

# **INTERROGATING HUSSERL'S IDEA OF EXPERIENCE**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**PAWAN KUMAR**



**CENTRE FOR PHILOSOPHY  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI – 110067  
INDIA**

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JAWHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI – 110067**

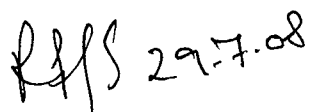
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**CERTIFICATE**

Certified that the dissertation titled *Interrogating Husserl's Idea of Experience* submitted by Pawan Kumar in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**, is an original work and has not been submitted either in part or in full in this or other university.

We recommend that the dissertation may be placed before the examiners, for evaluation.

  
**(Dr. Bhagat Oinam)**  
Associate Professor  
Supervisor  
Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
JNU  
New Delhi – 110067  
SUPERVISOR  
Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067

  
**(Prof. R. P. Singh)**  
Chairperson  
Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
JNU  
New Delhi – 110067  
Chairperson  
Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067

## DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation titled *Interrogating Husserl's Idea of Experience* submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree in this or any other university.

**Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi – 110067  
India  
2008**

*Pawan Kumar*  
29.07.2008  
**Pawan Kumar**

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**Centre for Philosophy  
School of Social Sciences  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi – 110067  
India**

**Pawan Kumar**

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The problem with experience has been one of the major concerns of philosophers over the ages. Philosophers have interpreted experience in various ways. One of the most important ways – phenomenological understanding – is that experience can be better understood through a descriptive eidetic science of experience. Eidetic sciences, hitherto existing, are generally considered to be concerned with reason. Arithmetic, geometry, pure physics, etc. are said to be *a priori* sciences. They are said to deal with general objects, such as pure number, pure triangle, natural laws, etc. in accordance with the innate *a priori* principles of reason. On the other hand, the sciences concerned with experience are said to be *a posteriori*. All natural sciences, sciences of animal beings, history, cultural sciences and the sociological disciplines of every kind come under this head. They are different from the eidetic sciences. The ongoing study discusses the possibility of the descriptive eidetic science of experience as has been propounded by a great philosopher of 20<sup>th</sup> century – Edmund Husserl.

Why do we need an eidetic science of experience? The certainty of the results of the eidetic sciences has always attracted philosophers. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Immanuel Kant, A.N. Whitehead, Bertrand Russell were inspired by the certainty of the eidetic sciences. They tried to reformulate the nature of philosophy on the line of the eidetic science. But they ignored the primacy of experience. They could not bring it to the fore. They remained obsessed with the reasoning faculty, and kept experience on the secondary level. They practiced the eidetic ideal on the reason alone. They could not develop an eidetic science of experience.

The notion of experience involves three essential components, these are: the experiencing agent, the process of experience, and the object of experience. Let us start from the last. Sciences of the natural standpoint consider only the individual thing as the proper object of experience. These sciences depend on empirical experience. They regard it as the only proper mode of experience which gives objects in a primordial status. Empirical experience renders only the individual objects. We all know that individual objects are contingent. Their form and being depend on the uniform functioning of the natural laws. Natural laws express only order, i.e., given such and such conditions, such and such consequences follow. If the natural laws would render different order, the form of the individual object would be different. Our epistemic need demands that we must contemplate on the possibility of such an object of experience which could be necessary as opposed to the contingent objects of experience.

Plato had tried to solve this problem by offering his theory of ideas. But the ideas offered by Plato treated the individual objects only as copy. In this way, following the Plato's way of argument, we come to know that all reality and substance belong only to the ideas and individual objects remain bereft of the enduring existence of their own. Moreover, Plato assumed an "other" world as the dwelling place of ideas. His enquiries became highly metaphysical and gave rise to many scholastic prejudices.

This is a fact that in our daily life, we deal with ideas or essences, but philosophical reflections on ideas render it impossible to accept essences as genuine objects of perception. We have been so accustomed to argue from the natural standpoint that we have forgotten to ask for essences.

Natural standpoint demands that all sciences must spring from experience. This may be regarded a genuine demand, but their identification of experience with sense-experience causes problems. Sense-experience can furnish only individual



beings. It cannot furnish generality. Natural sciences regard science of experience as the only genuine science. They regard that only they are concerned with the experienceable real fact-world. But, if we decline to accept the fact furnished by experience of the natural standpoint as the only possible kind of fact, then the standpoint of natural sciences comes to be insufficient. Moreover, if we accept induction as the right method of getting generality, even then we are struck by the fact that induction proceeds through the graded series of generalization, in which the lower species is derived from the higher species, and the higher species is achieved as the generalization of the lower species. Our phenomenological concern is not the derivation of the one from the other. On the other hand, we are interested to know “that” which could be given on the descriptive eidetic account without a relation to the vicious inductive series.

Experience has been given central place by the British empiricist philosophers. But their approach has distorted the actual form of the experience. They also identify experience with the sense-experience. They hold that all the sense organs function separately. In perceiving a tree, they say, we get its colour through our visual organ, its texture through the touch, its taste through the organ of taste, etc. These separately experienced features present the *object originaliter* in a distorted way. In the perception of a thing outwardly existing in the real world, even the empiricist confronts the full-fledged object, but he accepts only the distinct qualities as the genuine object of perception.

Locke, a great empiricist philosopher, accepted experience to be in form of sensation or reflection. In sensation, he said, we get ideas of heat, cold, etc; and in reflection we get ideas of perception, thinking, etc. He said that these ideas announce bodies in the world. Berkeley too assumed that sense can perceive only that which it perceives immediately, it can perceive only some qualities of objects; individual thing can be inferred but cannot be perceived. For these philosophers, matter existing in the world is only a philosophical invention.

Though these philosophers were students of experience, they could not develop a science of experience which could render self-sufficient ground of knowledge. Moreover, these philosophers could not free themselves from highlighting the root of reason. On the one hand, they deny reason as the authentic source of knowledge; on the other hand, they accept the process of inference as the process which leads from the separately experienced features of the tree to the full fledged tree. We are thus left with vagueness and lack of clarity.

In experiencing a thing, we experience this thing and most times remain ignorant of its neighbouring surrounding. This problem can be made clear through an example. Suppose, I go to the common room of my hostel, a movie is being played. I seat down watching it. After some time, when the advertisement is being played, someone changes the channel. I, after some time, as I know that the advertisement would have been over, want to continue watching that movie. But I have forgotten the name of the channel on which the movie was being played. The name of the channel was being displayed on the right corner of the screen. I was focused on the screen but could watch only the movie and remained ignorant of the name of the screen. This example is an exemplification of the situation we usually come across in our life. In our normal life, do we not perceive only that thing or event which is related to our interest and remain reluctant to the rest. If this approach remains limited to the life of an individual, it does not cause problems. But when this approach is accepted on a wider basis, it causes problems and makes our outlook narrow.

Now we come to the process of experience. It is evidently clear that the experiencing agent relates to the object of experience through the process of experience. Our main concern in this context is Brentano's solution to the problem, how the knower gets related to the object of knowledge, through his intentionality thesis. Brentano presented the solution to this problem through the notion of intentional "in-existence." Brentano suggested that the object of consciousness

intentionally in-exists in the consciousness. This notion has given rise to serious misunderstandings.

Moreover, he tried to bring the knower and the known in the intentional relation and thereby tried to solve the problem how the knower comes in contact with the object of knowing. But he propounds the difference between the physical and the mental phenomenon, which is only a new way to retain the age-old difference between the inner and the outer experience.

Brentano suggested that only the psychical phenomena are intentional, i.e., only they carry the specific mark of intentionality, i.e., “consciousness of something.” There is no problem in supposing that the psychical phenomenon is intentional, i.e., it relates the experiencing agent to the thing experienced, but what about the physical phenomena? If they are not intentional, i.e., if they do not refer to any thing, then from where they come to our consciousness and what purpose can they serve? If they are not capable of the specific mark of intentionality, i.e., “consciousness of something,” they cannot be assumed as related to any objectivity. Moreover, if we accept that they are stimulations from something outside, and at the same time, we accept that they do not refer to the source of stimulation, they cannot be regarded as physical phenomena, but appear only as aroused from and within the mind.

