomplete state of all sciences depends on this fact.”\(^{22}\) Natural science remains in need of clarification of its absolute foundation. The return to things themselves is not a return to the natural world, as a brute fact. It is a return to a world that carries and expresses meaning. It is a return to a world constituted in meaning. One of the examples Husserl uses to illustrate this is that of attention. Attention, as an attending to things, does not primarily direct us to objects as merely-being-there, either in the world or in the mind.

The unitary sense of talk of ‘attending’ so little calls for ‘contents’ in the psychological sense (as the objects to which we attend), that it ranges beyond the sphere of intuition, and embraces the whole sphere of thinking. It makes no difference how thought is conducted, whether on an intuitive basis or in pure symbols. If we are theoretically concerned with the culture of the Renaissance,\(^{21}\) BPP, p. 37
\(^{22}\) LI, I, p. 15

\(^{21}\) BPP, p. 37
\(^{22}\) LI, I, p. 15
with ancient philosophy, with the development of astronomical ideas, with elliptical functions, with curves of the $n$th order, with laws of algebraic operations etc., we attend to all these matters. If our judgment is of the form All A’s are B’s, our attention is given to this universal state of affairs, we are concerned with allness, and not with this or that single matter (...). The a certain, or the any, the all and the each, the and, the or, the not, the if and the then etc., are not things we can point to in an object of basic sensuous intuition, that can be ‘had’ sensationally or externally represented or painted.23

In attention, we are not solely preoccupied with the individual, with that which can be grasped for a specific function or under a specific angle. Attention embraces a whole range of objects whether physical or theoretical.

Attention triggers a whole understanding of the intentional movement. It is the turning of the gaze toward the specific, but also the going beyond and deeper in the horizon of givenness. In the midst of a forest, for instance, we stand within a wide range of trees. They seem all the same, but the minute we turn our attention to one of them as an oak tree, and attend to it as a specific, the forest becomes the background to a specific givenness. There is the articulation and constitution of the thing that happen at this point. Attention opens and deepens our understanding of the world.

Attention (…) is the index not only of the “I think” but also the “I can” of the ego. I can freely displace my attentive glance; I can bring into focus an object of which I was heretofore conscious only in the background mode of inattention (...). Attention, therefore, expresses the mode of life of the ego, its continuing thrust to go beyond the momentary and partial givenness of the object, to prolong its grasp of the object through new perspectives and to widen its understanding through investigation of each successive horizon.24

In this discussion of attention we can already apperceive the discussion of meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment.

23 LI, I, p. 274
In attention, we attend to things in themselves, not to objects in consciousness. The directedness of consciousness toward its objects is an intentional act in which objects are meant, whether they exist in reality or not. The movement of consciousness can also be turned toward non-existent objects. The god Jupiter and Boston and Sarh are intentional objects. While the last two are cities that can be visited, the god Jupiter exists as purely projected reality. Intentionality is independent from assertion of existence, and the intentional object exists only qua intended. The phenomenologist is preoccupied with the “what” of the object. In this, Husserl’s preoccupation resembles that of Plato’s search for essences or Heraclitus preoccupation with the Logos that speaks through and in the flux. The “what” of the object is the invariant structure, which makes the object what it is. “What is”, rather than punctual interest, determines the givenness of objects. This will become important in our critique of psychologism and in the discussion about the intersubjective space. In fact, a meaningful discussion is a pointing at something that can be commonly perceived. How does one perceive something common, if meaning is circumscribed by individual interests and functions that can be as many as there are protagonists in an intersubjective space?

The phenomenological movement, which is a search for meaning, truth and ground for genuine communication, starts when the functionalist production of the natural world is put out of action, and the ego turns toward the meaning that underlies such production. Husserl concerns himself with the constitution of meaning as such. Such constitution has two constitutive components: the noetic and the noematic. It is thus important to understand the relation between the noetic and the noematic, and how the
thing-in-itself constitutes itself in such relation. In the *Logical Investigations*, for example, Husserl concerns himself with the “essential structures of mental life,” “with the life of consciousness as source of all meaning.” The main preoccupation of the early Husserl was with an investigation into the “structures of consciousness.” Phenomenology as a rigorous science investigates into questions of objectivity. It investigates into questions of the constitution of objectivity as such. The inquiry thus does not just hit the objective world. Even the ego and its modes of knowing become objects of investigation. This constitutes a fundamental difference between Husserl and Descartes. We will see this in our next second chapter.

In the investigation of the ego, we come to the realization that the ego is a unity of body and mind. The intending of the world stand thus within a tension between the given and the not yet given, between presence and absence. This raises the question of the ambiguity the ego. The ego is both part of the world and “center of disclosure”. It is the “center of disclosure to whom the world and everything in it manifest themselves. It is the agent of truth, the one responsible for judgments and verifications, the perceptual and cognitive ‘owner’ of the world.” It is part of the world and transcendent to the world. The empirical ego is a body ego, thus a body-object too. The ego is thus immanent and transcendental, empirical. In the treatment of the return to things themselves, we come to the question of the relation of consciousness to its objects, to the question of the manner in which interiority relates to and knows exteriority.

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26 Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 112
1.2. The Reductionist views of Natural Scientism and Psychologism’s μεταβάσις εις ἄλλο γένος

The relation of the object to interiority is defined by its being contained in consciousness. The known object is located in the mind of the knower. This is the position held by the psychologist. Husserl thinks that the psychologist fails to understand or clarify “the logical unity of the ‘content of thought’.” For Husserl, indeed, “thought contents [like the Pythagorean theorem] possess an ideality that allow them to be instantiated in different thought processes of the same individual (…) or in diverse individuals’ thought at different times.”27 The psychologist fails to see that the object meant in thought is not a trace in the mind. For Husserl, being conscious is not a matter of grasping some traces in the mind. It is not a matter of being aware of our state of mind. It is rather a matter of intuiting directly the object, because “things do appear to us, things truly are disclosed, and we on our part, do display both to ourselves and to others, the way things are (…). By discussing intentionality, phenomenology helps us reclaim a public sense of thinking, reasoning, and perception. It helps us reassume our human condition as agents of truth.”28

The intended object is not intramental and consciousness intends the object in a movement of double transcendence. As Zahavi puts it, if the “object were really intramental, if it were contained in consciousness and part of the stream of consciousness,

27 *LI*, I, xxxi
it would have to share the nonperspectival givenness of the act, but this is not the case."\textsuperscript{29}

The authenticity and truthfulness of thinking consists therefore in letting things appear themselves. There is a self-presentification of the thing-in-itself to consciousness. The categorial confusion of psychologism starts off at this point, with the question of making contact with the thing-in-itself, in the form of the distinction between the “real” and the “reell”. The “reell” as object in consciousness is not necessarily the “real” as phenomenological object. The object requires consciousness in order to be but it cannot be reduced to consciousness. “Reality is radically transcendent to subjectivity [consciousness] and any attempt to assimilate one into the other is a \textalpha\textbeta\textsigma\epsilon\tau\textomicron\beta\alpha\beta\alpha\sigma\zeta \epsilon\tau\textomicron\alpha\epsilon \alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha \gamma\nu\omicron\omicron. Real being is irreducible to consciousness, \textit{Sein} is in principle \textit{Bewusstsein}. Transcendence, therefore, is the other qualification of the relationship between reality and consciousness.”\textsuperscript{30} Reality and its sense are not contained in the mind. At this point, it is necessary for us to make a difference between acts of meaning and ideal meaning units, between the expressions of meaning and meaning itself, between noesis and noema. We will see this in our section on expression where we will discuss “shifting of acts of meaning” and “ideal units of meaning.”\textsuperscript{31}

For Husserl, psychologism is a sort of naturalization of reason. Consciousness is considered as being a worldly thing. Psychologism’s categorial mistake or \textalpha\textbeta\beta\alpha\zeta\epsilon\zeta \epsilon\tau\textomicron\alpha\epsilon \alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha \gamma\nu\omicron\omicron\omicron resides in that it transforms ideal laws into real laws. As pointed out by Cobb-Stevens, the categorial mistake consists in the decision to reduce the “enigma of

\textsuperscript{29} Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl’s Phenomenology} (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003) 16
\textsuperscript{30} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution}, p. 196
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{LI}, I, p. 216
knowledge” to problems of relationship between intramental processes to extramental objects, while interpreting the intramental and the extramental as having the same ontological status.\textsuperscript{32} For Husserl, a strong psychologism would mean that all propositions are mind-dependent, and that they are contained in the mind. We would thus end up in a strong relativism and reductionism. If logical propositions are contained in the mind, we lose the apodictic and a priori character of logic. Husserl thus had to establish a difference between logical laws and validation laws which are psychological laws. Validation laws are but “peculiar trains of thought.” And we cannot deduce ideal laws from real ones; to put it in Husserl’s own terms, we cannot deduce “truth from generic human nature, the ideal from the real, or, more precisely, the necessity of the laws from the contingency of the facts.”\textsuperscript{33} Thus, “central to Husserl’s attack on psychologism as a form of skeptical relativism is his assumption that truths-as-such exist.”\textsuperscript{34} Truth is not reducible to particular judgments or train of thought.

The thought that logical laws are tied up to inner evidence, understood as inner experience of truth, relegates logical laws to their being mere psychological laws. The understatement of this belief is that “all truth lies in our judgments.”\textsuperscript{35} Logical laws cannot be thought of in terms of probability, approximation, induction, or deduction. The \textit{a priori} and absolute character of logical laws save them from probabilism and relativism. Logical laws have a universal character. They are not bound to the specific or

\textsuperscript{32} Richard Cobb-Stevens, and al. \textit{La Phénoménologie aux confins}, p. 16
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{LI}, I, p. 83
\textsuperscript{34} Martin Kusch, “The Criticism of Husserl’s Arguments against Psychologism in German Philosophy 1901-1920”, in \textit{Mind, Meaning and Mathematics}, Leila Haaparanta, ed. (Dordrecht: Springer, 1994) 65
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{LI}, I, \textit{Prologomena}, p. 115
the probable. For Husserl, “every judgment is bound by the pure laws of logic without regard to time and circumstances or to individual species.” The mood BARBARA in syllogism, for instance, deals only with the general that can be applied to specific multiple cases. The logical law is not a matter of subjective decision or specific judgments. I do not decide that $3 > 2$ or the existence of contradictories is not a matter of circumstance or individual acts. The law of contradiction is what it is whether I think it or not. Another example of this is the fact that “the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point” is not something that can be tied up to specific uttering or decision. It is so for whoever utters it. It is not the result of my inner experience. The expression can be altered but what is uttered transcends the moments of its utterance.

The ideal laws of logic impose themselves on individual thinking. The intuition into the impossibility of the coexistence of contradictories transcends the individual consciousness of it. Husserl assert in the Prologomena, that

syllogistic formulae do not have the empirical content men attribute to them: their true sense is plainest when we state them in the equivalent form of ideal incompatibilities, e.g. It is universally the case that two propositions having the form ‘all M’s are X’ and ‘No P is M’ are not true unless a proposition having the form ‘Some X are not P’ is also true. And so in every case. Nothing is here said about a consciousness of the acts and the circumstances of its judgment.

Logical laws are neither psychological nor empirical. “Universal objects constitute themselves in universal intuitions.” To be meant does not thus mean to have mental reality. Logical laws are not a matter of individual perception or judgment. There is a

36 LI, I, p. 93
37 LI, I, p. 74
38 LI, II, p. 292
39 LI, I, p. 255
difference between meaning and acts of meaning, between ideal unity of truth and the multiplicity of possible acts of truth. Meaning is not tied up to its being expressed in acts of meaning. Brentano talks of pure immanence in the sense of objects being contained in consciousness. For him, objects exist only in consciousness. Judgments are thus in his eyes presentations of objects contained in consciousness. For Husserl, objects are “mind-transcendent.”

Judgments are essentially different from presentations. There is for him a clear difference between the “presenting act and the presented content of an intention.”

We should not thus confuse judgment \textit{qua} content with specific acts of judging. While the first has to do with ideal meaning, meaning-units, the latter deals with relative specific meanings that can be causally determined by the former.

Brentano is the first who initiated the phenomenological movement by making a distinction between act and content. He asserted the fact that mental acts are directed toward objects in the world rather than toward mental representations. For Brentano, the object would be nothing to consciousness if consciousness did not set it before itself as an object. Thus, consciousness has to permit to object to become object of intentional acts. An intentional act would gain objective reference only by incorporating experienced acts of presentation in themselves, “through which an object is presented” to them. Brentano thinks that truth is a matter of presentation. Intentionality in Brentano’s terms is thus tied up to judgments or to the immanent having of objects. In this sense, internal perception constitutes the givenness of the object itself. As asserted by Mohanty, Brentano holds that

\footnotesize

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{LI}, I, p. Iviii-lix
  \item \textit{LI}, I, p. Iix
  \item \textit{LI}, II, p. 129
\end{itemize}

\normalsize
“in order to be able to judge that $S$ is $P$, i.e., to accept $SP$, it is necessary that $SP$ be presented. Judging that $S$ is $P$, then, consists first in presenting $SP$, and then in accepting it.”

Husserl points out that the phenomenological experience cannot be grounded in the “psychological experience (Erfahrung), nor in internal perception in the ordinary sense of the word, but only in ideational phenomenological inspection of essence.”

We need thus to leave the ground of internal experience in order to grasp things in themselves. Husserl points out to the fact that the subjective and private character of presentations does not allow them to become universal grounds for genuine knowledge. Therefore, truth cannot be reduced to acts of presentation.

The strong assertion here is that truth is truth and that it is not tied up to specific acts. Truth is not dependent upon my decision of its being the case or not. That the three angles of an equilateral triangle equate $180^\circ$ or that $2 + 2 = 4$ is something that stands as such independent from specific acts of counting. We are not stating here that two specific things equal four of them.

Psychologism, Husserl argues, fails to make the distinction between the meaning of the judgment and the act of judging. My act of affirming the judgment that $2 + 2 = 4$ is causally determined but it would be absurd to say that the truth of this judgment is causally determined. Otherwise we should be forced to admit that truth arise in the act of its being thought or that Pythagoras’ theorem became valid only at the moment when it was uttered by Pythagoras.

The validity of pure logic is not dependent upon specific psychological acts. Its objects are ideal objects. They do not derive their truth from the factual. They do not need the seal of the empirical in order to be. They are not dependent upon conventions of language.

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44 *LI*, II, p. 136
45 Leszek Kolakowski, *Husserl and the Search for Certitude* (South Bend: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001) 19
either. Their object is in itself what it is, whether it is thought of or not. It is only by being such that logical laws are able to be foundational for the legitimacy of specific acts. The “what” of the object in itself is founded in an ideal truth.

Ideal laws are not mental products. They are not the result of a mental association or judgments on some state of affairs. They have no empirico-inductive or empirico-deductive origin. While empirical laws carry their psychological loads and their limitations in time and space that does not allow them to become universal laws applicable under all skies and times, the ideal unity of truth transcends particular and individual circumstances. Psychologism falls into relativism in its belief in a multiplicity of truths because it lost sight of ideal truth. Truth is truth. The problem with psychologism consists thus first in that the psychologists

“ignore the fundamental difference between the norms of pure logic and the technical rules of a specifically human art of thought. These are totally different in character in their content, origin and function. The laws of logic, seen in their original intent, concern only what is ideal, while those methodological propositions concern only what is real. If the former spring from immediately evident axioms, the latter spring from empirical facts, belonging mainly to psychology. If the formulation of the former promotes our purely theoretical interests, and gives only subsidiary practical help, the latter, on the other hand, have an immediate practical aim, and they only give indirect help to our theoretical interests, in so far as they aim at the methodical progress of scientific knowledge.”

For Brentano, the object would be nothing if consciousness does not set it before itself as object, if it does not permit it to be object of feeling, desire, and thinking. An intentional act would then gain objective reference only if it is incorporated in acts of presentation. Husserl thinks however that the ideal object is the unifying thread of acts of

46 *LI, I, Prologomena*, p. 103
presentation. This emphasis on the fact that “all empirical procedure is dominated by an ideal norm, and the emphasis upon ideal elements and laws in the domain of empirical thought, remain central motives in [Husserl’s] thought until the end.” The identity of the object stands behind acts of presentation. The object is the same in various act qualities – it is the object of thought, desire, willing, wish, etc. Meaning is something we discover. It is not something of our making. It is not in experience but rather the content of experience. It is tied up to individual acts of utterance. The ideal mathematical law \((x + y)^2 = x^2 + 2xy + y^2\), for instance, can be applied to a variety of empirical situations without being reduced to any of them.

The “\(x\)” is the something whatsoever. It is not tied up to anyone’s psychological state. It is mind transcendent. Meaning is not however ideal in the sense of being normative. The objects of mathematic are understood as the “‘invariants’ or ‘identities’ in our experience.” If the object of mathematic is left to chance or specific conditioning, we would not have the science of mathematics as such.

In mathematics we suppose that different mathematicians are reasoning about the same number, or the same set, or the same function at different times and in different places, and if it were not the same object we were reasoning about in all these different circumstances, it would be very difficult to see how the science of mathematics would be possible at all. Mathematics would be utterly fragmented. No two statements of a theorem (or of theorems) could be about the same object.\(^{48}\)

The theory of cardinal numbers has nothing to do with counting or collecting. It deals only with numbers. This discussion in the domain of mathematics is paradigmatic in the

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\(^{47}\) Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy*, p. 169

\(^{48}\) Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, p. 447
domain of human discussion as such. How can it be possible to discuss any issue at all if
the discussion does not set itself within the framework of a common understanding and
reference? The possibility of discussion itself is set upon an acknowledged truth that is
transcendent to particular acts that express it.

The relativity of the empirical and the sensuous makes it difficult for them to open
up an objective ground that can constitute the ground for common understanding as such.
A common saying in French states that one should not discuss somebody else’s tastes –
“Les gout et les couleurs ne se disputent pas,” “degustibus coloribusque non disputantur.”
One does not question somebody else’s liking of specific colors and tastes. This comes
exactly from the fact that the material is so provincial in its scope that it is difficult to
prevent it from closing itself upon its specificity. It cannot constitute the universal
common reference. Ideal objects, on the other hand, are omnitemporal and metempirical.
They are not “bound idealities, but rather, they are ‘free idealities.’”49 The objects of
mathematics are not empirical or sensuous; they constitute the condition of the givenness
of objects and of our knowledge as such. They provide a “foundation for empirical
knowledge”50. The knowledge of the individual goes hand in hand with that of the
universal a priori which constitutes the condition of its givenness. The critic of
psychologism wants thus to save knowledge from relativism. Logical truth is not mental
process or “subjective-psychic proving.”51

49 Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith (ed.), The Cambridge Companion to Husserl, p. 448
50 Jan Patočka, An Introduction to Husserl’s Phenomenology (Chicago/La Salle: Open Court, 1996.
Translated by Erazim Kohák. Edited with an Introduction by James Dodd) 79
51 FTL, 151
For the psychologist, talk of truth or of thinking that does not have anything to do with psychology is pointless. For the psychologist, presentation, judgment, and propositions are mental acts. Logical proofs are proofs of judgment, and truth is truth of judgment. Psychologism falls into relativism when it treats logical laws as empirical laws, when it tries to deduce the a priori from the matter of fact, truth from generic human nature. Relativism is built upon facts, but facts are contingent. They cannot yield universality. Logical laws are apodictic and universal. They are foundational for assertion and judgment about facts. Husserl’s critique of Sigwart, for instance, is built upon such understanding of logic. Sigwart thinks that logical laws have psychological foundation, and that there is no truth unless an intelligent mind asserts it. Thus truth is relative to an individual mind. I judge this or that object to be Red and so is the case. Redness seems to appear and disappear with the object. According to Sigwart, the universality of the object is purely something inward. Husserl thinks however that Redness is “an ideal unity, in regard to which it is absurd to speak of coming into being or passing away.” 52 The laws of logic are timeless and they constitute ideal norms for judgment. They are “ideal norms for all judgments, regardless of time and circumstance.” 53

For Husserl, if we embrace psychologism’s relativism, we end up destroying the notion of truth and the possibility of knowledge as such. In fact, “if truth were essentially related to thinking intelligences, their mental functions and modes of change, it would

52 LI, I, p. 86
53 Marvin Farber, The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy, p. 126
arise and perish with them, with the species at least, if not with the individual.\textsuperscript{54} The recognition of the ideal truth is the condition for the possibility of knowledge and an objective for discussing issues. The content Red as such is what determines our common understanding and the possibility of assertion and communicating something to someone. We mean the one identical Red that can be intuited as such by us and others. One of the forms of psychologism’s relativism is anthropological relativism; the subjectivity of truth is attributed to the species. Truth thus depends on the specific constitution of groups. Truth is thus relative to the configuration of specific groups.

Erdmann, as one of the representatives of anthropological relativism, holds that there are different logical laws that are tied up to the specificity of groups. There are thus as many truths as there are groups of people or aliens. Logical laws and ideal meaning would thus be different according to the different contexts of their enunciation. There would be thus logical laws for Chadians, Americans, Europeans, or even Martians. The problem with Erdmann is the confusion between logical laws as such and their historical instantiations. Judging and meaning become equated with acts of judgment and acts of meaning. The anthropological relativist does not conceive of an objective meaning that would constitute the essence of meaning and truth as such. He reduces truth to assertions and considerations of individual members of specific groups. For the anthropological relativist, logical principles have only hypothetical necessity, because a change in our constitution would mean change in meaning and ideality as such. Social or racial context thus sets rules that can be called logical laws.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{LI}, I, p. 87
In a critique to Erdmann, Husserl reasserts the ideality of meaning and the universality of reference. His position can be summarized as follows, “for the rest I see no reason why we should stop at the boundaries of imaginary racial differences. Why not recognize real racial differences, differences between sanity and insanity, and all individual differences, as having equal right?” and Husserl continues, the fact that “Erdmann has sought to establish, that other beings might have quite different logical principles, cannot be accepted. An absurd possibility is an impossibility.” The ideality and unity of meaning cannot be jeopardized with hypothetical imagining of beings whose modes of functioning would be different from humans. Truth is truth, whether intuited by aliens or humans. For Husserl, “what is true is absolutely, intrinsically true: truth is one and the same, whether men or non-men, angels or gods apprehend and judge it. Logical laws speak of truth in this ideal unity, set over against the real multiplicity of races, individuals and experiences, and it is of this ideal unity that we all speak when we are not confused by relativism.” Truth is trans-temporal and trans-spatial. The absolutisation of a relative truth is correlative to giving up the possibility of a public space. How can we indeed face up to a truth that is commonly shared if such truth is fragmented into absolute individual truths? The truth of ideal objects is not tied up to their belonging to a specific context.

In the field of perception, we see that perception cannot embrace the totality of the world at one glance, yet we know the world in-itself. Inner evidence comes as a manifestation of an ideal truth. The intended object is object in itself as intended. It is not

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55 *LI*, I, p. 78
56 *LI*, I, p. 79
immanent, in the sense of being contained in consciousness. Consciousness is not a bag filled with the phantasy, the images, of the real. The question of the truth around which all human beings can meaningfully relate cannot be relegated to a private domain where individuals make truth be what it is. Objective truth is the only thing that matters for meaningful relations. Relativism closes human beings on themselves and does not allow them to open to a space inhabited by others, as a meaningful space. Laws of contradiction for instance have their roots in truth as such and it would be absurd to think of such truth as being dependent upon individual percepts. We see in fact that

laws such as the law of contradiction have their roots in the mere meaning of truth, that from these it follows that talk of a subjective truth, that is one thing for one man and the opposite for another, must count as the purest nonsense. He will not bow to the ordinary objection that in setting up his theory he is making a claim to be convincing to others, a claim presupposing that very objectivity of truth which his thesis denies.  

Conviction or discussion requires an objectivity to which they can point. Everybody in the context of a discussion should be able to perceive such ideal truth.

Logical laws cannot be reduced to a technology or art of thinking well, to a Kunstlehre. They are not traces in the mind. Through its confusion of logical laws with prescriptions from the mind, psychologism “ended up in skepticism and relativism” and it “made science impossible and (...) it devastated the entire intellectual legacy of mankind.”

That there is “a fundamental difference between the norms of pure logic and the technical rules of a specifically human art of thought…” remains very much persistent in Husserl’s thinking until the end. We need in fact to realize that “logic as a

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\text{\textsuperscript{58} Leszek Kolakowski, Husserl and the Search for Certitude, p. 17}
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\text{\textsuperscript{59} LI, I, p. 103}
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normative-practical discipline, i.e. logic as a set of norms for correct reasoning, must be based upon logic as a theoretical, descriptive, science." Logic as such is a theoretical, non-normative, science. As summarized by Kolakowski, logical laws cannot be approximate or more or less probable; they do not need empirical confirmation. We know them a priori, thanks to a peculiar sort of insight that allows us to grasp their necessity in the very moment of understanding them. This certitude is not a subjective feeling (...), it radiates from the very meaning of judgments, it is an apodictic certitude inhabiting this meaning. Husserl took up the Cartesian distinction between apodictic ‘evidence’ and the psychological sensation of evidence. His purpose is to combat the Protagorean principle stating that man is the measure of all things.61

An extreme empiricism and naturalism in general, is absurd. It destroys the possibility of knowledge as such. It “destroys its own possibility as a scientifically proven theory.”62 How do you validate your knowledge without acknowledging principles of validation? In its relativisation of reason, empiricism does not raise the question of the theoretical laws upon which the practical ones rest. Every normative science requires a theoretical foundation. This is the forgotten truth of empiricism and naturalism. We need to raise the question of the foundation of sciences, the laws which possess absolute validity and which are independent from circumstances.

By remaining at the level of causal relations between facts of consciousness, psychologism threatens the very possibility of knowledge as such. Laws that derive from such relations cannot constitute an a priori and universal ground for knowledge. Psychology “cannot (...) yield the apodeictically evident, and so metempirical and

61 Leszek Kolakowski, Husserl and the Search for Certitude, p. 21
62 LI, I, p. 59
absolute exact laws which form the core of all logic.” Psychology proceeds from induction, while logical laws have apodeictic validity. The threat we face with psychologism is not just a threat to epistemology. It is also a threat to reason and objectivity as such. It is a menace against truth as such. The phenomenological attempt to restore truth and to assert essence is a way of restoring the domain of truth as such. It is an attempt to open a space of a possible intersubjective discussion based on the notion of objective truth. By detaching reason from subjective reason and restoring the sense of meaning and truth as that which any discourse points at, phenomenology sends us back to the question of human relations. What do humans speak about? How do they speak about it? What condition their discourses about reality? Ultimately then what is the reality which is spoken about?

The empiricist naturalism equates science with real actuality. The dogmatic assertion of empirical existence, under which we can bring nominalization, which is a part of this understanding of reality, equates the object with its physical occupation of space. For such understanding of reality, objects are objects when they can be seen and named. Only the individual, the material, and the perceptual object exist. It thus failed to see that the return to things themselves is not just a return to experience. “The essential fault in empiricistic argumentation consists of identifying or confusing the fundamental demand for a return to the ‘things themselves’ with the demand for legitimation of all cognition by experience.” Empiricism thus forgets to inquire into the universal foundation of scientific propositions. While the matter of fact only yields singularity, the

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63 *LI*, I, p. 48
64 *Ideas I*, p. 35
laws of logic open up a universal foundation. Empiricist’s problem consists thus in its forgetfulness of the fact that “scientific knowledge is as such knowledge ‘with grounds’, and to know the ground of something is to have insight into its necessity.” Every this-here is related to a substrate-essence, which is at its core. Phenomenology wants to get at that which stands at the core of the object. The object as it is given in itself is the concern of the phenomenologist. This being-in-itself is not to be reduced to the being in consciousness or being physically-there, even if the two always go together. Phenomenology is a second act because it reflects on straightforward givenness. It wants to get at the necessity of that which is straightforwardly given.

Correctness of thought was conceived in psychologism in terms of its conformity to laws of thought or human structural functions. Husserl however thinks that laws of thought cannot be tied up to mere probabilities, left to particular nature or trains of thoughts. The ground of logic is independent from human nature. The validity of logical laws is absolute and universal. They are such for all rational beings, beyond specificities, functions or particular statements. That A is not “non-A” is not something of an individual making. We grasp it without the medium of actualization or factualness. In this, we see the difference between assertoric inner evidence and apodeictic inner evidence. In the latter we have laws and principles themselves in their absolute givenness. We have at this point for instance the “not-both-being the case for A and non-A”, which is the law of incompatibility or non-contradiction as such. In the former, we have a psychologistic affirmation of the law. We speak for instance of an Apple not being

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65 Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy*, p. 140
a mango for instance. The assertoric needs the apodeictic and not the reverse. We need laws of contradiction in order to be able to assert the being the case of different things as such.

The rational relativization or the subjectifying of truth does not allow objects to exist in themselves.

The relativity of truth entails the relativity of cosmic experience. For the world is merely the unified objective totality corresponding to, and inseparable from, the ideal system of all factual truth. One cannot subjectivize truth and allow its object (which only exists as long as truth subsists) to count as absolutely existent, or as existent ‘in itself’. There would therefore be no world ‘in itself, but only a world for us, or for any other chance species of being.66

Objective truth is that which allows common reference and the possibility of shared knowledge. If the object is reduced to its being known, if the subjective prevails over the objective, then we are left with no possibility of having an object as such. The preoccupation with founding science carries thus the preoccupation with a building up of an intersubjective space, as a space of common reference and prevalence of truth. The preoccupation turns thus into a preoccupation with the constitution of a public sphere, as a sphere where objectivity and truth rather than individual or group conceptions fashion the ideal in a totalizing way. We are here preoccupied with the constitution of the ideal conditions for any discourse whatsoever. This means finding the “homogeneous unity of explanatory principles”67 that shed light on our day to day dealings and practical life.

The perception into the objectivity of logic allows us see the possibility of “thinking beyond” the natural world. We can even conceive of impossible objects. We

66 LI, I, p. 81
67 LI, I, Cf. pp. 147-148
can intend fictional objects, because intentionality is not limited to the domain of perception. It is

only when we make a μεταβάσις εις ἄλλο γένος, and mix up the realm of psychological laws of thought with those of pure logic, and, further, misinterpret the latter psychologically, will there be a shadow of justification for asserting our incapacity to imagine other modes of thinking, and for denying to the words that seem to describe these any achievable sense. Quite possibly we can form ‘no real ideal’ of such modes of thinking, quite possibly this is unachievable for us, but such unachievability in no case amounts to impossibility in the sense of what is senseless or absurd.68

Natural science and experimental psychology lead to a reification and relativisation of consciousness. This is an absurdity according to Husserl. Phenomenological intuition grasps being as essence, not being as mere empirical or functional thing. It does not content itself with the matter of fact.

### 1.3. Nomological Sciences and Logic as Theoretical Science

As stated above, every normative science rests upon a theoretical science which assures its unity. Logic, as the science of essences, is the science of sciences. Its vocation is “the critical justification of reason, and as such, a vocation to be the science of all sciences (…). As radical and universal a priori theory of science, logic is not to be understood merely as an axiomatic or formalistic deductive system, formed by abstracting general traits from existing or past sciences.”69 As a theoretical science, logic tells us what is and not what “shall be” or “should be” under certain circumstances. Normative sciences

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68 *LI*, I, p. 95
69 *ACPAS*, p. xix
attribute value-judgments to things according to a general valuation, a certain ideal to which they must correspond. These attributions themselves depend on “certain condition to be fulfilled, whose non-fulfillment entails the corresponding negative predicate.”\textsuperscript{70} The normative carries thus the notion of a telos to which things must correspond, or aim. “A good A should be a B,” B constitutes itself as the telos toward which A must aim.

The presupposition and foundation of the normative happens thus to be a theoretical discipline. “Every technology includes in itself an entire normative discipline, which is not itself a practical discipline.”\textsuperscript{71} With the theoretical, we have a priori, objective statement of the ideal. “Only an A which is B has the property B.” Logic is an a priori science, a sort of \textit{mathesis universalis}, a theory of objects in the themselves. J.S. Mill and Lipps hold that logic finds its theoretical basis in psychology. For Husserl, if logic becomes a science among others its theoretical foundations would be destroyed, and we end up with no possibility of science as such. Logic cannot derive its lawfulness from psychology which is a natural science. The laws of natural sciences, which are derived from induction, cannot constitute the theoretical a priori condition for science. Psychology deals with the approximate, the probable, and empirical generalities. It cannot yield apodictic, a priori, laws. Its laws are contingent to specific time and space. The laws of empirical sciences are “fictions \textit{cum fundamento in re}”\textsuperscript{72} – The laws of natural sciences are laws that find their foundation in physical things.

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{LI}, I, p. 34  
\textsuperscript{71} \textit{LI}, I, p. 37  
\textsuperscript{72} Marvin Farber, \textit{The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy}, p. 114
Natural sciences are thus in need of a strict theoretical foundations that have their unifying principles in themselves. The autonomy of theoretical sciences stands in contrast to the heteronomy of normative and practical sciences. What gives logic its a priori and universal character is its independence from the factual. Logic is the science of ideal meanings. The scientist’s ideal meanings are not invented by him. He discovers them and uses them in his practice. The “objective validity of thought and thought-connections”\(^{73}\), which constitute the direction and horizon of his practice are grounded in theoretical laws, the logical laws. The whole complex of meaning itself falls under the unity of meaning as such. It is thus absurd to talk about the laws of logic as variable laws. The ideality of meaning, the theoretical character of logic, is what allows it to be related to the different matter of fact sciences. The ideality of meaning is not an ideality in the normative sense. We need thus to establish a clear distinction between normative laws and theoretical, ideal laws.

Truth in science is not a matter of practical connections that achieve their goal or function. The inner evidence, as the conviction we acquire in our scientific achievements is revelatory of “our consciousness of an ideal law.”\(^{74}\) The investigation in the foundations of knowledge must thus detach itself from empirical and practical presuppositions. It is the freedom from such presuppositions that allows us to discover the foundation of science in ideal meaning-units as such. As stated by Stevens, “whereas the positive sciences may legitimately limit themselves to a pragmatic notion of truth, philosophy must treat every question in function of truth in itself, in function of the

\(^{73}\) LI, I, p. 226
\(^{74}\) LI, I, p. 105
ideality of truth.” The matter of fact or the specific fields of science cannot constitute the ultimate validation of science. We reach here the point where the question of validation of science arises. If science cannot find its validation in the empirical or in essentially normative or practical domains, where can it find such validation? This is a question that addresses the possibility of science or of theory as such.

All sciences fall under laws and forms that constitute the ground of their certitude and universality. There are forms of thoughts or thought combinations under which they must fall. The forms under which the different sciences fall belong to specific fields of knowledge. In order for such forms to become real grounds for science, they must be independent from specific fields of knowledge. Forms or methods in science are thus steps toward ultimate validation, the validation of all validations. In other words, the validation of all validations can be only theoretical. We are able to put the stamp of science on different endeavors because there is an ideal we recognize or intuit in them. There are “a priori laws governing combinations of meanings.” To all non-independent meanings, a law of essence applies that regulates the relation of meanings: the meaning’s need of completion by more meaning.

There must be a sort of context; a connective forms, which are themselves meanings of a non-dependent sort. “There are obviously a priori laws of essence governing all meaning-combinations.” “All combinations whatever are subjects to pure laws.” There is a pure law of essences from which meaning combination is made

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76 *L*, I, p. 21
77 *L*, II, p. 62
possible. This belongs to an ideal, objective, “pure essence of the meaning realm.” The transgression of this realm of meaning brings about non-sense. Expressions like “round square” for instance are meaningful, even though they cannot have objective reference in the empirical. Thus, the expression has a unity of meaning even though it is absurd. Expressions like “a man or” cannot have a unified meaning. In our first case, “round square,” meaning exist but the objective reference, the object pertaining to such expression, cannot exist. The laws governing this sort of meaning-combinations have to be found in part in “the grammatical rules governing the parts of speech.”78 In the second case however, it is not the lack of objective reference that raises problem. The expression itself does not hold together.

We are able to recognize the validity or not of scientific methods because there is an ideal to which they must correspond or at least exemplify. Logic as the normative science of all sciences is the norm of all norms, the form of all scientific formations, without being reduced to any of them. Logic is however not a technology, a Kunstlehre. It is a purely foundational and purely theoretical science. It points to necessary theoretical conditions to which all sciences must correspond. Logic is independent from contingency and empirical or classes of singulars. Specific and practical sciences draw their lawfulness from logic and not the opposite.

The laws of pure logic are truths rooted in the concept of truth, and in concepts essentially related to this concept. They state, in relation 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,

78 LI, II, p. 68
psychological induction being limited by experience. The other conditions, however, have the character of ideal laws, and hold generally for every possible consciousness.⁷⁹

Even if empirical science draws its lawfulness from logic, it also carries with it some subjective traces. It uses devices and methods that are not totally objective. For these subjective sides of science to be constituted in science, they need a theoretical ground. On its “theoretical side” science must “conform to the laws of logic, which are of an entirely ideal character.”⁸⁰ They must conform to ideal meaning-units.

Logical laws, unlike laws of empirical sciences, are ideal, a priori, laws that carry intuitive certainty. The laws of empirical sciences are general real laws. The task of logic, as Husserl laid it out in the first volume of the *Logical Investigations*, is to fixe “the pure categories of meaning, the pure categories of objects and their law govern combinations.”⁸¹ The task of science is thus to search for the “objective validity of formal structures” that arise from categories. At this level, the task of logic is to understand meanings from their categorial formal structure and being or non-being of the state of affairs with which they deal. The task of logic is to give the “idea of a science of the conditions of the possibility of theory in general. We see at once, however, that this science points beyond itself to a completing science, which deals a priori with the essential sorts (forms) of theories and the relevant laws of relations.”⁸² Logic at this point is more normative then theoretical. It allows us to go from the perceptual to its

⁷⁹ *LI*, I, p. 119
⁸⁰ *LI*, I, p. 105
⁸¹ *LI*, I, p. 152
⁸² *LI*, I, p. 155
phenomenological givenness. Such normativity is not however the defining characteristic of what logic is in itself.

Husserl establishes thus a difference between logic as practical discipline and “pure logic as the theoretical system of purely formal and categorial truth.” The absolute sphere of givenness is that which is aimed at by sciences. Such absolute sphere of givenness is not however given in the empirical scientific endeavor itself. We need to raise the question of absolute givenness in the essence of things themselves. In fact, our lack of clarity with regard to the sense or essence of knowledge requires a science of knowledge, a science that dedicates itself solely to getting clear on the essence of knowledge. It will not explain knowledge as a psychological act; it will not investigate the natural conditions under which acts of knowledge come and go, or the natural laws by which they originate and change. To investigate such things is the task that a positive science sets for itself (...). Rather, the critique of knowledge seeks to clarify, to bring to light, the essence of knowledge and the legitimacy of its claim to validity, a claim that belongs to its essence.

While empirical sciences deal with perspectival givenness, phenomenology wants to get at that which constitutes the unity of the perspectives and the unity of science as such. Such unity is that which corrects scientific errors and assures scientific coherence. The ground of this unity is pure logic as science of all sciences.

While people like Frege conceive of logic as being essentially normative and containing the way we ought to think, Husserl asserts the independence and autonomy of logic. “The most fundamental concept of logic for Frege is the concept of truth-value. For Husserl it is the concept of meaning.” Logic is thus tied up to attributions in specific

83 Marvin Farber, The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy, p. 153
84 IP, p. 25
85 J. N. Mohanty, Husserl and Frege, p. 16
human acts for Frege. Thus, while both Frege and Husserl fight against psychologism, “Frege thought of logic as a normative science, whereas Husserl in his rather extreme anti-psychologism, suspects that the normative conception may indeed be a secrete ally of psychologism, and is certainly a poor defense against it. Husserl therefore thought of logic as a pure theoretical science, its normative role being derivative and founded on its theoretical principles.”

Logic is a theoretical science that states the ideality of meaning and truth as such. It is the measure of science as such. Logic has “to measure the empirically given sciences as to their agreement with their Idea, the degree to which they approach it, and where they offend against it.” Logic sets on sciences the obligation to correspond to their Idea. A normative or practical science cannot fulfill this role of obliging other sciences to correspond to the Idea of science. “A normative discipline never sets forth universal criteria, any more than a therapist states universal symptoms.”

There is an objectivity that determines the rules with which sciences evolve. The different fields of science are “objectively closed unity: we cannot arbitrarily delimit fields where and as we like. The realm of truth is objectively articulated into fields: researchers must orient themselves into these objective unities and must assemble themselves into sciences.” There is a lawfulness under which this gathering itself occurs. The content of knowledge falls under some categorial concepts that guarantee the unity of knowledge as such. With the question of the foundation of science in the theoretical, we raise the question of truth as such. While the laws of normative disciplines

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86 J. N. Mohanty, *Husserl and Frege*, p. 15
87 *LI*, I, p. 25
88 *LI*, I, p. 25
89 *LI*, I, p. 12
tell us what should be done according to specific circumstances, we are here at the level of the ground upon which anything whatsoever must stand if it holds a claim to universality. In logic, we speak of independent universal systems of coherence. The laws of pure logic are what allow us to pass from what is “trivially evident” to what is objectively clear.

As stated by Husserl, the laws of pure logic, as formal laws, are analytic laws; and “analytic laws are unconditionally universal propositions”; they are “free from explicit or implicit assertions of individual existence.” And Husserl continues: “In an analytic proposition it must be possible, without altering the proposition’s logical form, to replace all material which has content, with an empty formal Something, and to eliminate every assertion of existence by giving all one’s judgments the form of universal, unconditional laws.” The material content of analytic propositions can vary without altering the meaning of the analytic proposition itself. This only happen in the case of synthetic propositions and laws that include in themselves material concepts. Even if they can help in the specification of existence, analytic laws do not concern themselves with assertion of existence, which is the case for synthetic laws. Analytic propositions are proposition that permit a complete formalization. The analytic a priori is purely founded on formal categories. It is thus unaffected by material knowledge. Categorial form is the character of founded acts, which gives form to acts of straightforward intuition.

We see in this that logic is derived from the mode of presentation of the thing itself. This itself constitute the ground from which we can understand particular acts.

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90 LI, I, p. 19
91 LI, II, pp. 20-21
From this, we can see that validations carry the idea that science has forms to which it must correspond. There are forms and laws that determine what science is. Those laws and forms derive their authentification from the givenness of the thing in itself. Those forms and laws are independent from specific fields of knowledge. This independence is what makes their lawfulness and universality. As state by Husserl,

> Every science requires (...) a certain unity of validatory interconnection, a certain unity in the stepwise ascent of its validatory arguments, and this form of unity as itself a lofty teleological meaning in the attainment of the highest goal of knowledge for which all science strives: to advance as far as possible in the research into truth, i.e. not in the research into separate truths, but into the realm of truth or its natural provinces (...)

The task of the theory of science will therefore also be to deal with the sciences as systematic unities of this or that sort in other words, with the formal features that stamp them as sciences, with the features that determine their mutual boundaries and their inner articulation into fields, into relatively closed theories, with the features which fix their essentially different species or forms etc.92

The main point is that science has to aim at its telos which is the articulation of truth. The truth of sciences cannot be fragmented into specific practices or circumstances. It is a truth of the givenness of the thing in-itself. Should such truth become circumstantial and dependent upon individual practices, there would be no truth at all and no possibility of science as such.

Husserl’s “objections to any and every form of nominalism”93 can be understood in this context: truth is not a matter of individual utterance. Nominalism thinks that things should be regrouped under general headings, bundles, categories, through which they are known. Specific ordering and classification of things allow having objects as object of knowledge. Husserl does not think however that knowledge must be reduced to the sum

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92 LI, I, p. 24
93 LI, I, p. 260
of our empirical intuitions or acts of grouping. As stated by Levinas, “Husserl reproaches nominalism not only for losing itself in the blind play of association, where the world become a simple verbal sound, but for failing to recognize the consciousness sui generis that intends or reaches the ideal as such.”\textsuperscript{94} The constitution of groups is not, for Husserl, able to yield meaning in itself. It is only categorically formed intuition that constitute true knowledge. What the nominalist does not realize is that his grouping itself is subject to laws that transcend it. Only pure laws are able to regulate acts of combination. The regrouping cannot be arbitrary. We need to realize that “meanings are subject to a priori laws regulating their combination into new meanings (…). Since meanings cannot be combined to form new meanings without the aid of connective forms, which are themselves meanings of a non-independent sort, there are obviously a priori laws of essence governing all meaning-combinations.”\textsuperscript{95}

Particular truths have thus to be tuned with the notion of truth as such. The articulation of a specific truth derives it lawfulness from such attunement. A truth that stands outside of its ultimate ground is self-contradictory and self-destructive. The particularity of this situation resides in the fact that a particular truth is not the totality of truth. This will be important in our discussion of totalitarianism. The function of truth as such and its relation to particular truths is perverted when we absolutize particular truths. This is what gives birth to totalitarianism. Truths of logic have their whole foundation in the ‘sense’, ‘essence’ or the content of the concepts of Truth, Proposition, Object, Property, Relation, Combination, Law, Fact, etc. (…) An

\textsuperscript{94} Emmanuel Levinas, \textit{Discovering Existence with Husserl} (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2000 Translated by Richard A. Cohen and Michael B. Smith) 56-57

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{LI}, II, pp. 61-62
assertion, e.g., whose content quarrels with the principles whose roots lie in the sense of truth as such, is self-cancelling. For to assert, is to maintain the truth of this or that content. A proof, whose content quarrels with the principles rooted in the sense of the relation of ground and consequent, is self-cancelling. For to prove, is to state that there is such and such a relation of ground and consequent etc. (...) It is clear now that, in this pregnant sense, any theory is logically absurd which deduces logical principles from any matters of fact.96

Logic is foundational to sciences, because it is not reducible to any of them. It is a “science that is in principle the science of all sciences.”97 It is what all sciences have to fulfill or actualize. The later Husserl thinks of sciences of matter of facts as the pre-scientific ground for phenomenological science, which is the ultimate science of all sciences. The thing in-itself is of capital importance in the constitution of objects.

The problem Husserl has with the psychologist and the natural scientist is that they talk of provinces of truth instead of addressing the question of the objectivity of truth as such. Logic brings out pure and a priori universalities. It is concerned with ideas of scientific genuineness, which is a matter of coherence between particular practices and their foundational principles or ideals. Genuineness is thus “what is missed in obscurity or confusion”98 of matter of fact sciences. This applies to sciences, but it also applies to any question of truth as such. In discussion, practical interests must not constitute themselves into being the guiding principles. The space of discussion of issues must not be bound to particular and functionalist interests; otherwise there will be no venue for discussion at all. We must thus understand that all the propositions which have to do with making practical realization possible, do not effect the sphere of the pure norms of ethical valuation. If these norms, or

96 *LI*, I, p. 82
97 *ACAPS*, p. 1
98 *FTL*, p. 29
the theoretical knowledge underlying them, were to fall away, ethics would vanish altogether. If the former propositions were to drop out, there would be no possibility of ethical practice (or no possibility of a technology of ethical conduct).⁹⁹

We need thus an untouchable ground that informs practical decisions of life. The ideality of meaning carried out in logic is not so in the normative sense, but in respect of what is. It is ideal in the sense of bar for thinking as such. The theoretical is the foundation for the practical and the normative. We need to know what things are in order to act accordingly.