A solution to this problem has also been suggested by the sciences of the natural standpoint. They suggest that the object of experience exists in the *really* existent outward world. The experiencing agent stands in the *real* relationship with it. This interpretation may appear as an acceptable position. But if, in case, the object of experience is not an existent thing but a mere hallucination, then our whole framework of the epistemic engagement gets disturbed. Experiencing from the natural standpoint does not offer any remedy from this situation. In hallucination, where rope has been experienced as snake, or shell as silver, in our treating of the snake (of hallucination) as the *real* snake, or silver (of hallucination) as the *real* silver, we are

expected to be sure that we stand in a *real* relationship with the *real* snake. But, as we come to know that the snake of our experience is the snake of hallucination, or the silver of our experience is the silver of hallucination, to treat the rope as the *real* snake or shell as the *real* silver, becomes problematic.

Another problem that we face with the process of experience is that of the tension between inner and outer experience. Experience has been traditionally divided into inner and outer experience. Inner experience is considered as the experience of one's own psychic states. Philosophers have maintained that one cannot be deluded of one's own psychic states. We know our psychic states as simply and truly as they occur in our own being; we have direct access to them. Inner experience has been maintained as the evident experience. Outer experience is said to be the experience of the things and events that exist outside our own existence. Philosophers like Descartes have interpreted outer experience as simply delusive. This was the very conviction of Descartes that moved him to doubt everything and to search for an inner, self-evident, principle so that the evidence of the world and its things, events, etc., may be grounded upon the inner experience. He used geometric model of deductions based on axioms, and used the certainty of *cogito ergo sum* as the axiom of the deductive argument.

On the contrary, the empiricists critiqued the priority given to the inner, self-evident experience. Locke, for instance, accepts that the actual receiving of ideas from outside ("without") gives us notice of the existence of external things, and makes us know that something exists at that time outside our own existence which causes that idea in us, but he accepts that we do not know how it does it. He says in his work *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*:

It is therefore the actual receiving of ideas from without that gives us notice of the existence of other things, and makes us know that something doth exist at that time

without us which causes that idea in us, though perhaps we neither know nor consider how it does it....<sup>1</sup>

Berkeley, like Locke, accepts external perception as that on the basis of which we get ideas, but together with that he accepts that these ideas make us aware only of some features or qualities of the object. Berkeley, therefore, though does not claim outer experience to be delusive, but makes it insufficient. David Hume, on the other hand, goes to the extreme position, and hold that no experience – inner or outer, can be evident. However, despite of Humean skepticism, the debate related to the distinction between inner and outer experience remains a major concern for subsequent philosophers.

As a part of the debate, the problem of evidence then becomes completely focused on the distinction between inner and outer experience. This distinction has given rise to the internalist-externalist debate in the contemporary philosophy of mind. Internalism holds that one's own awareness of one's cognitive processes determines the epistemic justification of one's own beliefs. Externalism, on the other hand, holds that the believer need not be aware of the cognitive process of his beliefs, these are determined also by the surrounding objective world.

Now, let me focus on the notion of the experiencing agent. This experiencing agent is designated as subject, self, ego, etc. Philosophers have interpreted it in various ways. Our main concern in this regard is the “subject” as understood in the subjective idealism and the “ego cogito” of Descartes. The subject understood in the subjective idealism reduces all the contents of experience in its own ideas. This view makes the existence of the world dependent completely on the subject. It gives rise to serious inter-subjective epistemic problems. It, therefore, creates problems in formulating the basis of objective knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup> A.J. Ayer (ed.), *British Empirical Philosophers: Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Reid and J.S.Mill*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1965, p. 152.

Descartes' method of doubting establishes the existence of the ego cogito as the apodictically self-evident ground of clear and distinct knowledge. Descartes' discovery of the ego cogito was a great discovery, but Descartes used the ego cogito as an axiom which could serve as the premise of the deductive argument. He derived the existence of the world and all the worldly things through deductive arguments. In the Cartesian standpoint, experiencing agent itself is thus made aloof from the experience.

These are the important issues which bother a philosophically meditating mind. Traditional approaches to experience are very influential and fascinating but they do not render an acceptable account of experience. As discussed thus far, we are left with four major accounts of experience – natural standpoint, empiricist standpoint, Cartesian standpoint, and Brentano's standpoint. Natural standpoint suggests that we experience individuals; empiricist standpoint suggests that we experience sense-data; Cartesian standpoint suggests that our experience in regard to external objects is simply deceptive, therefore, we must look for some inner principle; and Brentano's standpoint has the suggestion that we enjoy physical and psychical phenomena and that our psychical phenomena is always "experience of something."

In the light of the mapping of the genesis of the problem of experience, let me now highlight the issues that have bothered me in this dissertation. The first noteworthy problem of experience hovers round the object of experience – what can be called a genuine object of experience. All living beings are experiencing beings. They start experiencing many things in their lives – objects, events, feelings, etc. If we accept only inner experience as the only genuine kind of experience, as regarded by Descartes, then all our external sense-organs and their workability become futile. If we regard, as per the Cartesian methods, that external experience is good for our everyday life, but not for a scientific life, then we come to face contradiction with the natural scientists' standpoint that knowledge should be enriched with new

experiences. If we accept, as per the natural scientists' standpoint, that we experience individual things and we must rely on the method of induction as means for knowledge (of generality), then, we lose the intuitive objective-giving character of our experience. And, on the other hand, we also get lost into the vicious inductive series, as stated earlier. If we accept, as per the empiricists, that we immediately perceive distinct sense-data, then we are again led back to the problem of the compilation of these sense-data so as to give the objective knowledge of a thing. Arguing from a normal everyday standpoint, we know that experience is not as complicated as regarded by the empiricist. If we accept, as per the Brentano's standpoint, that the object of our experience intentionally in-exists in our consciousness, then again we are laid back to the problem that the object of our knowledge is some inward thing or some outward thing. We thus remain in an indecisive state as regards the object, or more accurately, the genuine object of experience.

The process of experience, as understood by the traditional philosophers, also remains complicated. If we accept, as per the natural standpoint, that the object of experience exists in the transcendent reality of space and that between the real man or the real perception on the one hand, and the real object on the other, there subsists a *real* relation, then in cases of hallucination, etc., the objective relation presumed gets disturbed. We must ask, what happens to the real relation supposed by the natural standpoint? If we accept, as suggested by Brentano, intentionality as the mode proper to experiencing process, and that our psychical phenomena stand in relation to the object of experience, even then the process of experience does not get its proper designation. We are interested to know how the proper mode of experiencing can be exemplified at all.

The experiencing agent also remains unclarified. If it is treated as the "subject" of the subjective idealism, then it alone seems to constitute the thing and events it claims to experience, and no ground of objectivity can be found in its subjective

idealist approach. Its knowledge-claims come to contradictions with other subject's knowledge-claims. We are interested to find some intersubjectively acceptable ground. If we accept, as propounded by Descartes, that the experiencing agent is the doubter, and that its experiential relation to the external world is simply futile because of delusive interactions, then again our epistemologically accurate designation of the experiencing agent remains unsatisfied. We are genuinely interested to know what kind of being or ego can be regarded as the epistemologically potent, experiencing, agent.

This dissertation is an attempt to analyze and clarify these problems. It does not deal with the notion of experience in general. It is not concerned to trace the history of ideas concerning experience. It is an enquiry on the above mentioned problems of experience using the method of phenomenology as propounded by Edmund Husserl.

This dissertation is a text based study of Husserl's idea of experience. It includes a first hand reading of his works – *Logical Investigations*, *Ideas*, *Cartesian Meditations*, *Crisis*, and *Experience and Judgment*. These texts in their entirety are not the subject-matter of this study. The notion of experience, as it occurs in these texts, makes up the subject-matter of this dissertation. In this dissertation, the above mentioned problems will be approached through the phenomenological standpoint and method developed by Edmund Husserl.