We cannot base the whole pure and a priori science on deductive systems or axioms. We need the ideal as the foundation. The ideal object of logic is “neither the concrete object intuition, nor an abstract partial content.”¹⁰⁰ The partial takes us away from a thorough dedication to truth as such. Husserl carries out the “ambition to establish philosophy on a basis of unimpeachable rationality (…) [that] can be realized only by complete dedication to truth.”¹⁰¹ Husserl’s main preoccupation is that of grasping the essential and not just the contingent. It is a preoccupation with meaning and truth that runs through the whole of Husserl’s thought. We will see in our four and fifth chapters how this preoccupation with objectivity and truth articulates itself with that of the dialogue between identity and otherness, the self and the other. The question will ultimately become that of how the self is authentically itself and still open to the other. Our answer will point to the fact that truth and objectivity are not private properties, and that the objective is not circumscribed by particular interests. In the overall, the main

⁹⁹ LI, I, p. 39
¹⁰⁰ LI, I, p. 270
¹⁰¹ PCP, p.4
thing is that of the constitution of a political society through the affirmation of the existence of a truth that is radically transcendent and open to all individual perspectives.

### 1.4. Meaning-Intending, Meaning-Fulfilling, and the Identity of the Object

Truth is not circumstantial or relative; this is what comes out in the discussion of the ideality of objects of logic. The objects of logic are timeless and metempirical. They are not dependent upon circumstances or group interests. As much as functionality and interests can be important for practical life, they are not revelatory of the essence of things themselves. Specific acts aim at ideal meanings. The inner evidence of which the psychologist speaks comes as a manifestation of ideal truths. There is a structure of the world at which all the acts aim. Truth is not something relative to interests or needs. It transcends them and gives them their specific structure and meaning. It is that which informs the normative and the practical. The independence of truth can be seen in the example of the ideal objects of mathematics or pure logic.

Intentional acts thus aim at meaning. Intention, even empty, is pregnant of meaning. The noetic, the ego’s act of intending, and the noematic, the phenomenon, that which is meant, belong to the same movement of consciousness toward its objects. They belong together in the act of the givenness of the object in-itself. The question we had for the psychologist was to know whether the noema is just a fragmented reality that is
ultimately recomposed and given its full stature of being by the noetic act. The question comes down to that of knowing whether the object is merely mind-dependent. We are faced here with the question of whether fulfillment of meaning is something that happens merely in the mind. For Husserl, meaning-intending and meaning-fulfilling are two essential components of the intentional act. The empty intending always calls for fulfillment in intuitive acts. We may think of a mango tree because we have heard people describe it, or seen it on television, or touch its dead branches. As long as we do not see the mango tree, our representations of it remain partial. Now if we go to Africa and see a mango tree, the intended object becomes present, it is intuitively given as a mango tree here and now. Such fulfillment is founded on an act of recognition; the mango tree is grasped as a real mango tree.

The phenomenological object is however not reduced to the mere “real mango tree”. The constitution of the mango tree traverses meaning intention and meaning fulfillment, but it is not circumscribed by any of them. It is in a dialogue between act and content that we grasp the identity of the object. The given still has unexplored profiles that call for further fulfillment. There is an intentional structure through which givenness occurs. Such structure is articulated in the relation between meaning intention and meaning fulfillment. This structure of givenness of the object itself has its internal consistency. The presentification of the thing is a self-manifestation of the thing to consciousness. Consciousness grasps the object under certain angles, profiles, or sides. The intentional object is given through sense-data. The unity of the intentional object occurs in the articulation of the object through its different moments.
In the intuitive fulfillment, the sensuous and the categorial join together, in order to present the object as a whole in the givenness of the object itself. When I see a green mango tree leaf, I do not see subsequent parts of the leaf, I do not represent to myself a mango tree, then the color green, and then the “leaf”. I see in one movement of grasping the green mango tree leaf. The sensuous plays thus an important role in the formulation of my knowledge of the mango tree, but to make to myself and others what is thus intuitively given, I use categorial terms. The relation of green and leaf is not something seen. It is something that is given as categorial. And in case I point to the mango tree leaf by using the formulation: “this is a green mango tree leaf”, “this”, “is”, “green” and the relation between them is purely categorial. This are not tied up to a specific mango tree leaf. They can be applied to a multiplicity of realities. The relation between the categorial and the sensuous within which the object is given is revelatory of the mind-independency of the object.

Our grasping of objects occurs in a mixture of empty and fulfilling intentions as moments in the grasping. Givenness occurs as an identity of the features of acts that intend the object. The object of the meaning intention stands before us as one indivisible object. It is the objective content of the act of intending. The intended object is not merely that which is physically there or that which is contained in consciousness. Meaning intention can in fact be divided into possible, internally consistent, or impossible, internally inconsistent, acts. These possibilities and impossibilities are not found on empirical interweaving of consciousness. Inner evidence is the experience of the ideal truth as such, the experiencing of the thing in-itself.
Inner experience is “the experience of the 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.” Inner evidence has to remain in coherence with the idea of objectivity. We see the cube, for instance, as an identity that includes all its sides. We do not perceive sides and then infer the existence of the cube. We do not perceive the sides as fragmented realities. We see the cube itself through the presentation of its sides. The identity of the thing is not to be reduced to the sum of its sequential appearances. The object remains the same in different intending acts. In the synthesis of recognition, we recognize the object in itself in the reality of its givenness.

In recognition, which is a case of the agreement between the intended and the fulfilled, we have a synthesis of identification. In this case, we have an agreement between the two moments of the intentional act. However not all intentions get fulfilled. The correlate of the synthesis of recognition can be conflict, frustration, or disagreement. An intuition may not agree with a significant intention. The intended and the fulfilled can enter into conflict. We have in this case a new case of synthesis: the synthesis of distinction. Whether in the case of identification or distinction, we have an ideal that is aimed at in the givenness of the object. The ideal is either satisfied or disappointed. Frustration is always frustration of meaning and identity. The presupposition of conflict

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102 *LI*, I, p. 121
itself is a “basis of agreement.” An “intention can only be frustrated in conflict in so far as it forms part of a wider intention whose completing part is fulfilled.”

Meaning, truth, and identity, are given in the object in-itself. Husserl wants to get at the essence of things, to “the invariant features without which an object would not be what it is.” He wants to get at the apodictic object, as object in itself. Getting back at the thing in itself, is getting back to an “ethic of reason,” where ego and alter ego, can intuit into a common ground of perception of reality. This is an awakening of the guiding principles in discussions about issues. This is what preserves reality from being reduced to subjective reason. Reality would thus rely on a truth that is not subject to historical changes, or individual interests or predicaments. This helps inform and transform the public sphere and political reality in countries under the threat of totalitarianism. The world of technocrats, kleptocratic ruling, and absolute will to power can be challenged and question by this “ethic of reason,” where being and not appearance of the object is the determining factor in decision making and discussions. Husserl’s later work on intersubjectivity and life-world finds thus their founding moment in this discussion of the objectivity of reason. We will discuss further this point in our next chapters.

Meaning and truth, as ideals, must inform discussion of issues in the public sphere, because the relation of foundation is that which binds together and gives sense to expressions. It is that which bring the whole together as unity. We see thus why, Husserl inserted the discussion of the categorematic and syncategorematic in his discussion of the

103 Li, II, p. 212
104 Dag Hedin, *Phenomenology and the Making of the World* (Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1997) 27
constitution of meaning. Categorematic meaning is a meaning that stands by itself as an independent unit that ultimately can help in the constitution of meanings. The syncategorematic is meaning, as a dependent, as a “taken together with”, it is a composed meaning. The main discussion here is to affirm that

acts of meaning are transitory and individual, whereas the meaning, say that of the expression ‘lion’, is ideal and unmultiplied by repetition. So Husserl reasons, meaning can be seen as something specific, standing to individual acts as the universal redness stands to individual instances of redness. In meaning, understood as the general way in which an act is directed to an object, reference is constituted.106

Meaning stands as a species to specific acts of meaning. The object as meant is not tied up to its mere being externally there. Presence and absence both play a big role in the presentation of the object. This will be discussed at length in our next chapter. The same object can for instance be meant in different acts of meaning without being exhausted in any of them.

The meaning fulfilling opens thus to more meaning, it does not exhaust the richness of the object. Intuition has to be adequate in order to amount for knowledge in the case of immanent. Adequacy is possible only for pure phenomenon, not for physical objects. This position held by Husserl, is summarized in the following:

Although all knowing, as a full grasp of ‘the object itself’, is an act of fulfillment, not every act of fulfillment amounts to a knowing of the respective object – just as every act of fulfillment is an identification, by not conversely (LI 720). The intuition involved in a fulfillment must be adequate if that fulfillment is to be a case of knowledge, and it is adequate just in case every aspect of the object as conceived is also directly given (LI 745). This is the case of the ‘pure’ or complete intuition, already mentioned, where the act contains no intentional bearing upon its object that is not also satisfied by what is given (LI 734, 762). Such a pure intuition is an option only in a restricted range of objects – mental

106 Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith, The Cambridge Companion to Husserl, p. 122
acts and their components, and certain essences or universals and their connections – and is not possible for the physical world or physical objects (LI 765).  

The question of meaning intention and meaning fulfilling leads us to that of the givenness of the object. Intuition does not mean adequate givenness or evidence for transcendent objects. The intuition of the object can still carry a need for further investigation. Not all objects are given immanently, in an absolute self-givenness.

Intuition as the basis of all meanings is not to be confounded with sensory givenness alone. Sensory intuitions are those that cannot be given in absolute self-givenness of the object. Husserl also conceives of categorial intuitions. In self-givenness, the object itself “forces itself on us.”  

The production of meaning is thus strongly tied up to the appearing of the thing in-itself that thus forces itself on us. Meaning is independent from acts of meaning. Ideal meanings are independent from acts of meaning. It is such independence that allows them to be able to be repeated in unlimited acts of meaning. Meaning is the identical that is instantiated in different acts. Ideal meaning, as self-givenness of the object in itself in self evidence, constitutes the reference of different acts. The ultimate aim of the act of intending is the self-manifestation of the thing in itself. The phenomenologist is like the Socratic midwife who actively assists to the constitution and unfolding of meaning in the object itself.

Objectivating acts help us assess the rationality or not of acts. Quality and matter of acts are important in this discussion of the rationality or not of acts. The two constitute

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108 Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith, *The Cambridge Companion to Husserl*, p. 88
the “intentional essence of an act.”\textsuperscript{109} They are thus important in our discussion of the directedness of consciousness. This discussion itself opens that of sensation. There are objects that are not perceived but only experienced. Sensory data are thus experienced, while transcendent objects are perceived. By this discussion of sensory data and transcendent objects, Husserl introduces the discussion about the two way things present themselves to consciousness. On the one side, “we perceive (or encounter) objects, [and on the other] we experience sensations.”\textsuperscript{110} The object is not only constituted by consciousness, it is also given in itself. The experienced sensations are to be articulated, interpreted, in order to bring about objectivation. Sensation provides thus the raw material for thematization. In Husserl’s discussion of the life world, he stresses the importance of sensation as to make obvious the importance of the pre-thematic in the formulation of scientific knowledge.

Objectifying acts, nominal acts, are not enough to bestow meaning by themselves. There are parts of expressions that are not percepts, but however very important in meaning bestowing. These are the formal structures, the articulated elements that a specific percept does not give. The categorial intuition of the universal is the intuition involved in words like “this”, “is”, “a”, “the”, etc. These are objects that are not given in perception, but that are however important in the constitution of meaning. In expressions like “the gold is yellow”, we do not have “the”, “is” as perceivable objects. We cannot grasp the being yellow of the gold without them however. Meaning is thus not the same thing as objective correlate. As stated above, it may not be meaningless to speak of a

\textsuperscript{109} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution}, p. 48
\textsuperscript{110} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution}, p. 52
golden mountain for instance, even though such mountain does not exist objectively. Meaning should not be confused with meaning fulfillment in transcendent givenness. Meaning is not conditioned by objective fulfillment.

Categorial intuitions are the universal and formal involved in the “a”, “the”, “is” that are not given at a perceptual level. They are however what assure the formal structure of nominal state of affairs. In the categorial, we get into the intuition of the universal. It is in the categorial that we see the belonging together of a state of affairs. Meaning does not have its seat in perception. Meaning is different from a “straightforward relation of coincidence with perception. As stated by Husserl, “certainly one can tell one’s auditors, intelligibly and unambiguously that ‘I see that his paper is white’, but the thought behind such talk need not be that the meaning of this spoken sentence expresses a mere act of seeing.”¹¹¹ That which assures the formal structure of objects is not necessarily given in straightforward perception. This goes with Husserl’s preoccupation with the assertion that “philosophy is a methodical reflection on consciousness as revelatory of being.”¹¹² We do not satisfy ourselves with appearance and empirical givenness. We do not arrive at genuine knowledge through a mere description of transcendental objects or immanent psychological data. Such description itself requires a fund of concepts and ideal foundations that are capital for knowledge.

The discussion of the importance of sensation will be carried out in our third part. The main thing we have to retain at this point is that sensation brings to awareness the fact that objects of consciousness are not results of acts of consciousness as the

¹¹¹ LI, II, p. 273
¹¹² PCP, 67
psychologist would want it. Not only is the object not exhausted by particular acts of consciousness, but it imposes itself on us at some point. The object is not intramental. It retains its sides and profiles. Fulfillment cannot be thus about the coincidence of the intramental with itself. For Husserl, immanence means self-givenness of objects, and not their being contained in consciousness. If objects are intramental, we would reach the absurdity of believing that imagined objects or phantasied ones are real. A golden mountain or a pink elephant would thus exist as real. We talk of evidence when “Das Ding an sich”, the thing in itself, as meant is given in its full self.
Chapter 2: Self-Givenness of the Object and the Quest of Truth and Evidence

In the natural attitude, things are given as a matter of course. Our attention in the natural attitude is solely turned toward direct givenness in experience. We do not raise the question of the different modes of givenness of the object. We need to turn toward the objects of the natural attitude and take them as themes of a phenomenological investigation. In our critique of the natural attitude, we needed to raise the question of the constitution of objectivity and that of the connection between objectivity and subjectivity. Subsequently we needed to deal with the question of the relation between the objectivity claimed by positive and natural sciences and ideal-meaning. We came to see that phenomenological seeing is a double seeing: it sees that which is transcendentally given, but most importantly it turns its regard toward this act of seeing itself and takes it as a theme of a new investigation. Through such seeing, which is a second act, it grasps the thing in-itself, as an eidos or an invariant structure of the object. In so doing, we find a solid ground for universal science and knowledge. Logic is of great importance to such discussion of the objectivity of science.

The determining factor in this search of objectivity is truth. Such truth is foundational for a healthy dialogue between the immanent and the transcendent. The question comes down to knowing how the immanent establishes a contact with the transcendent, in order words, how knowledge achieves contact with objectivity. The
positive and pre-scientific knowledge of the natural attitude takes transcendent objects as
grounds for certainty. Husserl thinks that the transcendent, outside givenness, is always
inadequate and perspectival. As such, it cannot constitute by itself a ground for the
certainty of knowledge. The perspectival transcendent object can be given as a unity only
through the constituting work of consciousness. Immanence and transcendence work
together in the constitution of the object as a unity given to consciousness. This means
that immanence by itself cannot constitute a sufficient ground for the certainty for
knowledge either. Immanence in the sense of the internal having or containment of the
object by consciousness, as the psychologist postulates it, cannot constitute a ground for a
certainty of knowledge. Opposite to this first sense of immanence, we have immanence
as an absolute and clear givenness of the object. Such self-givenness is absolute. We are
here in a situation of “immediate act of seeing and apprehending the meant objectivity
itself as it is.”¹ We will now discuss the constitution of objectivity through the givenness
of objects. We will do this through the discussion of “expression and meaning”, parts and
whole, the true and the evident.

2.1. Intentionality and the Articulation of Meaning in Expression

Husserl states that all thought and theoretical knowledge are carried by expressive acts.
Expression and linguistic acts are thus important elements in the discussion of the
constitution of meaning and objectivity. Only in language and expression can the truth of

¹ IP, p. 27
science be formulated and conserved. The objectivity of logic comes to us in “grammatical clothing.” Science is objectivated through expression.

Only in this form can truth, and in particular the truth of theory, become an abiding possession of science, a documented, ever available treasure for knowledge and advancing research (...). The objects which pure logic seeks to examine (...) come before us embedded in concrete mental states which further function either as the meaning-intention or meaning-fulfillment of certain verbal expressions.²

Because of this importance of expression as an instrument for thought, Husserl thinks it must be thoroughly reflected upon. Thus it is not a mere chance that he started his discussion of pure logic with the question of “expression and meaning.” Expression is the means through which the given is articulated and accounted for as given in itself. The aim of the phenomenologist is to get the phenomenological unity of the objects of sciences as such. It is to get at the unity and truth of language, and the conditions of its truthfulness. We have thus to go to the source of the unity and validity of pure and universal ideas. Husserl thinks it is important to make a difference between founding intuition and founded or categorial intuition.

Husserl understands expressive acts as instantiations or singularizations of meaning. “Meaning as an ideal objectivity plays the important role of guaranteeing the objectivity of thought, the possibility of the same being realized, that is, thought, in really different acts of thinking.”³ Meaning can be instantiated in many expressive acts without being circumscribed by any of them. This is what we dealt with in our critique of psychologism: meaning is not mind contained. That which is expressed is a content or an

² LI, I, p. 167
object of reference. It is an object meant by consciousness. It is thus neither totally
transcendent neither totally immanent. The thing is given in dialogue between
immanence and transcendence. Thus, “Husserl’s theory of meaning bridges the gap
between extreme subjectivism and extreme objectivism. Meaning is objective as that
which is common to various subjective actual acts of intending. It is, however, common
to the fact of regulated comportment as subjective, not as objective merely.”⁴ Meaning is
what makes an expression an expression or a language a language. It is that which makes
it possible for specific expressions to have an object and to be understood within a
community. It is also that which makes it possible for a language to be translated into
another. Meaning also makes it possible for different expressions or predicative
judgments to hold together. The consistency of the object of reference and the
transcendental character of meaning are foundational for the possibility of discourse and
an ethics of dialogue as such. In meaning, we deal with ideal objects and not shifting and
circumstantial ones.

In expressive acts, we have meaning-intending and meaning-fulfilling. As stated
above, these constitute the noetic, subjective side, of expression. On the objective side,
we have the content or the object of reference. Meaning is the ideal that is constituted as
the unity of these two sides of expression. There is only one truth, one meaning, valid for
all. Meaning cannot be reduced to occasional or indexical expressions, whose contents
depend on the specificity of the situation or position-holding of the speaking person. The
meaning of occasional or indexical expressions changes according to circumstances. The

⁴ Jan Patočka, An Introduction to Husserl’s Phenomenology, p. 51
meaning that informs all expression is not reducible to circumstance. The act-matter as an exemplification or species of meaning is not meaning as such. The act-matter is something grasped in its hereness. It provides a context to the intentional act. But the object meant is larger than an object given in its hereness. There are for instance things, like the Black Hole or Centaurs that exist only as intended. This separation of meaning from the circumstance of the speaking person is capital in the building of an ethical space for dialogue and genuine intersubjective communication. The partners in dialogue realize that there is something greater than their uttered words that make it possible for them to be in a communicative space. Sokolowski considers human beings as agents “involved in truth.”5 If this is not the case then every person’s specific acts of meaning would be constituted into *Meaning* as such. The world would become then a place where “might is right.” The voice of the stronger would swallow the voice of truth without there being any instance of verification and challenge to the truthfulness of such a voice.

The relation between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfillment aims at grasping the meaningfulness of expression’s function as intimation and its role of expressing the ideal unity of meaning. Findlay, in his introduction to the Logical Investigations, thinks that “communication is not Husserl’s concern, because, for him, logic is concerned only with the expression of ideal meanings. The pragmatics of communication or reception of meaning is a secondary matter, a concern for the philosopher of language.”6 Successful communication is not the prime preoccupation for Husserl. However he did not lose sight

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6 *I*, I, p. 1
of the fact that meaningfulness has ultimately to inform a genuine intersubjective space. And such space is a communicative space. We can thus say that Husserl’s prime concern is successful communication if we understand by success the faithfulness of expression to its ideal which is to express truth as such. Expression is carrier of ideal meaning. Thus it functions meaningfully when the words uttered by the speaker aim at a meaning that is both available to himself and to the listener. The sounds produced by the speaker, in a communication context, have to be a sense giving-act. Expressions function as indication “signs of the thought of the speaker, i.e. of his sense-giving inner experiences.”

Expression makes available to the listener a fundamental grasping of meaning and such meaning is not just subjective or occasional. Husserl thus makes a difference between occasional expression and objective expression. The occasional and subjective expressions are those that refer to the here and now of the speaker. For Husserl, “every expression, in fact, that includes a personal pronoun lacks an objective sense.” “I” for instance does not refer to “whoever is speaking,” but to a primordial stance in the production of meaning. “I” indicates to the hearer that his vis-à-vis intends this or that. The meaning produced is not however a private property. We need to distinguish between expression and its meaning as ideal unity. Such ideality is not dependent either on meaning intention or meaning fulfilling. Meaning is not dependent upon acts that intend it. As stated by Husserl, I do not decide for instance the truth that “the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point.” The unity of the object itself or the state of affairs imposes itself on the judgment about it. The ideality of the thing transcends

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7 LI, I, p. 189
8 LI, I, p. 218
assertions or expressive acts that mean it. The unity of the object, as its identity and
cceptual content, is not to be confused with the object given in the here and now.

Before the act of communication, we need to go the essential structures of things,
because, as stated by Socrates before discussing attributes of virtue and what it does for
human society, we need first to know what virtue is in-itself. To put it in his own words,
“we shall have clear knowledge of this when, before we investigate how it comes to be
present in men, we first try to find out what virtue in itself is.”9 The act of meaning
derives its meaningfulness from meaning itself. One of the examples of this is our
statement in our previous chapter that the laws of logic are not grounded on psychology
or a specific subjective stance or context. Expressive acts grasp and express something
ideal and objective. Meaning is detached from a specific position holding in a “here” and
“now”. Its validity is not dependent upon circumstances. It informs indexical expressions,
which are circumstantial – “I”, “here”, “now” –, but it is not absolutely tied up to them.
Meaning is thus both contained in indexical expressions but also transcendent to them. If
the validity of meaning as such is dependent on individual circumstances, then anything
goes. There will be no standard for making an ethical judgment. Individual acts have to
aim at meaning. They cannot manipulate it at will. We need thus to leave the standpoint
of logic as technology to go to that of the structures of meaning that build up a genuine
discussion. Beyond the functionalist statements of matter of fact, we need to attend to the
structures of meaning that inhabit the expressed. We need to care about words in their
ideal unity, as that which informs linguistic works and acts of expression. It is thus

9 Plato, Meno, 100b
important to make a difference between expression as a physical thing (the sound, the written words) and the meaning carried by the physical support. If ideal meaning becomes relative, we suppress the possibility of any discussion or elaboration of theorems, proofs and theories of abstract sciences as such.

When discourse detaches itself from pointing to or expressing the ideal meaning or the object in-itself, it ends up being slave to subjective and functionalist reason – a reason preoccupied more with the triumph of individual self-interest than the triumph of truth as such. In subjective reason, discourse loses universal truth as its end. It gets stuck in intermediate ends. Discourse in this circumstance ends up being carrier of specific interests and ideologies. We see this manifested for instance in Nazi Germany and in many totalitarian states. In the case of Nazi German, the reference to notions like State and Nation lost their meaning and end up being mere instruments in the hands of the Fuehrer. Nation for instance in Nazi Germany was identified with φύσις (nature, soil, land) and blood. These two constituents became the leading principles in the distribution of relations within the country and beyond. Politics became the art of protecting blood within specific geographical delimitations. It lost its τέλος, which is to secure the common good, as the good life for all. It ended up being a manipulative field of ideologies, where the nation itself became a product of the state. The understanding of relationships within the country became thus perverted. The Nation in Nazi Germany, instead of being a community of people that have feelings, representations, projection about the future, became just a totalizing body that swallow all bodies within its boundaries. “Dialogue” or expression in this sense does not care much about expressing
meaning. It is a conveying of ideological information from one end, the Fuehrer, the total body, to the other, the vegetative mass of people, the “blood entity.”\(^{10}\) What we realize with this situation is that expression missed its mission of being carrier of meaning, because it got stuck into a functionalist and manipulative reason that had no eyes for the ideal.

Meaning has to be the foundations of expression. Meaning is not dependent upon who expresses it. It is not dependent upon our expressions of it. We “find it therein.” The expressed meaning is not merely contained in the physical sound. It is carrier of ideal meaning as such. As stated by Marvin Farber, “the meaning of a statement is also a unity in the manifold of experiences. We discern it to be an identity of intention in the evident acts of reflection. We do not arbitrarily put it into the statement; we find it therein.”\(^{11}\) Expression can refer to the same meaning over and over again, and in different act qualities. Meaning constitutes the identity of the intention. As stated by Husserl, “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

\(^{10}\) With its coming to power, the Nazi constitutes itself into a totalizing entity. The Nation became correlative to a gathering of people with the same Blood, the Aryan blood, into the land that belongs to them. This Aryan blood is to be conserved and separated from all others by all means. Unwanted bodies were eliminated and the Aryan blood was gathered from all over Europe within the boundaries of the Nation-as-blood, the Fatherland. Nazism created a new political reality where nation is no longer both a natural reality and an act of transcendence. The body of the nation is an obeying body to which means of existence are provided, but a body without will however. It is a body that lives on the order and will of the Fuehrer who directs its course. With Nazism we something unique happen to political history: the State creates the Nation.

truth.”¹² There is an objective relation of ground and consequence to which corresponds our subjective acts of inferring, proving, judging, etc. There is an ideal unity that is the content of those acts. Expressive acts do not circumscribe the object they express.

Expression has to strive toward meaning. Words have to have intentionality otherwise human being become like parrots who utters sounds but are not saying something. The word has to be inhabited by meaning. Such word always “points away from itself, as it were, [pointing] toward what is expressed as the thematic sense.”¹³ Expression does not circumscribe the object because there is not total coincidence between the object given in it and meaning itself. Meaning, as ideal content, is not the same as the object given in the here and now. We see for instance that 2 is not exhausted in “deux”, “zwei”, “two”, or “djo”; again we see that horse can be a cart or an animal. The expressed has to aim at objective meaning and such meaning is not just empirical. “An expression expresses the content of the perception or intuition that would present the thing or state of affairs corresponding to the meaning of the expression. That is, an expression expresses something we can find in the world; it expresses an object as it can be given in a certain way (...). My expressions (...) articulate a part of the world.”¹⁴ Expressions function as indication “signs of the thoughts of the speaker, i.e. of his sense-giving inner experiences, as well as of the other inner experiences which are part of his

¹² LI, I, p. 195  
¹³ ACPAS, p. 24  
communicative intention.” Husserl calls this the “intimating function” of expression. Thus expressions function at some point as signs that point to the meaning intended by the speaker. Husserl is however careful about maintaining a difference between expression and mere indicative signs.

This difference is important for the purpose of meaning, because “every sign is a sign for something, but not every sign has ‘meaning’, as ‘sense’ that the sign ‘expresses’. In many cases it is not even where this can be said, one has to observe that ‘standing for’ will not count as the ‘meaning’ which characterizes the expression.” The difference between expression and sign points to the question of meaning as such. Indicative signs do not have meaning beyond what they point to. For example, the smoke is a sign of fire, a flag is a sign of a nation, etc. The relation between the signifier and the signified is fixed either by nature or convention. There is a mechanical relation of association between the indicative sign and that which the sign stand for. The function of an indicative sign is thus to point to its objects whether they are real (brand, flag) or representational (fossil vertebrae as sign of prediluvian mammals, and Martian canals as signs of existence of intelligent being on Mars). An indicative sign thus constitutes an indication or a motivation for human beings. It is a motivation to thinking the relation between the sign and that which it stands for. The sign indicates the existence of other realities or state of affairs. The belief in the reality of one of the components motivates the belief in the existence of the other. This is however how far an indicative sign can go.

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15 *LI*, I, p. 189
16 *LI*, I, p. 183
Thus a sign serves as a help and indication to recognize the object to which it refers. In indication, there is no space for insight or additional knowledge. We have the flag; we know it is a sign of a nation or an institution. We expect to see a fire when we see a smoke. When we say that A indicates B, we expect the case to be true if A. B by itself can become an object of thought and this is another level of thinking activity all together. For instance, we may have the scientific observation of Martian canals as signs of the existence of intelligent beings on Mars; we can also see fossils as signs of predulivian mammals. This observation does not carry a meaning per se. We can however turn it into an object of investigation. Such investigation will require a surplus of meaning that was not straightforwardly given in the sign as such. The constitution of meaning here transcends the mechanical givenness of A and B.

Indication signs provide an empirical ground and motive to thinking. These ground and motive are not necessary a priori conditions of thinking. While driving from Boston to Newton, I see an arrow pointing at a direction and the word “Newton” written next to the arrow. I keep driving in the direction indicated by the arrow and I arrive in Newton. There is no surplus of meaning in this sign and the city. However, the act that links the arrow to the written word, and subsequently to the city is not in the sign. It is to be found somewhere else, in the categorial. At this level, we have the constitution of the categorial object. We see thus that the sign becomes a founding moment of the categorial and the phenomenological. The same way, sensuous acts are given through straightforward intuitions; they are foundational for the constitution of categorial acts. In the categorial acts, we find those that are purely categorial and those that are blended.
with sense. Ultimately however, even the categorial have some foundation in the sensuous. This is one of the reasons why Husserl believes the all founded acts are founded in the sensuous. Phenomenology is a second act. It is a turning of merely given into an object meant.

The sign and that to which it refers can trigger the phenomenological interest. Indication can thus contain a raw material for further investigation. Indicative sign point to an objective unity or state of affairs that can be taken as an object of investigation by the thinking person. Indicative signs indicate the object without articulating it. We can however take the relation between the indication and that to which it refers, the sign and its object, as an object of investigation. At this level of relation we use categoriality, we are thus at another level of investigation. When we move from the single-rayed intention of indicative signs to the multiple-rayed intention that take it as object of investigation, we are at the level of categorial articulation of the given. Indicative signs function somehow here as positing acts that just straightforwardly give their object without articulating them.

The fulfillment of signitive intentions does not necessarily mean that there is a relation of coincidence between the intending and the intended. If that occurs then we an intuitive illustration in the true sense, but the case is different when the “fulfilling intuition present an indirectly represented object, as when the use of a geographical name calls up the imaginative presentation of a map, which blends with the meaning-intention
of this name, or as when a statement about certain street-connections, courses of rivers, features of mountains, is confirmed by what stands inscribed on a map before us.”

In this sense, expression is richer than mere indication. It does not just stand for, but it means. While a sign always indicates, directly or indirectly, expression can function outside indication. In expression there is an articulation between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilling. Expression always refers to the meaning of something or of complex situations. Expressions are not thus tied up to an individual to whom they point in a uniform way.

Expressions not only express meanings, they express these meanings of something. An expression refers to (bezieht sich auf, LI I § 12) an object. Expressions, then, not only have a ‘meaning’ (Bedeutung) but also have a ‘reference’ (Beziehung). Furthermore, different expressions may pick out the same object through different meanings; thus ‘the vanquished at Waterloo’ and ‘the victor at Jena’ both designate the same entity, Napoleon (...). Similarly two expressions with the same meaning can actually refer to different objects, for example when I use the word ‘horse’ to refer to two different horses. Expressions not only refer to, or name, individual objects (like ‘Napoleon’ or a ‘horse’) but may also refer to more complex situations or states of affairs.

The meaningfulness or not of an expression is not tied up to mental images, to picture-mages, or to specific acts of meaning. In addition to the example of different expressions referring to the same object, we have also the case where we understand very abstract things without the mental pictures or their specific instantiations in acts of meaning. We can for instance understand expressions like: “complex acts of meaning are acts that have parts.”

17 *LI*, II, p. 232
The word gains its full importance as a word when it transcends its physical availability as object-at-hand. Whether spoken or not, the word keeps its richness and meaning as a word, beyond its pragmatic and practical availability. Expression’s meaning should not therefore be confused with intimation. Expression should not get stuck with mere intuition – whether the intuition of phenomena of external or internal sensibility. “Expressions and their meaning-intentions do not take their measure, in contexts of thought and knowledge, from mere intuition – I mean phenomena of external or internal sensibility – but from the varying intellectual forms through which intuited objects first become intelligibly determined, mutually related objects.”19 Expression always makes use of “categorically formed unities” to present its object. We have for instance expressions like: “this road leads to Newton.” Meaning does not reside in the givenness of the empirical. It does not lie in expression alone either. It lies in the coming together of the empirical and the categorial.

Meaning is not circumscribed by the empirical or its utterance. It is not constituted in a permanent hereness. As stated above, expressions like “horse”, for instance, have an extension that exceeds the mere givenness of the object in experience. “Horse” can be applied to the bucephalus, to a strong man, to a cart, to the power of an engine, etc. The same name has different values, depending on its specific attribution to things. This is the case of general names – unlike these, proper names are equivocal, they name different things by meaning them all differently. We need to go beyond the mere given and articulate reality in its full sense.

19 *LI*, I, p. 199
We need thus to make a difference between essentially subjective and occasional expressions on the one hand and their objective counterpart. Objective expressions do not depend on circumstances, either in their enunciation or in their grasping. While occasional and subjective expression refer to the situation or circumstance of the speaker, the objective gives objects or state of affairs that are general and universal. The meaning carried in expressive acts is not the meaning of a presentation. It is an ideal, timeless unity of meaning that we express in specific situations. The number 4 is an ideal unity. It does not say “four mangoes” for instance. “You shall not kill” is a timeless unity of meaning that can apply to different situations without being exhausted in any of them. It does not raise the question about the conditions under which its applicability is to be carried out. Thus content is not just the experienced content. Its ideality gives meaning to the specific. We need to make a difference between positing acts and non-positing acts. While the positing acts assert the existence of their object, the non positing ones state only the possibility of such existence.

Husserl used the case of attention to highlight the separation of the ideal from the empirical. Attention does not send us to the object as content in the psychic interplay. We can attend to things like “culture”, the “root of a number”. None of these meanings is dependent upon mental picture or empirical existence. The meaning of a symbolical language is not fulfilled in intuition. Objective reference does not determine meaning. This is the point where Husserl also makes a difference between objectlessness and meaninglessness. That we do not have the thing empirically given does not mean that it is meaningless. Meaning has an ideal generality that takes it beyond individual expressions
of it. As expressed by Husserl, the generality of words means that a “word is not bound to an individual intuition, but belongs rather to an endless array of possible intuitions.” Such generality of the words points to the fact that a word has a mission to open the society. Words through their generality are anti-totalitarian. The generality of the word call for a recognized alter ego. The possibility opened by the generality of words itself must be built upon the unified sense.

The distinction between essentially occasional expressions and objective expressions bring about other distinctions. We have for instance the distinction between complete and incomplete, enthymematic, expressions; we also have expressions that function normally and those that function abnormally; the distinction also concerns exact and vague expressions. Husserl gives the example of expressions like, “there are three regular solids”, which is a complete expression, and “there are cakes”, which is an enthymematic expression. The latter can only be understood in a specific context; otherwise it does not make sense. Ideal meaning is essential to expression. Beyond the specificity of contexts, we need to have access to a meaning that allows us to understand things as such. We find such possibility in law governed connection or ideal law that links positing names to judgments and attributions or predications. Ideal connection does not refer necessarily to experiential causal genesis. The work of linking the thesis and its dependent instances is the work of the unity of consciousness that grasps the unified sense of those expressions. There is a law to the fact that to all positing acts correspond non-positing acts. There is a form that different acts express.

20 *LJ*, II, p. 205
Expressions are meaningful and relate to something objective. They are not just revelatory of individual states of mind; otherwise we would have endless expressions and endless meanings. The possibility of dialogue itself would disappear. Reference, in the sense of ideal meaning, is what makes it possible for human beings to relate to one another as human beings. Meaning conferring acts or meaning intentions, which are essential to expression, have to become fused with meaningful fulfillment in the unity of the object itself. The object can be meant in different acts, but all such acts point at it as a non-fragmented whole. The state of affairs considers the totality of the situation, not just isolated parts. For instance in the wish that the knife be on the table, we do not wish the knife and then subsequently its being on the table. We wish “that the-knife-is-on-the-table.” Acts of meaning are themselves founded on meaning itself that gives them their consistency. The unity of the object is that which is aimed at in the categorial predictions. That which is given in judgments is a unitary object, “a unitary total act.” In expression, we are turned toward the thing itself. This means attending to the object itself. As stated above, the object of attention does not necessarily exist in the sense of its intuitive givenness in experience. It can either be intuited in experience or just in categorial acts.

The content of the expressive act can be the same while the act-qualities that present it differ. The same content can be object of a wish, a judgment, a question, or a critic. While the matter of the object remains the same, its act-qualities take different styles. Matter and quality, as intentional essence of the act, are always tied up. They tell us something about the unity and richness of the object. They also tell us that we cannot affirm the reality of the intentional object while denying the reality of the concrete object.
Expression needs to take seriously the existence of outside world, even though it knows that meaning is not dependent upon the outside or circumscribed by it. On the other side, in a mere embeddedness into the world of objects, it is impossible to have any object at all. The identity of meaning and truth is that which makes truth possible. Meaning is the condition and foundation of the different expressive acts of meaning. At the heart of our different objectivating acts stand the quest for the “what” of those acts. The “what” is the identical something to which all the acts refer. It is the same thing that the different logical shapes express. It is the S of S, S, S, etc. It can have a multiplicity of instantiations without itself being altered by any of them. The “what” is the One that is given only once and does not repeat itself, but which can be instantiated in many different acts.

If we solely take the occasional or the circumstantial as grounds for absolute validity, it would be impossible to have a world of reference that can be pointed at by different people, under different skies, through different acts. If we do so, we would lose the ideal and timeless unity of the object as such. Expression itself would become an impossible task, because we would have to make the tour of all things before speaking of them. We would have to have the root of a number or the mathematical number π before speaking of them. In a day to day life, we would to make the tour of the square before we could speak of it. We know however that we speak of square, the number π and the root of a number without having them in experience. On a more existential level it would be an extremely difficult task to understand somebody else’s experience. While watching the news on a cold that is hitting New England, a Chadian living under 30 Celsius
understands what is going on. There is something like cold that has meaning beyond material experimentation. I do not have “human existence” or “culture” or “ideal”; I however understand them when someone points at them in his expressive acts.

There is a structure upon which expression relies for its meaningfulness. Meaning is not contained in specific acts. It transcends them and informs them at the same time. In our next section we will see how the laws of modification and combination of meaning are dependent upon the “essence-bound structure of meaning.” We need to have fixed pure categories of meaning for the meaningfulness of our expressive acts. The pure forms of independent meaning and their compounding modification are those pure categories. In these basic forms, we find the constitution of the meaning-realm. Nonsense or senselessness comes about when word cannot form a unit that is attuned to this meaning-realm. Absurdity comes about when we are faced with the possibility or impossibility of the existence of the object meant. In the case of a material and synthetic absurdity (for instance the square is round), we face the question of the coherence of the meant with its objective reference. In the case of an analytic absurdity (laws of contradiction, double negation, modus ponens), we are faced the question of an internal inconsistency.

The foundations of speech are thus to be found a priori. The One universal meaning is that which different languages and act qualities aim at. The work of expression is to render “intelligible the ideal essence of all speech.” “The foundations of speech are not only to be found in physiology, psychology and the history of culture, but also in the a priori. The latter deals with the essential meaning-forms and their a priori

21LI, II, p. 68
laws of compounding or modification, and no speech is conceivable that is not in part essentially determined by this *a priori.*”22 In the case of nominal acts that are a modification of judgments, we come to see that from a many rayed-act, a synthetic judgment, we can pass to a single rayed act. We do not just stay in dispersed entities; we go to the foundation of complex acts. Complex acts are founded on simple ones, the nominal objectifying acts. The latter are the “primary bearer of ‘matter.’” Thus, “each intentional experience is either an objectifying act or has its basis in such an act.”23

Meaning intention and meaning fulfillment have the same object of reference. The object has to remain the same if fulfillment is to be understood as givenness of that which is intended. Thus the truth of knowing occurs in the identity of the two intentional moments. The noetic and the noematic are correlated. The intentional act sees beyond profiles and perspectives the identity of the thing in itself. The perceived is not exhausted in its givenness. For instance color can be instantiated in different colors, but the given color is not the totality of color. The givenness of the thing therefore contradicts its circumscription in a state of mind. The object that is given exceeds its parts, sides, moments, and profiles. Our grasping of the object occurs always in a mixture of empty and filled intention. Through its presentation, the intended object actualizes the empty intention, but such actualization does not mean that the object is through and through given. The intuitively given retains to itself profiles, sides, and moments that can only be appresented. My intending of the present sides goes with a co-intending of absent sides.

22 *LI*, II, p. 74
23 *LI*, II, p. 167
Our grasping of the object goes thus with a blending of presence and absence. This takes us to our treatment of parts and whole.

2.2. Parts and Whole: Presence and Absence as the Paradoxical Way in Which Givenness Occurs

Our preoccupation in the first chapter was to show the givenness of the object as a unity. The noema, the meant object, is always given as a unity of profiles and sides. As stated by Zahavi, Husserl calls this the “object’s inner horizon.”24 There is thus an a priori essential structure that is operative in the constitution of meaning in expressive acts. Thus, our above section discussed the importance of the dialogue between the noetic and the noematic, the subjective and the objective side of expressive acts and knowledge. This section on parts and whole wants to know whether the object is one or a succession of parts and moments. Parts and whole raise the question of the internal structure of the object itself. An object has an internal consistency and objects stand in relation to one another, and there is a context within which they are given. There is a structure of meaningfulness for objects. The structure of transcendent objects is constituted through sides, profiles, aspect, and perspectives. Perception is thus a sort of pretention. It pretends

to give the object wholly, yet it can only give it “from the front”, “only perspectively foreshortened and projected.”

Mereology, as a study of parts and whole, is an important part of Husserl’s Logical Investigations and his latter works. Mereology raises the question of the law governing the relation of foundation between parts and whole, and the internal consistency of the object. Objects have a structural form through which they present themselves. Those structural forms are: parts and whole, manifold and identity, presence and absence. Wholes can be divided into independent parts or pieces, and dependent parts or moments. This division itself raises the question of the founding and the founded parts. The founding parts are the substrates, the support of the founded. The discussion of the structural forms of objects bring forth that of constitution as “the establishment of categorial objects” through the recognition of the identity of the object through its parts, profiles, manifold presentations, sides, and aspects. The discussion of parts and whole, manifolds and identity, presence and absence, will lead us to the discussion of meaning-combinations and meaning-unit. The combination of objects is not a matter of chance. It is a law governed combination. Some objects for instance, can only be conceived as parts of a specific whole. Others cannot be conceived but as parts of a whole. We cannot for instance think of politics without its presuppositions. We cannot pull one of the presuppositions and constitute it into a whole.

Some parts are meaningless outside a whole that gives them meaning. Politics without the relation commandment and obedience is for instance inconceivable.

25 *LI*, II, p. 220
Commandment cannot be understood but in relation to obedience and vice-versa. The inability of non-independent objects to exist by themselves points to the fact that there is a law of essence that conditions their being. The relation of the non-independent to the independent occurs in an ideal law-bound field. A part is part according to some laws of its nature. Thus a whole is not just a matter of mere coexistence of disparate parts with no internal or essential articulation or concatenation. Parts can be understood only in a comprehensive whole. Contents are compatible and consistent in a whole. Thus compatibility belongs to the species of contents in a whole. As stated by Marvin Farber, “the general distinction of independent and dependent contents (...) attempts to show that to every case of dependence there corresponds a law of connection based upon the specific nature of the contents concerned, whereby the distinction between the material and the ‘analytic’ or categorial laws appears.”

As seen above, the formal structures of the presentation of things are parts and whole, manifolds and identity, presence and absence. A whole is composed of parts, pieces, or moments. A piece can be separated from the whole and become a whole by itself. They are thus independent parts. The non-independent parts are called by Husserl moments. A moment belongs structurally to a whole. Thus, it cannot stand on its own. Moments are constitutive parts of a whole, without which they cannot be understood. In the overall, identity stands as the foundation of the manifold. Parts and moments are understood only in a comprehensive whole that constitute their identity. Identity is thus

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26 Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy*, p. 219
that which is given through the perspectives, sides, and moments. Such identity is the identity of meaning itself that maintains open perspectives on the objects given.

The meaning just is the identity that is within and yet behind all of its expressions. We should also notice that the identical meaning is capable of being presented through many other sentences or expressions. (…) The horizon of the potential and the absent surrounds the actual presences of things. The thing can always be presented in more ways than we already know; the thing will always hold more appearances in reserve.27

The identity of the thing transcends its manifold presentations. Different people have access to the same identity through such manifold presentations.

Physical objects are given perspectivally and we cannot speak of coincidence in givenness in their case. However we know that when we grasp the object, it is not the perspectives that we grasp, but we grasp the object in-itself. We always “transcend the given in order to grasp the object itself.”28 The object shows forth and is always grasped as a whole. I do not receive parts and ultimately infer the whole. “The identity is given in a dimension different form that of the sides, aspects, and profiles; the identity never shows up as one of the sides, aspects, or profiles.”29 Perspectival givenness is thus part of the makeup of the physical object. For this reason, we cannot speak of adequate, apodictic, indubitable, and exhaustive givenness in the case of physical objects. The given always holds some aspects to itself. Many of its sides are not given in the percept. If the percept is the total presentation of the object, then the essence of the object “would be exhausted in such self-presentation.”30 What we grasp however is the object itself, not

28 Robert Sokolowski, Introduction to Phenomenology, p. 34
29 Robert Sokolowski, Introduction to Phenomenology, p. 66
30 LI, II, p. 221
its sides or aspects. Every fulfillment carries within itself a horizon of unfulfillment that is appresented in it. Consciousness is not thus circumscribed by perception. Only in the case of ideal objects and mathematical relations – that 3 is greater than 2 for instance – do we speak of total givenness.

Objects are divided into simple and complex ones. Simple objects do not have parts, while complexity implies a plurality of parts. Simple object cannot admit of plurality, while the complex ones do. Redness for instance is a simple object. It can be instantiated in a multiplicity of objects, but it remains the same One red. This goes in line with talk about dependent and non-dependent object. Objects relate to one another as parts and whole, or as coordinated parts in a whole. A part is present in a whole either as its essential or non-essential component. Parts can be separated and are transcendent. Independent parts are thus parts that can be separated and presented on their own, while the dependent parts or contents cannot be presented on their own. I can imagine a head without a body, but I cannot imagine a movement without a body, for instance. Another example is that red for instance is not dependent upon extension. Thus, the visual quality of red is not dependent upon extension. The quantitative extension or diminution of red does not affect the quality red. Red remains red whether as a red carpet or as a dot. On the other hand color is dependent upon shape. We cannot conceive of color without a background of shape. In the same way, we cannot conceive of a tone without intensity, for instance. Husserl calls these an “a priori necessity, grounded in pure essence.”
The notion of non-independence is not however tied up to that of an empirical appearing together, because an “empirical necessity is no necessity of essence.” Non-independent moments point to the fact that they are essentially tied up to a whole to which they belong. There is an a priori law governing the givenness of non-independent objects: they require a whole. The dialogue between parts and whole evokes the necessity of a ground upon which shared perceptions of reality can enter into dialogue in a constructive way. We can articulate reality only if we are in a comprehensive whole, to which human mind and understanding can relate. The ground upon which we speak of specific objects is a whole that is open to a common understanding. A here and now discourse for instance will always require a common reference as the ground for its possibility. It can have meaning only when it makes use of such ground. And the first thing that is part of such ground is a common understandable language. The discussion of parts and whole leads us necessarily to the question of the conditions of discourse on reality. It raises the question of the constitution of a public sphere, which is a space of discussing issues, confrontation of profiles and perspectives. A healthy discourse on reality is a discourse that takes into account the structure of objects themselves. Such structure is built upon the fact that transcendent objects are perspectival.

Thus the presented side should not be confused with the totality of the object. Our sides are always relative and they require a structure of meaning to which they belong. Having a realistic view on objects means seeing the organic relation that inhabits them; it means taking into account parts and whole, presence and absence, manifolds and identity.

31 *LI*, II, p. 12
as essential characteristics of the object. Doing so can save from the Pythagorean relativism where man is the measure of things. The Pythagorean principle basically states that totalizing parts constitute themselves into totalizing wholes. Plato addressed a thorough critique of this position through his critique of the Sophists in one of his dialogues, *Meno*. He raised the question of truth through a critique of relativism when he insisted on the ideal as that which should guide individual dealings.

It follows then from what you agree to, that to act in whatever you do with a part of virtue is virtue, for you say that justice is part of virtue, as are all such qualities. Why do I say this? Because when I begged you to tell me about virtue as a whole, you are far from telling me what it is. Rather, you say that every action is virtue if it is performed with a part of virtue, as if you had said what virtue is as a whole, so I would already know that, even if you fragment it into parts. I think you must face the same question from the beginning, my dear Meno, namely, what is virtue, if every action performed with a part of virtue is virtue.32

Plato’s concern was political in the sense that for him ideal truth is that which must inform the truth of the city.

Plato advocates for the understanding of the nature of things as that which allow us make right decisions. His critic to the politicians and the sophists of his time came from the fact that they dissociated their statements from the world of ideas, the Good and the Truth in itself. They dissociated themselves from a search for truth as foundational for their statements. Plato “cannot afford (…) to take lightly their selfish manipulativenesss and the danger and abuses to which they have subjected their fellow citizens and the ship of the state.”33 Truth, just like Justice and all the other virtues, cannot be subjected to subjective reason. Thrasymachus, in Book I of the *Republic*, argued that justice is what is

32 Plato, *Meno*, 79b&c
defined by the strong. This is another version of what Protagoras argued, in the *Theaetetus*, namely “man is the measure of all things: of things which are, that they are, and of things which are not, that they are not.” Plato answer to such relativism is that the Truth, the Good, and Ideas are not dependent upon subjective reason. Husserl would agree on this with Plato. However, for Plato, the access to truthfulness and thoughtfulness, to the world of ideas, the real world, occurs from the detachment of the soul from the body. We have to abandon the world of things as a deceptive arena. Husserl thinks we must return to things themselves, because truth must be looked for in the structures of the real itself.

The structure of the discourse about reality has to come from an understanding of the structures of the object itself. Husserl differs thus from Plato in that he finds the ideal in the organic constitution of the object itself and not in ideal skies. Phenomenology helps us “reassume our condition as agents of truth.”

Truth occurs in a healthy articulation and dialogue of profiles and perspectives. The truth about reality is not a frozen truth, it is a truth that is continuously the same and yet continuously unfolding in new profiles and sides. The richness of identity resides in the open possibilities it gives. The noema, the object given as an identity of its sides, is the object itself and not a substitute for it. When Husserl speaks of the ideal, he is not situating such ideal in the World of Ideas, the Truth in Itself, the Good, etc. The ideal for Husserl is to be found in the structures of the thing in-itself. We grasp the object itself in its essential being. For

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34 Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 12
instance when we have two nuances of red, what we see is not the nuances, but the red itself. The givenness of red is

a purely immanent givenness, not immanent in the false sense, namely, existing in the sphere of individual consciousness. Here we are not speaking of the acts of abstraction that occur in the psychological subject, and the psychological conditions under which they are performed. Rather, we are speaking of the universal essence red, or the sense red, and its givenness in the act of seeing a universal.\textsuperscript{35}

The ideal inhabits the real and this is what expressive acts try to articulate. The ideal of expression is to put forward something that can be understood by whoever hears it. Such understanding occurs in the context of a meaning-unit that is not just constrained within the limits of the particular. Nonsense occurs when expression is built up of words that can be understood by themselves, but cannot constitute a meaningful unit. We have for instance: “king science trees Boston.” Each of these words has a meaning by itself, but there is no coherent whole that comes out of them. It is nonsensical in the sense that it cannot be comprehended as a whole. On the other hand, absurdity occurs when even words taken in isolation do not have meaning. It is thus important according to Husserl to have a purely logical grammar that would have “laws that discourage nonsense and laws which discourage absurdity.”\textsuperscript{36} The meaningful units in this case bring us back to the case of parts and whole, manifolds and identity. In this talk of pure grammar, we speak of syncategorematic and categorematic expressions. Syncategorematic expressions are expressions that cannot be understood by themselves. They can be considered as parts.

\textsuperscript{35} IP, p. 42
\textsuperscript{36} LI, II, p. 71
The categorematic expressions on the other hand are expressions that have a meaning in themselves.

The talk of the categorematic and the syncategorematic itself brings forth the question of the laws that bind the syncategorematic together and constitute them into categorematic. The a priori pure laws, such as laws of contradiction, double negation, or the Modus Ponens, are laws that guarantee the “avoidance of formal absurdity.”37 In order for language to be coherent and rightly aim at truth, it must cloth itself in the pure theory of meaning: it must be carrier of the forms and structures that assure its meaningfulness. Specific grammatical forms have to abide by their ideal form. This ideal framework is that which makes it possible for different languages to express the hypothetical, the conjunctive, the disjunctive, etc. Even though different languages have their own ways or “structures”, there is an “ideal essence of all speech”38 to which they must abide. Being is thus that which allows us to present a state of affairs instead of aggregate isolated things. It helps us present the thing itself and raises consciousness to universality. Being makes us perceive the thing in itself in “concreto.” The categorial has the role of presenting things in one breath as ABC instead of subsequently presenting A and then B and the C, and then concluding the existence of ABC. We see the whole at once. The identity of the object is not the sum of its profiles. We see ABC at once and such identity belongs to the public space, which is an “open society.” As stated by Sokolowski, “‘behind’ and ‘in’ the sides, aspects, and profiles, there is also the oneness

37 LI, II, p. 72
38 LI, II, p. 74
of the object itself, the identity that is given to us. The identity is public and available to all; it is not just something that we project into appearances.”

There is a reciprocal or one-sided relation of foundation between parts and whole. This relation of foundation can also be mediate or immediate. The example Husserl gave is that of P(W), P being the immediate piece of the whole W. We can also have a relation like P (P(W)), P is a piece of P which is itself a piece of the whole W. In order to establish priorities in our discussions on reality, it is capital to know what a whole is and what is a part or even a mediate part. By doing so, a commandment for instance will not appear to be the whole of politics. Whether in the case of mediate or immediate parts, the whole W appears to be the foundation. Thus in the givenness of an object S, which has as moments or piece α, β, γ, we grasp the S itself. We do not grasp the subsequent moments of S and eventually infer the existence of S. We grasp S as the unity of all its moments or parts. The form of the whole is thus that of a unity due to foundation. Such unity is a purely categorial predicate. Since it also deals with the relation of foundation between parts and pieces, it is also a material or real unity. The law regulating the relation is a pure law. The discussion about parts and whole, dependent and independent objects wants to bring forth the importance of the question of the nature of things themselves. The discussion attempts “to show that to every case of dependence there corresponds a law of connection based upon the specific nature of the contents concerned, whereby the distinction between the material and the ‘analytic’ or categorial appears.”

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39 Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 21
40 Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy*, p. 219
In his later work, Husserl distinguished objects into those that fall into passivity after they have been constituted and those that are in “original passivity.” Thus, there are objects that can be given themselves as “original substrate-objects” and those that can only be given in the a priori condition of their givenness, in their “a priori original form”, as “original determination-objects.” The latter are dependent objects that can only become substrate after they have been constituted as determinations.

There are objects that can occur in original self-givenness in the form of substrate only by having occurred previously as determinations. And, on the other hand, there are objects for which this is not the case. Functioning as determinations is not essential for the latter; we call them original substrate-objects. For the other ones, the form of determination is essential, namely, their a priori original form; we call these objects original determination-objects. A shape, a color, is to be given originally only as the determination of a concrete object. A shape cannot become prominent without the shaped object becoming prominent, and the object is grasped first, even if the interest immediately passes over it, and then the object’s color is grasped, which may perhaps immediately usurp the main thematic.41

Dependent objects can thus become substrates only after they have been constituted as determinations. The constitution of meaning is a complex thing.

We need thus to make a difference between simple and complex meaning. The distinction between simple and complex meanings corresponds to the “grammatical distinction between simple and complex expressions.”42 While simple expressions have one meaning, complex expressions are composed of many expressions that can stand on their own, each having its own meaning. The one meaning of complex expressions is a composed meaning. An expression is complex when it has but one meaning, even if such meaning has many parts. Husserl gave examples such as: “A king who wins the love of

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41 ACPAS, p. 313
42 LI, II, p. 50
his subjects.” The terms of this expression can stand on their own – “a king”, “love”, “subjects” – and be fully understood outside of the whole to which they belong. Thus each term is on its own a simple expression. All come however to compose the complex meaning. Simple meanings can however carry layers of meaning, when they become object to interpretation. They carry realities that are not straightforwardly given. Simple meanings lose something of their simplicity when they become part of a whole. While simple meanings can stand on their own, non-independent meanings cannot stand on their own. Understanding this is of great importance to the avoidance of nonsense and absurdity.

At the level of expression, we come back to the question of the categorematic and syncategorematic expressions. The categorematic are independent expressions while the syncategorematic are complex expressions. The categorematic are complete and independently significant. The syncategorematic on the other hand are incomplete expressions. They are dependent upon the categorematic in order to be understood as a whole. They need to be taken-together-within a whole in order to be fully understood. Expressions like “that the rain…”, for instance have no meaning by themselves. They need a complement. Even if they are meaningful by themselves – “but”, “father’s” – syncategorematic expressions would still need completion. Syncategorematic expressions can also be totally meaningless without the context within which they have meaning. We have for instance “fu”, which can have meaning in an endless array of possibilities like “future”, “futile”, “refuge”, etc. “Fu” does not mean anything by itself. Thus, whether meaningful or meaningless, the syncategorematic needs a categorematic within which it
makes sense. The syncategorematic plays an important role in the constitution of meaning in expressive acts. What interest us in this discussion of categorematic and syncategorematic expressions is to bring out the unity of the object and to see how different semantic categories can be united to form a comprehensive unity. We avoid thus dealing with a chaos of sense.

The essence of the syncategorematic lies in its non-independence in terms of meaning *qua* meaning. The meaning intention of the syncategorematic is fully fulfilled in the categorematic expression. It is only within the categorematic that the syncategorematic, as a “given-together-with” or “taken-together-with”, gets its full meaning. An expression has to be put in a “context” where it gains its full meaning. As stated by Husserl,

>a meaning, accordingly, may be called ‘independent’ when it can constitute the full, entire meaning of a concrete act of meaning, ‘non-independent’, when this is not the case. It can then only be realized in a non-independent part-act in a concrete act of meaning, it can only achieve concreteness in relation to certain other complementary meanings, it can only exist in a meaningful whole. The non-independence of meaning *qua* meaning thus defined determines, in our view, the essence of the syncategorematica.43

Thus an isolated syncategorematic expression becomes meaningless. “How can we explain the indubitable fact that isolated syncategorematica, e.g. the isolated word ‘and’, are understood? They are non-independent as regards their meaning-intention, and this surely means that such intentions can exist only in categorematic contexts: the isolated ‘and’, the particle torn from its context, ought therefore to be a hollow noise.”44 Whether with the discussion of parts and whole or the syncategorematic and the categorematic we

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43 *LI*, II, p. 59
44 *LI*, II, p. 61
are within the discussion of the constitution of meaning. Meaning is an all encompassing whole. The coherence and ability of expressive acts to bring forth meaning and truth lie in their ability to bring forward the unity of the plurality.

Husserl understands evidence as an adequate self-givenness of the object. Self-givenness occurs always in the unity of the object. The “evident act of seeing is itself knowing in the most precise sense; and objectivity is not something in knowing like something is in a sack, as if knowing were a completely empty form – one and the same empty sack – into which one thing is put, and then another.”45 As stated by Brough, there is always a temptation to see consciousness as a container. We need to save the act from its materialization and bring it to its confrontation with the thing-in-itself.46 In givenness, the object constitutes itself in knowing as a unity and identity. It shows forth as a unity of perspectives and sides. We are back to the distinction we made earlier between immanent objects and the object in-itself. We distinguished

between real [reelle] immanence and immanence in the sense of the self-givenness that constitutes itself in evidence. What is really [reell] immanent counts as indubitable precisely because it presents nothing else, it refers to nothing ‘beyond’ itself, because here what is meant is also adequately self-given, full and complete. At first any form of self-givenness other than the self-givenness of the really [reell] immanent is not yet in view.47

The aim of the phenomenologist is to grasp the thing in itself in the fullness of its givenness. This occurs when we go from our particular meanings to meaning itself.

45 IP, p. 55
47 IP, p. 63
In intentional acts objects are constituted as being in themselves. This constitution itself requires a presence, that of the intending community of subjects, because the “objects that we are conscious of are not simply there in our consciousness as though in a box, so that one could simply find them there and reach for them. Rather they are only constituted in various forms of objective intention, as that which they are and that which they signify for us.”\textsuperscript{48} This constitution occurs as a synthesis of sides and perspectives. Constitution is therefore not a sort concatenation of parts that are external to one another; it is not a putting together of transcendent sides or parts of the object. It is an organic articulation of the object within time consciousness and within a community of intending beings. The givenness of the object occurs through a “stream of aspects and profiles” that appear as a continuum. There is an internal logic of givenness that always presents the object as a whole and never as fragmented parts. This is what consciousness grasps.

In the political sphere – understood as a community of human beings that relate to one another in a meaningful way – we face a serious problem when the moment or piece is totalized and constituted into an independent whole. Such distortion perverts the space of genuine discussion of issues. As stated by Sokolowski, when “a moment is taken to be a piece, taken to be separable from its wider whole and other parts; then an artificial philosophical problem arises about how the original whole can be reconstituted.”\textsuperscript{49} When we situate the problem within community, then we are not just faced with an artificial problem, but with a serious problem of self understanding. On the political level, when

\textsuperscript{48} Robert Sokolowski,\textit{ The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution} (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970) 60

\textsuperscript{49} Sokolowski,\textit{ Introduction to Phenomenology}, p. 24
the leader identifies himself to commandment and forgets the relation commandment-obedience, he necessarily falls into totalitarianism. The foundations of his power itself get lost, because obedience as the other constitutive part of the political reality is lost in the process of totalization. The identity of the object is not just one of its manifold presentations, in this case commandment. Relation is the defining factor of the political domain. When commandment is functionalized and becomes a tool for mere domination, we step out of politics as such. It loses its essence in the process. When the public, the common good, becomes the good of particular individuals, we are no longer speaking of the politics because the private is not political as such. We will discuss this in a more detailed fashion in the last chapter of this work. In addition to the above mentioned questions, we need also to address the concept of nation. The question we will raise will be to see how a nation as whole is bigger than its many “nations”.

If objects are always given as identities, we will need not to fragment them into their parts. The object is not to be fragmented between its objective presentation and its intramental presentation. Even in remembering what we grasp is not an intramental construction. In memory, it is the object itself as past that we grasp. Memory is the reliving of the past with its objects. On the noematic side, the remembered object is not just an image, but “the past-object-itself” that presents itself. On the noetic side, the remembered self and remembering self constitute an identity. There is a structure of givenness of the object that does not allow for its fragmentation into sequences or sections. The object is always given as an “internal holding together of parts.” Thus our understandings of things do not determine their being. I cannot thus reduce
commandment-obedience, public-private, enemy-friend, and nation, to be just what I think them to be. Identity is what is to be grasped in the givenness of the thing. Such identity is not reducible to one or to the sum of its appearances. The multiple perspectives are constitutive parts of the structures in the constitution of the object.

The identity of the object conceals and reveals. Beyond its presented parts, and the views, thematizations and systems about them, the thing retains some zone of autonomy to itself. Our expression of things does not circumscribe the given. “The meaning just is the identity that is within and yet behind all of its expressions (…). The horizon of the potential and the absent surrounds the actual presences of things. The thing can always be presented in more ways than we already know; the thing will always hold more appearances in reserve.” Absence and presence constitute the core of givenness. Sides are given which conceal or announce other sides. Absence plays an important role both in protensional and retentional acts of consciousness. While protension and anticipation intend the not yet given, memory actualizes the no longer here. The presence of the thing is thus a cancellation of an absence and a tension toward another absence through a presence. Thus, “when we appreciate the presence of a thing, we appreciate it precisely as not yet absent: the horizon of its being possibly absent must be there if we are to be aware of the presence. The presence is given as cancelling an absence.”

We are at this point faced with the question of the genesis of consciousness of transcendent object as such.

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50 Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 28
51 Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 37
Absence and presence do not send us to the fragmentation of the object through time. They are constitutionally means through which the object reveals itself as an identity in the limits of human knowing. They are parts of the constitution of consciousness itself in its intentional acts. There is a law of givenness of the object that states that physical objects are always given with a horizon of co-present givenness.

Inadequate modes of givenness belong essentially to the spatial structure of things; any other way of givenness is simply absurd. We can never think the given object without empty horizons in any phase of perception and, what amounts to the same thing, without apperceptive adumbration. With adumbration there is simultaneously a pointing beyond what is exhibiting itself in a genuine sense. Genuine exhibition is itself, again, not a pure and simple possession on the model of immanence with its \( \text{esse} = \text{perci} \); instead, it is a partially fulfilled intention that contains unfulfilled indications that point beyond. The originality of exhibiting the transcendent thing in the flesh necessarily implies that the object as sense has the originality of apperceptive fulfillment and that this harbors inseparably a mixture of actually fulfilling and not yet filled moments of sense.\(^{52}\)

The transcendence of the physical thing is the mark of its self-insufficiency. However, the inadequacy of the physical thing carries within itself, the possibility of its being perfected through completing sides. Perception is always open to newness, to new contributions. It is never closed. The identity of physical things is constituted through organic holding together of series of profiles and perspectives. While the physical thing is given perspectivally, immanent objects are absolutely given. Immanent objects do not have “unfamiliar sides.”

There is a permanence and identity of the object that is perceived through all its different moments of givenness.

The empty intention is correlated with the absence of the object, the filled intention is correlated with its presence. However, in addition to the empty and

\(^{52}\) ACPAS, p. 56
the filled intending, there is also an act of recognition, an act of identification, that is correlated with the identity of the object itself. This third act transcends the empty and the filled intentions, just as the object’s identity transcends its presences and absences.\textsuperscript{53}

This brings back the Platonic question of: how would you know that that which you have found is that which you were looking for, if you do not know what you are looking for? The identity of the object conditions the different acts that intend it.

The identity of the object is given with its presented and apperceived sides. Apperception is the surplus of givenness whereby we grasp the thing with more than what is given. And the more is a constitutive part of the thing; it is what which contributes to its identity. It is the co-presence of missing profiles in the given ones. The organic unity of the object makes it possible for it to be given as adumbration of parts. Perception for instance has its background of objects given as co-present but not necessarily co-intended. When we are seeing a sunset, we have the blue sky, the clouds, the forest, and the horizon are all part of the sunset, but the sun itself is what is perceived. All the rest are apperceived, appresented. There is an encompassing identity of consciousness that detaches the object from a background of objects and takes it as its theme. Such identity of consciousness also grasps the same datum through the different modes of its givenness. The now and the presented sides are continuously co-presented with the not now or the apperceived. The unity of the temporal object is always given in a stream of consciousness. Husserl speaks of the impossibility of seeing a comet without its tail or to hear a melody without retention of past tones.

\textsuperscript{53} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Introduction to Phenomenology}, p. 38
The unity and identity of the object integrates its sides, profiles and parts. The given is not a construction of the mind. Parts, moments, perspectives, and profiles of the object are given in a single movement of consciousness’ grasping of the object. Paradox is the way the object presents itself. The given is wholly given in-itself but at the same time, it retains some zone of autonomy to itself. All of its aspects and profiles are given at once and immediately accessible to the perceiver. The horizon of the thing-in-itself is a horizon of transcendence. There is an allure of things that structures the intentional act. The object itself through its constitutional form motivates the intentional act. Husserl used the notion of motivation to show the fact that the object itself through its own constitution calls for the act that constitutes it as noema. The ego ushers a world of appearances but not in an absolute fashion. On the noematic side, we see that there is a “propensity to be” of objects themselves. Noetically, there is a “propensity and to turn toward attentively.”54 There is thus a law of givenness carried by the object itself. Such law is a constitutive part of the structures givenness.

The intentional act is active in the sense that it stems both from the object and the subject. The concept of the “noematic core” used by Husserl in Ideas I is replaced in the Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis, by optimal, optimum, “maximum richness and differentiation in a unity.”55 The thing itself constitutes itself as norm of its givenness. The identical is attended to through different acts. This raises also the fact that not all intentional acts are the same. The optimum givenness, as a continuous enrichment in the givenness of the object, occurs in specific acts where parts articulate themselves as

54 ACPAS, p. xlvii
55 ACPAS, p. liii
they show forth. Husserl’s discussion of founding and founded acts can be brought back here. There are acts that have others as ground of their unity. They are founded acts; those that assure the unity are the founding acts.

The significant concept of a whole can be defined by means of the concept of foundation, as follows: By a whole is meant a totality of contents which are comprised by a unified foundation, and that without the aid further contents. The contents of such totality are called parts. The expression ‘unity of foundation’ means that every content is connected with every one, whether directly or indirectly, through foundation.56

Contents are founded on one another but ultimately all of them are founded on the whole that constitutes their unity.

From our preceding part, we see how perception is a pretention, because it pretends to give the thing in itself and yet, it can do so only through a series of unending adumbration of manifolds or profiles. The profiles of perceived objects can never be exhausted in givenness.

The perspectival adumbration through which every spatial object invariably appears, only manifests the spatial object from one side. No matter how completely we may perceive a thing, it is never given in perception with the characteristics that qualify it and make it up as a sensible thing from all sides at once. We cannot avoid speaking of such and such sides of the object that are actually perceived. Every aspect, every continuity of single adumbrations, regardless how far this continuity may extend, offers us only sides. And to our mind this is not just a mere statement of fact: It is inconceivable that external perception would exhaust the sensible-material content of its perceived object; It is inconceivable that a perceptual object could be given in the entirety of its sensibly intuitive features, literally, from all sides at once in a self-contained perception.57

56 Marvin Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy*, p. 304
57 *ACPAS*, p. 39-40
The full object is composed of its sides – both those that are genuinely perceived and those that are not. The presented sides are thus an invitation into exploring the whole of the object. On the noematic sense, the presented sides are given in an adumbration that refers to something more to be seen. The object constitutes itself as an “epistemic possession” through empty and fulfilled moments of givenness. The present sides are likely to slip into the zone of absence. They become absent sides, but that does not mean they have slipped into nothingness. They are the bold integrative parts of presented object. The visible becomes non-visible without necessarily being lost. There is thus a dialectical relationship of the visible and the invisible, the present and the absent, in the givenness of physical objects.

2.3. Variation and Modalization and the Unity of Meaning

The object is an identity that consciousness grasps through its perspectival presentations. “Consciousness refers in and of itself to objectlike formations, that is, it refers to the identical element in diversely varying sense.”58 Circumstances determine occasional expressions. We are immersed in a particular circumstance or situation from which expression itself emerges. However the validity and truthfulness of an expression cannot solely be confined within the limits of its utterance. In other words, truth is not relative to particular circumstance even though it is within such a circumstance that it is manifested as true. Objective expression however does not vary. Objective expressions are fixed and

58 ACPAS, p. 387
free from variation. Husserl thinks of variation as a way of getting at the being of the object itself. Variation is the “art” of putting the object under different act qualities or modes and seeing what remains that is of the object itself. The ideal would be to just transform subjective expressions into objective ones, but such attempt appears to be difficult, because of the difficulty tied to up putting into “objectively fixed fashion” realities like subjective time and space-position. The necessity of variation comes from the fact that we need to move beyond acts of meaning to meaning itself, as the invariable that sustains the variable. When meaning is detached from its subjective conditions in the psychological and grammatical connections, we lose the truth of things as such.

The contingency of expression does not limit meaning itself. We need to think of the object in its universality. The object is to be separated from the many predicates that are oriented toward it. The object is the identical core of the different intentional acts. Thus the object “becomes separated as central noematic moment: the ‘object’ [“Gegenstand”], the ‘Object’ [“Objekt”], the ‘Identical,’ the ‘determinable subject of its possible predicates’ – the pure X in abstraction to all predicates – and it becomes separated from these predicates or, more precisely, from the predicate-noemas.”

The object as such is the condition of the predicates. Even logical propositions are conditioned by essential phenomenological forms. Consciousness constitutes itself through its different modes, by correcting its different moments. There is a condition under which such constitution and correction occur. The stream of consciousness is correlative to the stream of the object itself. Things are more then their presented or

59 Ideas I, p. 313
perceived sides. The given always points to possibilities. We have the possibility of a
noetic grasp and that of a noematic structure of givenness.

Perception occurs always in a stream of givenness that ends in a synthesis. Such
synthesis itself can be interrupted by modalization or variation. In fact the object that is
given can be halted and questioned. It can be put into doubt and brought to another level
of givenness. This enriches the object rather than impoverishing it. The object of
perception can become the object of doubt, question, wish, discussion, etc. All these
different modes will bring to consciousness the fact it is the same object that is the object
of these different act-qualities or modes of approaching it. Certainty itself can be
modalized by the insight into the open horizons of the object. In fact, as stated by
Husserl, we can see “open possibility as modalization of certainty. But this modalizing
consists in the fact that an indeterminately general intention, which itself has the mode of
certainty, implicitly bears in a certain way a diminution of its certainty with respect to all
conceivable specifications.”60

In terms of the modification of certainty, we can think of Galileo and his epoch.
The certainty that the sun was turning around the earth was modified, varied, by Galileo’s
insight to the fact that it was rather the opposite. Through the modification of a common
belief, Galileo came to establish a scientific theory. The new possibility opened by
Galileo lead to a new certainty: the earth turns around the sun. The disclosed expectation
had to find fulfillment in the self-givenness of the object itself. The position taking of the

60 ACPAS, p. 83
ego appears thus to be an active “modal modifications of passive doxa.”61 Through its position taking the ego validates or invalidates the assumption of the passive reception of the given. The ego needs to strike down doxic validities in order to come to certainty, to the knowledge of the object itself. Certainty is not a matter of passive reception of the given. It is not a matter of mere enticement where one emotional or sensual attraction outweighs others. It is not a matter of subjective inclination toward one attraction or the other. Certainty must be grounded on the “matter itself as a concordantly constituted experience.”62 We must guard ourselves from the naïve belief that every consciousness in lived experience is a striving toward the givenness of the object itself. There are naïve intendings like in the case of enticement where things are not constituted in consciousness as intentional unities.

There are different levels or meanings of passivity itself. There is a way in which sense is constituted through time. On the noetic side, such constitution occurs in the activity of retention, in which the perceived past contents of consciousness pass into new ones in time. On the noematic side, there is a concordance between sides or profiles of the object. Thus passive modalization occurs when a new appearance does not fit in the sketched harmony of the presentation, when the sense is not fulfilled through the new appearance. Dysfunction occurs thus in the givenness of the object. The intervention of the abnormal raises question about the structure of the object. Modalization is the experience of otherwise and as such, a challenge to “the way things are.”

61 *ACPAS*, p. 92
62 *ACPAS*, p. 98
Modalization is an experience of ‘otherwise,’ and arises when a new givenness challenges the intended straightforward presentation of sense. It can do this by annulling, suspending, or by crossing out the intended sense. But this modalization, which is concretely a question of genesis, also radiates back into the retentional phases themselves, preserves the old sense as crossed out, superimposing and reconfiguring a new sense through a ‘retroactive crossing out.’

Thus modalization does not throw away past acquisitions. It rather enriches them with new meanings. It acknowledges them as crossed out and annulled.

Evidence and confirmation belong to passive synthesis. Passivity means here that the ego does not have an active participation in the formation of sense. It is not of its sole making. In sensibility for instance, the ego just receives sense data. Passivity can also be understood at the level of perceptual and pre-predicative, pre-reflexive, and pre-linguistic level. The thing itself constitutes itself in for the ego. The ego does not make it be. There is also the level of objectlike passivity – the object as not yet fully constituted, as not yet attended to by the ego shows up in the reality of its being. Passivity is thus the founding level of the intentional experience, the subsoil for the ego’s activity. For Husserl all acts are founded in the sensuous. Even categorial acts are founded in the sensuous. Founded acts are categorial acts. They are divided into those that are purely categorial and those that are blended with sense. Ultimately, even the categorial have some foundation in the sensuous.

Modification refers us to an unmodified core, to the origin, the genesis, of the object as such. As stated by Husserl, modification always refers back to the unmodified or unmodalized “primal form of the mode of believing” in the proto-doxa upon which

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63 ACPAS, p. xxxix
modalizing acts are founded. In reference to this proto-doxa, consciousness appears to be a “simple belief in an unmodified sense.” What is said here bring us back to Husserl’s principle of all principles: unless we go back to things themselves, we lose the ground upon which the philosophical reflection itself can be founded. It is only by turning our regard to our thematic or non thematic relation to things that we start the phenomenological movement. We have to take such relations as themes and reconsider them in a new fashion.

The term modification refers, on the one hand, to a possible transmutation of the phenomena, thus to a possible actional operation; on the other hand, it refers to the much more interesting eidetic peculiarity of the noeses or to the noemas in their pointing back to something other, something unmodified in their own essence, without any consideration of origin. But in both respects we stand on pure phenomenological grounds. For the terms transmutation and origin here refer to phenomenological eidetic occurrences and in no way signify empirical mental processes as facts of Nature.\footnote{Ideas I, p 253}

The mental processes themselves can function just as proto-doxa. Modalization occurs then when an “old sense is declared invalid, and another sense is interposed as valid.”\footnote{ACPAS, p. 70} We may believe that the grey mound we have perceived is a small land elevation. As we approach it, we see that it is an elephant. This other sense is imposed as valid.

Both in modalization and in variation, there is a search of the invariant structure that underlies the ego’s act. In modalization, a new sense is imposed that comes to change an old one. Valid sense itself is founded on ultimate sense as such. In variation, there is always a consciousness of unity that underlies varying acts. That which changes always changes in reference to the identical and the invariable. The aim of variation is

\footnote{Ideas I, p 253}

\footnote{ACPAS, p. 70}
thus to realize a perfect givenness by bracketing the contingent and merely factual. Through variation, we put the object in its various modes in order to get at its core, its invariant structure. Truth of being and truth of things themselves are identical here. Through this discovery of the “whatness” of things, we go beyond the dichotomy between the phenomenon and the noumenon. As stated by Quentin in his introductory note to *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, if

> to know things absolutely is to know their essence, phenomenology must be able to reveal the essential whatness of whatever is proposed to its investigations, and this whatness must be discoverable in appearances. For Husserl the dichotomy of ‘thing-in-itself’ and ‘thing-as-it-appears’ (noumenon-phenomenon) is an illegitimate concession to dualistic, causalistic metaphysics. Only ‘truths of reason’ can be objects of knowledge in the strict sense, but only what is essentially, necessarily true can be a truth of reason. Finally, only where there are no non-rational elements in the act of knowing – no elements of conjecture, of facticity, of contingency – can there be a knowing which has the absolutely true as its object.66

Being or the truth of things appears to be the intentional structure that is to be reached, as moment of genuine knowledge. The main thing is to demonstrate the unity of thought through different acts.

We cannot speak of modalization in the case of immanent objects, because such objects are always given with certainty. There are also meanings that we cannot vary. Expressions whose meanings are objective and fixed are not subject to variation. Husserl seems to imply that there are meanings that can be divided into objective and subjective. The meaning of subjective expressions is an ideal meaning that does not depend on utterance. The being-in-itself of the object is that which is intended and given through expressive acts. To being-in-itself corresponds truth in itself. Knowledge of the thing in

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66 *PCP*, p. 45
itself is knowledge of truth as such, which is objective. Knowledge is realized when meaning-intention coincides with meaning-fulfillment, when it terminates directly in a corresponding intuitive presentation. We deal at this point with evident necessity. Intuitive presentation, which is a necessary condition of meaning, is the presentation of the thing itself beyond its manifold presentations. The consciousness of fulfillment and that of identity are correlated.

Disappointment as the opposite of the synthesis of fulfillment, as the givenness of the object itself, is one of the signs of modalization. In fulfillment new sides enrich previous ones through adumbration. Such is not the case in disappointment, where the intended can even get annulled by the appearing object, as seen in modalization. I intend a grey mound just to find out that it is actually an elephant. I can anticipate from the appearing of the red and ball-shaped side of an object, that the other side will be red and ball-shaped. But then a green and indented side appears instead. Anticipation can either be confirmed or disappointed. The appearing of the object may or may not exactly correspond to our anticipation. The main point here is that either in disappointment or confirmation, we deal with an ideal that is either fulfilled or disappointed. In either case it is self-givenness that constitutes the measure of the act. Truth is a matter of an agreement between the meant and the given in intuition.

Evidence as a subjective experience of truth is a matter of an objective agreement. As Velarde-Mayol puts it, “truth is the objective correlate of the synthesis of fulfillment: the intentional objects of both acts agree or adequate each other. Evidence is the experience of this agreement, or as Husserl puts it, the immanent experience of truth (...).
Evidence is the consciousness of an objective agreement."67 There is a difference between the particular and its *eidos* and this is what eidetic reduction tries to bring forth through variation and modalization. We need to see the invariable that stands as a law of discourse or discussion. The “what” that conditions any discussion about things must be invariable. The invariable constitutes the ground for agreement or disagreement about issues. The invariant structure must not however be identified too quickly with essence as such. While we arrive at the invariant structure through free variation and modalisation, we arrive at the *eidos* through abstraction from content. The two however stand at the heart of the search for the depth of things as that which constitutes the foundation of inner truth.

The act quality as “the mode in which a determined intentional object is intended” can vary, but meaning itself does not vary. The quality of the act is thus the means through which variation and modalization are operated. It “is responsible for the different kinds of intentional experiences. Objects are given *as seen, as imagined, as thought, as willed, as wished* for, etc. The matter is the moment of the intentional act that has the function of presenting a determinate intentional object.”68 The matter of the act sends us to a concrete objective reference – a chair, a mango tree, an elephant, a house, etc. The matter embodies the peculiar way in which the object is given. The quality of the act always needs a matter as its objective correlate. If I think, I need something to think about. Perception is perception of something. Doubt is doubt of something. As stated by Husserl, consciousness is always consciousness of something. The intentional essence is

the unity between the quality of the act and the matter. The quality of act can be simple or founded. They are simple when they simply present their objects, in terms of presentations, judgments, doubts, etc. This brings us to what we discussed earlier about objectifying acts and non objectifying acts. The simple quality-acts are objectifying. The founded are non objectifying. In the case of the latter, we see that although an experience of joy may have a relation to something external, it is not an intentional experience. It is a subjective mood. The experience of joy is founded on a simple act: the relation to the object that provoked it.

Quality and matter of the act always work together in the constitution of the object. Through free variation and modalization, we realized that the matter can be put into many qualities of act, and still remain the same: the elephant for instance. The manifold presentations of the object – thought of, dreamt of, wished for, etc. – are all united in the same and persistent object. The same bold object is carried through the different acts. This shows us the persistent identity of the object. Such identity cannot be reduced to physical appearances. The same object also can carry different meaning for different people, through different act qualities. However, this does not reduce its fundamental being or meaning. For instance, the calabash for the desert traveler represents refreshment, because it is a carrier of water to drink. His dreams or projects of the calabash are oriented toward a biological satisfaction. The same calabash represents a decorative instrument for a home decorator. He sees it as fitting in specific locations in the living room, for instance. The calabash fulfills an aesthetic function here. For a philosopher artist, the calabash represents a venue for the capturing of the beautiful. It is
a place where creative imagination can be expressed through specific drawings. For the farmer, the calabash is a source of income, an economic instrument. Whether for the desert traveler, the home decorator, the artist, or the farmer, the calabash is the One intended through the different acts and perspectives. “The object is a unity.”

What stands before us is not just an aggregate of parts, but an intentional unity. Judgment and percepts are united in the unity of the object itself. Such unity is “engineered by a single act-character” that inhabits meaning intention and meaning fulfillment. The identity of the object traverses the different acts that intend it. Perfection of givenness comes as an adequation with the thing itself. Self evidence is thus an act of coincidence, and identification, and as such an objectifying act. The objective correlate of this objectifying act is truth itself. Self-evidence as truth is a self givenness of the object. Husserl establishes three levels of such truth. Truth is the “full agreement of what is meant and what is given as such (…) [It is] the epistemic essence interpreted as the ideal essence of empirically contingent act of self-evidence, the Idea of absolute adequation as such (…) [It is] the object given in the manner of the object meant: so given, the object is fullness itself (…) [It is] the rightness of our intention (an especially that of our judgment), its adequacy to its true object…” Self-evidence appears thus to be a matter of the showing up of the identity of the object.

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70 *LI*, II, p. 263-4
Ch. 3 Transcendental Consciousness and the Structures of the World

There is an articulation of the thing-in-itself that presents itself forth as a unity. This articulation of the thing is revelatory of the structure of consciousness that grasps it. The unity of the object presents us with the unity of time consciousness, which is the unity of constitutive consciousness as such. In the evolution of his thinking, Husserl felt the need to articulate “the phenomenological seeing of the essences of cognitive acts (noetic in general) and their objects understood as pure possibilities of any consciousness whatsoever.”¹ This turn will gradually lead to genetic and generative phenomenology. He did this through the articulation of transcendental subjectivity and the structures of meaningfulness.

We will start the discussion with transcendental εποχή and transcendental reduction as two important doors into transcendental phenomenology. Transcendental εποχή and transcendental reduction free consciousness and give it absolute possibilities. They transform the mundane belief into a transcendental question. What will be of importance for us in this discussion will be to see how with transcendental reduction we reach that which is essentially human, that with which every sound consciousness can have a resonance.

¹ LI, I, p. xxxiv
3.1. εποχή, Transcendental Reduction and the Universal Horizon of Consciousness

As seen in the first chapter, in the natural attitude, the involvement with the world is an uninterrupted involvement. The belief in the thereness of the world is the most encompassing belief in this sense. In transcendental phenomenology we have to get at the essence of the object in-itself. Through the perceptual givenness of the object in transcentdental givenness, and through the grasping of the essence of the object in regional ontologies, we are led to transcendental givenness where the object in it-itself is that which is given. In eidetic givenness, we see that objects and facts are particularizations of eidetic truths, they are individuation of essences. The natural sciences stop at essences and find truth therein. For Husserl, however, eidetic ontologies, just as natural scientist’s truths, are naïve in that they do not search for the meaning of that which is given as it is constituted in transcendental subjectivity. We have to get to the meaning and origin of objectivity as such.

The givenness of the-thing-in-itself to consciousness is that which matters for transcendental phenomenology. Through the εποχή, consciousness starts the journey into

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2 Plato for instance thinks that the real world is the world of Ideas, where Forms are archetypes of worldly reality. The true and the good are thus all that pertain to the Forms and not objects. Worldly objects are instantiations of such ideal forms.
genuine investigation. Only after the world of the natural person, that of the regional ontologist, and that of the natural scientist are bracketed, do we understand the meaning of the world-for-consciousness. The naivety of the natural worlds and that of the natural sciences comes from their presupposition of the world as natural fact. The Husserlian εποχή, through its suspension of judgment, wants to bring us back to such a world in-itself.

The εποχή allows for the true disclosure of the sense of the reality that was taken for granted in the natural attitude. The aim here is to arrive at a “fully justified knowledge.”3 In the εποχή, “we put out of action the general positing which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude; we parenthesize everything which that positing encompasses with respect to being: thus the whole natural world which is continually ‘there for us,’ ‘on hand,’ and which will always remain there according to consciousness as an ‘actuality’ even if we choose to parenthesize it.”4 The refraining from judgment in the εποχή is not incompatible with the recognition of a world that is there. The main preoccupation here is to grasp the essential structure of that which appears straightforwardly. We press and draw from the existing world the reality of its being, by putting it into brackets. We discover the thesis of the world by refraining from using the world-at-hand.

The εποχή suspends the natural affirmation of the world, in order to come up with the thesis of the world and that which makes the identity and unity of the world. It alters

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3 Dan Zahavi, Husserl’s Phenomenology (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003) 44
4 Ideas I, p. 61
and puts the natural world and its assumptions out of action. In this phenomenological break away from the natural dogmatism, the ego stops taking itself and things for granted.

With regard to any positing we can quite freely exercise this particular εποχή, a certain refraining from judgment which is compatible with the unshaken conviction of truth, even with the unshakable conviction of evident truth. The positing ‘put out of action,’ parenthesized, converted into the modification, ‘parenthesized positing,’ the judgment simpliciter is converted in the ‘parenthesized judgment.’

Intentionality goes thus hand in hand with a phenomenological εποχή and reduction, which are an exclusion of all transcendences in order to grasp their meaning. Husserl’s main interest, in this phenomenological attitude, is to “understand and describe the a priori structure of [the intentional acts]. He is not interested in the naturalistic explanation that seeks to uncover their biological genesis or neurological basis.” The intentional act aims at meaningfulness.

The εποχή and the reduction that follows it show how the noetic – the ego’s act of intending – and the noematic – the object as meant – belong together in the movement of consciousness toward meaningfulness. The subjective conditions for the possibility of theory, the noetic, do not refer to real conditions rooted in a judging individual or in varied species of judging beings. It refers to ideal conditions rooted in the form of subjectivity as such. Phenomenology wants to describe “the essential structures of mental life”, the “life of consciousness as source of meaning.” On the other hand, objective conditions are the rational possibility of any thesis whatsoever. Husserl praises Descartes

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5 Ideas I, pp. 59-60
6 Dan Zahavi, Husserl’s Phenomenology, p. 13
in this sense, because Descartes was the first who suspended the naïve movement toward the world. Descartes was the first who critically broke away from the authority of empirical validities and embarked on the transcendental journey. His “method of doubt was the first method of exhibiting transcendental subjectivity.”

Descartes was the first who operated the significant task of coming back to subjectivity as that from which we draw the world as meaningful. Husserl however criticizes Descartes for naively dwelling on the presumptions of an objectivistic world. Descartes’ philosophy carried forward the presuppositions of the old logic influenced by the natural attitude. As stated by Suzanne Bachelard,

> From the fact of its naïve presupposition of the being-in-itself of the world, logic finds its place among the ‘positive’ sciences for which the being of the world in effect raises no problems. Logic can break with the naïve objectivism of positive sciences only after this presupposition is unmasked. Now this presupposition can only be unmasked by mean of radical criticism of cognition. Husserl recognizes Descartes as the one who was first to engage in such a criticism of cognition whereby not only *epistême* but even the lowest level of all objective cognition, i.e., sensuous experience and correlative the world itself, are placed in doubt. But Descartes, Husserl says, did not remain loyal to the radicalism of his devotion. An entire heritage of ‘prejudices’ weighed upon the new way of philosophizing which he inaugurated. In the first place, he presupposed the validity of logic; and yet, as we have just seen, logic implies belief in the existence of that world which Descartes proposed to doubt.

Descartes’ doubt ends up positing some objectivities as existing in themselves without explicating the constitution or origins of such objectivity. Descartes in fact from his finding of the ego, operates a deduction of the world from the “I am” and God.

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In order to understand Husserl’s critic of Descartes, we need first to present briefly and schematically Descartes’ understanding of the ego and its position in the world. Descartes, the father of modern philosophy, started his important *Meditations on First Philosophy*, with the assertion that in order to know, we need to rid ourselves of preconceived and received assumptions and opinions. We need to bring before the court of reason the foundations upon which our old beliefs and rationality are built. We need thus to critique sciences and traditions – understood as the Scholasticism and natural sciences – because their foundations are shaky. They do not yield true being.

Descartes started his philosophic journey with doubt: “I realized that it was necessary, once in the course of my life, to demolish everything completely and start again right from the foundations if I wanted to establish anything at all in the sciences that was stable and likely to last.”

The Cartesian doubt was radical, hyperbolic and universal. It is exercised on anything that bears the slightest reason for doubt. The only thing that survived the doubt was the certitude of the thinking being: “I think therefore I am.” For Descartes, the thinking person has to turn toward “no knowledge other than what could be found within myself.” The human subject is, only because he thinks. His existence is strongly tied up to the fact that he thinks. If he stops thinking, he also automatically stops being.

The questioning of all preconceived opinions and scientific knowledge based on the senses led Descartes to the indubitable awareness of the thinker: “cogito ergo sum”.

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“Je pense donc je suis”, “I think therefore I am”. “I” as the center of all operative intellectual processes and activities cannot be doubted. To reach the certitude of this thinking “I”, Descartes made a difference between innate and adventitious ideas. While adventitious ideas are motivated by the transcendent, innate ideas are immanent ideas and do not have transcendent origins. Such ideas that are not transcendent and do not have their origins in the senses must come from God himself and are therefore certain. He sees that the certitude of the “I” is an inner certitude and does not depend on the external. The “I” lives in the clarity of self presence that is itself founded on the certitude of God himself.

Descartes’ doubt has as its starting point the fear that the thinking person becomes an extension of the world. He thus laid down the foundations to thinking that things are not “simply there for me, on hand.”12 Descartes also established that mathematical figures are not adventitious and do not have their origin in the transcendent, they must be founded on God himself and therefore are true. He thinks thus of mathematics as paradigmatic for all human understanding. Descartes decided that what is clearly and distinctly perceived through the mind alone is true. The guarantee of truthfulness itself are the thinking mind/person and ultimately God himself since the finite can only rely on the infinite as guarantee of its existence.

Descartes’ philosophy carries forward the assumptions of the natural attitude. It operates with the categories of a priori causality, and takes the ego as absolute evidence. It does not turn toward inwardness itself and take it as an object for investigation. The

12 Ideas I, p. 51
Cartesian method of doubt thus offered a beginning to radical philosophy, but it does not stay faithful to its promises. Descartes was a first step toward transcendental subjectivity because he realized through the εποχή that the world does not exist for me transcendentally but as a meant world. However, Descartes did not pursue the logic of the εποχή into transcendental reduction and ultimately transcendental constitution. As stated by Husserl, Descartes “stands on the threshold of the greatest of all discoveries – in a certain manner, has already made it – yet he does not grasp its proper sense, the sense namely of transcendental subjectivity, and so he does not pass through the gateway that leads into genuine transcendental philosophy.”\(^\text{13}\) The εποχή and the reduction that follows it open the door to “a universal apodictically experienceable structure of the ego.”\(^\text{14}\) This is what Descartes failed to grasp. The “I am” is not the last word. It needed itself to become a “field of work.”\(^\text{15}\)

Descartes takes the ego as a thinking substance whose essence is to be turned toward itself and find therein the truth of reality. Descartes’ preoccupation was thus to find truth in the evidence of the thinking self. The critique of Descartes consists in the fact that Descartes thinks of the reality of the world only as a presumption of existence. He did not make a sufficient difference between transcendental subjectivity and psychological subjectivity. Transcendental phenomenology deals only with the world as meaningful, as phenomenon. To do this, we do not only need to put the world into brackets, to operate the εποχή, but we need to transcendently reduce it and constitute it.