Phenomenology is a peculiar method to address these problems. Husserl calls phenomenology the "rigorous science." He calls it a science of "origins." Its peculiarity lies in its radically meditating approach. It is not inclined to accept any hitherto existing belief; no matter it is a justified true belief. It questions all forms of justification and validity. Husserl's phenomenology tries to examine the mode of experience anew.



Husserl critiques the traditional philosophy for its unscientific nature. He says, “I do not say that philosophy is an imperfect science; I say simply that it is not yet a science at all, that as science it has not yet begun.”<sup>2</sup>

Husserl is highly influenced by the “method of doubt” of Descartes and the discovery of the “ego cogito.” He sees a “hitherto unheard of radicalism” in Cartesian approach. But he does not accept the Cartesian plan to use the ego cogito as the self-evident premise of deductive arguments. He says that it is a prejudice that under the name “ego cogito” one is dealing with an apodictic axiom which can serve as the foundation for a deductively explanatory world science. Husserl is of the opinion that the ego cogito is capable of unfolding itself *ad infinitum*. He uses the method of transcendental reduction and reflection to get access to the transcendental subjective state of the ego, which opens an infinite realm of knowledge. Husserl’s phenomenological scheme is “ego – cogito – cogitatum.” In this scheme, experiencing agent, process of experience, and the object of experience appear to be inevitable parts, which cannot be segregated from one another.

Husserl’s phenomenological method is also influenced by Brentano’s method of intentionality. He accepts intentionality as the right characterization of consciousness. He modifies Brentano’s conception of intentionality, and tries to furnish it a more comprehensive and reliable ground. Husserl sees intentional experience as a unitary process. He does not accept the Brentano’s distinction of physical and psychical phenomena. He uses the notions of hyle, noesis, and noema to depict the proper functioning of intentional experience. He finds the notion of the noematic meaning which becomes the basis to relate the cogito to the cogitatum. He uses his peculiar method of phenomenological reduction to get to the notion of noema.

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<sup>2</sup> Edmund Husserl, “Philosophy as Rigorous Science,” in Peter McCormick and Frederick A. Elliston (ed.), *Husserl: Shorter Works*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1981, p. 167.

Husserl's phenomenological approach accepts that the grasp of essence (meaning) can open a new eidetic science which would be free from the enigmas of induction, deduction, and all the mathematical methods. He says in this regard:

Thus the greatest step our age has to make is to recognize that with the philosophical intuition in the correct sense, the phenomenological grasp of essences, a limitless field of work opens out, a science that without all indirectly symbolical and mathematical methods, without the apparatus of premises and conclusions, still attains a plenitude of the most rigorous and, for all further philosophy, decisive cognitions.<sup>3</sup>

Husserl's method remains focused on the experience and tries to apprehend what is given in it. Instead of dividing our knowing faculty into experience and reason, it accepts a unitary faculty of knowing, i.e., our conscious experience. It analyses the contents of this experience and applies its peculiar method of phenomenological reduction, reflection, etc. Husserl discusses the epistemic grounds which render a pitfall between inner and outer experience. His phenomenological reduction prepares the ground for all experience to be evident. Erazim Kohak says in this regard:

At most times, and for the most part, humankind has lived in the shadow of a profound suspicion that appearance is the mask rather than the face of reality.... Against that lingering skepsis, Husserl presents his conviction that appearance is not a mask but the presence of reality, overt rather than latent, to be *seen* rather than conjectured, the birthright of all humans rather than the privilege of poets, seers, or ideologues.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> Erazim Kohak, *Idea & Experience: Edmund Husserl's Project of Phenomenology in Ideas I*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1978, pp. 175–6.

This dissertation consists of five chapters including introduction and conclusion. The present chapter (chapter 1) discusses the problems inherent in the preceding approaches and theories of experience prior to, and with, the emergence of phenomenology as a science of epistemology. It describes the peculiarity and expanse of phenomenological method.

The second chapter titled “Husserl’s Basic Notion of Experience” discusses three issues – the quest for primordial datum intuition, adumbration, and the horizon of experience. The first section discusses the empirical and the eidetic intuition as the two modes of experience. Empiricist naturalism accepts the empirical intuition as the only acts in which objects are given in the primordial sense. They accept individual things as the only objects of experience. Husserl’s phenomenological method accepts the essence as the genuine object of experience and accepts the eidetic intuition as the acts whereby these objects are given. It describes ontology of essence and also an epistemology of essence through which this ontology can be approached. The second section is focused chiefly on enquiring how our perception gets adumbrated. It involves the critique of the outlook of the empiricist philosophers which renders it possible to rest satisfied with the adumbrations as the genuine findings of our experiencing faculty. This quest further leads to the horizon analysis. The third section discusses the possible horizons of experience and argues that the horizon of experience should be taken into account. These issues are basic because these are always the part of the treatment Husserl propounds. Specially, essence is a dominating notion throughout Husserl’s works.

The third chapter titled “The Structure of Experience” starts with the approach of intentionality as a phenomenological approach to address the intricate questions of experience. Husserl’s theory of intentionality starts with his work *Logical Investigations* and gets maturity in *Ideas*. Husserl has expressed his developed theory of intentionality in terms of hyle, noesis and noema. The first section discusses the Husserl’s notion of intentionality as developed in *Logical Investigations*. The second

section discusses its development in *Ideas*. As stated earlier, Husserl has adopted this concept from his teacher Franz Brentano. Husserl has made many modifications in Brentano's intentionality thesis. The first two sections disclose the problems inherent in Brentano's conception of intentionality and discuss Husserl's critique of Brentano's intentionality-thesis. This third section deals with the conception of evidence. Husserl has described the origin of the problem of evidence in the age-old distinction between inner and outer experience. Cartesian philosophy regards inner experience as evident and outer experience as delusive. Husserl refutes this view. He does not accept this distinction as the right basis to depict the ground of evidence. The notion of evidence is the guiding theme of Husserl's inquiry. He has tried to search the source of evidence in the outer and the inner experience as well and has criticized the standpoint that evidence lies only in the inner experience.

The fourth chapter titled "Towards Transcendental Experience" discusses the method of the phenomenological reduction and the notion of transcendental subjectivity. There are many intricacies in Husserl's treatment of phenomenological reduction. He has used many terms in this regard, such as, disconnection, suspension, epoche, reduction, bracketing. A naïve reader comes across these terms in *Ideas*. Husserl has used the transcendental reduction to bracket some transcendent objects. The first section of this chapter discusses this reduction. The second section discusses the controversy related to Husserl's method of reduction, and tries to make clear what Husserl means by phenomenological reduction, and further it tries to depict Husserl's unclarified position in regard to the relation between eidetic intuition and eidetic reduction. Husserl's complete phenomenological method comprises not only reductions but also reflection, free play of fancy, and shaping illustrations, etc. The third section discusses the notion of transcendental subjectivity. The notion of transcendental subjectivity is related directly to the method of reduction and reflection. Husserl has interpreted the notion of transcendental subjectivity with reference to transcendental ego. Transcendental subjectivity is the apodictically self-evident ground of all knowledge. Husserl has criticized Descartes for his failure to

take the transcendental turn. This chapter comprises Husserl's criticism of Descartes in his failure to get access to the transcendental subjectivity which remained *terra incognita* of consciousness for him.

Overall the dissertation attempts to discuss Husserl's treatment of experience with reference to his peculiar phenomenological method. In doing so, it comes across traditional theories and approaches to the study of experience. It comprises Husserl's critique of these theories and approaches. It also tries to express the way how the problem with experience can be addressed anew.