\(^{13}\) CM, pp. 24-25
\(^{14}\) CM, p. 28
\(^{15}\) CM, p. 30
The Husserlian \( \varepsilon \pi \omega \chi \eta \), just like the Cartesian one, consists in the suspension of any affirmation or thesis of the natural world and its values and validities. The \( \varepsilon \pi \omega \chi \eta \) presents us thus with the world as an object of phenomenological investigation. Phenomenological \( \varepsilon \pi \omega \chi \eta \) as a bracketing of existence and a “keeping in suspense of any transcendent validity”\(^\text{16}\) is not an end in itself. It needs to take us into the structures of the ego as such.

In the \( \varepsilon \pi \omega \chi \eta \) we put into brackets the being-there-of-the-world-for-us. “We put out of action the general positing which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude; we parenthesize everything which that positing encompasses with respect to being: thus the whole natural world which is continually ‘there for us,’ ‘on hand,’ and which will always remain there according to consciousness as an ‘actuality’ even if we choose to parenthesize it.”\(^\text{17}\) Unlike the Cartesian bracketing, there is a recognition that goes with the Husserlian bracketing. We acknowledge the stubborn existence of what is bracketed. We just stop taking for granted such factualness. We stop an ongoing conversation with the world in order to understand the world in-itself.

The work of the \( \varepsilon \pi \omega \chi \eta \) is thus to create a new field of meaning whereby the world of transcendency is not suppressed but understood in a new way.\(^\text{18}\) Bracketing brings us back to this fundamental truth that the thing is more than its presented sides and profiles and that we need to understand how we grasp the unity of the world as meant by consciousness. This turns us to the ego as a constituting agent from which the world is given as a meant world. The Cartesian identification of the ego with the soul signs the

\(^{17}\) *Ideas I*, p. 61
loss of its apodicticity. Descartes substituted the individual inner experience with the experience of the ego as such. The Cartesian calling into question of the world thus falls into dogmatic assertions of some bits of the world itself without raising questions about their constitution in the essential intentional structures of the ego. The richness of the cogito consists in the fact that the cogito includes our whole life of transcendental actions and things involved in it. We needed to investigate into the ego’s grasping of the world as such.

The parenthesizing concerns thus the world as a fact, not the world as an ‘eidos’. The εποχή gives us a transcendental field which is the field of pure cogitatum, the pure objects of consciousness. Through the suspension of our assent to the world of the natural scientist, our eyes are opened to things themselves. The εποχή leads to the reduction of the natural world to a noematic phenomenon. The ego itself is reduced to being the center of psychic acts. Through the εποχή we put out of action natural sciences and their tendency to transform parts into wholes.

The equivalent of degenerate, ‘partisan’ philosophy in Husserl is the tendency to let one mundane science or opinion take over the role of philosophy, which should be disinterested and transcendent to the whole of ordinary experience and science. It may be psychologism, mechanism, or a mathematization of nature and man, but in each case the science of a part is allowed to rule over the whole. The epoché is a device contrived by Husserl to prevent this from happening.19

The naïve and natural attitude and the reflective attitude are put into brackets. Through the εποχή, we put out of action the natural world of objective sciences and praxis. Εποχή as bracketing of the thesis of the natural attitude is not a doubt of the

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existence of the world as such. We just target the understanding of the meaning of the world. We put out of action questions about the existence or not of things. What interests us is the givenness of things themselves, the unity of validity, the one, the thing in itself. We suspend the world-horizon of the natural attitude, whether scientific or pre-scientific. In the εποχή, we do not however withhold our assent to “all individual validities, carried out step by step.” If we have to go through individual validities, the εποχή would become a never ending task.

The fundamental belief in the thereness of the world as the “most basic conviction of consciousness” is bracketed in order to gain the world-meaning. The universality of the εποχή is thus to be understood in the sense that it does not apply to singular objectivities and correspondent intentions. The εποχή concerns itself with the implications of intentional structures in virtue of which each intending of objects goes with a background and an infinite horizon of co-intended objects. By doing this, the εποχή allows us to journey toward transcendental reduction. Reduction is a change of attitude that allows us to take what is bracketed as theme of transcendental phenomenological investigation.

Psychology itself as objective science is part of the transcendental problem. It needs thus to be reduced. However, since psychology stands between objective science and subjectivism, it can constitute a sort of “truly decisive field”. Psychology is “decisive for the struggle between subjectivism and objectivism. For by beginning as objective

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20 Crisis, p. 148
21 Robert Sokolowski, The Husserlian Meditations, p. 170
When suspended and reduced, psychology discovers its own “meaning-bestowing origins. With this, psychology suspends itself: it leads into transcendental phenomenology.” Psychic life, as a natural reality, “must (...) fall before the epochē.” We need to stop partaking in singular intentionalities, in order to describe what is in the immanent pure consciousness. We need however to know that “consciousness has, in itself, a being of its own which in its own absolute essence, is not touched by the phenomenological exclusion. It therefore remains as the ‘phenomenological residuum,’ as a region of being which is of essential necessity quite unique and which can indeed become the field of a science of a novel kind: phenomenology.

Thanks to the epochē, we understand the world-phenomenon as correlate of consciousness. It is only through it that we can start investigating into the being of the world as such. Thus, a “genuine transcendental epochē makes possible the ‘transcendental reduction’ – the discovery and investigation of the transcendental correlation between world and world-consciousness.” Thanks to the epochē indeed, “I stand above the world, which has now become for me, in a quite peculiar sense, a phenomenon.” Epochē is thus an integrative part of reduction, but it is not in itself reduction. Husserl speaks of “excluding” and “parenthesizing.”

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23 Crisis, p. 208  
24 Crisis, p. 399  
25 Suzanne Bachelard, A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic, p. 157  
26 Ideas I, pp. 65-66  
27 Crisis, p. 151  
28 Crisis, p. 152  
29 Ideas I, p. 66
“whereas the epochē entails a suspension of ontic commitment, and is thus characterized as the *gate of entry* (...), the reduction is the shift in attitude that is thereby made possible, that shift that thematizes the correlation between consciousness and world in order ultimately to lead back to the primal transcendental realm or basis.”

The ἐποχή, and the reduction that follows it, aim at disconnecting from convictions built upon the natural world in order to build up new convictions. Reduction as the instance of the articulation of the meaning of the world places the ego above its immediate self-interests and involvement with the world. It gives to the ego, the “Sein an sich”, “being in itself”. We reduce the world-for-use in order to understand its meaning as a world-for-us. The reduced world does not become a world within the ego. “Neither the world nor any worldly object is a piece of my ego, to be found in my conscious life as a really inherent part of it.” The reduced world reveals itself as an “immanent transcendence.” Through reduction, I discover in the validity of the world my validities. They are the results of the ego’s transcendental constituting acts. Such validities are however always already infected with the presence of others. Reduction and the constitution that goes with it ultimately help the ego understand others as co-intending beings. We are thus called to new life through transcendental reduction.

With the reduction, we turn toward the natural world, natural sciences and cultural sciences as objects of investigation. Human beings themselves, including the ego itself, as relational beings, that have body and live within society, are reduced. As stated by

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31 Suzanne Bachelard, *A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic*, p. 158; and CM, p. 26
Husserl, “together with the outward transcendence of physical objects, the ‘inward transcendence’ of the empirical ego – must fall under the reduction. In this move, the phenomenon of knowing, then, will be divested of all ‘psychological apperception’ and thereby rendered ‘pure’.” In this case, consciousness is no longer taken to be a “regular inhabitant of the world it takes as its object; it will be referred to as ‘pure consciousness’” or transcendental consciousness. As stated by Patočka, “The phenomenological reduction is (...) an act of absolute freedom in which the alienated mind/spirit returns to itself, discovering its absolute essence, its absolute being.” The transcendental ego’s task is thus to look into the acts in which the ego is involved and to take them as objects of transcendental investigation. There is a “concern for truth in itself” that is involved in such investigation. The ego needs to go beyond mythical and practical explanations in order to get at the knowledge of things-in-themselves.

Only through “phenomenological reduction, do I acquire an absolute givenness that no longer offers anything transcendent.” Mundane belief is transformed into absolute and indubitable givenness through the transcendental reduction. The transcendentally reduced world becomes the “sphere of absolute clarity, of immanence in the genuine sense.” We speak at this point of a priori knowledge, but “what does a priori knowledge mean, if not knowledge that is directed to general essences and that

33 *IP*, p. 7
34 *IP*, p. 8
36 *PCP*, p. 18
37 *IP*, p. 34
38 *IP*, p. 66
draws its validity solely from the domain of essence.” 39 In our previous chapter, we discussed modalization and variation, eidetic reduction and how they take us to the invariant structure of object – to its essential and non-essential properties. In eidetic reduction or variation, we imagine and vary the object as different from how it presents itself in the now-givenness. We get thus to the essential necessity of the object. The work of the transcendental subjectivity is to express the world as a unity of meaning. Such world-meaning stands beyond the interests of subjective and manipulative reason.

Phenomenological reduction reduces the transcendent and all that is not absolute givenness. In the transcendental reduction, the different essential regions and the sciences that deal with them become transcendental clues. Phenomenological reduction as a move from the mere receptivity of the natural attitude into a seeing of the meaning of the world is a production of consciousness. It allows us to inhabit a new attitude through and within which we re-learn the world. Phenomenological reduction allows things to disclose their inner being. The thing is thus able to appear not “chopped up in bits” but as a whole. Transcendental reduction is a reduction to the invariant structure through which the thing is given as the identity of its manifold presentations.

There is thus a fundamental difference between phenomenology and the sciences of essences. “Transcendental phenomenology, as a descriptive science of essence, belongs (…) to a fundamental class of eidetic sciences totally different from the one to which the mathematical sciences belong.” 40 When we regroup things according to nature or essential being, this tells us something about the unity of their givenness according to

39 IP, p. 38
40 Ideas I, pp. 169-170
types. Things regrouped this way are however still infected with transcendence. The transcendental work that starts with reduction aims at purifying them from such infection. While the Cartesian ego tries to secure an objectivity that it has, the Husserlian transcendental ego tries to understand such objectivity. It takes essences themselves as themes of investigation. As stated above, when phenomenological investigation takes us to free variation, facts lose their privilege of “being-just-there.” We are concerned with their invariable structure and with the constitution of their essence.

Free variation takes us to the “eidos” of things. In free variation, “our imagination takes us beyond the restrictions of actual experience.” In the “process of free variation we become aware of an identity that persists in all the cases we can imagine. It is the invariant, the essence, which is the basis of the similarity of all the examples we can contrive. Only because this essence persists in them can they be ‘variants’ of a paradigm and not random individuals.”41 The eidos is thus that which is carried through its instances and profiles. The eidos itself becomes in transcendental investigation a transcendental clue. The eidos is not like the overhanging Platonic Forms. Things are law governed and there is always a specific structure of their being that makes it possible for subjectivity to grasp them. While in the natural attitude we just go on living in things, in the phenomenological attitude we are concerned with the unity of the given. The fullness of the object does not reside in its one sided givenness. The concern of transcendental investigation is thus to understand how subjectivity grasps things as eidos and as unity of meaning.

41 Robert Sokolowski, *Husserlian Meditations*, pp. 63-64
The *eidos* we get at reminds us somehow of Heraclitus’ Logos as the unity that underlies the flow. Heraclitus stated that we do not bathe twice in the same river, yet we know that we always go back to the same river. This is a matter of the persistence of the Logos in the flux. Two fragments can help us illustrate this. “One cannot step twice into the same river, nor can one grasp any mortal substance in a stable condition, but it scatters and again gathers; it forms and dissolves, and approaches and departs.” (F. 51) Thus, “as they step into the same river, other and still other waters flow upon them.” (F. 50) What assures the permanence of the given is the Logos, so Heraclitus advises, “it is wise, listening not to me but to the report, to agree that all things are one.” (F. 36)

Unlike the Heraclitean Logos, which is a sort of transcendent condition of unity of being, the Husserlian condition is a transcendental unity. It is the unity that resides in transcendental subjectivity, and not an independent external condition of being.

Through the imaginative process of free variation, we discover properties of the object that cannot be varied without fundamentally affecting it. Fiction is thus a fundamental element of eidetic sciences and ultimately of transcendental phenomenology. As stated by Husserl, “if one is fond of paradoxical phrases, one can actually say, and if one means the ambiguous phrase in the right sense, one can say in

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42 Heraclitus reflected upon existence and being in terms of movement, the universal change that constitutes the reality of being, and the permanence that permeates that movement as its foundational principle. His aim was to penetrate into the causal realm of being. He wanted to know the source, the constituting principle of being, in the genetic sense of the term. Heraclitus thus revealed to us the necessity for the human spirit to listen to the Logos, which is the foundational principle of all knowledge. This Logos is the identity and unity of the diverse. It is the relation that constitutes the unity of the diverse flux and fluctuation. For Heraclitus, the authority of the thinker comes from his or her capacity to listen to the Logos which is present in things and speaks through them. The Logos transcends the flux, but also speaks through it.
strict truth, that ‘feigning’ [fiction] makes up the vital element of phenomenology as of
every eidetic science, that feigning is the source from which the cognition of eternal
truths is fed.”43 Fiction is vital to phenomenology. Actuality is not the end-point of the
return to things themselves. The freedom of variation takes us to the essential in the data.
“If (…) the theoretical eye directs itself to the necessarily enduring invariant in the
variation; then there will arise with this systematic way of proceeding a realm of its own,
of the ‘a priori.’ There emerges therewith the eidetically necessary typical form, the
eidos.”44 Eidetic reduction helps us thus get at the “invariant essential structures of the
total sphere of mental process.”45 Fiction reveals the freedom of essences from facts. The
eidos itself is however to be considered as a transcendental clue. It is not the end-point of
transcendental phenomenological investigation. We are led through reduction to the
phenomenological viewing, which is absolute givenness. Positive truths that are justified
by evidence in this case become transcendental clues, index for the knowledge of
transcendental subjectivity.

The reduction ends up thus revealing the a priori structures in subjectivity “from
which all being derives its sense.”46 Reduction through its free variation is “the
methodical procedure through which one returns to the origin of our knowledge.”47 In
this situation, transcendental subjectivity becomes a disengaged spectator that observes
its own and anyone else’s naïve and objective involvement with the world in a

43 Ideas I, 160; also Suzanne Bachelard, A study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic, p. 176
44 SW, p. 25
45 SW, p. 26
46 Suzanne Bachelard, A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic, p. 184
disinterested way. The ego as the fundamental structure of consciousness resists reduction\(^{48}\). The unreality of the transcendental ego is that which makes it impossible for it to be reduced to a moment of givenness. The transcendental ego is not material/matter, total passivity, and as such, it resists reduction. The ego is the pole of consciousness. It is the pole of actions and affections. It is the subject of the reduction. It is the unity of synthetic acts, and as such the necessary condition of them all. In order for consciousness to be, there must be an ego. The reification of the transcendental ego would consist in transforming it into being the cause of the world in terms of creation. Transcendental subjectivity is the subject itself given in a non-perspectival fashion. The bracketing and reduction of the world leads us thus to transcendental subjectivity as the zero-point of orientation, the invariant point, the center of the life of consciousness. Consciousness appears as the residuum that resists reduction. The ego is not reducible to some streams of consciousness. It is not a moment in the givenness of its different acts. The ego is the presence that is absent in the sense that it is not contained in the different acts that intend it. It is the center of the constituting operations. As such it is not part of the world.

3.2. Time Consciousness and the Horizon of Unfulfilled Expectations

Through phenomenological reduction, not only consciousness loses its insertion into the empirical world and space. It also loses its naïve relation to the time of the clock. Reduction introduces us to the question of time consciousness as such. Time consciousness as the most important question in phenomenology has a founding role with regard to any form of consciousness. Time consciousness has been present from the beginning of this discussion. We have seen it in the discussion about parts and whole. The possibility of the thing as open to kinaesthetic possibilities point to a reference on time as the possibility of moving around the given. The “dialectic of presence and absence” is a dialectic of time as such. The constitution of the object as a unity is a constitution that occurs in the continuity of identity. As stated by Kockelman,

For Husserl, reflections on time and consciousness of time are very important in phenomenology because consciousness of time is the most fundamental form of consciousness and is presupposed in all other structures and forms of consciousness. Time consciousness is an essential dimension of every conscious, intentional experience, so that the analysis of time consciousness in some sense must precede the analyses of all other forms of consciousness.49

The most important thing for transcendental phenomenology is to understand how the “immanent time of the flow of consciousness”50 is constituted in subjectivity as a unity. In the flow of consciousness, the now given object carries within itself open horizons. There is a continuity between the now object and its retained sides. As we have

49 Joseph Kockelman, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 272
50 *PCIT*, p. 5
seen in our previous chapters, objects are never given as sums of fragmented entities. They are always given as wholes constituted of perspectives, profiles, moments, and parts. In terms of our grasping of objects, synthetic consciousness converts what is given in many rays (polythetically) into one ray givenness (monothetically). Things present themselves as unity to consciousness. The preoccupation of the phenomenologist is thus to go beyond the mere data of consciousness to uncover the synthetic unity of consciousness. The identity of the object is that which is given to consciousness. The meant object is a “pole of identity” that is not just contained in its perspectival appearances. There is a “universal constitutive synthesis” in which all “syntheses function together” as a whole.\textsuperscript{51} The transcendent thing is always given as an enduring thing. Time individualizes and gives to objects their identity. Inner time-consciousness, as the pre-reflexive self-awareness, as the stream of consciousness, gives us a perception into the way we grasp things in our ordinary life. The work of transcendental phenomenology is thus to grasp and describe such givenness.

As stated above, transcendent objects can only be given perspectivally. Such givenness reveals the structures of consciousness. Consciousness by its essence cannot grasp through and through transcendent objects. As stated by Husserl, “it pertains irrevocably to the essence of consciousness that every act have its horizon of obscurity, that every act-performance, in the shift of the Ego onto new lines of cogitation (action) sinks down into obscurity. As soon as the focus of the Ego is withdrawn from it, it

\textsuperscript{51} CM, p. 54
changes and is received into the vague horizon.”52 Moments of givenness of the object blend into one another in the continuum of modifications. The object is always given as a continuous unity through its presentations. Such unity does not reside in the connecting work of consciousness. It belongs to the structure of the object as constituted in consciousness. It is a being in consciousness as its “immanent ‘objective sense’.” We need thus to understand consciousness as an “all-embracing ‘cogito’” that comprises particular processes.

Consciousness of internal time is the “fundamental form of (…) universal synthesis.”53 We have a melody because different tones fall into one another and give us a whole. A melody is not a sequence of independent tones. Past tones are inseparable from present one. Past, present and future tones hold together in the continuity of the melody. This is how they constitute a harmony. The flow is not a sequence of disparate phases. The phases rather appear as moments of a whole; they are co-actual. The object always stands before us in “its mode of running off.” It is “always and ever a different object.” However, “running off phenomenon is a continuity of constant changes.”54 The importance of time in Husserl’s phenomenology comes from the fact that temporality is the formal condition for constitution. In objective time, the time of daily routine, we experience in temporal objects the unity of now-phases. We are able to “perceive

52 Ideas II, p 114
53 CM, p. 43
54 PCIT, p. 28 and p. 29
temporal objects because consciousness is not caught up in the now. We do not merely perceive the now-phase of the triad, but also its past and future phases.\footnote{Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl's Phenomenology}, p. 82}

There is always a horizon within which the now is given. Every phase of the object contains primal impression, the now-phase that “articulates” itself through its taking upon itself of its past and its tending toward its future. As stated by Zahavi, “the temporal impression must be situated in a temporal horizon; and be accompanied by a retention, an intention that provides us with a consciousness of the phase of the object that has been, and a protention, a more or less indefinite intention of the phase of the object about to occur.”\footnote{Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl's Phenomenology}, p. 83} The organic relation between retention, now-phase, and protention constitute the unity of inner time, which is the unity of experience as such. Time as carrier of the unity of lived experience is to be understood as a flow rather than a sequence of moments. As stated by Merleau-Ponty, time is the place where events instead of pushing one another into being, project around the present a double horizon of past and future, and receive thus a historical orientation.\footnote{Maurice Merleau-Ponty, \textit{Phénoménologie de la perception} (Paris: Gallimard, 1945) 277 : « [le temps est ce lieu où] les événements au lieu de se pousser l’un l’autre dans l’être, projettent autour du présent un double horizon de passé et d’avenir et reçoivent une orientation historique. » He stated further, « [Percevoir c’est] engager d’un seul coup tout un avenir d’expérience dans un présent qui ne le garantit jamais a la rigueur, c’est croire à un monde. » p. 344}

A temporal object is always “constituted in a manifold of temporal profiles.”\footnote{Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution} (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970) 84} Phases in the givenness of transcendent objects are moments in the givenness of an identity. The successive tones of a melody are not understood as isolated entities, but as

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55 Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl's Phenomenology}, p. 82
56 Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl's Phenomenology}, p. 83
57 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, \textit{Phénoménologie de la perception} (Paris: Gallimard, 1945) 277 : « [le temps est ce lieu où] les événements au lieu de se pousser l’un l’autre dans l’être, projettent autour du présent un double horizon de passé et d’avenir et reçoivent une orientation historique. » He stated further, « [Percevoir c’est] engager d’un seul coup tout un avenir d’expérience dans un présent qui ne le garantit jamais à la rigueur, c’est croire à un monde. » p. 344
moments of the melody. “The temporal object is a unity in a manifold of phases.” “Only phenomenological reflection focuses on what is absolutely present to inner consciousness: the now-phase and the accompanying profiles of elapsed phases. These profiles are essentially overlooked by the nonphenomenological consciousness, because a new kind of reflection is needed to bring them to light.”59 We grasp the whole through the retention of elapsed phases. In inner time the now-phase, the elapsed-phase, and the future-phase constitute a whole in the givenness of the object. In inner time, we deal with absolute presence. Presence always carries within itself absence.

The holding together of phases reveals the fact that the world is not just a psychophysical object and that it is always a meant world, a world for subjectivity. Things hold together because “consciousness as a storied structure of constitutive accomplishments”60 always grasps the thing in itself as a unity, and not as an assemblage of fragmented independent parts. Time-consciousness presupposes thus intentional consciousness. For Husserl, our knowledge of objects begins with primordial impression, “Urimpression.” Following the primordial impression, perception, we have primary memory that slowly fades away and constitutes itself into the presence-absence of secondary memory. Even anticipation is to be perceived as a projection of the soon to be past. Phenomenology has the task of elucidating the givenness of the object as a unity to consciousness in these different phases. The identity of the object is that which is grasped in the flow. We can illustrate with the question of the identity of an individual person.

60 *ACPA*S, p. 269
How is it that the adult recognizes himself in the child that he was is a matter of this holding together of unity of identity. The adult speaks of himself in the first person perspective even when he is speaking of himself as a child. When we speak of the identity of a person we see the unity that runs through his historical trajectory. The unity of inner time is thus the unity of human experience as such.

The continuity of a prominent and primordial phenomenon that is given now, is only conceivable as the continuity of duration. Continuity is the “unity of a continual fusion passing from phase to phase.”61 Inner time consciousness allows us thus to stay in meaning when we are describing objects. The problem with non-phenomenological consciousness is that it equates consciousness with attention – as an attending to the given in the now-phase. Inner time allows us to see that pre-reflexive and anticipatory consciousness is not a marginal form of consciousness. If the now-consciousness was our only source of knowledge of the object then we run the risk of not being able to have enduring temporal objects. There would be no possibility of having a historical continuity. In the domain of ethics and responsibility there would be no possibility of fidelity and accountability. Inner time brings about the question of historical and creative fidelity as such. Consciousness has to articulate itself in “transcendence” – through its living present, it has to welcome its past and open up to future – in order to take hold of history. There is a proverb that states that unless you know where you are coming from, you wouldn’t know who you are now and where you are going to.

61 *ACPAS*, p. 188
Passivity – the welcoming of the past and the tension toward the future, which are not of the making of the active cogito – participates thus in the constitution of the active grasping of the ego. Passivity is an integrative part of the ego pole. The self is both the pole of action and the pole of affections. As Benoist puts, the ego is the articulating instance of the “cleavage passivity/activity”.

The dialectic of passion and action is an integrative part of the dialectic of time. The constituting self, the one that is the fundamental structure of consciousness, is a consciousness that is already affected by its past and in tension toward its future. In terms of intersubjectivity, we will see that this affection is also the irruption or interruption of the Other in the self. The sensual data and feelings, the hyle, also show how before effecting its acts, the self is already “infected” with historical sedimentations. Its being is affected before it affects. Through the affects spring some associations that somehow condition the activity of the ego. The hyle carries consciousness to otherness – conceived as future and as the Other. Time consciousness introduces us thus to new dimensions of the ego and to the constitution of intersubjectivity. We will discuss this in our next chapters.

Passivity shows the fact that the temporal field contains in one movement the past, the present and the future. The present of a temporal field contains within itself its past and its anticipations of the future. Primal impression, the consciousness of the now-phase, cannot by itself give the object as a whole. There is a continuity between the now object and its retained sides. The past permeates the present and so retention is not to be understood merely as a reproduction. The now-object slowly slips into

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constituting/becoming a subsoil of the coming object. There is a sedimentation that occurs in the constitution of temporal objects. The slipping into one another of now-phases is a sign that time is more than a punctuation of moments and instances. We need to go to the origins of time, the “essence of time”, the primitive form of time consciousness. We find such sources in transcendental subjectivity. “Thus the ultimate source of all the achievements of subjectivity is found in the dimension of inner temporality.”

What is expressed in the unity of inner time is the unity of consciousness as such. This is the unity of the life of the ego. As such it is the condition of the possibility of all other synthetic acts. As stated by Stevens,

> Every synthesis performed by consciousness presupposes this fundamental form of the unity of conscious life. In this context, it seems that Husserl is not referring to temporality as noematic correlate, but the noetic aspect of time as the basic form of a universal synthesis which makes all other syntheses of consciousness possible. Therefore, Husserl stresses that the temporality of the life of consciousness is not simply a matter of observable fact, but rather an essential condition of the possibility of every imaginable ego.

Primary memory in such time is part of an ongoing experience. Secondary memory on its part presents us with something that is already past but that can at any time be recalled. The living present in this experience of time is an absolute concretum. As stated by Sokolowski, “in the transcendental reduction the world is transformed into phenomena in my stream of consciousness; in the apodictic reduction the whole stream of consciousness is transformed into phenomena within the living, flowing present. This present is

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63 Robert Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution*, pp. 77-78
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stretched, containing the central impression, retentions, and protention; presence, absence, and identity go on even in the elemental place."\textsuperscript{65} Consciousness is the “unity of the ‘immanent time’.”\textsuperscript{66} The enduring object in immanent time is here the enduring of the same through its manifold presentations. The pure ego is that which make it possible to have such permanence and identity of the living time. Time appears thus as “the universal form of all egological genesis.”\textsuperscript{67} Ego reveals itself through time as the unity of experience.

Transcendental ego grasps itself as a synthesis of time, as a unity of past, present, and future. Time is not a fragmented succession of now-phases. It is a unity of being and the identity of the object is constituted in the flow. Unless we have this unity of experience, parts become wholes and there arises a difficulty to have a discussion. In order for consciousness to understand itself, it has to “go beyond” the givenness in the now-phase. Retentional consciousness and protentional consciousness are parts of immanent consciousness as the tail of the comet is part of the comet. We can only see the comet through its tail. Immanent time appears thus as a time in which there is “duration and the alteration of what endures.”\textsuperscript{68} The now-phase of the intentional act presents us with things as existing in a continuum of protention and retention. The temporal mode of the present in perception “points to its horizons”\textsuperscript{69} of past and future. For Husserl, “every present moment of experience contains a horizon of the immediately past and a horizon

\textsuperscript{65} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Husserlian Meditation}, p. 159
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Ideas II}, p. 109
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{CM}, p. 75
\textsuperscript{68} \textit{PCIT}, p. 87 and p. 88
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Crisis}, p. 168
of the anticipated future. The actual present is thus a perduring form englobing retention of the ‘past now’ and anticipations of an after which is about to become now.”

The structure of the now-phase, retention and protention is the “unchanging form of inner consciousness, the form which retains its structure permanently throughout the perpetual changing flow of experience it encompasses. But although the form remains the same, one now-point differs from every other one by its different position in the flow of consciousness.” Primal apprehension as the now-point is a temporal phase that has its consistency in a whole that is made up of now-retention-protention. The now-phase is the phase from which time flows and objects becomes constituted. As such the immediate present, as the primordial phase, is not constituted.

All temporal phases are phases of the absolute present. It is only in the temporal flow that the object is constituted as an identity and given as object of intuition. As stated by Husserl, intuitive retention is a “first aspect of the fundamental lawfulness of the constitution of original time-consciousness.” And he adds: protention is the second aspect of “the genetic primordial lawfulness that strictly governs the life of consciousness as the time-constituting unitary stream.” There is thus a necessity to avoid the snares of confusing inner experience with perception. The object is richer than its now-phase. As stated above, this unity of time reveals the unity of the ego as such. New understanding of the self carries old ones in an organic way. The self is glued to his past.

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70 Richard Stevens, *James and Husserl*, pp. 62-63
72 *ACPAS*, p. 114 and p. 115
73 Robert Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution*, p. 91
74 Cf. Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, p. 70
of an individual story or history, there is always the haunting presence of the old in the new self. There is always an occurrence of “displacement” in the now-phase of self-understanding.

As stated above, we need to make a difference between givenness in inner time and mere transcendent perception. In inner time, the object is given as persistent through the unity of past, present and future. One of Husserl’s critic of Brentano is based on the fact that for Brentano only the now of perception is real. Husserl criticized him for not making a difference between act and content. Objectivity always has as its presupposition a consciousness of unity. Thus the question of time consciousness becomes the question of the interiority of knowledge as such. It becomes the question of the subjectivity that is the unity of the flow. We can thus understand the accomplishments of genuine theory only through a “clarification of principles”75 of interiority that form it. The psychologist’s questions about association on the transcendental level – the fact that one thing recalls the other on an external level – constitutes a starting point for genetic phenomenology. There is a law of association that conditions the unity of content in temporal continuity. Things that are constituted in consciousness are constituted as identities that are endurally present. We turn toward the psychic contents and take them as objects of investigation. We want in transcendental phenomenology to understand “the fusion forming a singularity of communion with regard to content.”76

75 ACPAS, p. 5
76 ACPAS, 176
While for Brentano, “original association” meant “an annexation of temporally modified representation to a given representation”\textsuperscript{77}, for Husserl, in original association or phantasy, we uncover the origin of time in subjectivity. We can use once more our example of melody. We see that we have a melody because different tones fall into one another in an “active” way giving us a whole. The capacity to perceive the falling into one another of these tones or the capacity to anticipate what is to come through the givenness of the tone is to be found in subjectivity itself. Not only in phantasy do we integrate one moment into another, but also from the known we project the unknown. Thus, “proceeding from the familiar tones, we would come to tones that we have never heard at all.”\textsuperscript{78} From his identification of content with act, Brentano ends up not answering the question of how time-consciousness is operative in the givenness of the thing. He did not answer the question of how the faded tone does not fall into nothingness but holds together with the now-tone and the projected tone, giving us thus a melody. There is a sort of transmutation of the now-phase into the new-phase that occurs in inner time. We cannot answer the question of the unity of the melody unless we answer that of inner time consciousness.

Primordial living retentions are a constitutive part in the constitution of objects. The faded phase of primal memory “enters” the now-phase giving it its meaning. And subsequently the now-phase is an integrative part of the anticipated phase. Retention has its horizon of the future, which is continuously disclosed and enriched with new events given in the now-phases. In recollection, we have one intention that is aimed at through

\textsuperscript{77} EJ, p. 14
\textsuperscript{78} EJ, p 14
the different fulfillments. The now, the before and the not yet are constituted as a whole in the unity of the enduring object. Objectivity presupposes a consciousness of this unity. Primal memory, secondary memory, the now-phase and anticipation of future belong to the different level of the constitution of the object as a unity. They involve passivity and activity in the constituting act. One of the things Husserl did in *Formal and Transcendental Logic* was to understand that passive synthesis is the integrative part of logic. We will discuss this at length in our next chapter.

The relationship between consciousness, reality and time is the basic form of constitution. The constitution of objectivity needs to be grounded and time consciousness helps in the process of such grounding. Objectivity raises the question of the constitution of the transcendent in immanent experience. The question is now to understand how consciousness reaches and constitutes that which is transcendent to its own immanence. In other words how does the constitution of “immanent transcendence” occur? The question itself will lead to that of the constitution of “intersubjective immanent transcendence.” The different “levels of constitution” bring us to the recognition of the intersubjective space of the constitution. Objective world carries a world-horizon. Such a world presupposes a community with common language and shared understanding. Language refers to an existing world of objects that exist as unities in consciousness. In fact if we take the work of the geometer, how can the internal structure of things that are available to him become available objectively unless it is constituted as an intersubjective unity?

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79 *PCIT*, p. 57
Time plays an important role for the constitution of intersubjective space. The unity of the object as constituted through time opens up a horizon for mutuality and intersubjective understanding. The Unity of time is thus a “unity of togetherness.”\footnote{EI, p. 159} It refers us to the horizon of intentions. The world constituted in inner time is the whole within which intersubjective relations are possible. There is thus a “necessary connection, on the basis of time as the form of sensibility, between the intentional object of all perceptions and the positional presentification of an ego and a community of egos.”\footnote{EI, 162} We have the unity of history because we have a unity of time. The monads live in a community of common understanding because they have the same world; they have a “temporal position” with regard to one another.

Phenomenology, we have said above, is “the science of all conceivable transcendental phenomena and especially the synthetic total structures in which alone they are all concretely possible.”\footnote{SW, p. 32} As an all-embracing science, phenomenology brings forth the knowledge that

Subjectivism can only be overcome by the most all-embracing and consistent subjectivism (the transcendental). In the [latter] form it is at the same time objectivism [of a deeper level], in that it represents the claims of whatever objectivity is to be demonstrated through concordant experience but admittedly [this is an objectivism which] also brings out its full and genuine sense against which [sense] the supposedly realistic objectivism sins by its failure to understand transcendental constitution.\footnote{SW, p. 32}
It is then now time for us to try to understand transcendental constitution, or how things are given to subjectivity in time as meaningful, carriers of values, and beings in themselves.

### 3.3. Transcendental Subjectivity and World Constitution

We come to absolute consciousness through the reduction of the different modes of apperception. Through the absoluteness of consciousness, we understand the relativity of specific objectivities and also their common absolute foundation in subjectivity. Reduction and time consciousness bring us thus to the awareness of the presence of subjectivity as a constituting principle. The pure ego appears as the constituting center from which things appear as unities. The constituting subjectivity leaves the sphere of naïve affirmations of objectivity “to situate” such objectivity in immanence. At this point, we move “beyond” static phenomenology to genetic and ultimately generative phenomenology. Here, we question assumptions of an objectivity that does not understand its genesis from transcendental subjectivity. Husserl operates thus a dialectic with regard to his own static phenomenology. As he stated,

> There is open to us the insight that an actually philosophic logic, a theory of science that explicates on all sides the essential possibility of genuine science as such and is therefore able to guide the development of genuine science, can grow up only in the nexus of a transcendental phenomenology. Historically existing logic, with its naïve positivity, its way of obtaining truths as objects of naïve straightforward evidence, proves to be a sort of philosophic puerility. An
independently developed logic of ideal signification-formation is just as unphilosophic as any other positive science.\textsuperscript{84}

Sciences are led astray because they do not raise the question of their genesis. Transcendental phenomenology aims at raising the question of the constitution of objectivity in immanence, the constitution of truth-for-us. Objects are always given as filled with meaning and values.

Constitution is the process through which meaning comes to be constituted for transcendental subjectivity. “In transcendentally reduced consciousness, (…), each act of reaching the object is an act of supplying it with meaning; any sense is the product of constitution, including, in particular, the sense of an object as an existing one.”\textsuperscript{85}

Constitution of immanent objects is a process of “accumulation” in which the object arises as a unity of partial phases. The world of the transcendental subjectivity is thus the “world for me.”\textsuperscript{86} Ego constitutes the objects to which it can return. The question we dealt with in time consciousness was to see how “temporal objectivity (…) can constitute itself in subjective time consciousness.”\textsuperscript{87} That question here comes down to that of the constitution of the unities of meaning. Constitution is thus a work of letting the object be “seen in its objectivity.”\textsuperscript{88} The work of phenomenology, which is to uncover the origin of meaning and the sense of everyday experience, appears then to be an uncovering of a subjective condition of the possibility of the world as such.

\textsuperscript{84} FTL, p. 13
\textsuperscript{85} Leszek Kolakowski, \textit{Husserl and the Search for Certitude} (South Bend: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001) p. 65
\textsuperscript{86} Ideas II, p. 196
\textsuperscript{87} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution}, p. 101
\textsuperscript{88} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Introduction to Phenomenology}, p. 73
The transcendental ego is thus “the primal logos from which everything else”\textsuperscript{89} originates. Reality exists by virtue of a sense-bestowing subjectivity. There is according to Husserl a contradiction in talks about a universal doubt, because even though the ego doubts of everything, its knowledge of its own questions about knowledge is something its holds to be true. The “original formation of meaning” is a result of the act of transcendental subjectivity. “All objective being has in transcendental subjectivity the grounds for its being; all truth has in transcendental subjectivity the grounds for the cognition of it, and if a truth concerns transcendental subjectivity itself, it has those grounds precisely in transcendental subjectivity.”\textsuperscript{90} Consciousness as the residuum, as that which remains when everything else is bracketed, is the condition of the “absolute ground for all posittings.”\textsuperscript{91} It is only such a consciousness that is not embedded into the transcendent that can grasp the world as meaningful. Such consciousness is that which gives us the identity and unity of things.

As discussed above, in terms of inner time, for instance, we see that the past does not fall into nothingness. The past is carrier of its future. The unity of time in transcendental subjectivity itself opens up the possibility of an intersubjectively constituted world. The grasp of the world beyond particular worlds is what establishes and assures communication between souls and meaningfulness in intersubjective relations.\textsuperscript{92} The ego as an active being constitutes itself as a pole of identity. It constitutes

\textsuperscript{89} FTL, 272
\textsuperscript{90} FTL, p. 274
\textsuperscript{91} Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith, \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Husserl} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 61
\textsuperscript{92} Cf. \textit{Crisis}, p. 254
habitualities, a constituting of objects toward which one can return over and over again.

Sense, once constituted, becomes an enduring reality to which one can return over and over again. As stated by Merleau-Ponty,

> there was an Erzeugung (‘production’) which has passed away, but which, by passing away, by becoming passivity, never becomes nothing, which on the contrary offers it for this reason as an activity of Wiedererinnerung <‘recollection’>, which is going to be the experience of Deckung <‘coincidence’> is going to be between what is remembered and what was produced with the evidence of the Erzeugung (...). The activity of the Widererinnerung is the realization, production of what was originally produced.\(^93\)

The ego as the one that operates the unity of synthesis is a unity of inner time. Experience is “essentially a stream”; it is a unity “constituted in a manifold.” Constitution is thus about presenting the unity of the thing found in the continuous experience of the ego. It is a way of accounting for the unity of the moments of consciousness. Retention and protention are “intentional relation (...) of phase of consciousness to phase of consciousness; and in this case the phases of consciousness and continuities of consciousness must not be regarded as temporal objects themselves.”\(^94\) The experience of truth is lived rather than objectified. The ego does not cognize the world as a world without sense. We grasp a sense-filled objectivity.

The world gains validity and sense only from its being meant by transcendental subjectivity. The “subjectivity of consciousness, which, as psychic being, [the theme of psychology], cannot be that to which we go back in our questioning into the

\(^{93}\) Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002) 22

transcendental.”95 We need to investigate into the question of objectivity from subjectivity. The transcendental ego, as a constituting ego precedes all that is worldly, including psychological self and others. Thus, the unities that we gain through free variations, phenomenological reduction, and in the discussion about time consciousness, and regional ontologies are transcendental clues that guide us to the sources of that which is known, and how it is constituted in subjectivity. The unity of experience does not have its principle and end in experience. The task of transcendental phenomenology is thus to understand the “universal constitutional Apriori” that governs the life of consciousness.96

As stated above, formal ontologies become transcendental clues for transcendental subjectivity in its constituting act. The region, physical thing for instance, is a transcendental clue.97 The phenomenological eye, in its seeing of the physical object, grasps only its identity through its different modes of presentation. Regional ontologies thus become an important stage in the transcendental constituting act. Passing through the basic level of constitution, which is perception, we realize that the perspectivally given object does not fulfill itself in mere perspectives. We then seize the object as belonging essentially to types, to a certain ontological region. We need however to go beyond this stage, because we need to understand how regions themselves get constituted. We need to get to transcendental subjectivity and see how the object is constituted as an in-itself.

Once we stop taking the world for granted through the εποχή and once we have reduced the world, we need to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of the world.

95 SW, p. 29
96 FTL, p. 246
97 Cf. Edmund Husserl, Idées directrices, p. 360
The work of phenomenology is a work of uncovering the constituted sense of the world. As stated by James Dodd,

Philosophical reflection, as an uncovering of the origin of the everyday sense of the world, thus of its truth as well, is the realization of an inner possibility of a subject, in particular of a subject who thinks, believes, holds a thesis. This truth of the world, in whatever form it manifests itself (explicit or implicit), is actual only given the prior realization of the position of a subject towards it – it is the subject, within a certain attitude, that provides the horizon for its signification.98

It is always an ‘I’ who thinks the world in a specific sense. In the constituting act the ego asserts itself to be not just one object among others. All objective truth needs to be founded transcendentally. The world of which we speak needs to have subjective validity. As stated by Husserl, “everything becomes perfectly clear when we say to ourselves, or each of us says to himself: the world of which I speak, the world of which the Chinese speaks, of which the Greek of Solon’s time speaks, the Papuan speaks, is always a world having subjective validity.”99

The ego is the “identical pole” of lived experience. It is the center of all psychic acts. The “structure of lived experience” point back to the intentional/directedness of the ego toward its objects. Objectivity is always an accomplishment in the subjectivity of the life of consciousness.100 The sense of reality is dependent upon subjectivity. Consciousness constitutes the world as a phenomenon. The fact that the transcendent is constituted in immanence becomes an enigma of consciousness as such. Consciousness in

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99 Crisis, p. 325 (also pp. 175-176). We will see later on how on this specific point there are inconsistencies in Husserl’s thinking when he identifies, strictly speaking, culture and rationality with Western/Greek culture and rationality. There is some menace of totalitarianism in Husserl’s thought while such through claims to find the strictly human upon which intersubjectivity can be meaningfully built.
100 Cf. EJ, pp. 30-31
its intentional movement allows things to emerge in themselves. Consciousness constitutes the object as a unity of meaning. Constitution, as an expression of the givenness of the object as meant by consciousness, brings us once more back to the reality that “things are not in consciousness as matches in a box.”101 There are conditions under which constitution is operated. The first of those are the conditions under which the object shows forth. The second is the intersubjective field within which constitution occurs. Ego founds meaning, through personal choices and activities, but as a member of a community it also follows others and lives by rules that are not of its making. It also assumes shared convictions. Constitution is thus not creation *ex nihilo*.

There is thus no arbitrary attribution of values or sense by the constituting act. Ego constitutes meaning but such constitution is conditioned by the structure of objects themselves. As stated by Husserl, objectivity points to a structure that is governed by a rule.

Any ‘objective’ object, any object whatever (even an immanent one), points to a structure, within the transcendental ego, that is governed by a rule. As something the ego objectivates, something of which he is conscious in any manner, the object indicates forthwith a universal rule governing possible other consciousness of it as identical. (…) Transcendental subjectivity is not a chaos of intentional processes. Moreover, it is not a chaos of types of constitution, each organized in itself by its relation to a kind or a form of intentional objects. In other words: The allness of objects and types of objects conceivable for me – transcendentally speaking: for me as transcendental ego – is no chaos; and correlative the allness of the types of objects is not a chaos either: noetically and noematically those multiplicities always belong together, in respect of their synthesis.102

The object itself is an identity to which consciousness turns. The constituting act welcomes and expresses something that is always already constituted *in sense*. For

101 Joseph Kockelman, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 156
102 CM, p. 53
instance, when we speak of a house there are things that are expected in the discourse. We do not speak of a house as we would of a tree. A house is not a tree.

The main question we need to raise at this point is to know how consciousness can be both that which constitutes the world and at the same time part of the world. There is thus a paradoxical and dialectical relation of consciousness to the world that needs to be articulated. The ego both belongs to the world and withdraws from the world in order to express it. This is the “paradox of subjectivity” as such. The paradox raises the question of whether humans are double beings, in the sense of being on the one hand psychological beings, “as human objectivities in the world, the subjects of psychic life” and on the other hand transcendental subjects, in their “world-constituting life process.” The answer to the question is that there is no duplication within the ego. The ego is always a perceiver perceived, an intending intended. We will discuss this more in our section on passion and action in intersubjective space.

The apperceived ego always presupposes an apperceiving ego. The constituting subject always appears as already constituted.

The psychic subjectivity, the concretely grasped ‘I’ and ‘we’ of ordinary conversation, is experienced in its pure psychic ownness through the method of phenomenological reduction. Modified into eidetic form it provides the ground for pure phenomenological psychology. Transcendental subjectivity, which is inquired into in the transcendental problem, and which subjectivity is presupposed in it as an existing basis, is none other than ‘I myself’ and ‘we ourselves’; not, however, as found in the natural attitude of everyday or of positive science; i.e., apperceived as components of the objectively present world before us, but rather as subjects of conscious life, in which this world and all that is present – for us – makes itself through certain apperceptions.

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103 SW, p. 29
104 SW, p. 30
The transcendental ego is different from the natural ego but not as a different entity, in the natural sense. The paradox of subjectivity resides in the fact that there is an identity between the transcendental ego and the natural ego. Transcendental ego is in fact “the field of transcendental self-experience (conceived in full concreteness) which in every case can, through mere alteration of attitude, be changed into psychological self-experience. In this transition, an identity of the I is necessarily brought about.”

Husserl tried to solve the paradox of subjectivity through his discussion of time consciousness and intersubjectivity. As we will see in the next part of this work, through its constitution of the primordial sphere, subjectivity constitutes itself as other through temporalization. While there is presence of self to self in primal time, memory brings in depresentation of the ego. This opens up empathy, which in turns opens up the sphere of transcendental intersubjectivity. Husserl speaks of paradox precisely because the ego that constitutes the world cannot be separated from its inner experience of itself. And inner time is made up of the unity of past, present, and future. In this we have perspectival givenness of transcendent objects, the impossibility of the total presence of self to self of subjectivity, and the empathic givenness of the other. The paradox of subjectivity becomes ultimately the paradox of intersubjectivity, which consists in the question of how the primal ego constitutes intersubjectivity of which it is a part.

Consciousness constitutes itself in the primordial now and it is in so doing that it constitutes its objects. The constituting thus always precedes the constituted, but at the same time has to pass through it. The constituting subject appears as already constituted.

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105 *SW*, p. 31
Transcendental subjectivity is not an instantaneous and brute fact. It is a being already permeated by the transcendent and the alter ego. The paradox of subjectivity is played out into the question of passivity and activity. There are habitualities that in one way or the other condition the constituting act. The world that the ego constitutes is also already a meaningful world that has its grasp on the ego. The historical constituting act has its history or even its prehistory. Ego is always already preceded in its constituting act. The world of the ego is carrier of meanings laid down by others that have preceded the ego. It is a world that has received the legacy of a “linguistic conventionality”\textsuperscript{106} and specific norms of understanding.