## Chapter 2

### Husserl's Basic Notion of Experience

This chapter is concerned with three cardinal issues of Husserl's idea of experience. These are – experience of essences, Husserl's treatment of adumbrations, and the horizon of experience. Natural standpoint accepts empirical experience as the only proper mode of experience. It denies the apprehension of essences. Husserl critiques this standpoint and maintains that essences can be apprehended by means of eidetic intuition. He maintains that the experience of the essence is as much genuine and original as is the experience of the individual. Our epistemic engagements in everyday life bring out manifold of percepts and our perception gets adumbrated in countless ways. Husserl critiques the empiricist image theory of experience and discusses how our experience gets adumbrated. Husserl's treatment of adumbration comes across the notion of the horizon of experience. He maintains that experience is always within some horizon. He discusses different notions of horizon and argues that the notion of horizon should be taken into account.

#### 2.1 Empirical Intuition and Eidetic Intuition

While discussing the nature of experience in Husserl's philosophy *prima facie* we come across the word "intuition." The word intuition comes from the Latin *intuitio* which is derived from *intueri*, meaning to look at attentively (with astonishment or admiration), gaze at, contemplate or pay attention to.<sup>1</sup> For Husserl, intuition is an act where an object is experienced as given; every science depends on certain intuitions

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<sup>1</sup> Mircea Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 7, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1987, p. 269.

in which objects are given in a primordial sense, such an intuition is primordial dator experience.<sup>2</sup>

Husserl speaks, primarily, of two types of intuitions: (1) Individual (or empirical) intuition, and (2) Eidetic intuition. Individual or empirical intuition is simple acquaintance of a concrete object existing in space and time. It posits the real in the individual form, as something existing in this time-spot, having a definite shape and existing at a definite place. For example, if I perceive a tree, I perceive it as a concrete individual object existing in, say, JNU campus and on 8th March 2008.

Empirical intuition functions in the natural sphere of knowledge. Natural knowledge begins with experience and remains within experience.<sup>3</sup> A natural human being remains aware of a world, spread out in space and time. He discovers it immediately and intuitively. He experiences it through sense-perception. This standpoint is natural standpoint. Natural standpoint implements all its researches in the world. The sciences of natural standpoint are sciences of the world, because world is the total field of possible research for them. For them, “true Being,” “real Being,” “real empirical Being” are the same things. Under sciences developed from the natural standpoint are included all natural sciences, sciences of animal beings, history, cultural sciences and the sociological disciplines of every kind.

Husserl says that every science depends on certain intuitions in which objects are given in a primordial sense. Natural sciences depend on empirical intuitions and they regard them the primordial dator experience. Husserl says:

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<sup>2</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1976, p. 51, henceforth *Ideas*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

The object-giving (or dator) intuition of the first, “natural” sphere of knowledge and of all its sciences is natural experience, and the primordial dator experience is perception in the ordinary sense of the term.<sup>4</sup>

Individual intuition posits the individual being with having a real content. It is present at a particular place and in a particular shape. Husserl says that it could be present at any other place and in any other form.

The natural standpoint rests on the natural laws which facilitate that given such and such natural conditions, such and such consequences follow. But the natural laws, in Husserl’s opinion, express only orderings, which could be quite different. Variation in ordering suggests the variation in the shape of the individual being. Therefore, Husserl regards that individual being of every kind is “accidental.” “It is so-and-so, but essentially it could be other than it is.”<sup>5</sup>

Husserl says that this contingency is limited because it is correlative to a necessity. An individual object is not simply an individual object, but it has its own proper mode of being, it has some essential predicables which qualify it. Whatever belongs to the essence of the individual can also belong to another individual. Husserl seems to suggest that the shared essence, which has the character of generality, makes up the necessity which every contingent individual being carries with itself. He says that this necessity has the character of essential necessity, and therewith a relation to essential generality.

Husserl moves forward through the interplay of contingency and necessity. Contingency is comprehended by individual intuition, whereas necessity by the eidetic intuition. He says:

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 53.



Now when we stated that every fact could be “essentially” other than it is, we were already expressing thereby that it belongs to the meaning of everything contingent that it should have essential being and therewith an Eidos to be apprehended in all its purity; and this Eidos comes under essential truths of varying degrees of universality.<sup>6</sup>

The knowledge of contingency gives rise to the knowledge of necessity. Firstly, we experience an individual thing (which is contingent), then we come to know that it has some necessity. This transition from contingency to necessity paves the way for the transformation of the individual intuition into essential insight. Husserl says, “Empirical or individual intuition can be transformed into essential insight (ideation) – a possibility which is itself not to be understood as empirical but essential possibility.”<sup>7</sup>

He accepts that the insight which gives the essence can be adequate as well as inadequate. Since we lead to the eidetic intuition through empirical intuition, so we must take care of the adequacy of it. Husserl is of the opinion that in cases of outer perception we have primordial experience of physical things, but in cases of memory, anticipatory expectation and in cases of knowledge of others and their vital experiences, we have no longer a primordial dator act, although we do have an intuitional dator. He accepts that any object of knowledge, which we come across, draws us into infinities of experience, so the motley of experiences always leaves the way to closer thing-determination. But, however, he accepts that whether individual intuition is adequate or not, it can pass into eidetic intuition. Again the eidetic intuition itself is either adequate or inadequate, has the character of a dator act.<sup>8</sup> We have known thus far that a dator act is an object-giving act, i.e., through it, the object is experienced.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

Pure essence or eidos is the object of eidetic intuition. He says, “The essence (eidos) is an object of a new type. Just as the datum of individual or empirical intuition is an individual object, so the datum of essential intuition is a pure essence.”<sup>9</sup> He thinks that the analogy between the two kinds of intuition, together with their corresponding objects, is not a superficial analogy. Eidetic and empirical intuitions both are intuition, as object is given in both. Individual and Idea both are objects, as both are given in intuition. The generalization of the concepts “intuition” and “object” is demanded by the very nature of things. Husserl stresses this point and says, “Essential insight is still intuition, just as the eidetic object is still an object.”<sup>10</sup>

We now come to the question of the essence. Essence, on Husserl’s account is the very being of the individual and it can be set out as “Idea.” He says, “At first ‘essence’ indicated that which in the immediate self-being of an individual discloses to us ‘what’ it is. But every such what can be set out as Idea.”<sup>11</sup>

Husserl lays the foundation of a kind of ontology which deals with essences. Essences, on his account, are of two kinds: material essences and formal essences. Husserl seems to suggest that material essences are related to what we call the “matter” of the object, whereas formal essences are related to what we call the “form” of the object. He says:

On the one side stand the material, which in a certain sense is the essences ‘properly so called’. But on the other side stands what is still eidetic but none the less fundamentally and essentially different: a mere essential form, which is indeed an essence but a completely ‘empty’ one....<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

Essences stay in a hierarchical order. Husserl says that the series expressed in this hierarchy has two limits, upper and lower, which never coalesce. As we move downwards the series, we get the lowest specific differences which Husserl calls the eidetic singularities; and moving upwards the series, we get the essences of species, genus, and finally the highest genus. Husserl presents some instances of this hierarchical series, which can be expressed as thus:

1. In the pure logical realm of meanings – “meaning in general” is the highest genus; every determinate form of proposition or of its components is an eidetic singularity; “proposition in general” is a mediating genus.
2. In the realm of arithmetic – “numerical quality in general” (*Anzahl*) is highest genus; 2, 3, 4 ... are its eidetic singularities.
3. In sphere of positive content – “thing in general” or “sensory quality in general” or “spatial shape in general” or “experience (*Erlebnis*) in general” are highest genera; determinate sensory qualities, spatial shapes, vital experiences as such are eidetic singularities.<sup>13</sup>

In the hierarchical series of material essence, the highest material genus is called “region.”<sup>14</sup> Husserl says that the region comprises all concrete empirical objectivities and their material essences. He speaks of the concept of “category” as related to the concept of the region. Husserl describes “categories” as related to the form of the region. He says that the pure essence or eidos then can be the highest category or one of its specializations or the fully “concrete.” Drawing on this line, we can say that any object of knowledge whatsoever, has its own species, qualities, relations etc., which are involved in its essence, therefore, the eidetic intuition of it

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

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incorporates all of its features. David Woodruff Smith has given an example in this context:

Consider an object in nature, say, this individual tree, a particular eucalyptus tree located at a certain time on a certain street in California. The tree is one thing, a concrete individual. Its essence is something else, an ideal formation comprising its species (*Eucalyptus*), its qualities (how it is colored), its spatial shape (how tall it is and how its limbs reach out in specific directions), its relationships (to me across the street), its structure with botanic parts (limbs, sap, bark, leaves), its unity, and so on. Such properties, each in principle shareable by other objects, make up its “material” essence as a spatiotemporal-physical thing in nature.<sup>15</sup>

Husserl says that there can be two ways of grasping the essence in its primordial form, viz. we can set out from (1) corresponding empirical intuitions, and (2) non-empirical intuitions.<sup>16</sup> We experience an individual being which exists in space and time. It has some features which are shared by other individuals. Our consideration on these shared features leads to the essence. Non-empirical intuitions are not concerned with the sensory experience of the individual; these are intuitions “of a merely imaginative order.” Husserl says that if in the play of fancy we live through fictitious acts of everyday life, we can, through “ideation,” get primordial and adequate insight into pure essence. But from them alone, he insists, we cannot infer anything about the fact-world. He says, just as to think a fact or to express it needs the grounding of experience, so thought concerning pure essence needs for its grounding and support an insight into the essence of things.

He opines that essential intuition should rest on the visible presence of the individual fact.<sup>17</sup> It cannot be possible without the free possibility of directing one’s glance to an individual counterpart and of shaping an “illustration.” Likewise,

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<sup>15</sup> David Woodruff Smith, *Husserl*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, 2007, p. 143.

<sup>16</sup> *Ideas*, p. 57.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

individual intuition cannot be possible without the free possibility of carrying out an act of ideation and therein directing one's glance upon the corresponding essence which exemplifies itself in something. Husserl is of the opinion that both the intuitions are interdependent.

Empirical intuition is the grasping of the object in its bodily selfhood. Essential intuition is the consciousness of a "something" self-given within the object; it also is the grasping of the essence in its bodily self-hood. Essential intuition, then, is a primordial dator intuition.

Essential insight is intuition, not a mere representation.<sup>18</sup> In cases of representative knowledge, we make something out of our earlier experiences, as in memory. Eidetic insight is not of this kind, it has the presentational character. When we get such an insight we directly encounter entities which we come across. That is why it is a primordial dator act.

Husserl says that a state of essential being belongs as its essence to each individual object and to each essence there corresponds a series of possible individuals. This is the ground for a reciprocal relationship between sciences of fact and sciences of the essence. Both the sciences are interdependent.

Regarding the status of eidetic intuition, Husserl mentions three preceding standpoints which have been hostile to essences, and as a consequence, to eidetic intuition. These are empiricism, natural sciences and psychology. He says that "ideas," "essences" and "knowledge of essential being" are denied by empiricism; natural sciences have been indebted to eidetic grounding, but have favoured philosophical empiricism; and psychologists too, have been hostile to ideas.

Husserl says that empiricist naturalism seeks to establish "self-governing Reason" as the only authority in the matters concerning truth. It demands that all science must spring from experience; therefore, genuine science and the science of

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-6.

experience is the same thing. On this account, since no one can have the experience of ideas, therefore, the existence of ideas are denied. “Ideas, Essence as opposed to facts, what else might they be than scholastic entities, metaphysical ghosts?”<sup>19</sup> Natural science of modern times claims that it has saved the mankind from these metaphysical ghosts. It also claims that natural science alone is concerned with the experienceable real fact-world. Ideas, essences cannot be experienced, therefore, they are nothing but imaginations; and a science based on imaginations can only be an imaginary science. Thus, the empiricist concludes that:<sup>20</sup>

1. To postulate Ideas is an ideological extravagance
2. It is a reversion to scholasticism
3. It is speculative construction *a priori*.

Husserl critiques the above empiricist assertions. He says that the empiricist outlook is based on misunderstandings and prejudices. He says:

The fundamental defect of the empiricists’ argument lies in this, that the basic requirement of a return to the ‘facts themselves’ is identified or confused with the requirement that all knowledge shall be grounded in experience.<sup>21</sup>

Empiricist naturalism takes for granted that experience is the only act through which “facts” themselves are given. But for Husserl, facts are not necessarily facts of nature. Empiricist, however, assumes that primordial dator act is concerned only with “the fact-world of nature.” Husserl views that this is the very notion where prejudices are harboured.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

Husserl is of the opinion that empiricism is itself pregnant with some serious absurdities, which can be demonstrated. Direct experience gives only singular elements and no generalities, and is thus insufficient. It cannot take recourse to the eidetic intuition because it denies it already, so it must be based on induction. Induction relies on mediated modes of inference, through which general propositions are established. Thus, we fall back on the principles on which modes of inference depend for justification. Are not these themselves empirical generalizations? asks Husserl. So, he proposes that the fundamental tenets of empiricism should be made distinct, clear and precise and their grounds must be better specified. He says that in the literature of empiricism it is hard to find any suggestion of a serious attempt to bring out “real clearness” and a “scientific grounding” into these basic relations.

Against idealism,<sup>22</sup> he says that the idealists accept pure thought *a priori* but do not bring out the fact that there is such a thing as pure intuition in which essences are primordially given as objects. He says:

Blindness to ideas is a kind of psychic blindness, which through prejudices renders us incapable of bringing into the field of judgment what we have already in our field of intuition.<sup>23</sup>

Husserl says that there is another offence against phenomenology that as “Platonizing realists” it sets up ideas or essences as objects and ascribe to them true being.<sup>24</sup> Husserl maintains that it is a superficial reading. He replies that if objects and empirical objects, reality and empirical reality mean one and the same thing, then no doubt the conception of ideas as objects and as realities is perverse “Platonic hypostatization,” but if they are sharply separated, as mentioned earlier, then no offence remains.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 88–90.

The above discussion suggests that Husserl regards eidetic intuition an authentic experience. It is primordial and object-giving. An essence, on his account, is not a metaphysical entity but an ontological entity. It is not a mysterious reality. Essences are encountered in everyday life. Husserl critiques the naturalistic, psychological and empiricist standpoints which refute essences and eidetic intuition.

## 2.2 Husserl's Advance over the Empiricist Theory of Perception

In the Vth *Logical Investigations*, Husserl criticizes the image-theory of perception. He says:

The erroneous *image-theory*, which thinks it has sufficiently explained the fact of presentation – fully present in each act – by saying that: ‘*Outside* the thing itself is there (or is at times there); in consciousness there is an image which does duty for it’.<sup>25</sup>

Sean D. Kelly, in his article “Edmund Husserl and Phenomenology,” has suggested that this image-theory belongs to the British empiricist philosophers. He says that the empiricists believed that perception is perspectival. “The empiricist idea that we immediately perceive pictures or images, instead of full three-dimensional objects, emphasizes the perspectival nature of perception.”<sup>26</sup>

Husserl, in the particular section of *Logical Investigations* concerned with the image theory (Appendix to sections 11 and 20 of Vth *Logical Investigations*), does not directly mention the British empiricist philosophers, though in his later work *Crisis*, he directly mentions them and says that the philosophical outlook of the

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<sup>25</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J.N. Findlay, Vol.2, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1970, p. 593.

<sup>26</sup> Sean D. Kelly, “Edmund Husserl and Phenomenology,” in Robert C. Solomon and David Sherman (eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to Continental Philosophy*, Blackwell publishing Ltd., Malden, 2003, p. 118.



British empiricist philosophers leads to the “bankruptcy” of philosophy and science.<sup>27</sup> Beginning with Locke, he says that his approach seeks to accomplish an epistemological grounding of the objectivity of the objective sciences. Dealing with this goal, Locke uses “ideas” as the building-block of such kind of objective knowledge. Locke comes to the conclusion that in experience we get only ideas, and on behalf of these, we infer an external world. Husserl keeps Locke’s views thus: “Only what inner self-experience shows, only our own ‘ideas’, are immediately, self-evidently given. Everything in the external world is inferred.”<sup>28</sup> Moreover, sense-data, as affections from outside are taken for granted which announce bodies in the external world.