Transcendental subjectivity needs to take its own psychic being as a theme. This is what psychology failed to do when it transformed itself into a technique or nomological science. The unity of inner time is constituted through manifold of temporal phases. As stated by Sokolowski, “immanent objects must already be constituted before reflection can turn upon them, but they are constituted as units while we experience them. Constitution of immanent objects and experience of these objects is the same process.”\textsuperscript{107} The ego is thus part of what it constitutes. The constituting ego has the world-as-meaning, but as a mundane ego, it is part of such a world. The field within which intentional objects appear is both a field of presence and absence. It is the field of the unity of perspectival givenness and temporal phases. As stated by Kocklemans, “My transcendental ego is thus evidently ‘different’ from the natural mundane ego, but it is by no means a second ego separated from the natural ego. The field of transcendental self-

\textsuperscript{106} Dan Zahavi, \textit{Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity}, p. 100
\textsuperscript{107} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{The Formation of Husserl’s Concept of Constitution}, p. 91
experience in every case can be changed into that of the psychological self-experience through a mere alteration of attitude. In the transition from the one attitude to the other, the identity of the ‘I’ is necessarily brought about.”

Things belong to an open horizon and such horizon announces the constitutive richness of the given and the presence of the other. As stated by Husserl, “anything that is – whatever its meaning and to whatever region it belongs – is an index of a subjective system of correlations.” And he continues further: “the world as it is for us becomes understandable as a structure of meaning formed out of elementary intentionalities.”

The “ego as identical pole of subjective processes” is the unity of all the cogitations, but the identity of the ego is an identity in and of the acts of cogitations. The ego “lives in all processes of consciousness and is related, through them, to all object-poles.” It acquires an abiding property through its acts. Thus the ego itself becomes constituted through its constituting act.

The constituted sense of reality is constituted as sense for ever. Our subsequent encounters with that reality will be conditioned by such a sense. The bestowing and constitution of sense themselves are not randomly performed. There is a law of givenness that conditions constitution. The sedimentation of meaning allows us to understand the object in a certain way and not in another. Husserl speaks of normality and abnormality in this case. The work of constitution consists in the uncovering of the unity of the sedimented sense. The uncovering of the sedimented meaning takes us to the original

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108 Joseph Kockelman, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 59
109 *Crisis*, p. 165 and p. 168
110 *CM*, 67
111 Husserl however uses these concepts in the sense of understanding homeworld and the alien world.
sense of the object. This takes us to the origin of our judgments about reality. Where do they originate from and what gives them consistency. The constituting act is thus a work of recognition of the thing in-itself as given to consciousness. The articulation of the think in-itself is thus a thematic formulation of a primordial “there is.”

Our next chapter will deal with this uncovering of sedimented meaning. How meaning is not something contained in individual mind is something that is important to discuss. We do this through the medium of the way we handle our discussion. This itself will raise the question of truth as the fundamental thing that stands at the core of human endeavors. How do we articulate that which is given in-itself to consciousness. We present it through judgment. Judgments however tend sometimes not to go to their own origins. We need thus to go the genetic arising of the thing in-itself.
Chapter 4:

Passive and Active Synthesis: The Genesis of the Truth of Predication and the Constitution of an Ethical and Political Community

In our discussion of static phenomenology, we raised the question of the unity of the law-governed objectivity and the invariant structure that constitute the conditions of our grasp of objects. “All unity points to law governing legality.”¹ We saw that the pure laws of logic are not tied up to specific circumstances or situations. Our freedom to move around the object and to categorically organize it has its law governed limits. In genetic phenomenology we came to realize that the objectivity of logical laws itself needs to raise questions about its origin in things. Transcendental phenomenology aims at grasping the thing in itself. What we aim at through our transcendental phenomenological endeavors is a search for the ground of scientific knowledge and human discourse as such. Such truth does not lie in true statements or in formulations of judgments. We need to go back to the ground upon which judgments are founded. The structure of meaningfulness is that which informs our judgments. We need then to trace back the truthfulness of our judgments to their origin in things.

¹ *I*, II, p. 309-10
The question of truth and evidence thus becomes a question of the truth of being, the unfolding of the thing-in-itself. Intuitive givenness appears to be the self articulation of the object as such. We will try in this chapter to go beyond self-evidence as mere adequacy as stated in our first chapter to see self-evidence as the full presence of the object in life world. Self evidence faces us here with the fact that profiles are not totalizing wholes, but structured parts of a sedimentation in being. Since “predication or judgment is the central activity of reason”2, we will conduct the journey toward the origins of the given through a discussion of our judgments and statements. Our predications, judgments, through their attaining of profiles or sides of things, aim at grasping the density of things themselves. How do predications and judgments stay faithful to their origins in things, and how their historical insertion into a human community constitutes the conditions of their truthfulness is the preoccupation of this chapter.

The historical meaning that emerges from our current predications and judgments has to be traced back to its prehistory, to the silent language of a sedimented meaning that continually informs a multiplicity of acts of meaning. We come back to the question of presence and absence, whole and parts, the unity of inner time through the detour of judgment and predication. We will see that as much as judgment-forms present us with things, we need to be presented with the object itself of which they speak. The authority of judgment itself therefore relies on the authority of the constituted things. Judgment-forms will then become themselves themes of phenomenological discussion. We will

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need to distinguish once more between the act and the content of the act. The discussion ultimately will take us to the “three stages of understanding: the naïve, the scientific, and the phenomenological.”

4.1. Predication as a Striving Toward the Truth of Being

Predications or judgments put forward states of affairs that can be confirmed or infirmed by reality. The apophantic domain, the domain of judgments, is reached by “reflective consciousness.” It evolves in the formal domain and can be contradicted by facts. Judgments thus can sometimes be suppositions of facts, in that they can be confirmed or infirmed by the presence or absence of the thing in itself. Judgments need to be checked by the thing-in-itself. As stated by Sokolowski, in judgments, we do not impose meaning on reality but we welcome a pre-existent meaning. Such meaning is the thing-in-itself as constituted.

According to Husserl, therefore, the proposition or the state of affairs, as a categorial object, does not come about when we impose an a priori form on experience; rather, it emerges from and within experience as a formal structure of parts and wholes. It arises in the way things can be presented to us: they can become articulated, their wholes and parts shaken out and their formal structure made explicit. If things did not present parts and wholes to us, predication and syntactic articulation could not occur; predication takes place between us and things, not within our consciousness or within subjective world.

The unity of the thing-in-itself is that which constitutes the unity of science. Husserl thus distinguishes formal apophantic from formal ontology. The former being the “apriori

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4 Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, p. 56
formal science of judgment, more precisely of the predicative judgment”, and the latter being the “eidetic science of any object whatever.” 5

As much as these two sciences are distinct from one another, we need to remember that it is always in predication that the “something whatever” makes its appearance. As stated by Husserl, “the universal essence can be unfolded in thought, and its unfolding necessarily leads to ontology.” 6 The idea is reiterated in another book: “Without exception, objects ‘exist’ only as objects of judgments, and for that very reason, exist only in categorial forms.” 7 The difference between the apophantic domain, the domain of sense and concepts, and ontological domain comes from the fact that the latter appears as proposed by the former. We need thus to know that the object of predications can only be presented to us in categorial forms, in predication. Predication however does not exhaust their being. Thus, when we take the apophantic as object of transcendental phenomenological investigation, we are aiming at grasping their content/the thing-in-itself that they carry in their endeavor, as the most basic thing in the presentation of their truthfulness.

The turn toward the apophantic is a turn toward the thing in itself, because judgments are but judgments about things or states of affairs. First, straightforward givenness is presented in opinions, common beliefs, and judgments of the natural attitude. Then comes the scientist’s criticism which is the modalization of the straightforward certainty of the natural attitude. The scientist in fact takes a distance from

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6 Ideas III, p. 21
7 FTL, p. 120
the dogmatic affirmations of existence of the natural attitude. As shown in our previous sections, this endeavor of the scientist carries some naivety that needs to be questioned and understood properly. The thing in-itself, in its intelligibility, is that which is intended by the scientist. Explication is thus a penetration into “the internal horizon of the object by the direction of perceptual interest.”

Predication has the function of elucidating the thing-in-itself and of communicating it.

The heart of categoriality is apophantic: “the heart of syntax is predication.” Transcendental phenomenology’s focus on the apophantic aims thus at getting at the thing in itself that yields a truth, that can become a reading lens for reality. The focus on the apophantic becomes somehow an articulation of a formal ontological logic, an aiming at the essence of things themselves that constitute the authority for human discourse. The thing in itself is what determines the universality of reference. For instance when we are discussing a notion like birth, we can see a multiplicity of possible applications of the word. We can see biological, spiritual, or social birth, but in all of these instances, what is seen is the process of coming to be, which carries within itself the notion of growth and continuity. Such understanding can neither be geographically or ideologically determined. There is such a thing like birth which imposes its meaning on the multiplicity of the uses we make of it. The thing-in-itself both transcends and is carried in the different references about it. The categorial form is thus a framing of the thing-in-itself. Thus, the objects that spontaneously arise in the natural attitude also constitute

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8 EJ, p. 105
9 Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, p. 49
themselves as supratemporal objects. They become objects to which we can return over and over again.\footnote{FTL, pp. 81-82}

A judgment that has undergone the test of criticism and has been verified, in the sense of its being confronted with reality, constitutes an objective meaning to which we can return over and over again. This is how objective reference is intersubjectively constituted. Thinking itself becomes at this point the formulation and articulation of a primordial and fundamental “there is.” In our thinking we refer to something that is not merely of our subjective making. What words express is the thing in itself. Language always strives toward the expression of the optimal condition of being. The main thing that we need to understand at this point is that truth is not relative. While it is always from a particular perspective that truth is uttered or stated, such predications are only acts of truth. They do not circumscribe truth as such. As seen in our first chapter, Husserl’s critique of traditional logic is based on the fact that such logic decided to enter into the service of natural science, by becoming itself a special science instead of being the foundation for all sciences, through the return to things themselves. Predications are vehicles of signification, of the presentation of things in the fullness of their givenness. Assertive statements thus unite the structurally articulated production of words with that which such words express.

Thus, even when logic is involved in scientific production or acts of producing, when experimentation is very much present to it, it still is preoccupied with the universal and theoretical which will enable humans to recognize reality for what it is. Husserl
praised Aristotle for being the first to operate in the domain of apophantic, the sphere of assertive statements and judgments. Aristotle’s formalization detached judgments from circumstances and allowed their pertinence or not to not depend on their relatedness to matters. Judgments are thus transformed into “universal pure-form idea: the pure concept of any judgment whatever that has, as the case may be, the determinate judgment-form ‘S is p’, the form ‘if S is p, then Q is r’, or the like.”\textsuperscript{11} Aristotle however, Husserl thinks, did not sufficiently operate in the domain of pure apophantic because his analytics was related to the real world. The something whatever became for Aristotle a something in judgment. As stated by Sokolowski,

The primitive, authentic presence of the apophantic domain is brought about by showing that this domain differentiates itself from the domain of objects in three respects: it initially comes to light when disturbances in the validity of objects and facts arise; it comes more radically to light when certain purported objects or purported facts are totally disconnected from the world and its objects, when they are canceled as not acceptable, as having been merely supposed at one time; finally, apophantic structures are teleologically oriented to being brought back to the domain of objects and facts, and even when they are canceled and abandoned they have this sense of abandonment because they fail to match the way things are. In its origins and in its finality, the domain of meaning is derivative from the domain of objects.\textsuperscript{12}

Aristotle’s idea of form is not pure because the variability of the terms with him is not free. We do not just have an abstract ‘S is P.’ How can then such logic reach the unity of truth as such and attain the genuineness of typical forms of knowledge is the question that needs to be answered.

\textsuperscript{11} FTL, p. 49
The problem here is that if we get stuck with the particulars, we will have problems to get to the ground from which such particular are built and from which they have meaning. Each judgment form is a generic universality not only with regard to judgments but also to pure forms subordinated to it. Such generic universality cannot be modified at will for instance. The judgment “S is p” can for instance be modified into “if S is p” or “the S is p”, etc. but these particularizations of “S is p” are particularizations of a primitive form. There are thus fundamental forms that constitute a model for subsequent judgment-forms. In the determination of the different forms of judgment, Husserl says, the idea is to reach the most primitive and simple form from which all the others spring. Such form is called the substrate or the thing in itself of which these judgments speak. The aim of judgment-forms is thus to express the truthfulness of the thing-in-itself as the most primitive thing in the archeology of their being. They have truth as their common “telos”. In pure analytics, in the unity of judgment, judgments stand as including or excluding one another with regard to this aiming at truth.

In pure analytics, we make an abstraction of the question of verification. Judgments do not stand by themselves but are passages to truths themselves. There occurs a shift of focus from mere judgment to cognition. Logic has to detach itself from questions of mere correspondence or adequation in order to become universal. We cannot elucidate the question of the apriori condition of the objects of knowledge if we take experience or what has worked as the condition of things. The always again, “what has worked for everyone”, “it is so”, “one cannot do otherwise” cannot become the apriori condition of true judgments whatsoever. We produce and
decide that judgments are true or false, because there is a horizon of being that determines the truthfulness of falseness of our occasional endeavors.

Consider, for example, the vast realm of occasional judgments, which, in spite of being occasional, have their intersubjective truth or falsity. This truth-value obviously depends on the relatedness of the single subject’s and the community’s whole daily life to a typical specific likeness among situations, such that any normal human being who enters a particular situation has, by the very fact of being normal, the situational horizons belonging to it and common to all. One can explicate these horizons subsequently; but the constituting horizon-intentionality, without which the surrounding world of daily living would not be an experienced world, is always priori to its explication by someone who reflects. And it is the factor that essentially determines the sense of occasional judgments – always, and far beyond what at any time is, or can be, said expressly and determinately in the words themselves. These horizons, then, are ‘presuppositions’, which, as intentional implicates included in the constituting intentionality, continually determine the objective sense of the immediate experiential surroundings, and which therefore have a character totally different from that of premise-presuppositions or from that of any of the idealizing presuppositions of predicative judging.13

That which constitutes the unity of logic and allows it to be valid for everyone cannot be circumscribed by a particular now-phase experience. The condition of the givenness of the object needs to be detached from punctual experiences. If the individual is the first thing in logic than we must say that the experience in which the individual is seized upon is what matters most – in the sense of being the principle of knowledge. If this were the case, the discussion of issues would be reduced to a juxtaposition of opinions and there would be no ground for any rational discussion.

While the domain of mere opinions and beliefs can make it difficult for us to see the world beyond our here and now, our specific condition and predicament, universal forms, without minimizing the importance of specificities, take us beyond them to their

13 FTL, pp. 199-200
essential givenness. Logic cannot stay untouched by experience, because it uses examples in its free variation, but such experiential examples, the specificities, stand before its eyes as products of genesis, the fruit of a sedimentation. The unity of the thing is that which assures to judgments their structure. There is a structure of the thing, a holding together of its sides and profiles that makes experience itself intelligible. “Prior to all judging, there is a universal experiential basis. It is always presupposed as a harmonious unity of possible experience. In this harmony, everything has ‘to do’ materially with everything else.”14 The formal logician does not speak of the unity of complex-judgments, the syntactical stuff, but these are presupposed in his discourse. The apriori world of apophathic logic is a world of experience taken to its higher level. It is a world constituted through sedimentation and concatenation. The world as experienced in the now-phase is thus always pointing beyond itself according to certain constituted apriori types.

Scientific truths themselves originate from the pre-scientific, from sedimentation. Science builds idealities upon one another “ad infinitum.” Theories fall into one another in the history of their perfection, achieving thus the highest level of ideality. What theories offer one another in the history of their construction is “specific ideality”. What they do offer is the self-evident, the unchangeable source of meaning. It is thus important to inquire back into the origin, the “primal materials of the first formation of meaning.”15 The object of the scientist is constituted through a movement from naïve receptivity of the world to an articulated world. The ideal world is constituted from a pregiven world. It

14 *FTL*, p. 218
15 *Crisis*, pp. 367 and 369
is thus important for us to go to this pregiven world in order to grasp the thing of which we speak in our predications. In every givenness, there appear to be appresented parts that are not immediately given. Such parts constituted layers in the sedimentation of meaning.

This is one of the reasons why Husserl wanted to found “logic in the prelogical and prepredicative.”\(^\text{16}\) In the prepredicative, we have the straightforward givenness of immediate experience, the direct relation to the individual. It is such experience that becomes the primitive building stone for logical formulations. Straightforward givenness in experience constitutes thus the concealed presupposition of logic. As stated by Sokolowski, “syntax arises in pre-predicative thinking.”\(^\text{17}\) We need thus to return to the most primitive thing in judgment to which all the others refer to. A deeper exploration of experience can give us a hint into the journey into the genealogy of logic. Experience can be either simple or founded. In perception, things are straightforwardly given to us. As stated above, reflection modalizes things that are thus straightforwardly given and takes them as themes. It is in so doing that we see the unity of the object. We need to see how “the act of prepredicative judgment, as a lower level of ego-activity (the level of receptivity), that of perceptive contemplation, explication, etc., is distinguished from the higher level, that of the spontaneity of the act of predicative judgment.”\(^\text{18}\)

The active turning toward of the ego is effected on the basis of affection. Before its explicit grasping of the things, the ego was already affected by them. There is thus a

\(^\text{16}\) *EJ*, p. xxiii
\(^\text{17}\) Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, p. 49
\(^\text{18}\) *EJ*, p. 61
strong relation between passivity and activity in the constitution of objectivity. As stated by Husserl,

The accomplishment of the turning-toward is what we call the being-awake of the ego. More precisely, it is necessary to distinguish being-awake as potentiality, as the state of being-able-to-accomplish an act, a state which constitutes the presupposition of the actual accomplishment of the act. To be awake is to direct one’s regard to something. To be awakened means to submit to an effective affection. A background becomes ‘alive’; intentional objects from this background draw more or less close to the ego; this or that attracts the ego powerfully to itself.\(^{19}\)

Before predication, we have the attraction exercised by the object on the ego; we have a spontaneous relation with things. The unity of the object imposes itself on the explicit act of the ego. Thus, the ground of scientific knowledge does not lie in true statements. There is a silent articulation of the object itself which constitutes the ground for predication.

Going to the genesis of judgments and uncovering the presuppositions upon which our discussions are built, will lead us to the conditions for an intersubjective coexistence. The something about which we speak needs to exist. The apophantic, as the formal domain, needs to be traced to its sources as condition of its truthfulness. The truth-in-itself, which is independent of subjectivity, is the condition for a healthy intersubjective interaction. Judgments need to refer back to the original form from which they derive, which is the theoretical unity that runs through explanatory or theoretical sciences. We have also unities that can be regrouped at a lower level as the unity of the provinces that constitute the unity of science. In both cases, we have an apriori conditions or structures that essentially condition the ego’s act. In either we have the thing-in-itself as the conditioning factor of the different acts that intend it. Thus the focus on the

\(^{19}\) *E.J.*, p. 79
apophantic ultimately is a “formal-ontological logic.” “Categorically formed objectivity is not an apophantical concept; rather it is an ontological concept. To be sure, the essence of such an objectivity consists precisely in being a fulfilled judgment having a corresponding sense-form.” The focus on judgments wants to hit things in themselves, and this is the domain of formal ontological logic.

A judgment that has undergone the test of being confronted with its origins constitutes an objective meaning to which everybody can return over and over again. At this level we have already the constitution of the domain of primordiality and intersubjectivity. Thus subjectivity and intersubjectivity themselves are constituted through the constitution of the object. The world receives a spiritual sense through the sedimentation of meaning that is passed on from one generation to the other. The intelligibility of the thing is that which is constituted in this temporal and intergenerational communication. In the philosophical attitude what interests us is the intelligibility of things. Such intelligibility can be discovered when we turn toward our everyday dealings and take them as objects of investigation. In doing this, we discover also structures and norms that determine what we ought to do regardless of whether we like it or not. The thing in itself as constituted in a sedimented meaning constitutes the unity of human consciousness. This is what allows humans to have a symbiotic rather than a merely functional society, which is a society artificially created for a short term goal.

20 FTL, p. 145
The unity of the thing goes thus hand in hand with the unity of the self and ultimately with social unity through time. There is a constitution of the thing in itself that shapes subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Such sedimentation of meaning helps create a symbiotic community, a community that understands itself as an historical unity of a whole. Such a community is created in fidelity to the mind of the members of the community whether dead or alive. This carries with it a historical and social responsibility. It can be the ground of the formation of a respectful community in the sense that meaning is larger than individual and selfish interests. We live in a world where individual development receives historical influences. We borrow attitudes, ideas, values, cultures, beliefs, and even perception from others. That I perceive blue and name it blue is not of my making for instance. The person receives but ultimately he has to take decisions with regard to the legacy. I cannot decide that the blue is red for instance, unless there is some visual abnormality involved. “You shall not kill your fellow human” is a law that imposes itself on me universally whether I want it or not. It is something that resonates with a human mind as such.

Our predications are thus carried forward in a world both of freedom and necessity. The individual is the original first in his utterance but he is also the carrier of a legacy that conditions his predications. As stated by Husserl,

The development of a person is determined by the influence of others, by the influence of their thoughts, their feelings (as suggested to me), their commandments. This influence determines personal development, whether or not the person himself subsequently realizes it, remembers it, or is capable of determining the degree of the influence and its character. Others’ thoughts penetrate into my soul.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} Ideas II, p. 281
The individual can however rise “beyond” this conditioning in order to invent himself. He is still subject of free acts. In every historical positioning, we have a thus a prehistory at work. One of the examples Husserl gave is that while drinking water to quench one’s thirst can be universally understood as a human person’s comportment, giving away one’s water to a thirsty child is not a purely natural human comportment. Such acts are both learned and results of individual decision. The sedimentation of meaning thus yields certain attitudes and ways of relating to the world and to one another that condition the harmonious building up of society. The possibilities of predication are thus limited by the authority of the thing-in-itself.

4.2. The True and the Evident: The Authority of Things-in-Themselves

The discussion of predications and judgments raises that of the truth and evidence of things. How do we know that things exist in themselves and are what they are? Consciousness evolves in the contact with things-in-themselves. There is a passivity that stands at the heart of the conscious act. Meaning has a genesis in things themselves. Meaning inhabits its object. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, the meaning of the ashtray is not in some idea of ashtray. It is in the ashtray itself. The thing-in-itself is given in perspectival givenness. Truth and evidence, as the hitting at the thing in itself, build themselves up between visibility and invisibility, presence and absence. What is needed
in the discussion about evidence is to go back to the things in themselves of which predications speak. Before all judgments we know what is true and what is false.

Traditional logic, instead of going to this “what” got stranded in questions of avoidance of error and clarity. It became as Husserl puts it, “a psychologistically determined technology of correct thinking.” It forgot to take “objective self-evidence as a preliminary condition of a possible self-evident act of judgment.” Such self-evidence is not a private matter; it is not dependent upon individuals or circumstances, even though it springs from them. As stated by Husserl, “if someone experiences the self-evidence of A, it is self-evident that no second person can experience the absurdity of this same A, for that A is self-evident, means that A is not merely meant, but also genuinely given, and given as precisely what it is thought to be.” Self-evidence, as the givenness of the thing-in-itself, tells us something about the self-identity of the thing. The object is grasped as a unity in inner time consciousness. Evidence constitutes thus an “a priori structural form of consciousness.”

One of Husserl’s preoccupations was thus to know how “the demonstrative thought-train that only arise in certain mental circumstances, [can] rise to the claim that the syllogistic form it justifies is absolutely valid”. His contention is that “the psychologistic doctrine has no acceptable answer to such questions. Here as elsewhere it lacks the capacity to make sense of the claim made by logical truths to objective validity,

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23 *EJ*, p. 18 & 19
24 *LI*, II, p. 266
25 *FTL*, p. 284
and therewith also their functioning as absolute norms of correct and false judgment.\textsuperscript{26} Husserl’s preoccupation in his early work was thus to solve the question of the truth of predications and judgments. The constitution of the ideal object was the main preoccupation of the \textit{Logical Investigations}. The ideal needed to be found that would constitute the condition of any object whatever. Truth for the early Husserl was to be found in the ideal adequation between meaning-intention and meaning fulfilling. Truth is the “full agreement of what is meant with what is given as such. This agreement we experience in self-evidence, in so far as self-evidence means the actual carrying out of an adequate identification.”\textsuperscript{27}

The object of which phenomenology speaks is the one that unfolds in constituting act of the ego. Evidence is thus getting at such an object in itself. While the Husserl of static phenomenology speaks of ideal object, the Husserl of genesis speaks more of sedimentation, of layers of objects, of the constitution of meaning through the absence-presence of past layers, the sedimented presence in present layers. The objective ideal is thus not something that stands out there and ready to be grasped. It is something that constitutes itself through the unfolding of sense in the constitution of the thing in itself. This raises the question of the different levels of evidence. On the one side, we have evidence as distinctness. On the other, we speak of evidence as clarity. The first comes about when confused judgments become distinct. The second comes about when the distinct judgments are confirmed by the givenness of the object. Logic of non-contradiction goes with the first. Logic of truth goes with the second. The main thing we

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{LI}, I, p. 71  
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{LI}, II, p. 263
need to see here is that even distinct judgments need to be confirmed in the truth of the
givenness of objects as such. Only in clarity do we talk of the givenness originaliter of
the thing or the state of affairs. Clarification appears thus to be the fulfilling moment of
judgments. In clarity we have a sort of synthetic unity. Evidence is thus not just a brute
correspondence between meaning-intention and meaning fulfillment, it is the gradual
constitution of the object through the sedimentation of meaning. This brings historical
considerations into the constitution of evidence as such.

The different levels of evidence are interdependent. “Evidences are
interdependent; they refer backwards and forwards to other evidential decisions; they
constitute a harmonious totality only in the infinite dimension toward which they
continually advance. There is no place in such a conception for an infallible, absolute,
final and unassailable mode of evidence.” Evidence is thus a unity made up of unities.
As put forward by Husserl, “evidence, as the giving of something-itself, has its variant
formations, its degrees of perfection in giving something-itself – it has many diversities,
which fall under essential types and must be explored.” Husserl continues, “‘Evidence’,
or the giving of something-itself, as fulfillment, confirmation, verification, cancellation,
falsity, practical failure, and so forth – all these are structural forms belonging a priori to
the unity of a life.” Evidence is thus not just something that is apodictically out there to
be grasped. It is something that is constituted through the sedimentation of sense in
lifeworld.

28 David Michael Levin, *Reason and Evidence in Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 106
29 *FTL*, p. 287
30 *FTL*, p. 289-290
This understanding of evidence cannot but bring to mind Plato’s different steps in the journey toward Reality. We pass through different levels of evidence: opinions, belief, knowledge and finally understanding. In understanding, Plato tells us, we are faced with the really Real, the thing-in-itself, in its ideal condition of givenness which was diversely presented in the preceding modes of givenness. Understanding is thus Plato’s highest moment in the grasping of reality. We see the thing for what it is and therefore are able to discern a difference between the thing-in-itself and its copy, reality and appearance, being and seeming as presented in lower levels.\textsuperscript{31} The Truth of being unfolds at the level of understanding. The different levels of evidence in Husserl aim at bringing to view the best conditions in the unfolding of the truth of the thing. For Husserl, when we bring truth in the discussion about logic, we go beyond the sphere of distinct evidence or that of pure judgment-forms. We go beyond the a priori sphere as soon as we ask the question of truth. With the introduction of truth, judgments are no longer considered qua judgments, but are passages to truths themselves. We see then how judgments fulfill themselves in truth. We pass that to the level of formal ontology. Evidence as the givenness of the object itself as meant implies the unimaginableness of the its being otherwise.

Evidence is the self-givenness of the thing itself: “The thing is ‘itself there’, ‘immediately intuited’, ‘given originaliter’.”\textsuperscript{32} Individual evidences however stand in need of confirmation. Conceiving of them as apodictic is an absurdity according to Husserl. Evidence as the coming forth of things-themselves, varies according to the

\textsuperscript{31} Cf. Plato, \textit{Republic}, Book VII

\textsuperscript{32} Suzanne Bachelard, \textit{A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic}, p. 101
“various structures to which the various types of objects correspond.” Evidence is thus evidence of evidences that have gone through variation and have attained the highest level of givenness. Levin explains how Husserl came to this new understanding of evidence: Husserl has this “thesis that ‘rational consciousness in general designates a \textit{summum genus} of \textit{thetic modalities}, in which ‘seeing’, used in its widest sense, as pertaining to primordial givenness, constitutes a well-defined class.’ He [Husserl] suggests that the term ‘evidence’ (Evidenz) should serve to designate just this \textit{summum genus}.”

The different steps in the clarification of evidence have as their aim, the expression of the truth of being as such. Our dealing with systems of true predications aims at the expression of truth as such. Predications or judgments can be given in different subjective manners. A confused, vague judgment or opinion becomes a distinct opinion or judgment, when an explicit act of judging is added onto it and brings it to fulfillment through modalization. How consciousness can progress from confused and non-organized levels to articulated and organized levels has a lot to do with the unfolding of the thing-in-itself. To get thus to the truth of judgments, it is not enough to stop at the predelineations or separation in formal logic; we need to go to the substantiations (acts of foundation) that underlie the separation of evidences. Formal logic needs thus to raise questions about the origins of the categorial and the objective laws of right thinking.

Formal logic or analytics, as formal theory of science, is thus a formal ontology and as such, it is directed toward objects. In fact, when we judge, we focus on objects, not

\footnote{Suzanne Bachelard, \textit{A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic}, p. 106}
\footnote{D. M. Levin, \textit{Reason and Evidence in Husserl’s Phenomenology}, p. 76}
on thematizing as such. As stated by Husserl, “if we are busied with objects – and, in particular, if we are judging about them –, we stand inside our own consciousness; which is naturally not to say that our consciousness is what we are busied with, and most assuredly is not to say that those objects are nothing but states or processes of consciousness.”

Objects are what we mean in predications. Analytics is directed toward what exists, toward things themselves. Through sedimentation, a meaning is constituted that becomes the abiding objective property to which all acts have to confer. Evidence thus refers us ultimately to objectivity as something “everyone can see.”

The theories of formal logic are the presentations of the things in-itself as the condition of thinking.

The critical attitude, it should be added, concerns all judging activities with respect likewise to the modalizations occurring in them and the distinctions between evidence and non-evidence that are peculiar to such modalizations themselves; but the intention aimed at cognition tends clear through these modalizations – through the questionabilities, possibilities, probabilities, negations – toward evident certainties. These, when actualized, are the unqualified truths as themselves-given: cognitional acquisitions abiding from then on, capable of again becoming accessible to insight at any time, and accessible in this manner to everyone as rationally thinking subject, even as they were before their ‘discovery’. Every scientific statement has this sense from the start. It is already addressed to this ‘everyone’ and states what the substrate-objectivities are in truth – as everyone can see.

Judgment-forms need thus to become thematic fields that lead us the unfolding of truth in the givenness of things-in-themselves.

Thanks to evidence, consciousness always tends toward reason in the sense of affirming correctness or infirming incorrectness. Evidence is thus the synthetic unity through which objectivity shows forth as the truthfulness of the object. There is an

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35 *FTL*, p. 111
36 *FTL*, p. 126-127
ideality of the object that both appears through its sides and transcends all sides or profiles. Evidence is the showing forth of the wholeness of the object in the space of reason. Even though such showing forth is not normative in nature, it imposes on our predications a direction to follow. We need to conform to a certain direction while speaking of things. There is a correlation between reason, consciousness, and truth that is the underlying basis of the talk about evidence. As stated by Husserl,

Not merely ‘truly existing object’ and ‘object to be rationally posited’ are equivalent correlates, but also ‘that truly existing object’ and object to be posited in an originally perfect rational positing are equivalent. The object would not be given to the rational positing imperfectly, merely ‘one sidedly.’ (…) Of essential necessity (in the Apriori of unconditioned eidetic universality), to every ‘truly existing’ object there corresponds the idea of a possible consciousness in which the object itself is seized upon originarily and therefore in a perfectly adequate way.37

Evidence is not a sort of psychological indicator to judgment. Not every positing mental process can become evident, because it may not reach the being-in-itself of the object.

When we go back to the ground upon which evidence stands, we see an agreement between judgment and the thing-in-itself to which it refers. Judgment becomes thus an expression of the truthfulness of the thing-in-itself. The aim of every science is thus to reach such ground as the unfolding of truth itself, which encompasses all the regional truths. The real and the ideal world exist for us because of such evidence, which is the truth of being as such. “Every evidence ‘sets up’ or ‘institutes’ for me an abiding possession. I can ‘always return’ to the itself-beheld actuality, in a series of new evidences as restitutions of the first evidence.”38 Evidence thus sends us back to the

37 *Ideas I*, 340-341
38 *CM*, p. 60
question of constitution. The world as abiding possession is a constituted world. This is the world of the transcendental ego, which grasps the in-itself of the many intentionalities directed toward it. That which is the identical expressed through many particular intentionalities and “de facto” intendings is the irreducible thing-in-itself, the invariant structure of the many variations. It is the thing in itself as intuited by the transcendental ego, and intuition is the “presence to consciousness of an essence.”

The evidence of transcendental world is essentially constituted through the givenness of profiles and sides. It carries a “multiform horizon of unfulfilled anticipations.” The evident is a unity of synthesis. Judgments or predications thus strive toward the knowledge of what is the unity of being. The object of judgment, as stated above, has to be given as “itself-there”, “in the flesh”. Self-gIVENNESS is thus self-evidence, as the unity of the thing-in-itself that encompasses all perspectival givenness. Self-evident givenness does not need judgment in order to be. Judgments of existence, for instance, are themselves founded on the self-givenness of the object. The predicative is founded on the pre-predicative. Even the logician’s judgments have as their substrate the pre-predicative world. The truths of predications are thus the expressions of the truth of the object as such. As Husserl puts it,

(…) this relation of founding concerns not only judgments grounded in experience but every self-evident predicative judgment in general, and therewith also the judgments of the logician himself, with their apodictic self-evidence, which, after all, make the claim of being valid ‘in themselves,’ i.e., regardless of their possible application to a determinate range of substrates. (…) This is original self-evidence, i.e., that which must already be on hand if self-evident predicative judging is to be possible. What makes affirmative statements, once constituted,

39 CM, p. 62
40 CM, p. 61
into a repository of knowledge, and what justifies their claim to knowledge, is not, therefore, to be sought in the statements themselves. What is needed is a return to the mode of givenness of the act of judgment, to their self-givenness or nonself-givenness; for this is the condition of the possibility of the successful achievement of knowledge.41

The self-evidence of predication is thus built upon primitive evidence, the evidence of the thing-itself. It is that which is at the heart of scientific preoccupation. Evidence appears thus as the modalization of certainties. This is the work of transcendental ego which carries the world as a meaningful entity. Such a world is expressed through language, through predication. The thing that appears in predication is not the predicating person’s property; it does not belong to the articulating and predicating act as such. It rather articulates itself in the act. When we raise the question of truth we take up the predicating act and confront it with that which gives it its full meaning as act. Meaning intention needs to be fulfilled in the identity and truthfulness of the object itself. The thing-in-itself is that which unfolds in predication and syntactic or propositional acts and gives them their legitimacy.

The explicit acts of grasping have as their origin original self-evidence. Self-evidence itself has ultimately to be traced back to the totality of the world as field and horizon of givenness. The being-there-beforehand of the world forms and affects the field of consciousness. The act of cognition is always carried “on the ground of the existing world in totality”: “The being of the world in totality is that which is not first the result of an activity of judgment but which forms the presupposition of all judgment.

41 E.J., p. 20-21
Consciousness of the world is consciousness in the mode of certainty of belief. The object’s givenness determines the ego’s possibilities. The object provides the ego with the ways it can anticipate its missing profiles. The quest for the object is a quest for the unity of meaning that is not just a practical or useful unity. The substrate S that our cognitive acts or predications present is the identity of determinations. It is the identity of a sedimented experience as such.

This identity of the thing in itself as identity of being is what allows human beings to have a meaningful relation among themselves. How else can we meaningfully be related to the other if we do not have such an identity of being? The constitution of the public sphere as a space of discussion and interaction is only possible when being itself conditions it. The public sphere is constituted, when meaning as self-evidence of things is that which conditions human discourse. Self-evidence as the being of the thing-itself creates a “space of reasons” that allows human to cross over to one another beyond their particular profiles and perspectives on reality. As stated by Sokolowski,

We could even say that the concept of Eisenhower or the concept of leopards is ‘in’ the people who conceive these entities. But we have to remember the new sense that the word in has taken on in such speech. The word has shed its materially spatial sense, in which one place is differentiated from another, and has moved into that common ‘space’ that is the domain of thought or the space of reasons; this space is entered when we identify things across their presence and absence, and when we make pictures of things across their presence and absence, and when we make pictures of things and thoughtfully imagine them. It is the strange space we enter when we begin to name things and thereby capture their intelligibility.43

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42 EJ, p. 30
43 Robert Sokolowski, Phenomenology of the Human Person, p. 183
The public space is thus the space of reason where things that are constituted in meaning become the common and abiding properties of those who enter such space. In our discussion on constitution, we saw that constitution is letting the object be what it is for us, to let it appear in-itself. In predication we do just that: we appropriate or endorse the thing as being-in-itself. As stated by Sokolowski, “our freedom [on things] is a function of our veracity; freedom does not mean arbitrary selection, but adherence to what is best. Freedom is wanting what is truly good, not imposing what we want.”

Unless we go to meaning as the articulation of the thing throughout its different temporal and spatial phases, we will get stuck in the categorial mistake we spoke about in our earlier chapter. We will not know the difference and therefore end up having a distorted understanding of history. We do not grasp things as parts, but we grasp the thing as a whole constituted through its parts. This is what Husserl calls the spiritual sense of things that is fused with the physical. How do I for instance speak of the identity of the Chadian people if all I see in such speech is the Sara, the Ngambaye, or the Gorane, etc.? To speak of the Chadian people, as a nation, I need for instance to see beyond the geographical and ethnic distribution of the population an identity that runs deeper than this physical distribution. The spiritual sense is more than the mere physical object. It is articulated and fused with it, but it is not circumscribed by it. The identity of the Chadian people can be, for instance, deciphered in the common dreams of the people, their shared values, their ways of structuring themselves toward reality, and how reality itself shapes such understandings. We spoke earlier of the “eighth month” as an example of such

44 Robert Sokolowski, Phenomenology of the Human Person, p. 27
understanding. This common identity which is capital in self understanding does not however deny specific identities. It is made up of them all.

Evidence which is the “experience of truth”\textsuperscript{45} as originary givenness is the a priori condition for the givenness of objects whatsoever. The thing-in-itself has to become the determining factor in position takings. For Husserl, “the propositions or the state of affairs, as a categorial object, does not come about when we impose an a priori form on experience; rather, it emerges from and within experience as a formal structure of parts and wholes.”\textsuperscript{46} Objectivity is thus the modalization of human experience taken to its highest level of givenness. Through sedimentation, specific position takings constitute meaning. That which is thus constituted becomes independent from specific position takings. It becomes the property of humankind to which a multiplicity of egos can have access. Let us take for instance our notion of colors and the first people who named colors. At some point, a community of people named the sky or something as blue. The blue stayed with us and became our common property. The blue once constituted crosses cultures and geographical situations. Only in situations of abnormality does somebody refer to the blue as something else.

The constituted thing regulates human dealing and becomes the telos of their striving. In the public sphere, the ethics of communication itself is conditioned by that which is thus constituted. In communication, we understand each other because it is the blue itself to which we refer. “Each person is rescued from solipsism by the other and

\textsuperscript{45} Marvin Farber, \textit{The Foundation of Phenomenology: Edmund Husserl and the Quest for a Rigorous Science of Philosophy} (Frankfurt: The Ontos Verlag Edition, 2006) 132-133

\textsuperscript{46} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Phenomenology of the Human Person}, p. 56
each is placed in the direct presence of the object, because the thing is known by each as being presented not only to himself but also to the other, as well as to anyone who overhears or who is addressed later on. Since two minds originally articulate the thing together, the signification of the words being used could not be a private, mental meaning.⁴⁷ We need thus to trace back the “epistemic” to its origins in the “doxa”, and our articulations of the object back to their eruption in spontaneous human dealing. The pointing at the blue as blue is a spontaneous act. The predicative has as its ancestor the pre-predicative. The hidden presuppositions of the ideal sciences are rooted in the life-world as the world of lived experience. The production of meaning needs thus to remember its ground so that it does not become alien to itself. Predication has to remain faithful to itself by tracing back its articulations in the pre-predicative. As stated by Stevens, “the pregiven world is the starting point of all scientific and intellectual endeavors.”⁴⁸

The thing itself carries its ideal conditions of givenness. It provides us with the ground and principles upon which, through human conversation, policy makings and the goal of the society can be understood and articulated. Human conversation is thus the field of the presentations of the thing-in-itself. Predication is not an arbitrary or random juxtaposition of state of affairs. The thing itself informs the conversation about it. As much as the thing is constituted at the level of subjective and intersubjective interactions, it also constitutes such acts, because it constitutes itself in them. Predications give us thus

⁴⁷ Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, p. 69
the self-constitution or articulation of the thing. The categorial needs thus to be the expression of the thing itself, it is the objective and intersubjective manifestation of the inner articulation of the thing-itself. It becomes thus the meeting point of subjectivities, the ground for common understanding, and an open intersubjective space. The main point in our discussion about issues is to make a distinction “between the thing and the way the thing appears to”\textsuperscript{49} an individual person.

The constitution of the public sphere occurs when we recognize the thing-itself for what it is. Our discussion about Common Good or ethics of coexistence can be an eternal wandering if they do not measure up to what they name. The Common Good can become the good of some individuals if objectively we cannot measure it to something everybody can see and agree upon. The thing itself needs to be grasped as “the rule for the changing manifold of sides, aspects, and profiles that it offers to the perceiver.”\textsuperscript{50} We need to go the intelligibility of the thing itself as the essence and the “source from which the properties of the thing flow.”\textsuperscript{51} The possibility of making a difference between things, the rational and the irrational comes from the fact there are some measures through which we judge. Such distinction allows people to peacefully discuss issues instead of resorting to guns and fighting, for instance, to impose a specific side or profile of reality. Rational persuasion as part of a democratic culture springs from the conviction and recognition of the identity of truth that informs specific truths and position takings. We need thus to

\textsuperscript{49} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Phenomenology of the Human Person}, p. 214  
\textsuperscript{50} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Phenomenology of the Human Person}, p. 208  
\textsuperscript{51} Robert Sokolowski, \textit{Phenomenology of the Human Person}, p. 186
trace “predicative experience back to the non predicative” as the condition of intersubjective discussion. Such tracing back can be a vain work if its ultimate goal is not to arrive at the thing-in-itself.

4.3. The Foundation of the Predicative in the Pre-predicative

The prepredicative world is the non-thetic dimension that is not a production of a rational and categorial statement, predication. The object of such a world is object for me before any explicit grasping of it. Our predications are thus second acts and a recognition of the depth of the object as such. The world of experience, the life-world, has always been there before any positing. Such a world always precedes and anticipates the explicit grasping of it. The visible is always accompanied by an irreducible veil of invisibility. Our cognitive acts aim at unveiling such invisibility that inhabits things in their presentations. The perceived, the given, is close and yet distant, present and yet absent. This fact that visibility always carries within itself invisibility is a convocation for consciousness to transcendent, to journey toward the depth of things. There is a recognition here of the fact that it is impossible to circumscribe the given, because it is always given within a background of absence, within a sedimentation of being.

Consciousness has thus to go beyond mere presence in order to get to the self-evidence of the object as such. An example we can give here is Jesus’ presence in the Temple at 12 (Luc 2: 39-46). What the Rabbis see is a 12 year old child who was asking

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52 FTL, p. 170
them questions that are beyond his age: “Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.” There is more to this presence than what is presented: it is God himself that was present to them. The Rabbis could understand his questions through the specific position they are in, yet such questions constitute a challenge to their minds. The 12 year old child has its absent side, that is the manifestation of God and the history of salvation. The child is given in the dialectics of veiling and unveiling, presence and absence, visibility and invisibility. The object itself has to yield to consciousness and open its hidden sides in order to be known. We can only understand the reality of things, and even that of the knowing ego, through a double transcendence. Consciousness has to rise toward the object. The object itself has to yield its hidden sides. Sedimented history unfolds as history goes on and no one can pretend to have the totality of the sides. We may thus see in the unfolding of $\alpha$ and $\beta$ the manifestation of the substrate $S$ itself, but these two do not circumscribe $S$ as such. $S$ is richer than its presented sides.

Appresentation gives us the substrate $S$ as a whole in our spontaneous movement toward the world. In the successive moments of givenness $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$, etc., it is the $S$ itself that we apprehend as a whole. There is a continuity and an identity that we grasp in the different moments. The $S$ itself is the center around which the mediate substrates gravitate. In our genetic view, the world itself is the absolute $S$ that constitutes the field and unity of all givenness. “The $S$ is ever the $S$ of one and the same ‘apprehension’; it is always present to consciousness as the same in the unity of an objective sense but in a continuous transformation of the act of apprehension, in an ever new relation of the emptiness and fullness of the apprehension which goes forward in this process as the
The world is the absolute substrate seen through many perspectives and sides that remains the same and informs all cognitive acts.

What is evident in predications and judgments is what was already confusedly present in our spontaneous orientation toward the world. What is evident now in predication can become quite different through modalization. Evidence as the self-identity of the thing is the “a priori structural form of consciousness.” It refers us back to the life-world as the condition of thinking. Theories are to be traced back to their ground, as the origin of their truthfulness and correctness. Theories are abstractions from the life-world, which is truth in itself.

Objective theory in its logical sense (taken universally: science as the totality of predicative theory, of the system of statements meant ‘logically’ as ‘propositions in themselves,’ ‘truths in themselves,’ and in this sense logically joined) is rooted, grounded in the life-world, in the original self-evidences belonging to it. Thanks to this rootedness objective science has a constant reference of meaning to the world in which we always live, even as scientists and also in the total community of scientists – a reference, that is, to the general life-world.

Scientific achievements are part of the categorial expression of the life world; they are categorial formulations of what was given in the life world. Self-givenness of the thing entails “the overlap of consciousness with reality.” The achievements of science also need to be confirmed and have their character of validity in the life-world.

Things given straightforwardly in our spontaneous relation with the world, the “hyletic” data, are the “unstructured raw materials for our structuring and form-giving

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53 *EJ*, p. 126
54 *Crisis*, p. 130
mental activities.”\textsuperscript{56} The life-world is the horizon which is either known or incompletely known. Our scientific discoveries are a matter of the unfolding of parts of the life-world. The world itself opens itself to categorialization. The scientific achievement is an idealization of the pre-scientific and the “logical is based upon the prelogical experiences (of perception, phantasy, time, and thing).”\textsuperscript{57} Science deals with specific regions of the life world. It is through this endeavor that the objective is ultimately constituted. Through modalization and criticism, science goes “beyond” the straightforwardly given in order to articulate its essence. There is always a silent relation to the life world upon which reflection is built. The thetic is continually accompanied by its blind and nonthetic counterpart. We know that there are mistakes because there are truths from which we assess such mistakes and correct them.

As much the world of sensation constantly changes, it is an invariant through its fundamental structures. Scientific idealizations, or predications, do not create things “ex nihilo”. They work with things that are already there, pregiven. As Husserl puts it, we need to “look back to the origins of a successful rational objectification with a fundamental stratum of the world.” This is so because “in the ‘synthetic’ progression [of perception] I do not put the horizon together, ‘joining’ something to something else, dealing with it as material; in ‘act’, in the course [of perceiving], I am directed toward the ontically valid unity, directed toward the mobile, continual overlapping of the horizons, which is concretely the whole intentionality of appearances and horizons of

\textsuperscript{56} Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith. Ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Husserl}, p. 98
\textsuperscript{57} Barry Smith and David Woodruff Smith. Ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Husserl}, p. 64
appearances.”58 The unity to which we are oriented in science is the unity of a pregiven world that is self-evident and coincides with the world that we grasp perspectivally.