Searching for Locke’s views in his work *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, we find that according to him, experience may be in the form of sensation or reflection. In the case of sensation, we get simple ideas of red, cold, heat, hard, tasty, etc., and in the case of reflection we get simple ideas of perception, thinking, willing etc., that is to say, in all cases we get idea. He says that we get the knowledge of our own existence by intuition; of the existence of God by demonstration; and of other things by sensation. Concentrating on the existence of the other things, it will be appropriate to keep his view in his own words:

It is therefore the actual receiving of ideas from without that gives us notice of the existence of other things, and makes us know that something doth exist at that time without us which causes that idea in us, though perhaps we neither know nor consider how it does it: for it takes not from the certainty of our senses, and the idea we receive by them, that we know not the manner wherein they are produced; v.g; whilst I write this, I have, by the paper affecting my eyes, that idea produced in my mind which whatever object causes, I call “white”; by which I know that that quality or

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<sup>27</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr, Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 1970, pp. 86–8, henceforth *Crisis*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

accident ( i.e.; whose appearance before my eyes always causes that idea) doth really exist and hath a being without me.<sup>29</sup>

Berkeley makes this view more advanced. He too, assumes that we get only ideas in perception. For Berkeley's motto *esse est percipii*, to exist means to be perceived. Berkeley keeps his views in *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous* as thus:

*Phil.* The point then is agreed between us, that sensible things are those only which are immediately perceived by sense. You will further inform me, whether we immediately perceive by sight anything beside light, and colours, and figures: or by hearing any thing but sounds: by the palate, any thing besides tastes; by the smell, besides odours: or by the touch, more than tangible qualities.

*Hyl.* We do not.

*Phil.* It seems therefore, that if you take away all sensible qualities, there remains nothing sensible.

*Hyl.* I grant it.

*Phil.* Sensible things therefore are nothing else but so many sensible qualities, or combinations of sensible qualities.<sup>30</sup>

Husserl says in the *Crisis* that Berkeley reduces the bodily things to the complexes of sense-data. Material things may be inferred, but they are not perceived, for Berkeley maintains that the senses perceive nothing which they don't perceive immediately, for they make no inferences. Therefore, matter existing in itself, according to Locke and Berkeley, is a philosophical invention.<sup>31</sup> In this direction, Hume goes to the end, for him, all categories of objectivity are fictions.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> A.J. Ayer and Raymond Winch (eds.), *British Empirical Philosophers: Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Reid and J.S. Mill*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1965, p. 152.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>31</sup> *Crisis*, pp. 86–8.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

Now, problem arises when we accept that only ideas are given to us and then decline to see the givenness in its entirety. In the VIth *Logical Investigations*, Husserl presents the outlook of the erroneous image theory as thus: “The object is not actually given, it is not given wholly and entirely as that which it itself is. It is only given ‘from the front’, only perspectively foreshortened and projected etc.”<sup>33</sup>

Sean D. Kelly says that Husserl, like empiricists, accepts that perception is perspectival, but he takes an advance over them as he talks about transcending the narrow perspective.<sup>34</sup>

Such an image-like thing which appears in perception and furnishes only partial knowledge is called by Husserl “*Abschattungen*,” it has been translated as ‘adumbrations’. David Woodruff Smith defines adumbration as “a variation in the appearance of an object of perception; for example, the same colour of an object appears with different adumbrations under different lighting conditions.”<sup>35</sup> Dr. Smith says that Husserl distinguishes three types of entity in the “constitution” of a material thing as given in perception:<sup>36</sup>

1. The thing itself
2. Its essence
3. The appearances or adumbrations.

In the same stream, according to Dermot Moran,<sup>37</sup> three main traits of perceiving emerge in *Logical Investigations*:

1. Perception presents an object directly, immediately and currently.

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<sup>33</sup> *Logical Investigations*, p. 712.

<sup>34</sup> Sean D Kelly, “Edmund Husserl and Phenomenology,” in Robert C.Solomon and David Sherman (eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to Continental Philosophy*, Blackwell publishing Ltd., Malden, 2003, pp. 112–42.

<sup>35</sup> David Woodruff Smith, *Husserl*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London, 2007, p. 428.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 220

<sup>37</sup> Dermot Moran, *Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 157.

2. The act of perceiving involves unquestioned acceptance, belief.
3. Perception is always adumbrated.

Therefore, it is not uneven to accept for a while that as we perceive an external object, our perception gets adumbrated and we deal with the image(s) of the object from one perspective or other. Husserl does not stop here. He tends to transcend the adumbrated stage of perception. Husserl says that the image-theory ignores the fact that in a representation by images the represented object (which is original) is meant by way of its image as an apparent object.<sup>38</sup>

Now we have three things for consideration – “consciousness,” “image” and “thing.” The image represents the thing; thing and image are in resemblance. Husserl is of the opinion that only this resemblance cannot help. He says, if one thing resembles to other, it does not mean that one is the image of the other. What makes the image to be an image is a presenting ego’s power to use a similar as an image – representative of a similar.<sup>39</sup> Image as an image is constituted in a particular intentional consciousness which involves the reference to an object extraneous to the consciousness. He says:

This can only mean that the constitution of the image as image takes place in a peculiar intentional consciousness, whose *inner* character, whose *specifically* peculiar mode of apperception, not only constitutes what we call image-representation as such, but also, through its particular inner determinateness, constitutes the image-representation of this or that *definite* object.<sup>40</sup>

Husserl says that only the relational opposition between the image and the original does not point to two genuinely apparent objects in consciousness, rather it

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<sup>38</sup> *Logical Investigations*, p. 593.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 594.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

points to possible cognitive consummations<sup>41</sup> through which a synthesis between the image and the thing can be done.

Any image, in order to be an image, presupposes an object which is intentionally given to consciousness, if we regard this object as itself constituted through an image then we will be inclined to the fallacy of infinite regress.<sup>42</sup> We must come to see the need for a constitution of presented objects for and in consciousness, in consciousness' own circle of essential being. He emphasizes that the external object (transcendent) is not present to consciousness merely because a content rather similar to it is in consciousness, for this consideration as a supposition can be reduced to utter nonsense but the point is that all relation to an object is part and parcel of the phenomenological essence of consciousness.

The relation of the image to the consciousness is not like that of the "statue" to the "room." He says, "One should not talk and think as if an image stood in the same relation to consciousness as a statue does to a room in which it is set up, or as if the least light could be shed on the matter by inventing a hotch-potch of two objects."<sup>43</sup>

It is only the phenomenological analysis of the essences of the concerned acts which can help to achieve the desired understanding. These acts are essentially peculiar in the *a priori* sense that in them an object appears sometimes directly and sometimes as a "representation by images."<sup>44</sup> Representative image itself is constituted in such an act; the prime source of its representative character is to be sought.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 595.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

Husserl says that it is an error to draw a distinction between “merely immanent” or “intentional objects” on the one side and “transcendent or actual objects” on the other side.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, it is an error to make distinction between a sign or image which is present in consciousness and the thing it stands for. It will be equally wrong to substitute some other real datum of consciousness for the immanent object. In this way, Husserl denies to accept the dichotomy of intentional object and real object. He says:

It need only be said to be acknowledged that the intentional object of a presentation is the same as its actual object, and on occasion as its external object, and that it is absurd to distinguish between them. The transcendent object would not be the object of this presentation, if it was not its intentional object.<sup>46</sup>

When the perspectival view of perception reports to have perceived the object from a perspective, it really means that while many properties of the object are illustrated in the “nuclear content of the percept,”<sup>47</sup> many others are not present in such illustrated form. They are there; the difference is that they are “subsidiarily intended,”<sup>48</sup> but in different fashion. They are symbolically suggested by what is apparent primarily, but are not themselves part of the intuitive content of the percept.