The world that we stop to take for granted is problematised and taken to a level of articulation where it expresses its wholeness and unity. In phenomenological reflection, the self-evidence of the natural attitude and all naïve pregivenness is held “in abeyance (...) in order to make such pregivenness problematic in the most universal generality.”59 Every experience has a horizon-structure within which it is comprehensible. This horizon-structure of experience, its “original induction”, is that through which we can operate our cognitive activities and the activity or relating things to one another. “Thus every experience of a particular thing has its internal horizon, and by ‘horizon’ is meant here the induction which belongs essentially to every experience and is inseparable from it, being in the experience itself.”60 Induction here implies a reference back to the motivating source of the knowledge we have of the object. Sciences, like geometry for instance, have a history. Searching for the origin of geometry is not about going back to the first man who started the movement, but how the things of geometry got constituted through a sedimented meaning.

Predications aim at presenting that which is structurally already constituted. Even though it is only through predication that “what is” is brought forth, the “what is” that is expressed is not contained in the predication itself. Concepts, as Husserl puts it, do not

58 Crisis, p. 348
59 ACPAS, p. 388
60 EJ, p. 33
spin “out of empty possibilities.” The thing is not just randomly assembled. Its unity is a matter of lawfulness. In the perspectival givenness of physical things, a sense is already predelineated. Even free phantasy has its possibilities in the essential givenness of the object itself. We cannot phantasize without bodies or shapes for instance. The essential constitution or the structure of things delimits our possibilities over them. The universal objectivity itself has to be founded on givenness of the object in the life-world. The world is thus the epistemic universal ground. And phenomenology as “the eidetic theory of lived experience” takes us to the core of lived experience as such. We go here from mere givenness to the meaning of the continuously altering streams of lived processes in their essential being. We trace things back to their pregivenness in lived experience.

The object as it is given now offers also possibilities upon it to the thinking person. The horizon-structure of the object presents us with the object as it is in itself and from a specific background. The object of experience appears thus with both its “internal horizon” and with its “infinite, open, external horizon of objects cogiven.” Our perception of a valley goes hand in hand with the perception of the hills and mountains that go with it. These are not explicitly given, but they constitute the background from which the thing emerges as an in-itself. There is an interconnectedness that runs through reality. The object always stands in relation to its corresponding members. It is never a totally independent part. The one-sidedly given aspect of an object is a call to a journey of discovery, even a state of affairs is given with absent zones. The world is always given as a general structure within which a multiplicity of perspectives and structures coexist.

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61 *Ideas III*, p. 25
62 *EJ*, p. 33
The essence of things is what prescribes the direction taken by specific sciences. The ultimate object of transcendental logic, for instance, is to get to the truth of things themselves. It raises thus the question of how consciousness contains sense. In such a question we try to establish the essence of things dealt with in a functionalist way by the scientist technician. We need thus to know more about the object by opening up its absent sides, because we know that “that which is appearing, precisely in the given sense, appears actually only by certain sides and is nevertheless meant, through indeterminately, as a ‘more’, over against that which is ‘actually’ appearing.”63 The presented sides of the object of every day experience call us to a journey into the depths of its givenness. As stated by Zahavi, “for perception to be actually what it is – namely, a perception of the object itself – other aspects that are absent in the currently present perception must be co-present in some way; without this horizon of what is co-intended, the transcendent perceptual object would not be thinkable.”64 This is what allows us to discover the being of the object. This in turn makes the ego itself understandable as the unity of givenness in time. This is what found our predications about the object on solid grounds. We go beyond superficial givenness to the core of the object. Our discourse becomes thus more concerned with accuracy and correctness. They become more related to truthfulness and stay within the ethics of communication, whereby our exchanges relate to humanity as such.

63 Ideas III, p. 27
64 Dan Zahavi, Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity: A Response to the Linguistic-Pragmatic Critique (Translated by E. A. Benhke. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001) 40
Meaning constitutes itself through human communication. We return back to a world constituted in sense that becomes the place from which we rationally organize ourselves and organize our lives. Such a world itself is constituted through the sedimentation of habitualities and rational decisions. Habitualities prescribe a type through which the object can be known. A certain familiarity with the object allows us to orient ourselves toward it as an in-itself and even to anticipate some of its missing features. The substrate \( S \) is that which is expressed in the clarifications we give about the object. It is that which delimit our clarifications, because clarification is its expression. Elucidation or clarification is an intuition into the object. These are objects of the world as universal horizon. The world is thus the universal horizon that stands as a horizon of reference for a plurality of perspectives and views of situated egos. The world is the meaningfulness beyond all meanings. It is that in which all of them find meaning. The world as horizon offers only limited possibilities to actions that intend it. We are not totally free in our intending acts. We can freely vary the world, but such variations cannot be done without bodies, for instance. There are thus forms that cannot be varied. There are invariant structures that allow the variation to occur.

There are substrates that do not arise from substratification, they are not production of variation or modalizations. They are absolute substrates. In the sphere of experience, such substrates are objects that are simply experienceable and determinable. The world is the absolute substrate. We need a world in order for variation and modalization to exist. We cannot exercise the intentional activity unless we have a ground upon which such acts can be exercised. “Everything mundane, whether a real
unity or a real plurality, is ultimately dependent; only the world is independent, only it is absolute substrate in the strict sense of absolute independence; it does not subsist as a finite substrate does, namely in relation to circumstances exterior to itself.\textsuperscript{65} The world is not just an absolute substrate. It is also an original substrate, in the sense that it contains not only physical nature, but also values, cultures, scientific acquisitions, etc. Such a world is preconstituted as a unity before the ego’s explicit decision to transform it. It always already exercises an influence on the ego before the decision is made. The world carries a motivational force.

There is thus a level of receptivity that precedes ego’s explicit decision. Activity as a position taking always presupposes passivity. There is something that triggers consciousness’ interest and brings it to the specific position it takes. Affection is the condition of the active turning-toward of the ego. Motivation, affection, and association as the influence of the world on the ego, are important in ego’s decision making. “The object ‘intrudes on the subject’ and exercises stimulation on it (theoretical, aesthetic, practical stimulation). The Object, as it were, wants to be an Object of advertence, it knocks at the door of consciousness taken in a specific sense (namely, in the sense of advertence), it attracts, and the subject is summoned until finally the Object is noticed.”\textsuperscript{66} Constitution as givenness of the thing-itself in a certain manner, constitutes in the ego a unity that allows it to intend and intuit things in a certain manner. Also the sedimentation of habits – ego receives passively both natural and cultural things – conditions ego’s actions on the world.

\textsuperscript{65} EJ, p. 138
\textsuperscript{66} Ideas II, p. 231
Through passive synthesis comes the constitution of ego’s character. Association, as the “principle of passive genesis”, is thus “the realm of the ‘innate’ Apriori without which an ego as such is unthinkable.”67 Ego appears in genetic givenness as a unity of infinite connections, established through the unity of a universal genesis in the World. What all this comes down to is that ego belongs to a world and to a tradition of sense builders that shape him and give him a definite grasp on reality. Ego is not however mere receptivity. It receives in an active way, because the world also bears its trace, its specific contribution. Sense is thus laid down and passed on in an active way from one generation to another. This determines strongly our understanding of the world and our specific take on it. The world takes on meaning through human actions and decision, some of which are not the result of specific rational acts.

Even in passive synthesis, then, there is a “teleological sequence governing our consciousness.”68 Consciousness is always aiming at sense even in the non-predicative, and this is what predication presents. What is thus presented is what phenomenology takes as object of investigation. We go back to the sense toward which every human being strives in his natural dealing with things. We need thus to take the lived experience of space and time as the origins of the ideal space and time of science. The individual and historical lived experiences of space and time constitute the prehistory of the theories of space and time, and it is this prehistory that we need to question in order to get to the thing itself toward which it was striving. As stated by Husserl, “essentially the path of

67 CM, p. 80 & 81
knowledge is to ascend from *doxa* to *epistēmē* – it is simply that even concerning this ultimate goal, the origin and specific rights of the lower stages should not be forgotten.“69  
The return to the origin of knowledge is thus a return to an unchallengeable primitive self-presentation of the object. The world of experience, the life-world, is that which has been covered by sciences with a “garment of ideas.“70 The phenomenological work is thus that of uncovering things-in-themselves and to see the layers of meaning that occur in their constitution. It consists in the uncovering of seeing the thing-in-itself.

Explication is thus a penetration into the “internal horizon of the object by the direction of perceptual interest.”71 The field of givenness is a field where at the same time as the object is given in-itself, it is also co-given with other objects. Objects are co-presented and co-given within a structure that assure their coherence and structure. Politically speaking, we see that it is important to concentrate on the essential rather than the peripheral. The object that is given as an in-itself detaches itself from a background of co-given objects. The co-given is not central unless there is an intentional shift of gaze toward it. The co-given is an important factor in givenness, but it should not overshadow the object of explicit perception. In political discussions in Africa, sometimes, we see how a focus on ethnicity and regional allegiances blur the political discussion of issues. The peripheral becomes an all encompassing reality that heavily obstructs public discussions and a genuine understanding of notions like nation, state, common good, etc. It is important, as Husserl advises, to distinguish between the object and its background,

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69 *EJ*, p. 46, and also Suzanne Bachelard, *A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic*, p. 144
70 Suzanne Bachelard, *A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic*, p. 141
71 *EJ*, p. 105
between seeming and being. That is the only way to see into things themselves and to attain the truth of the genuine givenness of things. The thing in itself should the determining factor in position takings.

The world is always given in a sedimentation of meaning, through time as bearer of the synthetic identity of the thing. As Donohoe puts it, while static phenomenology "strives for an understanding of the general structure of consciousness, focusing on the ideal laws governing the acts of consciousness", genetic phenomenology for its part "provides not only an explanation of the ego and its development but also a corresponding explanation of the world and its development." Thus, while static phenomenology remains very formal in its considerations of "structural analysis of constitution of judgments and their meaning", genetic phenomenology enters into considerations about the ego as lived-body. Genetic phenomenology searches for the sense that unfolds in human history. It looks for the historical sedimentations that are both carried forward in categorial predications and scientific achievements. We find such meanings in pre-predication and in the pre-articulated life of the ego in things. Ego’s act is thus a second act because ego itself is ultimately part of that which is constituted. Ego is part of its own history.

The unity of the ego is made up of a manifold experiences. The ego is not an alien spectator to human experience and history in its position takings. As it is always already affected as it effects and takes decisions. Ego’s affection occurs in a common pregiven

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73 Janet Donohoe, *Husserl on Ethics and Intersubjectivity: From Static to Genetic Phenomenology*, p. 23
world, as stated above. I apprehend myself always as a human ego that is situated in a world composed by selves and things that are perspectively given. The ego is thus both “hyle”, matter, and spirit. Thus, in talks about ego as a human being, when we stop at the level of ego as merely a “hyle”, then we live in the era of the prevalence of self-preservation. This would be so because such ego does not consider its spiritual, psychological, and relational character as important. It only considers the preservation of the biological and the physical. We will elaborate more on this in our discussion of kleptocratic and dictatorial regimes in Africa. The ego is constituted both through passivity and activity: it is a personal ego. Ego, as a psychological being, is a unity of body and spirit. Ego is a Body and “the Body as Body presents, like Janus, two faces, and first of all within intuition. It is a reality with respect to nature as the world of things given in intuition and is at once a reality with respect to spirit. Thus it is a double reality, to which pertain two lines of real circumstances.”

By bringing in the unity of experience as ground of understanding, Husserl solves some of the problems of formalism in his static phenomenology, where “structural analysis of intentionality had little to say about the specific contents of various objects.” In genetic phenomenology, we raise questions about the origins of the object and the historical conditions of meaning. In static phenomenology we looked for the structures of meaning, now we learn to see the conditions of predication in the pre-predicative, in the world of life as such. The categorial here is the offspring of the life of consciousness in things. The Lebenswelt, the world of life, which belongs to the pre-predicative, the life of

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74 Ideas II, p. 297
spontaneous organizations that occurs before scientific thematization, is the condition of any thematization. The ego as an identity of the stream of consciousness is the identical in the flux; ego transcends the flux but is not unaffected by it, because the habitualities that come from its acts end up giving it its own structure. They are all the categorial acts that deposit a sense in objects that condition our subsequent grasp of them. It is at this level that we raise the question of normality or abnormality as the conditions under which objects are given. It is about the natural configuration of things in the Lebenswelt that conditions our take on them.

It is the unity of experience itself that determines our judgments about normality or abnormality of state of affairs. The normal and the abnormal are so only in reference to the unity of experience. They presuppose the showing forth of such unity. In order for a world to be constituted normally, we need spatio-temporal objects to appear in a cohesive and concordant fashion. As stated by Natanson, “within the round of the individual’s daily routine, he finds and defines what is ‘normal’ for him, what is ‘familiar’ and also what is ‘strange’. There is no point in time when an elder takes a child aside to tell him the facts of daily life, nor is there a manual for the exposition of the taken for granted.”

The normal is that which is constituted within specific experiences, but at the same time, it is also that which lives in tension toward that which is not within those experiences, the abnormal. The normal always explodes toward the abnormal; homeworld exists always in a dialectical tension with the alienworld.

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The homeworld is that (...) which is the result of the establishment of a kind of style of normality within a community. The community has its own style of constitution of the world that becomes established as the normal sense of the world. The community that shares a style and inhabits the same lifeworld is understood to be the homeworld. The homeworld is that which is familiar to me because it is the place where I am understood to be normal. I share the sense of the world with those in my homeworld while the alienworld is that which is unfamiliar, where I do not have the same style of constitution or the same sense of the world.77

The home is thus a specific way of constituting the world and inhabiting it. It is also the primordial stance from which openness to the alien becomes possible. The constitution of the alien from the home necessarily affects the home’s style.

Normality and abnormality are thus very much operative in the intersubjective framework. I learn the rules of life from humanity as such. Humanity as such, the world as horizon, is the field where we learn normality and abnormality. Individuals learn within their specific society the way to look at things themselves that condition their relations to things and among themselves. Societies in turn learn from one another a way to structure themselves and have the right grasp on things. A foreign abnormality can thus question and modalize a home “normality.” It can take it to a new level of self-understanding and articulation.

What counts for us as ‘abnormality’ is to be seen as a modification of what counts for us as ‘normality.’ Yet the moment that a concordant apprehensional system is apprehended as a new and foreign normality, it breaks off from our own normality, for it turns out to be a self-sufficient normality with abnormalities of its own. Hence what is implied in our apprehension of a foreign normality is precisely its independence from our own: what is peculiar to the ‘foreign’ is precisely that it breaks through the total style of our own normality. 78

77 Janet Donohoe, *Husserl on Ethics and Intersubjectivity*, p. 104
78 Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, p. 91
The home’s categories of validities can be enriched through its understanding of the independence of alien normality. This recognition of the other validities is made possible only on the basis of the recognition of the world as horizon. “The absolute objective world-structure”79 is thus what is prime in all talks of normality and abnormality. This is what makes possible the understanding of the concept of abnormality as a healthy recognition of difference and not a totalitarian will to impose one’s views on others.

What emerges from talk of normality and abnormality is the understanding that Truth is constituted in truths. Generations lay down traditions and understandings that are carried forward and that are grounds for human dialogue. A meaningful and healthy relation can emerge from home and alien world only through the building up of a “home community.” This new home which is the space of dialogue, as the confrontation and sharing of profiles, can only be a healthy space when the home and the alien understand what constitute them fundamentally as homes. The home community can only be built when the diversity of experience go back to things themselves and trace their lawfulness in the assertion of meaning and humanity. In this sense, Kant’s categorical imperative becomes a powerful means into understanding such space: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.” And the same formulation of the maxim states: “Act in such a way that you treat

79 Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, p. 92-3
humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means."\(^{80}\)

This recognition of the fundamental communication between homes can only occur when the world is recognized as the absolute substrate. This is the world as horizon for human behaviors and acts. What we find here is the essential that expresses humanity in its fullness. We do not get stuck with the peripheral or the non essential. We go to that which is constituted as the absolutely human and that which is the expression of the things-in-themselves. The horizon of humanity, as the world in its fullness, is prior to any thesis about the world. We are thus in a movement that goes from the preconstituted world of the natural attitude but that returns to it in order to understand it and use it as the ground for further human actions. Phenomenology is thus deeply political in the sense that it wants ultimately to give humans things-in-themselves as means of their interaction and actions.

### 4.4. Life-World and the Paradox of the Ego

In our first chapter, we dealt with the universal character of logical laws, as that which makes possible for them to not be bound to time or to circumstances. In genetic phenomenology, we raise questions about the universality that we have just thus assumed. Universality is not just out there and ready to be the paradigm for all

subsequent knowledge. In genetic phenomenology, we realize that logical formulations find their origins in the pre-predicative. They were constituted as sense before their explicit formulations into categoriality. The mood BARBARA for instance, before becoming the referential objective whatsoever, has its origin in sedimented meaning. As stated by Husserl himself, “universal objects constitute themselves in universal institutions.”81 Institution here already refers to the unity of the givenness of things themselves in the pre-predicative. The object does not by itself constitute itself as a universal objective validity that offers itself to intuition. Through human dealings and actions, objectivity is constituted and instituted which offers itself as a ladder for further dealings. Objectivity is thus not just something “out there” but something that needs to articulate its origins. We need to dig up the natural laws of givenness of the object in-itself as that which condition our grasping of things. As much as we can find meaning in the structures of consciousness, we need to raise questions about how they arise in those structures.

The x whatsoever given in logical formulations is a higher level of reality as constituted at a primordial level of givenness. The categorially formed “free ideality” is a fruit of sedimentation. That which is constituted as objectivity for a multiplicity of references has its origins in immediate givenness. The ideality of meaning, its self-sameness, has to do with a sedimented meaning. How do we understand the universal gravity theory if we do not have a firsthand understanding of bodies? The formulation of the theory itself springs from such understanding and experience of bodies. Predication is

81 LI, II, p. 293
a higher level of experience. Science always speaks of a world that is through and through transparent and that can be explained by a system of theories. Such theories however are consistent and coherent only when they remain faithful to their origins in the world as we know it in our experience. The world, as we know it, has its own density and horizons of unfulfilled expectations. All profiles carried within themselves absence. We need thus to “leave” the sphere of “radical absolutes” in order to be reconciled with the structures of the living as such. The common world points, beyond individual theories, to a nexus of relations that we need to explore.

The philosopher, as “functionary of humanity”82 is only so in so far as he asserts the “independence” of the object of his search. He is functionary to an “authentic humanity that is absolutely universal,”83 in so far such absolute universality remains faithful to its origins in the world as absolute substrate. Since the vocation of the philosopher is a vocation to truth itself, he must bear within his intellectual preoccupation, the preoccupation of humanity as such. To do this, he needs to go back to the life-world, the world as lived through in a spontaneous and natural way. This is where true objectivity of the thing-itself-as-given-to-intuition is expressed. Truth as the experience of “that which is” is the confirmation ground for rational activity. To get to such truth, we need to get to “the hidden unity of intentional inwardness which alone constitutes the unity of history.”84 Things are not given as disparate entities because there is field of givenness that structures their givenness as comprehensive wholes. Such

82 Robert Sokolowski, Husserlian Meditations, p. 177-178
84 Crisis, p. 73
structuring field is the life-world, the Lebenswelt. The life-world is the subsoil, the root, of scientific activity. As such it needs to be clarified.

The life-world is the world of experience, of which science is the formulation. It is the coherent world that goes on prior to any theorizing; such a world becomes fundamental to theory itself. This world is called “primordial world” or “the sphere of ownness” by Husserl. Scientific achievements, as human achievements, have their origins in the life world and go back to it. The telos of sciences is an idealized world, as world existing-in-itself, a complete world, that present in a single movement all the profiles of the given. The total predication always remains a pretention, because the life-world as the presupposition of science “is the realm of primordial evidences.” Theories will always require the self-evidence of the object as their fulfilling moments. The life-world is the homeland of rationality as such. The objects of the life-world are the ones that express the truth sought after by science. Predications do not give us “definite validity.” The super idealization of the logician, instead of imposing meaning on the world, needs to be preoccupied with getting its theories confirmed by givenness in the natural world. We need to get to “the hidden presuppositions” upon which natural scientific and logical theories rest. The constitution of meaning occurs always upon the radical givenness in the life-world. “Episteme” is thus a modalization of the unity carried forward in “doxa.”

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86 EJ, p. 14
The “sphere of origins [as] the sphere of absolute givenness”\textsuperscript{87} determines our understandings of the object. Scientific and logical predications are “a finite knowing within an infinite horizon”\textsuperscript{88} of the world as horizon of givenness. The Ego is carrier of systems of significations that do not need to be explained in order to be. Such systems constantly inform and influence ego’s rational acts of predication. They precede predication because they are part of the showing forth of the structures of the life-world as such. The scientist and logician as human beings are inscribed in a specific history and time. They are living subjects, and as such bodies, traversed by the existential contradiction, which is the act through which the human person recognizes that he is limited but that at the same time he belongs to the world as an infinite horizon.\textsuperscript{89} The world as an open horizon cannot be circumscribed by the knowing activity, because it is that from which such activity can be understood.

I know and understand the world only through the dialectic of the visible and the invisible, the veiling and unveiling, presence and absence. Meaning erupts through this dialectic. Knowledge always occurs through a double transcendence and wholeness is always offered through parts on the background of a universal horizon. Presented sides are always a motivation and invitation for the ego to start a journey into the depth of things. As Barbaras puts it, invisibility is the constitutive reserve of that which appears

\textsuperscript{87} IP, p. 39
\textsuperscript{89} Theonest Nkeramihigo, “La contradiction existentielle (…) est l’acte par lequel l’existence reconnaissant sa finitude, reconnait du même coup que cette finitude, élément éternel de son essence, n’épuise pas cette essence. Comme finitude l’existence n’est pas encore elle-même, ne sait pas encore vraiment son sens. C’est cela que dit le concept de contradiction : l’existence est éternellement finitude et cependant ne découvre pas son sens au niveau de la finitude. », p. 181
Before the explicit “turning toward” of consciousness toward the world through predicative acts, consciousness has lived peacefully with it through its grasped parts. Predication always overflows from the pre-predicative. The presence of self to self in thought carries with it a de-presentation because of the call of the object and its motivational force. Consciousness always welcomes a silent history that precedes its own historical acts. The scientist and the logician are sailors both in history and prehistory; they are immersed in the sea of objects and meanings laid down by their forerunners and contemporaries and by themselves. The self always discovers itself through a wrenching (un arrachement).

The thinking ego is always situated and in-situation in its thinking activity. We do not grasp things generally but we always understand them from a specific angle and through a specific eye. The ego is thus a synthesis of activity and passivity and it is from such synthesis that it operates its grasping activity. Time and space have thus a strong importance in the constituting activity and on ego’s predicative power. The lived space, as an anthropological space, prescribes the distance between us and objects. It prescribes our possibilities on the objects, through kinesthetic movement. The Ego is an “I can that rises” toward the world and a response to the motivational invitation of the world. It is through space that we have the field of presence which structures our intentional acts. The constituting ego is an ego that encounters transcendent things only through a specific angle and not otherwise. This is the lived space. Abstract space is grafted on such concretely lived space. The paradox of visibility and invisibility of transcendent things

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reveals the fact that through an intentional necessity, ego is open to an outside that can only be given perspectivally. The life world is the crossroad of horizons of expectations and anticipations.

While in space we grasp things perspectivally, in time we grasp them as sedimented wholes. Space and time bring us to the reality of the givenness of the whole through its parts. Time is lived through as an experience of bursting and rift (éclatement et déchirement). The sedimentation of meaning occurs through this experience of bursting and rift. The primordial now points to subsequent now-phases that will integrate it. The primordial now falls into non-primordiality when a subsequent now follows it. Consciousness carries thus dynamic possibilities of situations: past, present, and future. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, perceiving, for instance, is engaging a future of experiences that the present cannot guarantee. It is a belief in the world. The foundation of the history of our rationality is thus to be traced back to the givenness of things themselves, to the lived-world. The thinking ego needs to be founded on the incarnated subject, whose life is structured in time and space. The self is the totality of its different temporal moments, and so is the history of his knowledge.

Through these different attempts, whether it is the scientist and logician’s objectivity or the philosopher’s discussion of time and space, it is the unity of the thing that is searched for as the condition of a meaningful insertion into the world of life. Predication tries to put forward such unity, but predication itself is always already constituted in sedimented meaning. The words we use in language belong to a world to

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91 Merleau-Ponty, Phénoménologie de la perception (Paris : Gallimard, 1945) 344
which they continually return for their meaningfulness. Words are tributaries of a social experience. Predications carry the welcoming of a tradition of spoken words and world which being is sedimented in the being of the predicing person. Predication carries thus its own historical weight: it is an awakening and enriching of a world that was already spoken. In predicative acts, as much as the ego expresses its autonomy, its authentic style, it also expresses a specific linguistic community. This linguistic community in its turn belongs to humanity as such. The supra-temporal in thought is the constituted: we can only understand the prime-ultimate because we have categories that allow us to grasp it. As Merleau-Ponty puts it, even the news about death and disaster are not radical news: they are understood as news about death and disaster because we know what death and disaster mean.\(^9^2\) The life-world structures our acts of predication. It serves them as their ultimate reference.

In terms of language, we can only understand the other because there is a common reference to which we point in our predication. We cannot have a common reference if we did not have an objectively constituted meaning, which traces its origins back to the shared space of lived experience. Outside of the common reference, the putting together of words in predication becomes nonsensical. In predication thus ego is both master and slave. It is slave to a tradition in which articulations are sedimented in its being. Such tradition itself is slave to humanity to which it is accountable. From this comes the responsibility carried in predicative acts. Language carries a heavy weight of

\(^{92}\) Merleau-Ponty, *La Prose du Monde*, p. 12 : « la nouvelle même d’une mort ou d’un désastre que le télégramme m’apporte, (…) n’est pas absolument une nouvelle ; je ne la reçois que parce que je savais déjà que des morts et des désastres sont possibles. »
mimesis. Mimesis is not just mere repetition. It necessitates a position-taking, a re-appropriation of what is said. It engages a responsibility. The categories of language are shaped by the life-world itself. The new signitive intentions receive their identity from an available signification.

As Merleau-Ponty puts it, human beings are knots of relations. The ego always finds itself in a world that was already expressed, which is carrier of meaning. It finds there a language which is already spoken and a culture which gives a certain tone to society and to the being of individuals within it. There is thus always a pre-reflexive and pre-predicative that precede reflection and predication. The ego is thus called to continually confront his validities with those that are functioning within the community. This is what assures him to remain a responsible individual within his community. “The subjective synthesis (...) is overcome by the advent of the Sprachgemeinschaft <‘community of language’>. This encloses a Mitvollzug <‘cooperation’>, an active Nachverstehen <‘reunderstanding’>, a present co-Erzeugung of the Erzeugung which was present originally in the single subject.”

93 The availability of the production for subsequent productions, its openness to an unlimited horizon of individual acts, is what the sedimentation of meaning sends us back to. Production through language once it is produced and has predicated its meaning becomes the property of the Sprachgemeinschaft. It becomes the property of humanity as such.

What belongs thus to humanity as such is what is good regardless of individual interests or decisions. This is what we aim at in our predications: the deeply human that

connects humans to one another. The subject of history is not just the individual ego, in his performances. Even though each individual’s input enriches the whole, historical continuity is brought about by an irreal ego, which is the spiritual sense that both carries and transcends individual senses, the transcendental ego. The a-historical character of the transcendental ego comes from the fact that it is more a sedimented and concatenated spirit of generations of people that have been faithful to truth in their strivings and acts. It is thus the makeup of the spiritual community of humans that have embraced and remained faithful to their humanity. When we see the meaning of this then we understand the obligation individuals have to remain faithful to it in their acts of carrying forward the sedimented meaning. Once we get to meaning as the unfolding of the thing-in-itself, it is difficult to react otherwise than to conform to such showing forth. This contributes greatly in the constitution of the public sphere which in turn contributes to the building up of a healthy political society.

The public sphere as a space of discussion of issues and reality gives a special shape to political reality. The public sphere need however to be founded on sense and meaning as the unfolding of the thing-in-itself as constituted through sedimentation in the life-world. Members of a community are not just juxtaposed next to one another; they actively work toward achieving the goals of the community, which is the manifestation of the thing-in-itself. They must thus actively work in producing such meaning. The state, for instance, is one of those productions.

The state is not a community, nor is the nation, nor the people. Rather, the state is the intention, the sense, of certain acts performed by individuals in a civil community. It has no independent existence, and it does not act on its own. It exists as a byproduct of choices and as an instrumentality for accomplishing
social goals. The state’s sovereignty necessary to its being is only loosely analogous to the freedom of an individual person. One might more accurately say: the state is the sovereignty constituted by personal civil acts.\textsuperscript{94}

The constitution of political society is done through a sedimented spiritual sense. It is through common reflection and acts that we do not merely live in pre-givenness but understand such pre-givenness and the obligations it carries. The thing-in-itself that is presented through constitution constitutes the community of egos as “agents of truth” that strive to lay down traditions of sense. They take the real measure of things and of existence. When we see the spirit that inhabits the constitution of the state, we see in the state a respectable institution that requires appropriate reaction. The state would stop in this sense to being a means for personal gain and kleptocratic ambitions for instance.

We need thus to carry out a reduction of the political as such and see the spirit that inhabits it. We do not in this instance merely deal with a general notion but we see them as sedimented meanings that present us with the thing-in-itself as the condition for the truth of our acts. In this sense, there is no interruption between interpretations, but rather a continuity and identity of being between the new decisions and the old interpretations, because there is a spiritual sense that runs through them. This historical fidelity to truth maintains an ethical sense in the community because it saves from absolutizing individual sides of reality. When sides or profiles are constituted into totalities it becomes impossible to have a genuine conversation and discussion. Predications become thus imposition of meaning instead of being a service to truth. This is the point where we reach political and social manipulations of language. Language

serves here the agenda of individual ideologies rather than taking truth as such as its telos. The instrumentalisation of social, political realities and beliefs is a consequence of the forgetfulness of the unity of truth in the givenness of things-themselves.

We need thus to go back to things themselves. In our discussion of politics, instead of getting stuck with specific political acts or performances; we need to understand politics as such as the condition of the feasibility and rightness of those acts and performances. As said above, what makes politics “what it is” is the relation commandment-obedience. This is the invariant that subsists, whether we change political regimes, and despite contingent and historical political forms. Commandment and obedience condition the political order as such, because they are what politics is all about.

In commandment, the fate of individuals and that of the state are put into the hands of an individual or group of individuals, who in return assure their security and well-being. Commandment itself is based on the notion of authority. Thus the structures of the relation between commandment and obedience exclude the relations where the right of the mightier is the guiding principle. The extension of the power of the sovereign remains within the boundaries of the contract that binds him to the subjects. The sovereign does not stand above the fundamental laws of the state. His power is not a matter of natural force but a matter of the interpretation of rights and duties. As Freund puts it, “where there is convention and the law, there ceases the right of the mightier.”

The thing-in-itself of politics is thus a healthy relation between commandment and obedience that preserves and protects the common good. Where these two are not

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operative, the coming together of people to form a society can give way to violence and brute power. Commandment and obedience are the guarantees of the unity of the nation and the good stature of the state. In the pursuit of the unity of the nation, commandment gives orders, commands, coordinates and corrects, all these specific acts have as their presupposition the givenness of the thing-in-itself. Since commandment aims at canalizing individual interests into a comprehensive whole, such whole a needs to be grasped and stated for everyone. The sovereign is thus at the service of that which is constituted through sedimented givenness as the comprehensive whole in which the whole community can recognize a rational and ethical givenness of its striving toward the truth of things as such. The sovereign’s power as the ability to impose one’s will over other wills through persuasion and discussions implies thus the ability to state and bring forth the thing-in-itself that can imposes a common interpretation and understanding. Commandment, as the power to coordinate individual wills in the direction of a definite common good, needs thus to have the ability to unveil the “founding layers of validity” that inhabit the givenness of the thing-in-itself.

The presuppositions of politics are the invariant and universal that constitutes a ladder for specific practices. As such, they should not depend upon specific time or space. What they present is only the thing-in-itself of politics, which is a healthy relation between commandment and obedience. When a government or sovereign stop listening to the authority of the givenness of things themselves, it becomes self-cancelling and it can give way to all sort of protests. There is a right to resistance that belongs to the people.

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96 Anthony Steinbock, Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995) 41
when their governments go astray in the interpretation of the common good. Sovereignty
ends up becoming an oppressive tool in the hand of some dictators, when individual
goods are absolutized and become confused with the common good. The rights to a safe
and healthy life are jeopardized when we forget the ground of our practices as the infinite
horizon of the lifeworld, where things have a meaning constituted through historical
sedimentation. A healthy political society includes a recognition of the thing-in-itself as
the most evident determining factor of actions. When political power is conceived solely
as power for self-interest, it alienates humans from one another and from the life-world.
The preoccupation with gain takes over the preoccupation with actively inhabiting the
world.

The active inhabitation of the world involves the recognition of the fact that the
common good is bigger than the individual or sum of individual well-being. It involves
also a recognition of the sedimented meaning in words like justice, concord, respect,
goodness, accountability, etc. The power to a positive self-projection in the building up of
a nation or a state presupposes an intuition into things-themselves, into the sedimentation
of meaning that inhabit reality, as presented in the concepts above. This means a positive
insertion into the world as infinite horizon. Projection has as its presupposition a
reappropriation. Consciousness faces us thus with the reality of the feeding of reflection
upon pre-reflection. A decision that forgets its ground, as the place from which it springs
and to which it returns, is a decision that is doomed to being unethical. The articulated
world of politics draws its force from a cultural and historical world that precedes it. Such
a world imposes upon it a responsibility. Our political constitution of meaning is done on
the background of a constituted meaning that conditions it. The ego participates in an all-
-encompassing system of forms that condition individual acts. As stated above, things
cannot be randomly put together.

In our discussions about matters, we need an instance where “truth about the
object which is unconditionally valid for all subjects” as our guiding principle. The life-
world as a general structure is the universal a priori ground for our discussion. It is the
objective conditions that help build up a healthy understanding of the issues at stake. It
constitutes the open horizon that is the “telos” of the intentional acts. The attainment of
“the universe of truths in themselves”\(^\text{97}\) is that which must condition the public sphere.
What is needed in this return to things-themselves is a return to an “ethic of reason”\(^\text{98}\) that
informs and transforms the public sphere and the political reality. In a world of
technocrats, kleptocratic rulings, and absolute will to power, an ethic of reason can
constitute a fundamental means to a confrontation of profiles. Political societies as
reasoned societies must be inserted into a higher order-we, which is humanity as such.
Political communities carry within themselves the sedimentations of meaning and
validities of their specific community and of humankind as such.

The objective thing as constituted through sedimented meaning is “there for
everyone”. The issue of normality and abnormality appears as the regulating instance
conditioned by the thing-in-itself. There are structures and frameworks and expectations
that guide and regulate experiences. If experience clashes with them, then we are facing
abnormality. Normality is the transcendental feature of reality. The normal and the

\(^{97}\text{Crisis, p. 335}\)
\(^{98}\text{Natalie Depraz, “Phenomenological Reduction”, p. 2}\)
abnormal are to be understood in the sense of the harmony and concordance of the given. The normal and the abnormal have to do with “the way in which sense emerges as concordant, optimal, typical, and familiar for our various experiences and comportments.” Abnormality erupts in politics when commandment is exercise outside of any law binding contract. When the leader feels that he is not accountable to his subjects we face the problem of the wandering of commandment. We have a way of looking at politics and social realities as being immoral or inhumane because there is a standard to which they do not correspond. This understanding of normality leads us to the fact that there should be a connection between what a human subject is, what the implications of his actions are, and an absolute ought. The knowledge of an optimal givenness carries an obligation. Our statements and handling of reality must be modeled upon an objective reference that is given in the sedimented self-evident thing. Optimal givenness has an immanent ethical sense.

Normality brings us home, it installs us in the human domain. As stated by Steinbock, the home is the birthplace of the ego as a human person, as “agent of truth”. Ego discovers its face and is capable of history only within the open particularity of his life-world. It is only through historical particularities that we articulate the universal. It is thus important for us as human beings to inhabit the world through such particularities – such particularities are not closed particularities, but they are themselves particularities that are inserted in the world as universal horizon. The identity and universality of reason is made up of its different reasons. The universality of reason is a dynamic universality,

always in the making, and always taking-in multiplicity. As stated by Masolo, there is a necessity to have a dialogue “between the universal sphere of principles and the particular domains of practice” because, he continues, “morality as ‘conformity to ideals of right human conduct’ remain universal.”\textsuperscript{100} The universal itself is given in the field of the life-world, as a field where humanity itself is expressed. When we bring this into the political domain, we see that the manipulation of the presuppositions of politics, commandment and obedience, occur as a consequence of particularities raising themselves above the universal. For instance, when tribal or clanic solidarities are stronger than the nation or the state, we end up in a wandering not only of categories but also of the ethical and the political. When ethnicity and tribalism are transformed into the leading principles of politics, ethical values are put into bracket. Normality itself is transformed into abnormality, the struggle for a healthy democratic space is transformed into a struggle for self-preservation.

Living in a healthy society is not just a matter of a rational and punctual decision. It is a matter of self-insertion into a community of human beings. Such community is a community that is constituted through time and space. The enduring thing-in-itself is constituted in a historical continuity. Meaning articulates itself in that which is particular. Such particularity is a particularity that cannot stand by itself. It is a particularity that is inserted in the world as absolute substrate, the universal horizon of understanding and givenness. Particular communities carry their own normality but such normality needs to be open to discussion and to the recognition of the others’ normality as well. They are

\textsuperscript{100} D. A. Masolo, “Reason and Culture: Debating the Foundations of Morals in a Pluralistic World”, in La rationalité une ou plurielle? Edited by Paulin J. Hountondji. (Dakar: Codesria, 2007) 227
open societies that discover their own face in the self-evidence of the thing-in-itself in which any human person can recognize himself. We live thus in societies that welcome both their particular sedimented meaning, as their particular lens into the world. They also recognize their community of destiny with others. This is the condition of an ethic of a healthy public sphere.

Convictions and habitualities constitute the unity of the ego. But such unity is an open unity because ego lives in a knot of relations that determine his ethical vision and his political positions. Thus the underlying preoccupation and obsession of the logician with objective laws can be understood as a preoccupation for the constitution of a ground upon which issues can be discussed. It is ultimately an objectivity that refers us back the constituted self-evidence of the thing through sedimentation. We can also understand the invariant structure as the structure of the sedimented thing-in-itself. The unity of inner time is the unity of the subject as he carries through his being a sedimented sense. Overall, we can say that Husserl’s preoccupation from the beginning has been to express the thing-in-itself as it is the condition for the possibility of our predications and for a healthy public and political sphere. The life world becomes thus the principle, in the genetic sense, and end, “telos”, of political practices. We need now to see how practically this can be. We will discuss the Monadology and transcendental Monadology and what they mean for the constitution of the life-world.
Chapter 5:

Monadology, the Primordial Hereness, the Inter-Monadic, Transcendental Intersubjectivity, and the Political World

The return to things-themselves is a return to the ground of all givenness, which is the life-world, as the condition for all predications and discussion. The life-world is also the ground and presupposition of scientific idealizations. In our return to things-themselves, we discover that nature and experience are the idealized actuality of all scientific predications. Thus, the life-world appears to be “the forgotten meaning-fundament of natural science”\(^1\) and predications. That which is straightforwardly given is taken to the highest levels of givenness through variation and modalization. As stated by Husserl, the pre-geometric world is the meaning-fundament of geometry. That which is theoretically and categorically given has its origins in the life-world. The things given in predications are constituted through sedimentation of meaning in the life-world. This constitution of meaning through sedimentation presupposes a subjectivity through which it happens.

The thing does not constitute itself \textit{sui generis} as meaningful. Meaning exists only for a subject that constitutes it and carries it as the means for his relationship to the world. Constitution refers us thus to the ego as the unity of a stream of experience. The Ego

\(^1\) *Crisis*, p. 49
constitutes meaning but also constitutes itself in meaning, and for that matter it becomes our point view on the world. The ego is the foundation of all that is my own; it is a primordial “I”, a position from which there is the possibility of meaningful relation to the world and to the other. The identity and unity of the “I” is that which assures the consistency and permanence of the different experiences and acts that are directed toward the world. Ego, as the unity of inner time consciousness, is the unity of an identical bearer of different experiential categories. The subject is a monad, the primordial unity of the experiences of an individual subject. As monad, ego is the “origin, place where everything is answerable for itself.”

As a primordial stance the monad is the point of departure of a relation to otherness. The Husserlian monad is not a closed being; it is a being permeated by otherness and continuously open to the outside of itself. As such, the monad becomes an important means for building a public sphere and an inter-monadic community. The inter-monadic as an open and political society can however only be constituted based on understanding, which is a fundamental intuition into the being of things-themselves. Understanding as intuition into the unfolding of things-themselves at the highest level of their givenness allows self-evidence to be the guiding principle of discussions. Understanding thus allows society to be ordered according to its telos which is the preservation and just distribution of common good. In so doing, it helps in shaping human destiny. The possibility of understanding itself resides in the monad as the place where the thing reveals itself at a primordial level to the constituting ego. The primordial

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stance is thus important in the constitution of an open society, a society that not only cares for discussion but puts truth as the primordial thing in such discussion. Discussion becomes an attending to the birth and growth of truth in the intersubjective and political space.

5.1. Monadology and Primordial Hereness: Owness as the Condition of Openness

A man found an eagle’s egg and put it in the nest of a barnyard hen. The eagle hatched with the brood of the chicks and grew up with them. All his life the eagle did what the barnyard chicks did, thinking he was a barnyard chicken. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He chuckled and cracked. And he would thrash his wings and fly a few feet into the air. Years passed and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird above him in the cloudless sky. It glided in graceful majesty among powerful wind currents, with scarcely a beat of its strong golden wings. The old eagle looked up in awe. ‘Who’s that?’ He asked. ‘That’s the eagle, the king of the birds,’ said his neighbor. ‘He belongs to the sky. We belong to the earth – we’re chickens.’ So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that’s what he thought he was.

(Anthony de Mello, Awareness, p. 3)

Expressing things-themselves requires a stance from which such an expression is produced. We grasp and express things from a primordial hereness. The Socratic imperative, “Know Thyself”, appears to be a prerequisite for entering into dialogue with others. The monad, the ego as it grasps itself in the unity of its constituting acts, is the condition of the primordial grasp that allows discourse on reality and the constitution of the intersubjective space. As primordial hereness, the monad is different from any other and from the transcendent. A phenomenon is always something for the ego while “the
ego is something for itself.” The ego constitutes itself as the identical pole of habitualities, the unity of all the layers of meaning that it carries in an absolute “here”. The monad refers us thus to the unity of the ego as body and soul. The primordial sphere is a sphere of immediate self-givenness of the ego to itself. It is the sphere of presence of self to self in immediate intuition. The ego, which is the unity of the flow, the unity of internal time consciousness, is that, thanks to which experience itself gains its unity and consistency. As such, the monad is the condition of experiencing of otherness.

The monad is constituted as a here and it grasps the world from such hereness. Hereness is thus the “place” from which sense is constituted. Husserl speaks of the monad as a flesh, a mixture of body and soul, a primordial self-givenness of the ego to itself. In normal parlance for instance, when something takes a full hold of people, they speak of the fact that they fill it in their flesh. The flesh expresses the unity of body and mind, an absolute here from which any experience is possible. It is only through such a primordial here that I can later apprehend exteriority, including the being of the other ego, as a center of decision, as an “I can.” When we speak of the intelligibility of things as a constituted intelligibility we are referring to the primordial and the intersubjective sphere. Once constituted, the intelligibility of things is always grasped and expressed at the primordial level. The one that expresses the intelligibility of things is an ego, a monad that speaks in the first person and “from here”. It can also be a specific society to which such intelligibility is given in its particularity. There is no general knowledge or no knowledge without someone that knows, a place from which such knowledge emerges.

3 Velarde-Mayol, On Husserl (Belmont: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2000) 72
We speak always from a primordial stance and this is the first means into the building up of an inter-monadic community. It is only from such a stance made up of convictions that it is possible to aim at truth as that which conditions the discussions about issues. Unless one knows oneself, one cannot know the issues at stake in an intersubjective space. The primordial sphere, the sphere of ownness, is thus important into opening up the space of dialogue. Who is then the ego that speaks in the first person about the truth of things? It is the monad as a self-constituted ego that makes possible all subsequent constitutions. The monad is the unity of the ego, a spiritual unity that constitutes the ground for knowledge. The ego constitutes itself as an egoic transcendental monad through self-temporalisation. The ego is the identity and unity that is made of sedimented moments of inner time. Consciousness constitutes itself in the process of an endless appropriation and reappropriation. These refer to the fact that it is always from a being situated that the spirit expresses itself. The ego as the unity of the flow of consciousness is unique and non transferable. It exists in an original and primordial here.

Immanent objects for instance can only be given from a first person perspective. They can only be appresented in others, through empathy. In terms of their true meaning and deepest sense, some truths can only be given subjectively; even though we can tentatively bring them forward to the intersubjective space. Nobody can, for instance, be at a primordial level of someone else’s experience of loss of a loved one. The self is always brought forth in a primordial and non-primordial level. He is always co-determined, because he receives intentional contents that are part of an external input, but
ultimately the self is alone. The self is always given to itself originaliter, and such original givenness goes hand in hand with the co-givenness of the other. No monad is the same as another but they are given on the background of a common world, the world as horizon of horizons. The primordial sphere is always already an intersubjective sphere in that sense. The ego receives layers of meaning that are part of the constituted world within which it is given. It belongs to an inter-monadic tradition.

The self-explication of the ego that occurs on the level of the sphere of ownness goes hand in hand with the situation of the ego as body. The ego constitutes itself as “I myself” in its different acts, as an identical substratum of ego properties. As such, it is the enduring unity that constitutes itself as the center of relationships to the “outside the self.” The monadic time is the universal form of all its moments. For instance, we can say that the adult ego as agent of truth assumes and carries as its constitutive part “the ego as the child with no responsibility”. The monadic time is a time that holds together in an organic unity. The monad is thus the unity of genetic givenness. Such unity constitutes the temporality within which temporal unities develop and come to completion. The unity of the monad as the sign of its uniqueness is constituted through its self-temporalisation; it is impossible for one of its moments to be given without the apperception of others. Let us put this in Husserl’s own words.

If we take a subject (a concrete monad), the unity of being in its becoming signifies the unity of its development (a genesis in the precise meaning of that term), it then becomes clear that the content of a subsequent temporal fragment and of each temporal phase at its place in the continuum is unthinkable without its prior fragments. The apperception which begins at a place is precisely motivated
at that place and at no other, and contains in itself the inseparable imprint of a genesis as such.\textsuperscript{4}

Individual life is filled with now-phases that do not fade away and fall into nothingness. Past phases become corner stones in the constitution of now-phases. When someone says “I am X”, the X is presented as a whole that is not a sum of now-phases or as contained in some bits of them. The X is constituted as a totality through historical sedimentation. It is only as such that it understands issues and addresses them through its position taking in predications. The hereness of monadological givenness refers to the situatedness of the ego as given through sedimentation of meaning. The monad is a constituted totality of being from which any constitution is made possible. Only through such understanding of the monad do we come to develop a sense of respect for the transcendent and otherness. And it is only in this case that we can develop a sense of political responsibility. Monadological self-constitution is thus something that takes us beyond solipsism. It creates an open society. Therefore, while the phenomenologist has to operate a reduction to the sphere of ownness, the primordial and monadological sphere, which is a solipsistic sphere, is not without doors and windows. It is a solipsism permeated by a sedimented meaning and by otherness.