There can be many percepts of the same object, all differing in content. Husserl calls it the “phenomenological mutual belongingness”<sup>49</sup> of the manifold percepts pertaining to a single object. All these percepts portray the object differently, but despite these differences one and the same object is present in all the percepts. He says:

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp. 595–6.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 712–3.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 713–4.

In one percept the object appears from this side, in another from that side; now it appears close, now at a distance etc. In each percept, despite these differences, one and the same object is “there,” in each it is intended in the complete range of its familiar and of its perceptually present properties.<sup>50</sup>

Husserl adds, if percepts were always the actual, there could be only a single percept of each object as its genuine self-presentation.<sup>51</sup> But this is not the case. The object as it is in itself is not wholly different from the object realized, no matter how imperfectly it has been realized in the percept. It is part of a percept’s inherent sense to be the self-appearance of the object. For phenomenological purposes, Husserl assumes that ordinary perception is composed of many intentions (perceptual, imaginative, signitive), yet it, as a total act, grasps the object, even if from one aspect.<sup>52</sup>

Husserl speaks of the “purely perceptual content” in external perception. It is what remains when we abstract all purely imaginative and symbolic components: it is the “sensed content.”<sup>53</sup> This “purely perceptual sensed content” evaluates the parts and moments of external perception and as well as of the perceptual object. It imparts to its total content the character of a perceptual projection of the object.<sup>54</sup>

To the manifold percepts, there corresponds a continuous flux of fulfillment or identification.<sup>55</sup> Each individual percept is a mixture of fulfilled and unfulfilled intentions. To the fulfilled intention corresponds that part of the object which is given in an individual percept. To the unfulfilled intention corresponds that part of the object that is not yet given, which will be brought out by new percepts. Husserl says, “All such syntheses of fulfillment are marked by a common character: they are

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 714.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 713.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 714.

identifications binding self-manifestations of an object to self-manifestations of the same object.”<sup>56</sup>

In this way, the phenomenological mutual belongingness of the manifold percepts becomes an integral part of the phenomenological project of knowledge. Arguing from the empirical standpoint, we get adumbrations and do not get to the mutual belongingness of the manifold percepts. This discussion further proceeds to the conception of the horizon of experience.

### 2.3 The Horizon of Experience

Husserl’s account of horizon starts with *Ideas* and gets maturity in *Cartesian Meditations* and *Experience and Judgment*. We get different notions of horizon in his writings, such as, object-horizon, act-horizon, internal horizon, external horizon, temporal horizon, etc.

In *Ideas*, section 27, Husserl discusses about the world (as horizon) which is spread in space and time. Corporeal things of the world are simply in the world, no matter whether anybody pays attention to them or not. Besides the inanimate objects, there are animal beings also. These things, animate and inanimate, are present as realities in the potential field of intuition. It is not necessary for them to be present precisely in the field of perception of the knower, but as the knower starts to pay attention to them, they come in the immediate co-perceived surroundings. He says:

I can let my attention wander from the writing-table I have just seen and observed, through the unseen portions of the room behind my back to the verandah, into the garden, to the children in the summer-house, and so forth, to all the objects concerning which I precisely “know” that they are there and yonder in my immediate co-perceived surroundings – a knowledge which has nothing of conceptual thinking

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



in it, and first changes into clear intuiting with the bestowing of attention, and even then only partially and for the most part very imperfectly.<sup>57</sup>

But even with such an added knowledge, the world does not disclose itself completely. He adds, “The misty horizon that can never be completely outlined remains necessarily there.”<sup>58</sup>

In the same section of *Ideas*, he talks about the temporal horizon. As the world is present spatially, so it is temporally. He says, “This world now present to me, and in every waking ‘now’ obviously so, has its temporal horizon, infinite in both directions, its known and unknown, its intimately alive and its unalive past and future.”<sup>59</sup>

He says that pointing one’s attention temporally forwards and backwards, one can make intuitable to oneself the existing things in space and time. When one becomes consciously awake, he finds himself in relation to a world which through its constant changes remains one and the same. But this world is not there as the world of facts and affairs, but also as a world of values, etc. He says, “Therefore this world is not there for me as a mere world of facts and affairs, but, with the same immediacy, as a world of values, a world of goods, a practical world.”<sup>60</sup>

The things of the world are not only the things with their positive qualities, but they also have some value-characters ascribed to them, such as, beautiful or ugly, agreeable or disagreeable, pleasant or unpleasant, etc. Things exist as things to be used, for example, a glass exists as a glass to drink from, etc. Husserl says that these

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<sup>57</sup> *Ideas*, pp. 101–2.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

values and practicalities belong to the constitution of the “actually present”<sup>61</sup> objects as such, no matter one turns or not turns to consider them.

In *Ideas*, sec. 35, Husserl says that every perceived object has a background in experience. For example, if I perceive a piece of paper lying on the table, I see around it books, pencils, etc. These things are also perceived, that is to say, they are in the field of intuition. But while I turn towards the paper, I don't turn towards the other things lying on the different sides of it, so I assume that I am not apprehending them. They appear but are not singled out. “They appeared and yet were not singled out, were not posited on their own account.”<sup>62</sup> He says that every perception of a thing has such a “zone of background intuitions.”<sup>63</sup> It is such a background that makes sense to particular intuitions.

In *Ideas*, sec. 81, Husserl extends the notion of temporal horizon as he stresses the distinction between “phenomenological time” and “objective or cosmic time.” He says that after the phenomenological reduction; consciousness forfeits its setting in cosmic time. The same time which belongs to experience as such is that from which are determined “now,” “before,” “after,” “simultaneity,” “succession,” etc., but it is not to be measured by any state of the sun, by any clock or by any other physical tool, Husserl stresses that it cannot be measured at all.

He says that the term “temporality” expresses a necessary “form” which binds experiences with experiences. Every real experience belongs to one endless “stream of experience.” He says, “Every single experience can begin and end and herewith bring its duration to an end – for instance, an experience of joy. But the stream of experience cannot begin and end.”<sup>64</sup> Every experience takes place within an endless

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

continuum of durations. It becomes possible because it is constituted within a continuous flow of modes of givenness.

“Every experience, as temporal being, is an experience of its pure Ego.”<sup>65</sup> So it is quite possible that the Ego may direct its personal glance to this experience and grasp it as really enduring in phenomenological time. This mode of givenness of the temporal experience is itself an experience.

Husserl takes the example of the experience of joy. The experience of joy begins and ends and endures during the interval. He says:

The joy, for instance, which begins and ends, and during the interval endures, I can first gaze at as it is in its purity, following all its temporal phases. But I can also pay attention to its mode of declaring itself: to the modus of the actual “Now,” and to this feature also that with this very “now,” and in principle with every “now,” a new and continuously new “now” links up in necessary continuity, and that in concert with this every actual now passes into a just vanished, the just vanished once again and continuously so into ever-new just vanishings of the just vanished, and so forth.<sup>66</sup>

David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre prefer to call it “a horizon of an act.”<sup>67</sup> In section 82 of *Ideas*, Husserl presents three dimensions of temporality, namely “before,” “after,” and “at the same time” and says that they portray the stream of temporal unities of experience.