Hereness and uniqueness are built up through sedimentation of ego’s acts of reason. This constitutes also one of Husserl’s differences with Descartes. As stated by Husserl, “the unity of the ego is constituted in the stream of life.”\textsuperscript{5} The constitution of the monad occurs through time and through the constitution of habitualities. For instance,

\textsuperscript{5} Ideas II, p. 268
something intuited as good will belong to the baggage of the ego. The monad is a whole constructed of non-independent parts. He is the unity of moments, the synthesis of temporal phases, of presence and absence. The monad is thus the structure of a lived experience given in a primordial hereness. Hereness refers to the fact that the monad is a body. The body for Husserl however is not just Körper – body as a physical thing – but also Leib – flesh. The sphere of ownness, the primordial sphere of the body-flesh exists in exclusion of all others. The body as flesh appears as carrier of a surplus of meaning that other bodies do not have. Such surplus meaning is a specific expression of the world from a here. The body as flesh becomes thus ultimately a principle of constitution as such. As stated by Husserl, even though it is part the total physical nature, this body, along with all similar body-flesh appears to me to be endowed with a surplus of meaning that no other corporeal thing, in conformity with external experience, and which constitute it. The body flesh is carrier of subjectivity.

As stated by Sokolowski, “our body is one among many bodies, but it is experienced in a way different from any other.” It is the center from which all intentional acts radiate. It is always from “here” that the object is given the way it is given to the intending person. As a monad, the ego is thus constituted as the primal norm of reality.

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7 Robert Sokolowski, Phenomenology of the Human Person, p. 194
In transcendental attitude, I delimit what is my own, and exclude all that is alien. In this abstraction which excludes all others, what remains is the ego as given to itself originaliter, but also as situated in a flesh that is open. The monad is situated in its own sphere as a primordial sphere from which understanding and relations are made possible. It is only from here that it is possible to grasp transcendence and otherness. As stated by Zahavi, the body is “the absolute ‘here’ in reference to which every other object is ‘there,’ (…), our own lived body is the center to which space as a whole is related (…). It is for this reason that Husserl writes that the lived body is the condition of possibility for other objects (…), and that every experience of the world is mediated by, and made possible by, our lived bodilihood (…). The world is made “intelligible concretely as constituted sense” through transcendental subjectivity and its rootedness in the life-world. It is thus important to understand the situation, the being of the ego as sedimented in meaning, as a condition for the grasping and relating to otherness.

The autonomy of the subject as a constituted autonomy is foundational for science and theoretical endeavors. We deduce the objective from the apodicticity of interiority. This autonomy is itself built in the organic dialogue between soul and body. As stated by Husserl, the body as a “zero point of orientation”, the “center of orientation”, is the “place” from which intentionality goes to things. Intentional acts evolve around a body-position in the here and now. The body as a zero-point of orientation constitutes an

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8 *Sur l’intersubjectivité I*, (Introduction by Natalie Depraz) 44-45
10 *CM*, p. 137
“ultimate central here.” Positions like top, left, right, bottom refer to the hereness of the body. My body is thus always here, I cannot change my position to my body. Even in imagination, I need the hereness of the body as the center from which the imaginative projection emerges. The normal system of appearance of things is thus always organized around a body-position. Two bodies can thus intend the same world and even have the same world, but they can never have the same body-here to which such world is given, because each intends the world from a primordial and original “here”. The perspectival givenness of the transcendent world is thus a reflection of the monad or incarnation of the mind. The ego has always a specific world that it expresses and means. Through the body-position we understand that the ego is primordially a flesh and as such it can neither transfer its position nor its particular grasp of the world.

The primordial sphere is a sphere of responsibility. The monad always speaks from a first person perspective. There is a self-manifestation of the monad in the declarative. As stated by Sokolowski, in the declarative, “I engage myself in what I say”; and I can engage myself only from a primordial “here”. The speech that is produce from “here” is assuming the non-transferable responsibility for what is said, because “when I use I as a declarative, I explicitly manifest myself in the act of manifesting the world.” In the declarative use of speech, the agent is brought forth as assuming the responsibility of what is said, because it is said from a non-transferable

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11 CM, pp. 61, 166, 167
12 CM, p. 216
14 Robert Sokolowski, Phenomenology of the Human Person, p. 13
primordial here. The ego manifests its uniqueness in its declarative use of speech as being here and assuming a special stance which comes with the fact of being “here”.

The constitution of primordiality comes as a result of a double movement where the ego not only separates its body from all body-things but also from all other egos, and asserts itself as “my body self”, “my flesh.” Ego constitutes thus its own sphere as the space of responsible and ethical self-assertion. The flesh as a zero-point of orientation is thus a primordial originating place. Thing among things, the body-flesh is of a special make up. It does not resemble any of the other things, because it is a center of decision and structuring of all of them. It stands in a special relationship to all the other things. As stated by Husserl, it is only in a mediate way, through the eyes of the other, that I “learn” to apprehend my body as a physical thing. The body expresses subjectivity. The body is carrier of a surplus of meaning that no other body has. The flesh, as the psychophysical unity of body and soul, cannot be reduced to being a mere thing. It is always experiencing even while experiences are carried out upon it. The flesh is that which is the more originally my own.

Among all spatial things of my concrete universal sphere, ‘my flesh’ is that which is my own in the most original sense, that which is originally my own and which is always mine alone, that which is constantly at my disposition, and that which is the most original: it and only it is what benefits from such an immediacy.

My body-flesh takes thus a special configuration with regard to anything transcendent. It is both subjective and objective. It is a unity of a special make up. As stated by Husserl, “my ‘flesh’ is for me a unique configuration, entirely my own, subjective-objective, and

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15 Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Zweiter Teil: 1921-1928, p. 65 The body-flesh always appears as carrier of an surplus of meaning that no other physical body has.
not merely one thing among others, an in-itself (in the sense of an intuitive in-itself, an intuitive spatial thing, an in-itself already constituted in a solipsistic manner), but a unity both remarkable and strictly defined…”

The world stands before the monad as carrying a potential to be known. The flesh is given as a volitional structure, as an “I can” and “I do”, as a constituting “hereness”. The flesh allows us to have a horizon of co-intention. The discussion of presence and absence in the intending of transcendent objects carries an understanding of the kinesthetic presence of the flesh. There are open horizons of givenness because I can go around the given. I can tour it and discover its missed parts that were given to a “thereness”. The primordial stance is thus not a totalizing stance. From my “here” I grasp the world with all its open possibilities and such possibilities are possibilities for a “there” perspective. Only the world as horizon of horizons is an all embracing horizon of which “here” and “there” perspectives are primordial moments. For instance, if someone runs a race with the aim of winning a gold medal and loses that game, and sees someone else receive the gold medal, what constitutes for him a disappointment of his expectations is present to the other as a fulfillment of his hope. The same world targeted from two different standpoints will be primordially present only to one monad and appresented to the other. I cannot be primordially at the experience of the gold medalist recipient just as he cannot be primordially at my experience of the gold medalist loser. The lost possibility does not constitute the closure of possibility as such. It constitutes its openness to the other.

The world as an open horizon of possibilities is always given in different primordial ways. I can always project myself in the experience of the gold medalist recipient through a modification of myself, but the projection does not entail “being at the experience itself.” If we go back to what we discussed above, we see that the experience of normality and abnormality itself sends us to this fundamental reality of “hereness” within which the monad lives. The normal as the home constitutes all that is given through the flesh. Normality sends us to the primordial sphere, but such normality does not exist as a totalizing entity. It is a normality that stands in dialogue with that which is alien to it. I can welcome the beauty of the experience of the gold medalist and try to see in his joy an important moment for him as a monad. This is the only means into building up a meaningful community of monads which do not close themselves up on their acquisitions and positions, but open such positions and acquisitions up to the world of the other. The normal and the abnormal as “modalities of sense constitution” stand in close relation.

The understanding of the fact that the monad is not a closed entity but a being that carries layers of meanings and sense, that it is constituted in the inter-monadic, is what Husserl himself failed to carry to its fulfillment in his phenomenology. Husserl fell into totality in his considerations about the centrality of Europe and the peripheral givenness of all others. Husserl constituted “the spiritual telos of European Man” as the only telos within which all the others are comprehensive. The alien and the abnormal become thus the peripheral instead of living in a constructive tension with the home. Thus, at the same time as he states that no line of truth should be absolutized, Husserl absolutizes his own
truth, the European. He took the European truth to be the invariant structure of all other truth, the ladder that measures their conformity to truthfulness. He refuses the full status of humans to the Papuan. As he stated, “according to the old familiar definition, man is the rational animal, and in this broad sense even the Papuan is a man and not a beast (…). But just as man and even the Papuan represent a new stage of animal nature.”\textsuperscript{18} The question at this point is why does a rationality that claims that “a one-sided rationality can certainly become an evil”\textsuperscript{19} not fully includes the Papuan world as having its sides and perspectives that are missing to the European, but not absent for the Papuan themselves? And the question here is why is Husserl using the “even the Papuan”? Does he have doubts about their humanity?

Husserl asserts the importance of the primordial level as the level of the coming to be of a constituted truth that is a condition for dialogue. It is thus important to start from a “one-sided perspective” which is the perspective of the thinking or predating person. The fundamental starting point in this endeavor however is the givenness of the thing in itself in the world as horizon of horizons. In his delimitations of Europe, Husserl considers Europe as the world of the European Caucasian man. Europe in Husserl’s view is more racial than geographical. In that sense, the Gypsies, the Indians, and the Eskimos are not part of it. To Europe belongs the “European man.” As he states,

We may ask, ‘how is the spiritual image of Europe to be characterized?’ This does not mean Europe geographically, as it appears on maps, as though European man were to be in this way confined to the circle of those who live together in this territory. In the spiritual sense it is clear that to Europe belong the English dominions, the United States, etc., but not, however, the Eskimos or Indians or the

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Crisis}, p. 290, the stress on “even” is my own.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Crisis}, p. 291 and \textit{PCP}, p. 180
country fairs, or the Gypsies, who are constantly wandering about Europe. Clearly the title Europe designates the unity of a spiritual life and a creative activity – with all its aims, interests, cares, and troubles, with its plans, its establishments, its institutions.\textsuperscript{20}

Husserl’s enthusiasm for Europe blinded him to the real implications of the egological and monadological constitution. In the monad, there is the pervasiveness of otherness: no monad is an island. The highest form of humanity is for Husserl the European humanity toward which all the others must strive. Another quote from Husserl stressing the essentiality of Europe:

We get a hint of that right in our own Europe. Therein lies something unique, which all other human groups, too feel with regard to us, something that apart from all considerations of expediency, becomes a motivation for them – despite their determination to retain their spiritual autonomy – constantly to Europeanize themselves, whereas we, if we understand ourselves properly, will never for example, Indianize ourselves. I mean we feel (and with all its vagueness this feeling is correct) that in our European humanity there is an innate entelechy that thoroughly controls the changes in the European image and gives to it the sense of a development in the direction of an ideal image of life and of being, as moving toward an eternal pole.\textsuperscript{21}

So much for opening and situating the monadic in the inter-monadic! Husserl’s “Europe constituted itself through precisely the act of self-demarcation from those it considers racially Other and strange.”\textsuperscript{22} The Husserlian Europe becomes a totalizing entity that may not be able not only to have dialogue with other, but to see its historical sedimented meaning as a meaning that was always already invaded and pervaded by otherness. Other nations become for Husserl imperfect instantiations of the European humanity. Husserl’s ontologization of European humanity led him to fall into the naiveté of the natural

\textsuperscript{20} PCP, 155
\textsuperscript{21} PCP, 157
\textsuperscript{22} Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Achieving Our Humanity: The Idea of the Postracial Future (New York and London: Routledge, 2001) 188
attitude and psychologism he was fighting. The spirit was displaced from individual minds to be located in Europe as a racial ideal entity. The spirit needs to be understood in the context of a cosmopolis, starting with the Greece trans-Mediterranean commerce with other people that helped shape, through sedimentations of meaning, the specific face of Europe known by Husserl.

Husserl’s anthropology of the center versus the peripheral equates spirit with an assemblage of cultural and scientific achievements. Husserl conceives of the spirit in a cumulative and quantitative way, but there is a need to see it in a more qualitative way. We need to understand spirit as the highest form of intuition into the deeply human and its expression. It is a concatenation and sedimentation of the human self-understanding and articulation of being-as-such. As such, spirit is then the best expression of that which is fundamentally human. It is an expression that is given through primordial givenness. The spirit thus is one but manifested in the diversity of cultures and locations. The spirit is the ideal of humanity that each culture and place constitutes and expresses in its particularity. It is the transcendental world as it is given in and through sedimented meaning in the life-world.

We need thus to understand the paradoxical relation of the self to itself into which the monad is situated. On the one side, the monad refers us to the experience of identity of the presence of the self to itself in a “here”. Such presence in “hereness” claims precedence over any other. However this presence itself recognizes itself as a situated presence facing otherness, a legitimate “thereness” that also claims an “absolute hereness”. Both sides however know that their “here” and “there” are so only with regard
to the same world. The presence of the monad to itself carries thus an obligation to de-presence. Monads know that their existence depends on the recognition of such a world as universal horizon. They discover that they are constitutive dimensions of one another. Primordiality is not synonymous with the constitution of the monad as an absolutely closed entity. The monad is always given with the appresentation of the alter ego. The inter-monadic is thus a community based on mutual recognition.

The birth of moral consciousness and the specific insertions into the human society occurs in this context of primordial givenness. Moral consciousness and the sense of responsibility are carried forward in the unity of the monad as it is inserted in its primordial world. The unity of the ego carries an innate and acquired ethical and political responsibility. The primordial sphere as a sphere of knowledge is also the horizon of co-existence. As stated by Uroh, this acknowledgment helps us avoid a “unilateral historical narrative that homogenizes and freezes human experience, even recalcitrant details.” And Uroh continues, “the end of history implies the privileging of one civilization in a way that treats the historical performances of others somewhat as interludes to the Western drama of life and the participants in that histories as passive spectators to Western experience.”23 Western values and intellectual achievements are considered by Husserl to be the absolute way to civilization. The others are considered the silent witnesses to the unfolding of a history, to which they did not bring anything, but that will become paradigmatic to their own histories. Husserl jeopardizes his conception of world as horizon of horizons with this understanding of Europe.

23 Chris Okechukwu Uroh, “The End of History and the Future of Difference”, in La rationalité, une ou plurielle? (Edited by Paulin J. Hountondji. Dakar: Codesria, 1997) 244
Kierkegaard’s understanding of the monad adds something very important to our discussion here. Unlike Husserl, Kierkegaard does not conceive of the monad in a quantitative way, but rather in a qualitative way. In his discussion of the experience of Abraham, for instance, Kierkegaard articulates the question of the sphere of ownness or the primordial sphere as a sphere of absolute commitment to the absolute. For Kierkegaard, it is only through a deep penetration into the originality of an individual experience that of Abraham for instance, that we discover the real measure of subjectivity. Abraham had a radical experience that not only marks his uniqueness but also puts him outside of the human realm of discourse. Kierkegaard puts an emphasis on the fact that Abraham could not speak and that even if he spoke he could not be understood because he lost human language. He cannot speak because he has lost the universal as the telos of his action. “Abraham cannot be mediated, which can also be put by saying he cannot speak. The moment I speak I express the universal, and when I do not no one can understand me. So the moment Abraham wants to express himself in the universal he has to say that his situation is one of temptation, for he has no higher expression of the universal that overrides the universal transgress.”24

The universal becomes thus a temptation for Abraham. Abraham, the man who believed in the possibility of the absurd, is different from what was spontaneously perceive as face value and rational. His uniqueness is manifested into his embrace of his individuality and the absurd order that comes with it – killing the son of promise. At God’s commend Abraham rose up, early in the morning, and took his unique son, the

object of his love and the hope of nations, to head to the mountain to sacrifice him.

“Abraham acts as though there were a superior measure of moral performance that made social intentions irrelevant; he supposes himself to have an absolute duty to God that overrides the ethical defined as the universal.” The question Kierkegaard puts before us is to know whether any man has taken the real measures of Abraham’s feeling on that journey. With Abraham, justification no longer comes from the quantitative, from race or a specific society, with its cumulative historical achievements as justification instances. Justification comes from a qualitative leap of the single individual who posits himself as standing beyond the universal in an absolute relation to the absolute. Abraham suspended the universal as the telos of his actions and took the ethical beyond itself by not yielding to its demands.

That experience isolates Abraham from the realm of human discourse. He could not talk, because his act stands in contradiction both to the ethical/universal and to reason. The sacrifice jeopardizes the life of the son of promise. It raises the question of the insanity of the father willing to kill his only son, the father of nations. The silence of Abraham comes about because of his inability to explain to others and to himself in an objective fashion the motives of his willingness to kill his own hope and love. An extreme pathos is a medium to self-alienation; and Abraham was alienated from the realm of the universal in his closeness to himself. He feels it in his flesh and no one can take up his flesh and enter into it. As stated by Kierkegaard, “When I have to think about Abraham I am virtually annihilated. I am all the time aware of that monstrous paradox

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25 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, p. 28
that is the content of Abraham’s life. I am constantly repulsed, and my thought, for all its passion, is unable to enter into it.” And Kierkegaard continues. “The hero I can think myself into, but not Abraham.”26 Nobody but Abraham can be at Abraham’s experience at a primordial level. The sacrifice of the son of promise constitutes Abraham’s self-fragmentation and this cannot be articulate. Articulation would require an observer’s eyes and such eyes Abraham has lost. And even if he had such eyes, his discourse would be populated by the surface and not the depth of the experience. In the world of spirit, the individual, as relating to himself, is the original first.

At the primordial level, authenticity sends us to the uniqueness of an individual experience, in this case Abraham. No one can be someone else’s suffering at a primordial level for instance. How would anybody pretend to know Abraham (or the Papuan) from within his own experience? Predication fails at this point to transmit an optimal condition of the givenness of the object. How can I for instance try to make available to my friend my experience of loss? *We are at and in the object* and expression cannot but be an inadequate transmission of the state of affairs themselves. This is what makes important for us at this point Kierkegaard’s notion of the silence of Abraham. In the movie *License to Kill*, the lawyer Martin Sawyer (played by Denzel Washington) had to represent John Peterson (James Farentino) whose daughter has been killed in a car accident by a drunken man. Sawyer said to his client, “Mr Peterson, if that means anything, I know how you feel.” This pretense outraged Mr Peterson who replied: “Don’t you dare! Don’t you dare tell me you know how I feel! I won’t accept that. (...) I didn’t lose that child! She was

26 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, p. 62 and p. 63
taken from me, she was murdered. And burying her was the hardest thing I’ve ever had to
do and I hope you would never have to know what I feel like, Mr Sawyer. That, I
wouldn’t wish on my worst enemy.”

What makes Kierkegaard important in the context of our discussion comes from
his stress on the individual and how it consists on absolute closeness to oneself. There are
experiences of the ego as flesh that cannot even be shared or brought to the realm of
discourse. While Kierkegaard expresses very rightfully the immanent presence of the self
to the self, he fails to see that the self is always given within a horizon of co-givenness,
that the primordial sphere always carries its load of non-primordiality. Kierkegaard just
states the individual as being responsible for itself and its decisions, without stressing on
the fact that the individual is always already constituted and that his values and the
particular way he handles them are results of sedimentation of meaning. The universal
thus stands as a permanent presence in the core of individuality. What is capital in
Kierkegaard, in my judgment, is his articulation of the flesh through the notion of
Abraham. The experience from within, subjectivity, is primordial and original in the
sense that there are not two instances of it. Abraham can never be a mediate because he is
not a copy. The unique experience of the monad both precedes and stands above the
universal. This is probably what the common saying asserts by saying that silence is the
most powerful way of respecting someone’s experience of loss. This itself is a call for
respect of individuality. Abraham can only understand the experience of loss and its
weight by being present to himself on his journey to Moriah. He hits the heart of human
experience, the universal, only by being deeply and uniquely at his own experience. We
can only cry the cry of the other if we have been at our own and learn what it means from within. The constitution of meaning happens in the dialectical relation of the here and the there, between the monad and the inter-monadic.

The articulation of Kierkegaard’s notion of the individual as an absolute presence to something absolute that fundamentally alienates from the realm of human discourse helps us see what an aspect of the monad can be. The monad is a non-transferable flesh that feels from here in an absolute fashion. Unlike Kierkegaard’s Abraham, the Husserlian monad is that which welcomes the sedimentation of meaning in its being. Specificity is not just the monad as individual; it can also be the inter-monadic world, as it stands different from any other. A community of experience gives a particular identity to people. It gives them a common experience and perception of the world and of reality. The community of experience brings about the identity of a people in its self articulation. This is what language, which is a particular presentation of the world through a particular eye, translates. We cannot speak perfectly two languages because language is a translation of an inhabited world. Such world is not just inhabited but it inhabits the ego that occupies it.

The monad can thus become the uniqueness of the givenness of a specific community within which there is a communal experience that an alien can only feel from a distance. If we take the people living in Darfur refugee camps for instance, we see that we can have discourses about the situation but can we ever feel what the Darfuri do at a primordial level? The inter-monadic is thus a community that carries its specific marks as something fundamental to it. As stated by Husserl, “each monad having the status of a
concrete possibility predelineates a compossible universe, a closed ‘world of monads’, and that two worlds of monads are incompossible, just as two variants of my ego (…) are incompossible.”27 As stated above, it is difficult to speak two different languages at the same time, because speaking them well means inhabiting the world they express and no one can inhabit two worlds at the same time.

The monad, the “transcendental primal I”28, is the ground for the inter-monadic. What Husserl has clearly seen, and Kierkegaard failed to grasp totally, is that we cannot conceive of a monad that stands totally separated from a world. As stated by Zahavi, “wherever I turn, the world in which I live (as the world that is the correlate of normality) presents me with references to others. I am in the midst of a world that has already been provided with sense by others, and my formation of judgments, my self-apprehension, my evaluations, and my interpretation of the world are guided by a linguistically articulated pre-understanding.”29 Even Abraham has heard God’s command in a specific spoken language. As much as the acts of the community as a whole are founded on individual acts, individual acts are founded on the constituted meaning that sustains the community within which they find themselves. Individual acts constitute thus an enduring self-consciousness of the community that turns the community toward the alien. The self-consciousness of the community informs individual decisions and forms the public and political sphere.

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27 CM, 141
28 Dan Zahavi, Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity, p. 99
29 Dan Zahavi, Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity, p. 100
5.2. The Inter-Monadic: The Transcendental Primal I as a Transcending Ego

Transcendental phenomenology advocates for the constitution of an inter-monadic community. How can a community of primordial spheres be built? The question now is to know whether there is an absolute primordiality, in the sense of a Leibnizian total closedness of the monad upon itself. How can the primordial ego know the other? Phenomenology brings us to the understanding of primordial sphere, my sphere of ownness, as an open space. Ego constitutes the other as an alter ego, as another primordial “hereness”. Only a rightful understanding of what is my own can open me to the understanding of what is other. Thus the recognition of the “primordial here” does not open to solipsism. The other cannot be constituted as a mere transcendent object. Absolute originality is not possible because originality is always “tinted” with a sedimented meaning. It is always within an inter-monadic community that the monad constitutes itself as a “primordial here.” The transcendental monad bears within itself other monads, because the constitution of the monad makes it such that it always requires the other.

Transcendental subjectivity gains its full sense and can function only within transcendental intersubjectivity. Transcendental intersubjectivity as the “relatedness of subjects to one another” is important in the constitution of the transcendental subject. Intersubjectivity is thus a central matter in the question of subjectivity. The monad is transpierced by the presence of the other. As Yves Cantin puts it, “becoming myself is
possible and becomes effective only if the self is not enclosed, in a place which would be a prison; if the self can pass to otherness, and encounter the other than me.”30 The monad carries the other as a constitutive part of itself. The other monad is always originally other, a psychophysical being, that displaces my “hereness.” As stated by Steinbock, “we can stand in relation to the alien or an alienworld, but the alien is ‘given’ to us only as inaccessible, as irreducible to us and to ‘our’ world.”31 The alien brings to the home another level of self-understanding and articulation.

We cannot however just dogmatically make such claims about intersubjectivity. It has to be transcendentally established and understood. The inter-monadic community as a sense bestowing community needs to be articulated. Transcendental subjectivity, by constituting the monad as monad, brings to view what is essential in it and opens it up to others as carriers of the same essential attributes. The paradox here is that the grasp of the “primordial here” is what opens up to the acknowledgment of difference. The monad is able to grasp the ego sui generis, with all its richness and possibilities, because it is here. The other is given to the monad in a non-primordial fashion because it is another primordial presence of self to self. As stated by Husserl, “the other is himself there before us ‘in person’. On the other hand, this being there in person does not keep us from admitting forthwith that, properly speaking, neither the other Ego himself, nor his subjective processes or his appearances themselves, not anything else belonging to his

own essence, becomes given in our experience originally.” The other is an absolute thereness. The monad can understand this fact only because it has this experience of absolute self presence in its hereness.

The other’s givenness occurs through the alteration of our own self-givenness. In transcendent givenness, the sharing of the world occurs through the alteration of the self’s world. The world of the other is given to the monad through the modification of the self’s profiles. I cannot have access to the profiles that are present to the other unless I change my body position through kinesthetic movement. The other is also a zero-point of orientation and in order to have access to his world, I have to rise toward it. The other monad is always given as a co-presence, as a center of meaningful acts. The temporal stream of transcendental subjectivity is a stream of co-presencing. In co-presence, the other is given as an originary presence that does not threatens my sphere of ownness, but rather enriches it through conversation and exchanging of worlds. It is through such welcome that the inter-monadic is constituted as a community within which members entertain for one another empathic feeling.

Self-temporalization and the hereness of the monad as flesh are the conditions for the insertion into a community of monads. Time brings about the question of the self-alteration and displacement of the ego, which comes with “dissolution of absolute self-presence”. There is no absolute self-presence because presence carries within itself

32 CM, 108-109
33 Robert Guilead, De la phénoménologie à la science de la croix: L’itinéraire d’Edith Stein. (Louvain/Paris: Nauwelaerts, 1974) 20 : « Autrui est un tel phénomène, originaire et indéniable. En effet, dans le monde, je ne rencontre pas seulement les choses naturelles, mais aussi des êtres qui sentent, pensent, agissent, souffrent et se réjouissent comme moi, bref mes semblables qui se distinguent évidemment de tout ce qui est objet. »
34 Sur l’intersubjectivité I, (Introduction by Natalie Depraz), p. 31
absence, which in turn calls upon the alter-presence as a co-presence. As stated by
Zahavi,

Self-temporalization is thus regarded as the condition of possibility for the experience of others, as well as for the ‘self-alienation’ (...) and monadization that this implies; as [Husserl says, ‘self-temporalization through depresentation (...) has its analogue in my self-alienation (...) (empathy as a depresentation of a higher level – depresentation of my primal presence [Urpräsenz] into a merely presentified [vergegenwärtigte] primal presence).35

There is always a hetero-affection in the relation of the monad to the world. The first level of such hetero-affection is that consciousness is always consciousness of something. The monad’s self-knowledge posits it already at a certain distance with itself. The something intended by consciousness is also discovered as open to a multiplicity of views upon it. Second, we discover that through the temporal constitution, even the internal structure of the ego is always already “invaded” by otherness: the monad is constituted in and through a sedimented meaning, through passion and action.

In our discussion of passive receptivity we saw that things cannot be randomly assembled because there is a normal condition of their givenness. The normal or optimal condition of givenness is always constituted in an intersubjective world. The genesis of the monad is thus implicated and conditioned by that of the generations that preceded it and by its own generation. The footprints of the other are everywhere in the constituting acts of the monad, especially in objects that carry cultural or political values. The world is there for me before my explicit turning of my regard toward it. Such a world was an already perceived world. The unity of the monad is thus a unity of a genesis. Truth is thus not just something that befalls the monad as a readymade thing from without. Truth is

35 Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, p. 67
constituted in the inter-monadic. It is done in a mixture of passivity and activity, even though it transcends and conditions specifics and circumstantial truths. Passivity unveils thus the level of the *alien within*, the fringes of our being of which we are not aware as such. Passivity, as the affection and conditioning exercised by layers of meaning, is a constitutive part of the constituting acts of the monad.

Primordial givenness occurs within a loaded historical givenness. The monad, as a personal ego, is social and political being. It is given through its body as situated. As body the monad is a pole of both affection and action. Affection points to the fact there is a motivation in the actions of the ego; ego’s actions receive some attraction that trigger and condition them. There is always the impact of otherness on the constitution of the monad. As body-flesh, the ego is open to being motivated by otherness. The body-flesh allows for pairing and co-presencing of lived bodies in the way we grasp the foreign body. Pairing involves a “transference” of sense from a “here” to a “there” that appears as body. We can see that the other subject is a fully standing subject that is not reproducing our acts but is producing his own acts. The other positions himself in the world through assertions that drive me beyond my personal meanings into a world of discovery. Through the givenness of the other, I am given a world that I would not know otherwise. Such a world, however I can know only from “outside”. I do not stand primordially in the world of the other. It can be given to me only through appresentation.

The first thing we see in the appearing of the other is his body, and the presentation of the body carries with it appresentation. The other is given to the “here” in a non-originary fashion. Appresentation here means that the body-there, the other,
appears as carrier of a depth of subjectivity. The body of the other is an animate bodily organism, a carrier of will. The body of the other appears as “someone else. And what is grasped with actual originariness in this seeing – namely that corporeality over there, or rather only one aspect of its surface – is the Other’s body itself, but seen just from my position in respect of this aspect.”36 As stated by Kockelmans, “we must recognize in our field of objects some objects that are like none of the others. They present themselves not only as known by the knower but also as knowing the knower, and this also is an immediate phenomenon.”37 We need thus to elucidate the meaning of the other and why it is so important in the constitution of the monad.

The other is given as a psychophysical being that can be grasped only through the medium of his living body and its different functions and acts. The perception of the other always goes with an exposition to his gaze as well. I see him moving in the world just like I do myself. I see the other in the activity of constitution as he makes use of available human tools in a transformational fashion. The other is there as expressing the world in a primordial fashion. The other as body-flesh is thus co-perceived rather than just perceived. I always grasp the other in a non-primordial level as an alter ego. We have a direct grasp of ourselves in inner perception. We do not have such grasp of the other. We apperceive the other and recognize him as other through “assimilative analogy.”38 The other appears as an “analogon to my interiority.”39 The body-flesh of the other is

36 CM, 124
38 Joseph J. Kockelmans, Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology, p. 280
appresented to me through analogy with my own flesh. In analogy, we do not transfer to the other our inner feelings. We recognize, we reverence, the reality of such feelings as expressed “there”, by the other.

The other announces himself through appresentation as enduring in time and bearer of inner time consciousness. He appears as a psychophysical entity that is recognized as subject of the world and not mere object. He appears as possessing my absent world and being turned toward my world intentionally. The natural world in this co-presencing appears to be the first level of commonality, as something that is intersubjectively shared. The perspectival givenness of objects reminds me of the presence of the other. Thus, while we acknowledge that there is a level of analogy and transfer of my “hereness” to the “thereness” that allows me to know the other, such knowledge of the other cannot be a matter of mere putting into the “there” what is happening “here”. Analogy is a moment in the empathic constitution of the other through coupling and imagination.\(^\text{40}\) I can imagine myself as being there and experiencing what the primordial there is experience is experiencing. I see in the “there” what could be happening “here” too.

Through association and pairing, I do not merely perceive the other as a “Körper”, physical body, but as Leib, flesh, a living body that is like my own. Within the sphere of ownness, a certain similarity connects the body “there” with my body “here.” As stated by Husserl, “pairing [is] an associatively constitutive component of my experience of someone else.” He continues, “the ego and alter ego are always and

necessarily given in an original ‘pairing.’” 41 I always experience the other as 
*experiencing* the world. This presupposes the acceptance of a co-shared world-
experience. Intersubjectivity presupposes the acceptance of the fact that there is a 
primordial transcendence that runs through the unity of the object as being both the unity 
of individual experience and the unity of an intersubjective experience of the same object. 
Objects are always given within a horizon of co-presence. As stated by Zahavi, “the 
horizontal mode of givenness of the object is *intersubjective* in its very essence.” 42 As said 
in our previous chapter, the other can complete my missing profiles because they are 
present to him.

Analogy thus occurs within the framework of motivation, where some objectively 
constituted meaning conditions my analogizing. The other is constituted in me as other 
than me. There is thus a dialogue between the inner and the outer in the perception of the 
other. There is first my inner self that helps me connect to the expression of the body 
there. There is the fact that I do not just see in the expressions of the body there mere 
automatic unrelated acts, but I perceive in the expressions of the body there, the 
expressions of a will, of an inner self. I see a unity of being running through the acts of 
the other. There is a double apperception that is at work here. On the one side, I see the 
body of the other through the presence of my own body. On the other, I am aware of the 
feelings and sensations of my body and “transfer” such feelings and sensations to the 
other through empathy.

41 *CM*, p. 112
42 Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, p. 45
This double apperception is what helps us grasp the other “not only as body but as flesh of the body”\(^{43}\), as *Leibkörper*. The other is perceived as the “I” of a primordial world. He is another monad. I cannot thus conceive of his existence through mere inference. I do not infer for instance that because I see a bundle of clothes and a hat, gloves, and a movement of all of them together according to the structures of a physical body, that I see someone walking on the street. I do not infer the existence of the other, I see him as a center of actions. The presence of the other is not given to me through deduction, but through a *feeling-in* the other. The other is really other. He is not just my double. He is a co-presence. Analogy is not mere inference. It refers to the givenness of “I” and the other as a living body. The other always enters my perceptive field as a living body, a *Leib*, an originary givenness, an alter ego, that I can only grasp in a non-primordial level. It is only in this understanding of the grasping of the other that we can understand the analogical givenness of the other.

I always encounter the body-flesh of the other through empathic mode. Empathy creates a unity of life and a union of “I and Thou”. The other is welcomed in empathy as a co-subject, a constituting being that cannot be reduced to being a transcendent thing. The perception of the other as flesh motivates a positing of another consciousness.\(^{44}\) The appresentation of the flesh of the other means basically that I slip into or toward the other body-flesh, without concretely inhabiting it. The givenness of the world of the other becomes an integrative part of my experience at a non-primordial level. First of all, the

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object is “torn away from me” in its givenness to the other. Also in imagination, we experience our body as an alien body; our body lives in an “as if.” In imagination we experience otherness as an integrative experience or at least possibility of the self. The other is another “hereness” and I cannot get totally to such “hereness” from my own “hereness” merely through kinesthetic movement. The grasping of the other goes with a self-displacement and alienation. The penetration into the otherness of another subject is basically an impossible task. We can only relate to the depth of the other as a primordiality that calls for respect.

The presence of the other is always an intending presence. The monad thus intends the other as body-flesh, not as mere body-thing. There is an awareness of a co-intending that accompanies the intending of the other. Such awareness goes hand in hand with the recognition of a shared world. I see my neighbor as also intending the forest that is given to both of us. The other is given as a co-subject, not just as a juxtaposed body. The dialogue between the monad and the inter-monadic occurs on the basis of an acknowledged world, the world as horizon of horizons. This world which is the universal horizon imposes responsibility upon the monads. In such a world, the maximization of individual interest with no regard to the common good cannot become a universal principle for action. No one can will, for instance, that such behavior becomes a universal principle of action, because it transforms the monad into a totality that has no eyes for the inter-monadic. It is through the acknowledged insertion of the monad into the inter-monadic that the sense of duty and obligations emerges. The monad, as flesh, is constituted within an ethos that it enriches in turn through its specific acts and decisions.
It is historically constituted through a sedimentation of meaning that carries its weight of obligations and accountability.

It is through its acknowledgment of its constitution and insertion in a world of meaning that the monad perceives its historical duty to human society as such. Humanity as such becomes at this point the community of communities, the field of the legitimacy of their actions and decisions. Humanity becomes the world as horizon of horizons. The constitution of the monad occurs thus through the constitution of the “Kingdom of ends,” which is a world in which the telos of human actions and decision is the promotion of humanity in each of the human subjects, that are considered as ends and never as means.45 The monad understands fully itself only in the inter-monadic. The monad and the inter-monadic exist in a relation of mutual foundation. As stated by Feist, “just as individuals can bootstrap themselves and turn themselves into ethical subjects, so can a community. It can climb the steps from mere life community to personal and then to ethical community. But for this to happen, the ideal of an ethical community must already be an intentional configuration in the individual.”46

The world as universal comprises all particular worlds but it is not reduced to any of them. It is the instance of their intelligibility and legitimacy. As stated by Husserl,

Within the limits of my transcendentally reduced pure conscious life, I experience the world (including others) – and, according to its experiential sense, not as (so to speak) my private synthetic formation but as other than mine alone [mir fremde], as an intersubjective world, actually there for everyone, accessible in

respect of its Objects to everyone. And yet each has his experiences, his appearances and appearance-unities, his world-phenomenon; whereas the experience world exists in itself, over against all experiencing subjects and their world-phenomena.\textsuperscript{47}

Objects belong to a shared horizon where I and “Thou” are situated as co-agents of truth. As stated by Sokolowski, “by discussing intentionality, phenomenology helps reclaim a public sense of thinking, reasoning, and perception. It helps us reassume our human condition as agents of truth.”\textsuperscript{48} The recognition of the world as universal horizon saves us from the totality of a reason that wants to impose its dictate on all that lives.

The monad is a body-flesh situated in an intersubjective world where things-in-themselves are open to a multiplicity of perspectives. The theoretical content of science and nature are intersubjective because the thing-in-itself is always universally available. The world as universal horizon contains all the worlds and therefore constitutes the condition for the possibility of their existence. The horizon of horizons stands as a horizon of reference for the plurality of perspectives and views of situated persons. The self in such a situation is an interiority-in-tension, a tending toward the other. As stated by Oberlander, the world as “horizon of all experiencing intentions (…). This universal horizon overreaches all other worldly horizon (e.g., the ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ horizons of perception), for it permits no further formation of a horizon…”\textsuperscript{49} And Oberlander continues, “situatedness is living within this universal horizon, and thereby, manifesting

\textsuperscript{47} CM, p. 91
it from just that particular perspective.”50 The intersubjective space is constituted as a space founded on the community between primordial spheres. Normality constitutes itself in this encounter and shock of primordial spheres. The opening of the monad to the outside thus goes hand in hand with passive receptivity.

The monad knows and such knowledge is not just a matter of an internal dialogue of consciousness with itself. There is an affection that occurs in the turning toward. Feeling makes us realize this even on a deeper level. The monad is thus not a total presence of self to self with no eyes or ears to the outside world. It always articulates itself as a relational being. It apprehends the other as a co-positing of inner experience through his living body. There is always in the phenomenological radical constitution of the monad, as absolute “hereness”, the eruption of the other. Such eruption shakes the normality of the hereness. The presence of the other shakes selfness and obliges the monad to self-transcendence toward the body-flesh there. It is of the essence of the monad to be a political being, in the Aristotelian sense of man as a being “designed” to live in community. The reduction to the primordial sphere or the sphere of ownness does not close the monad upon itself. The monad is not a closed being with no doors to the outside. As stated by Velarde-Mayol, “the window of the monad is the act of empathy.”51 It is its feeling-in-the other.

Empathy as the apprehension of the other as flesh carries a feeling-into the other. In “empathy, I apprehend the other subject as flesh of a subject as an analogon to my

51 Velarde-Mayol, On Husserl, p. 79
own subjectivity and to world-life."52 I feel in my flesh, at a non-primordial level, what is going on in the foreign flesh. There is a feeling-in my “I” of the “Thou”. That which is primordially “there” is presented in a non-primordial level “here”. It is only when there is a non-recognition of the primordiality of the other, that we are tempted to reduce his primordial “hereness” to the sameness of our primordial “here”. The totality of the hereness and sameness is constituted when the world as open horizon of primordialities is not acknowledged. Basically, when things are not understood in their being-in-themselves, in the world as horizon of horizons, their showing forth in particularities is exaggerated and elevated to the level of an all-embracing totality that crushes all missing profiles. The inter-monad exists only as a recognized world of co-presence of multiple profiles. Primordial worlds are but the profiles of the one world as horizon of horizons. The monad’s perspective on reality is thus not the only total perspective. It leaves room to the eruption of the world of the other. The return to things themselves, as return to the essential structures of givenness of the world, helps ego discover itself as a situated being, one among others. This co-existence does not cancel the first person perspective, the identity of the ego and the fact that it can only be given as a monad, a flesh that is “here.” It rather enforces it and provides the monad with its real face.

Empathy provides us with an inter-monadic, an inter-human world. Empathy establishes a dialogue between my hereness and the other’s hereness. It occurs in the welcoming of that which is not given as here, but acknowledged as a primordial world. In empathy, the intersubjective world unfolds as an inter-monadic world. The frontiers of

profiles, sides, and aspects of objects and reality slip into one another even though they hold their primordiality. I am here yet I can feel the other’s pain or state of being at a non-primordial level. There is constant dialogue between primordiality and non-primordiality when we are in the inter-monadic community. I am not totality here and yet I cannot be totally there. There cannot coexist two different primordialities in the same here. Yet I can be transported into the other’s primordiality on the basis of the human constitution and the common world that is given as horizon of horizons.

Empathy is thus the possibility and ability the monad has to penetrate into the other’s world both in a primordial and non-primordial level. I am pained (primordial) as I am feeling-in my friend’s pain (non-primordial). I am close to my friend yet at a non-bridgeable distance. My friend’s pain is non-transferable; I cannot feel it firsthand. Empathy is thus the feeling-in with the other with an essential acknowledgment of the fact that the distance between the empathizing self and the empathized self are distances that cannot be crossed at a primordial level. As Hart puts it, “empathic presencing is an absenting or a de-presence of my ‘here’ to a ‘there’ which too claims to be an original ‘here.’ It is a making present of what for me is another primordial making present and therefore a making present of what for me remains essentially absent. For this reason empathic perception may be considered a self-displacement.”

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Gilead, the Einfühlung is not an Einsfühlung.\textsuperscript{54} There is no identity of givenness between the two feelings.

The law of empathy is that the empathizing and the empathized cannot belong to the same stream of consciousness. Empathy is a matter of a communication of consciousnesses. In empathy, there is solidarity of destiny that is created between humans, and even between the dead and the living. All walk together in spirit. The living, the dead and future generation become empathically fellow travelers through the work of the spirit. I can feel the joy, the hope, the pain, the anger, and the suffering of my ancestors as I read history, for instance. Through my self-givenness to myself and through my insertion into the world as flesh, I have my being as being-for-myself and also being-in-communication-with others. The spirit itself is constituted through the grasp of that which is fundamentally human. The human is fundamentally a shared world and living in such a world requires a conversion of instincts and putting individual wills at the service of that which is more conducive to the creation of the spirit. The inter-monadic is thus a community that strives toward the creation of a real humanity through concrete acts and decisions.

Empathy leads us thus to the ethics of coexistence and the political society that can be built upon it. Transcendental ego and the monad carry in their being the expression of humanity as a result of the work of spirit. Transcendental ego is constituted in meaning and it carries meaning as something to be expressed in its acts and decision making. The transcendental ego looks thus like the Platonic dialectician who has

\textsuperscript{54} Reuben Gilead, \textit{De la phenomenology a la science de la croix: L’itinéraire d’Edith Stein} (Louvain/Paris: Nauwelaerts, 1974) 16
contemplated truth in itself and returned to the cave to enlighten others about it. The inter-monadic and transcendental intersubjectivity bring to view the fact that intersubjectivity is a “relation between lived bodies” and that the “other adds a new and radical transcendence to my experience of objects.”55 The other enriches my profiles. The monad is always given in an interlacing of relations. Through the body-flesh, the monad is a touched toucher. It does not just experience the other as a thing, because their bodies send them back to the same world of lived-experience.

The inter-monadic is always given as a “common field of experience,”56 a world where convictions are shared and discussed. It is a world where such convictions are continuously modalized and taken to higher levels of understandability, on the ground of an understood normality. Different experiences come thus to be constituted as a non-bound objective and theoretical framework within which discussions can be conducted and understood. As stated by Husserl,

When I leave out of account the factually, phenomenologically investigating ego, and form the idea of an ego as pure ego as such through the eidetic variation of myself, the fact, I will find the eidetic nexus of possibility as the general operative nexus, as eidos: a possible pure ego as such standing in relation to an open unending multiplicity of other egos as alien to it, but as standing to it in relationships of empathy and in I-you relationships, in relationships of communicative interaction, reciprocal-ego-determination. Likewise, when I do not carry out the eidetic reduction, I not only pronounce my ‘I am,’ but rather, exercising the phenomenological reduction with regard to the factual givenness of alien human-beings, and carrying out phenomenological legitimation by indicating phenomenological empeiria, I know myself as pure ego and in addition am empirically certain (in the phenomenological field) of co-being and communicative solidarity with other pure egos. But I also therefore recognize that every truth into which I have insight is intersubjectively valid: It is valid above

56 Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, p. 150
the empirical, namely, it is not merely dependent upon my empirical ego. It remains if I were to modify myself in through into a randomly altered ego.\textsuperscript{57} I always experience the world as being-there for all. Each however has his own world-experience. The other and the world are always given to me in “consequence of my life’s constitutive synthesis, in systems of harmony.”\textsuperscript{58} Under normal conditions, I do not see men walking like trees for instance. Such talk is basically nonsensical.

Knowledge and recognition of the other go hand in hand, in the field of the world as universal horizon. The alter ego’s appearance refers us to the world as a world of co-consciousness. I cannot thus constitute the other in a radical way.\textsuperscript{59} The existence of the other exceeds and precedes the constituting work of consciousness. The other shows up as a lived body, a flesh, that is also telling me something about myself. My regard does not empty the other from his interiority. The other brings to awareness the fact that as I perceive, I am also perceived; the perceiving ego is situated in the life-world as open horizon of perceptions. The totality of the ego would thus mean the negation of the other and that of the world as such. The totality of the monad would constitute its truth as the ultimate and unquestioned truth. Such truth will feed on the denial of the world as it is given in concrete experience: the world that cannot be contained in one perspective. It cannot be unilaterally given otherwise it ceases to be the world as we know it. The world is not the monad’s private property.

\textsuperscript{57} \textit{ACAPS}, 648
\textsuperscript{58} \textit{CM}, 91
\textsuperscript{59} Maurice Merleau-Ponty, \textit{Eloge de la philosophie}, p. 89 : « La position d’autrui comme autre moi-même n’est pas en effet possible si c’est la conscience qui doit l’effectuer : avec conscience, c’est constituer, je ne puis donc avoir conscience d’autrui, puisque ce serait le constituer comme constituant, et comme constituant à l’égard de l’acte même par lequel je le constitue. »
The Husserlian monad is a monad that is constituted in passion and action. It is a monad that takes the unity of its givenness as a means for the constitution of the intersubjective world. It also understands the constitution of its monadological givenness as springing from the inter-monadic. The monad’s self-articulation is always already historically circumscribed. The monad’s sphere of ownness is shaped within knots of relations. This understanding of the monad is what saves us from the subjective, manipulative and functionalist reason, which is a reason that transforms reality into means for absolute self-assertion of individual will. Subjective and manipulative reason is a reason that does not understand its essential insertion into the inter-monadic community. It understands itself solely as closed into its acquisitions and constituted unity. It does not refer the constitution of such unity to the community of destiny that carries the unity of the inter-monadic. By doing so, it cuts the communication and dialogue that shape the givenness of the inter-monadic as a community constituted in meaning.

The result of this is the crisis of humanity which is basically a crisis of understanding the knots of relations that constitute the ground for the givenness of the monad. Understanding means here hitting at the thing-in-itself as intersubjectively constituted. Understanding, as the intuition into the-thing-in-itself, is the condition for the constitution of an acceptable inter-monadic community. Understanding, as the intuition into the essential and invariant structures of the object, allows us to shape the reality of public sphere as a sphere where differences are perceived as profiles of the one world as universal ground for meaningfulness. This is the condition for the constitution of what
Immanuel Kant calls the “kingdom of Ends,” where the alter ego is never a means but always an end in itself. In understanding behaviors and decisions have as their paradigm an ideal humanity, because each of the members can feel-in the alter ego and feel a community of destiny with them. In understanding, speaking with authority about something means calling its authority to show forth. In understanding, alienworlds are welcomed and respected. In the context of a nation that understands itself as an intermonadic community, the homeworld is made up of homeworlds. People need not cling onto their ethnic, religious, or political groups or convictions, as the guiding principle of their actions and decisions. It is in the mutual dialogue between homeworld and alienworld that the constitution of humanity comes about.

5.3. The Crisis of Understanding as a Crisis of Humanity

a. The Crisis of Science/Reason as a Crisis of Humanity

Husserl sees the crisis of humanity as a consequence of the crisis of a reason estranged from its grounds in the life-world. Reason must have as its preoccupation understanding, which is the intuition into the thing in-itself. Humanity gets into crisis when knowledge is disconnected from understanding as the objective givenness of the thing in-itself that shapes society and human dealings. The intersubjective space enters into crisis when subjective and functionalist reason takes hold of reality in a forgetfulness of the world as horizon of horizons. We enter also into crisis when primordiality is not understood in
connection with its sedimented meanings and stands as a *totality* with regard to all that is not within it. The crisis of understanding is basically a crisis of disconnectedness with the life-world, with the sedimentation of meaning, and with others. It is a crisis of the articulation of knowledge and the monad’s situation in the world as universal horizon. How does rationality and human production remain faithful to human beings’ vocation on earth is one of the questions we need to raise here. How can we keep production in check so that it does not become the telos of scientific achievement? How can such achievements return back to life-world and nourish it?

Husserl’s critique of the natural scientist and the psychologist was founded on the fact that they transform knowledge into something alien to the space of life, where sedimented meaning drives the knower beyond his particular meanings into the depth of the thing-in-itself. Such meaning is constituted in the inter-monadic community. Husserl’s treatment of the crisis of science as crisis of the European humanity leads to the realization that the crisis consists in the desertion by science of its foundational ground in its historical sedimentation in things-themselves. The success of sciences led the scientists to proclaim the certainty of their endeavor with no remembrance of the genesis of those sciences in things-themselves in the life-world. Husserl’s question was to know what success would mean if it does not respect its origins. In other words, can a science that does not care for the life-world from which it originated be considered successful? And what would such success mean? The crisis is a result of a dry science that forgot its origins in truth, as the givenness of the thing-in-itself in the life-world. We need thus to
go back to the things of which science speaks and discover in their unfolding the unity of science and its insertion into human community.

The crisis of science consisted in its disinterest in life. As stated by Husserl, “in our vital need – so we are told – this science has nothing to say to us. It excludes in principle precisely the questions which man, given over in our unhappy times to the most portentous upheavals, finds the most burning: question of the meaning or meaninglessness of the whole of this human existence.”60 When cold objectivity becomes the sole preoccupation of science, we can rightfully ask ourselves whether we can “live in this world, where historical occurrence is nothing but an unending concatenation of illusory progress of bitter disappointment.”61 For Husserl, a science that is solely concerned with production, success, and prosperity becomes blind to human preoccupation with meaning, because it installs itself in the factual and the now-phase and forgets its constitution in sedimented meaning. We cannot go endlessly from factuality to factuality. The now-phase has to carry its faded-phases as a constitutive part of its self-articulation. What all the now-phases carry forward is not just factuality but the unity of meaning that covers them all.

Real existential questions are not things for which solutions exist readymade; they are not mere facts which can be circumscribed by the sciences of facts. Science cannot thus content itself with mere observation of the physical world. The universal practical science does not touch on the universal ideal as such. What is needed is the return to things as a return to their givenness to consciousness the way they are given, as

60 Crisis, 6
61 Crisis, 7
meaningful. The crisis of the European humanity is thus considered by Husserl as the crisis of reason untangled in “naturalism” and “objectivism.” “The crisis could then become distinguishable as the apparent failure of rationalism. The reason for the failure of a rational culture, however, as we said lies not in the essence of rationalism itself but solely in its being rendered superficial, in its entanglement in ‘naturalism’ and ‘objectivism.’”⁶² The crisis came as a result of the imperialism of sciences that shuts down the horizons of existence as such. The crisis consists in the loss of sight of the fact that the world is the synthetic unity of meaning, and that it is the field within which causal laws are significant. The world as a universal horizon is a horizon constituted through human acts and decisions in the life-world. The unity of the world is thus not reducible to some functions of understanding.

The crisis constitutes itself as a crisis of articulating the meaning of the significance of the spirit carried by the European scientific achievements. The sciences of objects end up not seeing the meanings of the objects of which they speak. To do this they would need to go back to the intentional relations of consciousness to things in the life world. As stated by Husserl, “blinded by naturalism (no matter how much they themselves verbally oppose it), the practitioners of humanistic science have completely neglected even to pose the problem of a universal and pure science of the spirit and to seek a theory of the essence of spirit as spirit, a theory that pursues what is unconditionally universal in the spiritual order with its own elements and its own laws.”⁶³ We need thus to come back to the ground upon which the preoccupation with production

⁶² Crisis, 299
⁶³ PCP, p. 155
stand, instead of getting stuck in production as such. For Husserl it is important to come back to the world of meaning and value which was abandoned by the science of facts. We saw this loss of meaning ending up crushing lives in Nazi Germany where meaning was reduced to the ideology of the power holders. Meaning was reduced to the ideology of the salvation of the fatherland. 64

Even philosophy has failed to find its voice in the articulation of truth and meaning. The prevailing temptation of naturalism invaded even the philosophical domain, which ended up in totalizing assertions about reason. Reason became the all comprehensive entity that either contains the whole of the natural world, as a container. The categories under which the world is known ended up being considered as totalizing entities. The realization of the impossibility of this totalizing reason led to the disenchantment of reason as such. The pretention to total explication thus failed to be the satisfactory instance in the philosophical endeavor. This collapse of the era of totalizing narratives signed the collapse of European humanity. Skepticism about reason took over European man. This skepticism about reason is a skepticism about human beings as rational beings as such. Thus, for Husserl, the crisis of the European humanity is directly linked to a reason that was unable to live up to the ideals of the spiritual being that the scientist is himself. The crisis could have been avoided if questions were raised about the

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64 The Nazi gaze was basically a gaze that empties reality from its consistency and essence. It is a gaze that reduced reality to both alien or home blood – the alien blood being the dirty or unworthy of life blood and the home blood being the pure blood for whose preservation everything else is destroyed. Science became in this context a technology for increasing the life-quality of the home blood, through the destruction of the alien blood.
conditions for the constitution of the thing of which science speak. Such condition is to be traced back to subjectivity and to its lived experience.

In the crisis, nobody believes in truth anymore because science that was considered the ultimate deliverer of truth has shown to not being able to satisfactorily answer questions about human experience and meaning. Science has invited disenchantment because, as Levinas puts it, there is a difference between “the technical function of reason and its spiritual function.” 65 The crisis arose because this difference between technique and understanding was not made and because of the existence of the prevailing naïveté of thought that takes the world and scientific acquisitions as the authorities for the objectivity of truth. This naïveté did not take into account that there is a need for a unity of meaning that holds together both the promises of scientific achievements and the reality of human existence and expectation in the world of life. This unity of meaning that holds the two together is to be found in the sedimented meaning of the world-life.

The loss of meaning led to the wandering of reason that subsequently led both to the totalizing and disenchantment of reason. For Husserl, the solution of the crisis lies in the insertion of reason into the human community and the spirit upon which it is built. Reason needs to discover its genesis in its unfolding and constitution in the life-world. There is a need to inquire back into the meanings that constitute the meaning spoken about by science. The forgetfulness of such meanings is that which brought about the crisis. As stated by Husserl, we need to inquire into the original meaning of “exact

sciences of nature”, because a “proper return to the naïveté of life (...) is the only possible way to overcome the philosophical naïveté which lies in the [supposedly] scientific character of traditional objectivistic philosophy.” The accurate self-understanding of reason goes thus hand in hand with its return to its genesis in the life world. Basically Husserl is inviting reason to a work of humility.

What we need to see here is that as much as the Husserl of the *Logical Investigations* was struggling to demonstrate the objectivity that constitute a telos of all the sciences and thus criticized the naïveté of natural sciences, he did not advocate for the throwing away of the natural world or natural science as such. What Husserl advocates throughout his work is that we need not trade one naïveté for another. We need not take a modalized object for the ground for certainty and objective knowledge. In the phenomenological attitude, the modalized itself becomes a theme. The things of which sciences speak are modalized objects. They are higher levels of things given straightforwardly. We need thus to take these higher levels of givenness and question them in order to see their constitution in subjectivity, and how they become the essential components in the constitution of the spirit that is the ground for understanding. The things spoken about by science are given in “an invariant general style” and they are “bound by this general style.” Scientific systems are built upon the background of a traditional heritage. We need then to raise questions about the meaning of things spoken about by science; otherwise we end up with a dry and cold science that has no eyes or ears for human reality.

66 *Crisis*, p. 59
67 *Crisis*, 31
For Husserl, the crisis of science as a crisis of European humanity is a result of the forgetfulness of meaning. He said for instance that for the Greek, nature was not just an objective world, but also included the gods and demons. Nature was thus an inhabited and relational place. It was not just a place for use, but rather a sphere of self understanding and articulation. Nature existed for the Greek as a human world, a place where there is a priority of human beings. Such understanding of nature was lost according to Husserl with the modern period’s enthusiasm for reason, which has relegated human expectations, dreams and hopes to the second place. Efficiency and progress was the sole sought for value in the modern era. The modern period’s enthusiasm for reason has made the spirit visible in achievements an annex to the body. This absolute preoccupation with success and progress threw the modern era into dissatisfaction and distress. For Husserl then, “the problem of Western man is not one that ‘objective’ science can solve; its solution lies in a science of the spirit – and its task is to grasp the spirit that characterizes and animates Western civilization.”\textsuperscript{68} What is of interest here is the relegation of technical advancement to the second place. The importance and value of technique lies in the fact that it is constituted in spirit. It is a fruit of a concatenation of intuitions of things-themselves. And in return it can be considered only with regard to its promotion of meaning in the bettering of the life-world.

The return to the things-themselves, to the life-world, is thus imperative because it is only from it that science can reconcile itself with itself. For Husserl, Europe represented a unity of values and ends that scientific achievements just instantiate. The

\textsuperscript{68} Crisis, p. 17
attainment of a truth that is “valid for anyone at all” is the only way to reconcile Europe with itself. Such truth cannot however be contained in mere practical achievements. It can only be achieved through the return to the ground of all knowledge. Thus while static phenomenology takes us to the trans-temporal invariant structure as the condition for the validity of knowledge, genetic phenomenology completes this work by situating such trans-temporal structure in the historical constitution of meaning. The world as horizon of horizons remains a horizon of meaningfulness. It is the non-perspectival horizon of all perspectives. It is the instance of their legitimacy – this means it situates what is humanly acceptable as the end of human action. Transcendental and genetic phenomenology drives us thus to the awareness that totalitarianism and relativism are the two faces of the same coin with regard to which we need to guard ourselves. In both there is a refusal to see the givenness of the world as universal horizon. On either case the ground is situated in the individual.

The richness of Husserl’s phenomenology consists thus from the static to the genetic and generative phenomenology to speak of the world as the universal field of the coexistence of profiles. This is a face value acquisition that Husserl almost put into jeopardy with his ontologisation and totalization of the European man. As stated above, for Husserl, except for the Greek-European philosophy, all the others are practical sciences. For him, they are not philosophies but “mythical-religious attitudes.”69 The Greco-European philosophy is thus constituted as a totalizing philosophy outside of which the world cannot be understood. We need to guard ourselves from totalization by

69 *Crisis*, p. 283
reminding ourselves that the primordial is the very place where a meaningful dialogue can be possible. For a totalizing home, the alien is a total and radical abnormality. For a primordiality that is open to being modalized by the alien, the alien is welcomed as richness. The different systems of thought do not fall out of rationality because of their difference. Worlds are that which allow us to have *The World*. There is no world that stands as an island and constitutes thus itself as an ideal form for all others. We avoid the wandering of reason by acknowledging this fundamental fact.

**b. The Crisis of Understanding as a Crisis of Humanity**

Understanding takes us to the core of things-themselves as the condition of specific acts. This is what allows the constitution of the public sphere, as an open political society. In understanding we attend to the object itself as that which conditions the constitution of a healthy inter-monadic space. We cannot for instance build a healthy political society if we do not know *what* politics as such is. Leaders of nations and organizers of states need to grasp the reality of things-themselves as that which condition their decision making. The things-themselves need to be that which shape and structure their attitudes and decisions. We see the wandering of politics as a lack of intuition into the reality of what it is. When political power for instance turns into a totalitarian tool for subjugation, exclusion and marginalization, we realize that we are facing a crisis of understanding. This in its turn reinforces citizens’ alienation both from the public good and from one another. Social cleavages become strengthened and powerlessness of some margins of the population increases. Understanding leads to the constitution of an open society. In the
phenomenological understanding, “the political should free its content from power in the sense of domination, a result of the desire for ruling, and link it closely to authority.”

When understanding is lacking within the boundaries of a nation, ethnicity, religion, and regionalism become stronger than the allegiance to the state, to the nation, and to the common good. This is when we face the crisis of the relation commandment and obedience, spoken about above, and the respect of the conventions that tie the ruler to the citizens. One of the problems some African countries are facing now is this crisis of understanding. Opposition of identities and their instrumentalisation by politicians has suffocated the public sphere. What emerges from this is the crisis of trust that reinforces peoples closing themselves on their specificities instead of opening such specificities to dialogue with other. The constitution of the inter-monadic ends up being perceived as a dangerous means for self-dissolution into a dangerous universal. The world in this case is not perceived as a universal field of worlds. The authoritarian and dictatorial understanding of the political power is the results of unilateral understanding of the world. The co-existence of profiles is a threat to a world that does not understand itself as part of a field of coexistence. Self-preservation becomes here the leading principle of politics. We have seen this in segregationist societies, in the Nazi Germany, and we are seeing it now in dictatorial regimes in Africa and across the world.

The constitution of a closed society comes as a result of politics of self-preservation that takes hold of the common good as individual good and creates a circle of violence. As a result of this, identity-based crisis and conflicts have pervaded the

political discourse and discussions in many African countries. As stated by Ikelegbe, “politics is suffused with competing identity assertions and contestations. The mobilization of identity has reached an all-time high to the extent of suffocating political life (…). Group animosity, sometimes outright hostility, has served to undermine inter-group relations.”71 We see an example of this in the current crisis in the Darfur where a group of people is committing genocide against the other.

Understanding takes us to see things-themselves, to see humanity for what it is beyond particularities. While it embraces them all, it is not circumscribed by any. We cannot discuss notions like nation or state before the assertion of the fundamental fact that there is a world as universal field of understanding. Such a world shapes particularities and conditions the structures of politics. There is a wandering of politics and humanity as such when identity-basis understandings are taken to be the leading principles in the shaping of the nation. As stated by Ikelege, “the identity basis of politics has created a convoluted form of citizenship distinguished by the absence of a genuine sense of national belonging and cohesion.”72 All this degenerates into violence, corruption, armed conflicts, civil wars, and all sorts of ills within the state. The consolidation of a democratic state and the enforcement of social justice within it can occur only as consequence of a national dialogue where profiles and perspectives face and challenge one another. When normality and the home open themselves up to

“modalization” by the abnormal and the alien, the thing in-itself becomes the judging instance of particularities. These particularities understand their self-articulation as always already situated in the inter-monadic world.

In the dialectics of the “here” and the “there”, as two primordial spheres, the “here” is not a total presence of self to self, the absolute condition of the world in the Husserlian genetic sense. The eruption of the other into the self, which is not an intrusion, always preceded the self-clarity. The self will always articulate itself through the legacy of a received language for instance. Thus, self-responsibility and self-assertion go hand in hand with self insertion into a community of monads. For Husserl, the ego is always already communal and belongs to the community of monads. As stated by Janet Donohoe,

the personal identity of the ego from birth to death requires the community with Others in order that the ego can be constituted as a human being. Without the Other, the ego cannot constitute itself as human. It can only constitute itself as a presently constituting consciousness with a limited past and a limited future. Even the ego that presently constitutes its surrounding world is an already communalized ego in the sense that there is no possibility for constituting the surrounding world outside of an already-inherited tradition that shapes the human ego as a member of a human community. That inheritance places the Other in a certain position of prominence with respect to the ego.73

Identity cannot deny identities without denying itself. The different forms of identities that exist within a state and nation are the conditions for its existence as state and nation as such. To use Husserl’s expression, these identities are moments in the constitution of the identity of the state or nation. They are parts of its self-articulation. Understanding

brings us thus to the seeing of the thing-itself of nation or state and helps constitute the ground for the discussion about the common good.

Identity based conflicts and wars are manifestations of the struggle to grasp the identity of the nation or state-itself. When there is no recognition of identities, dialogue gets reduced to a monologue. It gets reduced to the absolute defense of specific and circumstantial interests. The subjective and manipulative reason takes over the discussion. This signs the disappearance of rights and obligations. Right-in-itself becomes confused with the right of the stronger. In such a context, “the struggle for social inclusion and citizenship rights has been waged in different ways in different African countries. In some countries, it has assumed an armed expression in which ethnic groups take up weapons against each other or the state in the quest to claim their ‘rights’ as citizens.”

In the context of Africa where nationality is constituted of nationalities, the refusal to recognize the other and his primordial sphere necessarily leads to deadly confrontations of monads, which constitute themselves thus as closed entities. There is a need in Africa to recognize the reality of the different ethnic groups with their specificities as a constitutive dimension of the unity of the nation as an overall geographical entity. When a genuine dialogue between those nations fails, we end up in the crisis of understanding as a crisis of the African humanity.

The dialogue between nations can only reach its full expression when it takes the intelligibility of the Nation-itself as the ground from which its articulation flows. The

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disclosure of the nation-as-such is that which assures nationalities to understand themselves as moments of an entity from which they derive their own intelligibility. The crisis is thus a crisis of understanding, intuiting into the notion of nation and citizenship as such. The nation as community of communities is constituted through relationships and sharing of profiles. It is thus a categorial mistake, within the frontiers of the same country, to consider a specific “nationality” to be Nationality-itself. The crisis of nation is a crisis of failed relationships, a failed insertion of the particular into the universal. National unity and coherence can come only as a result of the holding together of nationalities. The only way to break away the vicious circle of violence is to build up state structures that draw their meaningfulness from an understanding of the essential structures of politics as such. This is the only way to guarantee freedom, equality, and social justice for all. This can become foundational in the distribution of rights and duties – the distribution of the common good as such.

In the case of Chad, with the inter-ethnic violence, wars, and division, comes the constitution of patrimonial states. The country is basically considered spoils of war, that shift from one conquering ethnic group to the next. The country itself is considered the good of those who wage war and fought to “acquire” it. This divides the country between conquered people and conquerors. This consideration of the other as conquered people, that have lost their freedom of speech and their voice within the state, delays significantly the building up of a democratic state in Chad. The idealization of the conquerors’ group has led to the exclusion and alienation of the other from contributing to the fate of the nation. It led also to the instrumentalisation of notions like common good, justice, and
equality. What remain are self-preservation and misunderstandings of the handling of the state. The crisis ends up being the crisis of paradigms as such.

In this case of Chad, the country is divided in terms of people’s allegiance to their particular ethnic groups – South or North, Muslim or Christian, and within these differences, Sara, Zakhawa, Gorane, etc. Under President Ngarta Tombalbaye’s regime, on January 19th 1962, all political parties, except the PPT-RDA, which was the President’s party were suppressed. All political power was thus concentrated into the hands of the president and his party. This led to all sort of exactions, among which the persecution of the Northerners. The acquired power was trusted into the hands of the Sara from the South. A state of suspicion settled in Chad that was aggravated and “heightened when the president, alleging that he’d uncovered several coup conspiracies engineered by the opposition, subsequently declared a state of emergency. This led to an amendment of the constitution on June 4, 1964, that made Chad de jure a single-party state.”

The constitution of the country as a single-party state was accompanied by the attribution of civil service positions to the Sara people and some exaggerations that led to the humiliation and bitterness of the Northern population. Even though the situation was not that clear cut, this is how it is perceived today. There were reports of ‘insensitivity’ on the part of southern officials, including: torturing, disrobing, and parading women in public; levying fines (50,000 F cfa for each offense) for not cutting one’s beard; forcing the Tubu to be sedentary cultivators of crops (as were the southerners during colonial period) rather than herding cattle; disdain for the dia, or the blood wealth in Biltine-Ennedy-Tibesti (BET), shown by prefects such as Lieutenant (later general) Negue Djogo (appointed in 1966); and severe punishment (50-100 whip slashes per person) for those caught in dispute.

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75 Azevedo, Roots of Violence: A History of War in Chad (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach Pub., 1998) 91
76 Azevedo, Roots of Violence: A History of War in Chad, p. 92
The importance of this passage is that it shows us how the absolutisation of the monad leads to reducing the other as a mere means to the absolute assertion of a “hereness.” The closed monad does not consider its fundamental insertion into human history as a constitutive part in its constitution. President Tombalbaye’s reign was marked by a precedence given to the Southerners over the Northerners. Mistrust settled between his government and a significant part of the population, especially the Northerners, which led to civil war.

The creation of the FROLINAT (Front de Liberation Nationale), which was in its big majority led by the Northerners, came as a response to this situation of mistrust. Many revolts erupted in different parts of the North. The overall result of these movements was the military coup that overthrew President Tombalbaye in 1975. Power was thus acquire by the North as a means for revenge and historical vindication of one’s group. In 1982, Hissène Habré, a Gorane from the North, became president of Chad after a military coup. His presidency was marked by a bloody and political instrumentalisation of “the division” North-South. President Habré, who is now under trial in Senegal for war crimes and crimes against humanity, planned and carried out an ethnic cleansing against the Southern part of the country. The intermediary allegiance once again took over and the ruling principle became the preservation and vindication of the ethnic group of the president. Since the particular group of President Habré constituted itself into the sole detainee of truth they were led to the destruction and annihilation of the alien. A total self has in principle all the profiles of reality and thus does not know of an outside world as a shared world. The other does not exist as other and ends up just becoming a place where
a totalitarian will can be exercise. This is what happened both in the cases of President Tombalbaye and President Habré. The center and the periphery are thus determined and defined in terms of a power holding.

Without the fundamental openness of the monad, meaninglessness and violence intrudes human societies. Thus, as much as it is important to understand oneself as a monad and to be able to speak from a first person perspective, it is important to know that one’s perspective needs to be situated and inserted in the world as universal horizon. The perspective needs to be acknowledged for what it is: one perspective among others. Presidents Ngarta Tombalbaye and Hissène Habré and now Idriss Debi did not understand that politics is all about building reality on the ground of the givenness of things-themselves. It is about constituting a harmonious inter-monadic community in which a multiplicity of perspectives can co-exist without becoming threats for one another. President Tombalbaye’s regime left Chad with the legacy of the blood of many Northerners who paid a high price for their being Northerners. President Habré closed himself upon his ethnic group, the Gorane, and his regime left Chad with the legacy of 40,000 political assassinations and 200,000 systematic acts of tortures of opposition members. President Idriss Debi’s regime is leaving Chad with the same legacy of murder, torture, corruption, and oppression. The only thing that matters for President Debi is the concentration of the common good into the hands of his ethnic group, the Zaghawa.

Under these different regimes, especially President Hissène Habré, predication was not a matter of pointing at the self-evident givenness of things-themselves. It was rather a matter of re-uttering the spoken words of the president or at least uttering words
that are suitable to the overall ideology of the regime. As said above, “the human person as agent of truth” needs to speak from a primordial sphere, from the self constituted as monad. Predication as a mere re-saying of a prevailing ideology is basically a lie in the sense that it is not spoken from somewhere – there is no “I” that is producing the act of speech. Predication was thus devoid from its substance by these different regimes. Hissène Habré’s law was the unquestionable law, which has swallowed 40,000 lives. During Habré’s regime, being sentenced to prison was equivalent to receiving a death sentence.

People suspected of collaborating or active involvement with armed opposition groups have frequently been victims of human right abuses in Chad. In particular there have been frequent reports of detention without charge or trial of suspected government opponents at secret detention centers in N’Djamena. No political detainees have been brought to trial since President Habré came to power. Some have disappeared while others have been detained incommunicado for long periods without any form of legal procedure. Others have been killed following their arrest.77

The Goranization of power ended up freezing political reality into that of the preservation of the Goranes’ interest in total disregard to the interests of the others. Since self-preservation was the leading principle, notions like national security and common good become an alibi for the physical suppression of opposition members.

National security became a powerful reason for creating a powerful repressive machine whose sole preoccupation was the preservation and maintenance of power for the sake of the president and his ethnic group. In the name of security, every citizen was controlled. The members of the single-party, UNIR (Union Nationale pour

77 “Chad: Arrests of Member of the Hadjerai Ethnic Group” (Amnesty International, AFR 20/05/88, March 1988)
l’indépendance et la Révolution), constituted themselves into informants and intelligence agents, that watched every move of their fellow citizens. Freedom was suppressed and every person was supposed to speak a language that was part of the general ideology of the power holder. Each of the UNIR members in turn was controlled and must continuously struggle to remain in the good favors of the president, which means basically that they must struggle to stay alive. All the “subversives” faced death penalty. The “subversive” is the enemy from within that threatens the good of the country. Such good is however confused with that of the president and his ethnic group.

Of all the oppressive machines of President Habré’s regime, the DDS (Direction de la Documentation et de la Sécurité) which was an instrument of terror and oppression, whose mission was to terrorize and subdue the population, was the worst. The DDS system of incarceration was so inhumane that those who were liberated from the DDS prisons had to take an oath of secrecy in which they state they have seen nothing, heard nothing, and specially that they would not tell anybody about the conditions of the jail. The DDS had a military branch which was charged with the mission of liquidating all the opponents to the regime. The armed branch carried terrorist missions and abduction of opposition members in foreign countries. President Habré had a very manicheist vision of

the world – either you are with him or against him. The nation was divided into two by him: on the one side there was the Gorane group and all those that are loyal to them and on the other there were all the others, the renegades. Habré killed intellectuals, notables, army officers from the South of the country.

President Idriss Debi overthrew Habré as a sign of protest to his totalitarian regime. However, as soon as he got the political power, he transforms it into a means for the preservation of the Zaghawa, his ethnic group. In this logic of self-preservation, the other becomes an available commodity for the Zaghawa. The will to power, its conservation, and accumulation and concentration of wealth into the hands of the Zaghawa become the only political agenda Idriss Debi brought to the presidency. In such understanding, the bodies of the citizens are not perceived in their being flesh, or in their primordial givenness. Bodies are distributed within the nation according to their order of “importance”, the body par excellence being that of the Zaghawa. The body of the leader’s ethnic group has no limit to its self-assertion. Political achievement is identified with the power of guns, and the ability to terrorize and subdue others through fear. Victory in war – which ultimate form is the overthrowing of a president in the exercise of his function – is considered the highest form of “political success.” The logic goes this way: you need to take guns, acquire power, put the power into the hands of your ethnic group, and you are considered a politically accomplished person. It is difficult in such a context the see the unity and identity of things-themselves as the guiding principle of the

79 « Hissein [Habré] est un homme décidé à exterminer tous ceux qui ne partagent pas ses opinions; selon Habré, ceux qui ne pensent pas comme lui sont contre lui et tous ceux qui sont contre lui n’ont pas le droit à la vie. » Rapport 30
drive to acquire power. Such a common telos can be accomplished only through the opening up of profiles, sharing of perspectives, and the acknowledgment of a historical sedimentation of meaning.

The understanding of primordiality as a radical closing of the home to the alien has led Chad to the instrumentalisation of relationships and to a logic of endless war and violence. When ethnicity and clan become the totalizing explanatory instance of things, reality gets perverted and carries the stamp of death. This totalization swallows bodies and voids them of their substance and primordial givenness. It distorts the understanding of life and its meaning. The preoccupation of the leaders as exemplified by the three Chadian presidents here is to functionalize and mold bodies around self-preservation. The totalization of a primordial sphere throws us into the era of the wandering of reason, which becomes alienated from its purpose: attending to the unfolding of meaning in the production of life. We need to go back to things themselves and understand the meaning of concepts like political power, commandment, obedience, and ruling, as means to the reinsertion of sense into relationships within the country. Such understanding opens us up to the recognition of the profiles of reality, and as its correlate to the recognition of the other as another human consciousness that deserves to be respected. This is what situates us into human community as something fundamental to the monad. The different crimes against humanity perpetrated by the different presidents listed above are a universal violation of human consciousness as such. We have only one humanity that is given within the world as horizon of horizons. Such humanity is violated whenever one of its
members is violated. The only solution is thus to face consciousness with its birth in a shared world that is bigger than its instinctual needs in the here and now.\textsuperscript{80}

The \textit{metabasis eis allo genos}, discussed in our first chapter comes back here, in the sense of the wandering of a political reason that is unable to connect to its telos, as the production of life, through the protection and distribution of the common good. In the mixing up of categories, the person of the leader is identified with that of the state. The state becomes a kind of “natural” extension of the leader’s person. Thus a healthy criticism of the functioning of the state is considered a direct attack on the leader. The natural offspring of this confusion of categories is the confusion between private and public. The public becomes the private good of the leader. The relation friend and enemy itself gets then perverted. The citizen who wants to lift the country up through the implementation of institutions that function toward the preservation and fair distribution of the common good is considered the subversive, because his vision stands against the leader’s good. Thus in the categorial wandering of reason in politics, the meaning carried by words and concepts ends up not being operational. Under Hissein Habré’s regime for

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\item[\textsuperscript{80}] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, \textit{Sens et non-sens,} 175: « Nous pensions qu’il n’y avait pas de juifs, pas d’Allemand, [pas de Sar, pas de Gorane, pas de Zaghawa, pas de Moudangue, pas de Gambaye], mais seulement des hommes ou même des consciences. Il nous semblait qu’à chaque moment chacun de nous choisissait dans une liberté toujours neuve d’être et de faire ce qu’il voulait. Nous n’avions pas compris que, comme l’acteur se glisse dans un rôle qui le dépasse, qui modifie le sens de chacun de ses geste, et promène autour de lui ce grand fantôme dont il est l’animateur, mais aussi le captif – chacun de nous dans la coexistence se présente aux autres sur un fond d’historicité qu’il n’a pas choisi, se comporte envers eux en qualité d’’aryen’, de juif, de Français, d’Allemand, [de Sar, de Gorane, de Zaghawa, de Moudangue, de Gambaye], que les consciences ont l’étrange pouvoir de s’aliéner et de s’absenter d’elles-mêmes, qu’elles sont menacées du dehors et tentées du dedans par des haines absurdes et inconcevables… »
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instance, soldiers became order givers to high ranking officers. A healthy handling of political power goes with the understanding of the presuppositions of politics as such.

The constitution of the public sphere needs objectivity as the ground from which it emerges. Such objectivity itself can only be built when things are given as being there in-themselves. This in turn implies a return to their meaning as constituted through historical sedimentation. The self-evident showing forth of the thing-in-itself on the background of the world as universal horizon is what can moderate ideologies and perspectives and give them a right understanding of themselves and their place. An ethnic group cannot constitute itself as the totality of being, because its particular expression of itself is done from a horizon of an inexhaustible being as universal horizon. It is only when we reach understanding of the world as horizon of horizons that the state and its institutions will situate themselves in the “kingdom of ends”, as Kant would say. In this the leader understands his role as a role of stewardship toward the common. His acts would thus strive to correspond and remain coherent to meaning as such.

81 Rapport de la commission d’enquête sur les crimes et détournements commis par l’ex-président Habré, ses co-auteurs et/ou complices… (Mai, 1992) : « Au sein de l’armée nationale tchadienne, Habré a créé sa propre armée dénommée la Sécurité Présidentielle (SP) compose essentiellement des membres de sa tribu et de ceux qui sont acquis à leur cause; les éléments de la (SP) jouissent non seulement de tous les droits et des privilèges exceptionnels mais ils se permettent en outre toutes les exactions tandis que le reste de l’armée est clochardisé et abandonné a elle-même sans salaire ni indemnité. Les principes de la hiérarchie militaire ont été intervertis : des officiers supérieurs marchent à pieds avec des pantalons rapiécés alors que de simples soldats sans grade et sans formation sont véhiculés, logés et donnent des ordres a ceux qui, en temps normal, doivent être leurs chefs hiérarchiques. »
Conclusion

Rationality is not just about a well thought out articulation of ideas. It is rather a matter of being concerned with expressing the intuited meaning of things-themselves, as given in the life-world. In inner time consciousness, we saw how objects, perspectives and profiles cut into one another in order to constitute the unity and self-evidencing of objects. The return to things themselves consists thus in distancing ourselves from prejudices, opinions and assumptions in order to see them in the phenomenological light. The natural world is thus accepted and welcomed as the background for the phenomenological endeavor, which is an attending to the unfolding of the truth of being, the intuitive visibility and intelligibility of things-themselves. Even the reduction that puts the world out of play and refuses its complexity is preceded by an acknowledgment of the being there of the world. The certainty of common sense and the natural attitude are the presupposed basis of any intentional turning of regard. It is only in the world that the ego knows itself. The irony of an over-flying consciousness is that it ends up being nobody’s consciousness. The phenomenological search is always a situated search that looks beyond itself to possibilities that are not given in the here and now.

The categorial act is an act which is founded. It gives form to straightforward acts or intuitions. It brings them to articulation and a new understanding. In the categorial act, the original object is seen in an interpretive and connective way. The object itself is not however falsified. It is only intellectually grasped, taken to a higher level of givenness, through modalization. The categorial thus leaves the object-itself unchanged and to be
what it is. The limit of the categorial is the object-itself, because the categorial is founded on the life-world. Concepts draw their meaning and strength from the givenness of things in experience. If we want to abide by meaning then we need to go back to the primordial sense that unfolds in the life-world.

The three stages in the development of Husserl’s phenomenology – static, genetic, and generative – are stages toward the unfolding of the truth of things themselves, as the condition for the constitution of an inter-monaodic world. These stages raise the question of the relationship between consciousness and the world. In the static we were preoccupied with the conditions of a discussion as we can find them in categoriality. We thus inquired into the constitution of an objective meaning as the fulfilling instance of the diversity of acts that aim at it. We were not preoccupied with the historical development of sense and its evolution through dynamic relationships. This became the task carried out in genetic phenomenology. In the generative phenomenology, the constitution of sense faces us with the question of the community of destiny that exists between generation and how sense has a history and pre-history, through traditions of understanding. Sense is thus something constituted in the inter-monaodic and inter-generational. Such understanding of the constitution of sense carries a responsibility and calls for an ethical memory. We cannot behave anyway toward the world and others because life is received. This implies a relation of respect to the homeworld, as the place of the constitution of normalcy, but also to the alienworld as a modalization force to the home.
The different stages in Husserl’s phenomenology are thus stages in the constitution of the possibility of a healthy intersubjective space as a political space, where the received life is taken care of. Through modalization and variation, we get to the invariant structure as the core structure of givenness that gives us the object as richer than its presented sides. Through our critique of psychologism, we came to the affirmation that consciousness is not a bag, as stated in static phenomenology. These two affirmations place objectivity at the heart of the public space. To discuss issues, to agree or to disagree, we need a reference in relation to which agreement and disagreement can be understood to be such. The invariant structure is a universal structure in that it is not exhausted in individual acts. Objectivity is constituted as the universal referent for individual acts. The thing that is thus displaced from the private to become a public property allows people to have discussions without resorting to war, violence, or totalitarian reactions. We are stewards of being; we are not its ultimate and sole possessors. The thing-in-itself belongs to a universal horizon. We find thus the origins of the thing-itself by going back to its givenness in the life-world as a shared world. Objectivity itself is constituted in human dealings with one another, through discussions, confrontations of views, and decision making. Meaning is not an individual property just as it is not the property of a generation or a specific group of people. It is intersubjectively and inter-generationally constituted.

Totalitarianism comes thus as a failure to understand that meaning is not the property of a particularity. It is from the understanding of the nature of things-themselves that we come to the birth of the notion of truth and objectivity as the condition of
individual endeavors. The thing-in-itself is the unity of its states. Sameness, the identity of the thing, is the condition for understanding, but such sameness is not the sameness of a total here. It is rather the sameness of the world as universal horizon. The difference between the normal and the abnormal comes as a consequence of a world that is agreed upon, and that is out-there-to-be-seen. Normality and abnormality are matters of either concordant or deviant assertions with regard to the same world. As stated by Husserl, the indefinite character of the spatio-temporal world requires that the absolute consciousnesses that are in communication should not be narrow-minded.\(^1\) Either in static fulfillment where there is a coincidence between the empty and the fulfilled, or in dynamic fulfillment where there is a gap in time between the empty and the fulfilled, our preoccupation stays with the identity of the object as the condition for the constitution of a public space for reason. This is how the intersubjective character of logical truths themselves is constituted. Knowing them means fulfilling the requirements of normalcy, as the intuiting into things-themselves. Normalcy here is to be perceived on the background of the world as universal horizon; such normalcy is the normalcy of humanity as such.

My primordial sphere can thus understand and articulate itself only in a more global normalcy. The public sense of reason throws the here into dialogue with the alien. The experience of the other brings the notion of displacement within the ego. My hereness can be appresented to me through modification as the hereness of the other. I can see that the other is another hereness that is a center of execution. I can also grasp my

body through empathy and have a second perspective on it. There is a sort of variation of subjectivity that occurs in the encounter with the other. This is possible only because “I” and “thou” are situated in the same world. Constitution thus as a letting the object be seen as it is constitutes also the inter-monadic world.

The agent of truth always acts through and from a specific identity. But the minute such identity is constituted as a universal explanatory venue for all that is, the search is perverted and turned against the humanity of the searching agent and that of the other. The recognition of the world as a universal horizon constitutes thus the conditions for laying down the foundations of an ethic of coexistence and the creation of a society that protects and values its members. It is only through such recognition that we are able to lay down principles of social justice and the enactment of laws that protect the rights of citizens and enunciate their obligations. This is what allows for the creation of a democratic society, where the diversity of interests is protected and promoted. Ethnicity in Chad for instance raises the question of the coherence of the state and the organization of a healthy distribution of the common good. The exaggeration of ethnic realities and their politization has led to violent actions and reactions, and to the constitution of ethnic nationalisms that infringe national discussion and unity. The fracture between the social and the political jeopardizes national unity and concord. Citizens close themselves on their particular social/ethnic circles and do not conceive the community of destiny that binds them to their fellow citizens. The citizen’s allegiance to the country is traded for an allegiance to particularities.
The striving toward national unity is thus a way of coming out of a totalitarian single-minded rule, where legal instances are transferred to illegal and natural venues. It is a breaking away from the logics of the institutionalization and nationalization of particular practices, through the radicalization of individualities in total disrespect to plurality. The intuition into things-themselves is that which allows for the promotion of the common good and the constitution of a community that operates a synthetic unity between divergent interests and ideologies. Conflicting interests and ideologies find a ground for dialogue in the understanding of the thing-in-itself. Different people, within their historical givenness, can enter into a relationship of mutual fertilization and enrichment through a perceived world as universal horizon.

The recognition of the world as universal ground is the condition for laying down the foundations of social justice and the creation of laws that protect the rights of citizens. This also allows for the creation of a democratic society, where the diversity of interests is protected and promoted, through the promotion and protection of the common good. Conflicting interests can find a ground for discussion in the thing-in-itself. In Chad where the power of guns speaks louder than discussion, and where intermediary allegiances take over the allegiance to the nation, we can reinvent dialogue through the assertion of what things are in-themselves. In Chad, forms of belonging, which are moments in the constitution of national unity, constitute themselves into unbridgeable entities that do not allow for a genuine dialogue based on notions like power, commandment, obedience, authority, common good, respect, peace, and justice. Understanding such key concepts
will help shape the nation through the constitution of a historical sense, through the
insertion of the particularities into the universal.

We need to raise the question of where the primordial bond lies, whether in ethnic
identity or in national identity. Neither a frozen entity nor a power-instrument, ethnicity
lies in the dialectical relation between the here and the there. The lack of such
understanding is what leads ethnicity to degenerate into wars, bloody confrontations,
centripetal tendencies and reactions. The inter-monadic alienation comes thus as a result
of a lack of understanding, intuition into things-themselves. Nations within the nation
constitute themselves into impenetrable wholes instead of being moments in the
constitution of the national whole. The inter-monadic discussion can occur only when in
declarative speeches the thing-in-itself is that which conditions the act of speech. The
discussion has to be carried in and by veracity, “as the impulse toward truth, [that has]
(…) the virtue of truthfulness [as] its proper cultivation.” “Veracity thus means
practically the same thing as rationality, but it brings out the aspect of desire that is
present in rationality, and it has the advantage of implying that there is something
morally good in the fulfillment of this desire.”

Interests will thus be protected as they situate themselves within a national rational discourse.

We get to the thing-in-itself in understanding. Irrationalism, anti-rationalism,
relativism, and totalitarianism come as a result of a refusal to return to things themselves
in their core givenness. This is the determining factor of the crisis of humanity. We saw
how a science disconnected from its roots, its genesis, ends up becoming inhuman.

2 Robert Sokolowski, Phenomenology of the Human Person, p. 20
Husserl tried to connect knowledge to understanding as the self-givenness of the thing-in-itself as it occurs in normal human dealings in the life-world. What we need to grasp at this point is the inter- and trans-generational spirit that runs through history as sedimented meaning. Forgetting such spirit is what brings about the disenchantment of the world. Here our preoccupation is to see how there is an ethical and political sense that is constituted through sedimented meaning in human dealing within the life-world. Such sedimented meaning is that which informs the formal structure of politics as we know it through the different systems. In the case of Chad, there is a need to go back to how the Chadians understand themselves and their relations to one another. We need to borrow from the key notions that are carried through their understanding of solidarity and openness to the alien.

Going back to how people deal with one another under normal conditions will open up the ground for the structuring of political institutions and the State. In a society of massification – that organizes individuals into masses that serve specific interests or political ideologies – the individual disappears and we deal only with the anonymity of the mass. We saw for instance how in Nazi Germany, the stress put upon nation as blood destroyed anything that stands outside of the givenness of the blood-nation. The understanding of the Nazi nation, a nation that exists without individualities and specificities ended up destroying humanity. The Nazi nation was a construction filled with automata. Individuality disappeared because the grand narrative of nation as blood became a totalitarian explanatory instance outside of which no reality existed. This misconception of what nation was led to the exclusion and alienation of the Gypsies, the
Jews, and the non-Aryan from the realm of the political and national good, and to their annihilation. In Rwanda, the Hutu and the Tutsi entered a deadly and bloody confrontation on the basis of ethnicity. The worth of the Tutsi and the moderate Hutu was tied up to either their ethnicity (Tutsi) or their social and political convictions (moderate Hutu). This resulted in the Genocide of the Tutsi by the Hutu. The same reality happened or is happening in the manipulation of the notion of ethnicity at the political level in the Darfur and in Chad. When specificities and differences are not welcomed as means for a meaningful dialogue, they end up becoming tools in the hands of those who can use them as means of oppression and annihilation of the other. People close themselves up on self-preservation in these instances.

The normal as the optimal condition of givenness should not thus be understood merely as the home, but rather as the fundamental insertion into human community as such. It is only in this way that it can become the place for a healthy political discussion and decision making. The inscription into normality comes as a result of an inscription into a healthy corporeity, which is a corporeity open to a discussion with the normality of the alien. The normality of the home has to be inscribed in the normality of humanity as the horizon and universal field of all normalities. The telos of human existence should be about performing rational acts that correspond to the values and sense constituted in humanity as the field from which they draw their meaningfulness. The dialogue between the inter-monic is constructed on the bases of an ideal that is commonly searched for. The ideality of values is what helps the primordial ego remain at its place and yet open to the values of others. The ideality of values is what can help in negotiating conflicts and
finding a common ground for the coexistence of divergent interests and perceptions. The world as universal horizon is a horizon of humanity itself. In it, differences are welcomed as richness rather than perceived as threats. A healthy confrontation of those differences is what leads to the constitution of a world that is viable for all.

No nation – a specific people with defined characteristics and vision – is an island. As stated by Sokolowski, “the intentional stance, in which we take others not only as conscious of things but also as agents of truth, is the default condition for human beings. It is in this attitude that we learn to speak and thus begin to think on our own. We would not have an impersonal view of things if we did not have a personal one beforehand.”3 Thus individuality and intersubjectivity are correlated. In this sense, closing oneself on one’s world, constituting it as an unbridgeable absolute, leads to the crisis of the political domain. The absolute presence of self to self as a means for governing the nation appears thus to be more a technology for self-preservation than a genuine way of governing. No one is an island and nationality always calls for internationality as the very means of its self-articulation. The goals of reason must be the promotion of humanity that transcends the boundaries of ethnic or interest-group belongings. When reason becomes controlled by immediate gratification and functional, practical interests, it withers and becomes a dry and cold weapon that can ultimately crush humanity instead of promoting it.

We need thus to open a political space as a space where inter-monadic communication becomes the central issue. Not only do we need to make a discovery of

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3 Robert Sokolowski, *Phenomenology of the Human Person*, p. 217
the ego as pure interiority but we need to understand it as the potential and the actuality of an intersubjective relation. Incarnation is thus the central reference to human existence, because it is that which throws the ego into a world inhabited by his fellow travelers. The world is an open horizon of co-intentions and the self is given to itself as situated in a relational space. Home and alien are co-constituted. They mutually inform and limit one another in the constitution of the political society as a society inhabited by human beings, as ends. The constitution of the homeworld as normal entails thus the constitution of another as abnormal and as having the right to its difference. My home as normal has as its limit the world of the other. The alien is not a second zone citizen because it is given as correlative to the home. The political, economic, and social connotations of the relationship between the home and the alien are thus to be found in the concept of the world as universal ground.

Instead of closing identities upon themselves and freezing the political sphere, we need to open them up to the welcoming of the alien. This can result in the development of multiparty systems which is an ally to democracy. It can also limit the wandering of the state and its institutions by limiting parallel allegiances. Informal and local organizations will then understand their lawfulness and right to be only within the whole. The ego as the condition for the manifestation of being becomes thus an agent of truth. He brings his contribution to the story of sense builders by adopting a stance that inserts him into humanity as such. At this point the Husserlian return to things themselves brings us back to understanding the reality of ethnicity, authority, and political power as inserted into the
preoccupations with meaning. Meaning is the ultimate end, that which allows practices to be historical and to be inserted into the continuity of human existence.
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