In section 83 of *Ideas*, he says that no concrete experience can pass as independent. Each concrete experience “stands in need of completion” in its reference

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>67</sup> David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, D. Reidel Publishing Co., Dordrecht, 1982, p. 237.

to some “connected whole,” which in form and in kind is not something we are free to choose, but are rather bound to accept.<sup>68</sup>

In *Cartesian Meditations*, section 19, Husserl makes the notion of horizon more explicit. He says:

Every subjective process has a process “horizon,” which changes with the alteration of the nexus of consciousness to which the process belongs and with the alteration of the process itself from phase to phase of its flow – an intentional horizon of reference to potentialities of consciousness that belong to the process itself.<sup>69</sup>

To our consciousness, many subjective processes belong and they stand in diverse relations with it. We can put remembering, thinking, judging, imagining, calculating etc., as subjective process. Taking up “remembering,” we can say that the process of remembering has a process horizon, that is to say, remembering (act) takes place in some horizon. For example, if we remember God, it has a particular horizon; if we remember a friend, it has a different horizon; if we remember the taste of the food taken last night, it has still a different horizon, and so on. Therefore, as subjective process is altered, horizon changes. Husserl takes the example of “external perception.” He says:

[T]here belongs to every external perception its reference from the “genuinely perceived” sides of the object of perception to the sides “also meant” – not yet perceived, but only anticipated and, at first, with a non-intuitional emptiness (as the sides that are “coming” now perceptually).<sup>70</sup>

In cases of external perception, there is reference to the perceived side of the object, as well as the reference to the meant side. These sides are not yet perceived

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<sup>68</sup> *Ideas*, pp. 240–1.

<sup>69</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1977, p.44.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

but are “anticipated.” For example, while perceiving the table, we have the reference to the front side of it which is being perceived now, but there is also the reference to the back side of it, which not yet perceived but is meant. These possibilities too, make up the horizon. He adds, “Furthermore, the perception has horizons made up of other possibilities of perception, as perceptions that we would have, if we actively directed the course of perception otherwise....”<sup>71</sup>

He says that perceptions have also a horizon of past, which work as a potentiality of awakenable recollections and to the recollections themselves there belongs the continuous intervening intentionality of possible recollections.<sup>72</sup> If I perceive the study-table today, I recollect that I had perceived it yesterday; this past experience is associated with some recollections which again are associated with some more possible recollections. I remember that a fly was also sitting on the left corner of the table; this recollection may arouse the recollection of my childhood days when I played and danced with the flies. I can have these recollections if I initiate in the right direction, as Husserl rightly says, “... to be actualized on my initiative, actively....”<sup>73</sup>

Summing up this discussion in *Cartesian Meditations*, he says, “The horizons are ‘predelineated’ potentialities.”<sup>74</sup> David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre suggest that the notion of ‘predelineation’ is the heart of Husserl’s definition of an act’s horizon.<sup>75</sup>

In *Experience and Judgment*, section 8, Husserl speaks of “internal” and “external” horizon. Horizon, on his account, means “induction.” He says, “... every experience of a particular thing has its internal horizon, and by ‘horizon’ is meant

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 44–5.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> David Woodruff Smith & Ronald McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, D. Reidel Publishing Co., Dordrecht, 1982, p. 247.

here the *induction* which belongs essentially to every experience and is inseparable from it, being in the experience itself.”<sup>76</sup>

Induction, according to Husserl is a mode of inference which refers back to the basic anticipation. It aims beyond the core of givenness. This aiming beyond refers to two things:

1. Anticipation of determinations pertaining to the object of experience,
2. An aiming beyond the thing itself, i.e., an aiming beyond to other objects of which we are aware at the same time, although at first they are merely in the background.

Husserl says that everything given in experience has an internal horizon as well as an external horizon of objects. He says, “These are objects towards which I am not now actually turned but toward which I can turn at any time and which I can anticipate as being different from what I now experience or as similar, according to some standard or other.”<sup>77</sup>

In every perception of an object, we become aware of some of its features, and remain incognizant of others. As for example, while perceiving the table in the room, we see its front side, its colour, etc., but do not see its bottom side and the features related. Regarding these features, there can be some anticipation of determination, such as, on the bottom side, it is so and so. This part is called internal horizon. Besides these features of the object itself, we still remain incognizant of other objects which are lying in the room, such as, a picture on the wall, a flower pot, an electric bulb, etc. These things together with the object of perception (the table itself) make up the external horizon.

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<sup>76</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgement: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe, trans. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks, Northwestern university Press, Evanston, 1973, p. 32.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Besides these different notions of horizon, Husserl speaks of ‘intersubjective horizon’ in his work *Crisis* (appendix VI), where he says that the world is the horizon of our life.<sup>78</sup> We remain conscious of it attentively or inattentively. World is the horizon of our actual and possible interests and activities. In this world, many people live who experience the world from their own perspectives. They too, have their own horizons of experience. We remain conscious of the open horizon of some of our fellow beings, while unconscious of the horizons of other people.

In this way, we discussed in this chapter that the experience of essence is a genuine kind of experience. The notion of essence plays a great role in Husserl’s philosophy. We also discussed Husserl’s treatment of adumbrations. Our discussion proceeded further to the horizon of experience. These notions can be discussed in a still more profound way in relation to intentionality which is the theme of the next chapter.

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<sup>78</sup> *Crisis*, p. 358.

## Chapter 3

# The Structure of Experience

In this chapter I shall discuss three issues; those are intentionality, phases of experience and evidence. In Husserl's philosophy, the operative term for experience is consciousness. Husserl has discussed three concepts of consciousness in the Vth investigation of *Logical Investigation*. In this work, we do not find the concept of consciousness in a developed form; here he has contemplated on some basic considerations on intentionality. In the first section of this chapter I shall discuss the development of the concept of intentionality as propounded in the Vth investigation of *Logical Investigations*. We find the developed concept of intentionality in his work *Ideas* where he has elaborated this concept systematically in terms of hyle, noesis and noema. In the second section of this chapter I shall discuss this development. In the third section, I shall discuss the concept of experience as Evidenz. Evidenz is the German word for evidence. Husserl calls it self-evidence sometimes. The consideration for evidence has begun in the Appendix to the VIth investigation of *Logical Investigations*, where he has discussed the origin and importance of this concept in philosophy. This concept has been further developed in *Ideas* and *Cartesian Meditations*. I shall try to discuss this development.

### 3.1 Preliminary Considerations on Intentionality

In the Vth *Logical Investigations*, section 1, Husserl discusses three concepts of consciousness, namely

1. Consciousness as the entire, real (*reelle*) phenomenological being of the empirical ego, as the interweaving of psychic experiences in the unified stream of consciousness.



2. Consciousness as the inner awareness of one's own psychic experiences.
3. Consciousness as a comprehensive designation for 'mental acts' or 'intentional experiences', of all sorts.<sup>1</sup>

The first conception of consciousness derives its inspiration from the psychologists like Wundt. Husserl says that modern psychologist defines his science as the science of conscious experience of experiencing individuals. Modern psychologist regards conscious experience and conscious content as real occurrences. By experience or contents of consciousness, he understands percepts, imaginative and pictorial presentations, acts of conceptual thinking, surmises, doubts, joys, griefs, hopes, fears, wishes, acts of will, etc. He believes that these real occurrences unified in the stream of consciousness compose the real unity of consciousness of the individual mind.

Husserl critiques this theory. He says that the modern psychologist ignores two distinctions, which are:

1. Distinction between the sense aspect and the external object or its features
2. Distinction between the sense aspect of experience and the full perceptual appearing of the sense aspect<sup>2</sup>

Husserl says that the modern psychologist takes the sense aspect and the external object as similar things, and maintains that their difference depends only on the mode of treatment. Psychologically speaking, we get a sensation; physically speaking, we get an external object. Husserl says that it is phenomenologically false.<sup>3</sup> Husserl treats these two as distinct entities. He says that our experience of external things has twofold conscious content: the sense aspect and the full perceptual

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J.N. Findlay, Vol. 2, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1970, p. 535.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 537–8.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 538.

appearing of the sense aspect. When we perceive an object, we get some sense content which corresponds to the object of perception. Our sense content receives an “objectifying interpretation,”<sup>4</sup> and thereby we get to know the thing. Modern psychologist could not make this distinction.

Second concept of consciousness treats consciousness as the inner awareness of one’s own psychic experiences. Husserl accepts that this conception is more primitive and it has an intrinsic priority. He elucidates this concept as thus: “This is that ‘inner perception’ thought to accompany actually present experiences, whether in general or in certain classes of cases, and to relate to them as objects.”<sup>5</sup>

This expression suggests that there are two experiences: “inner perception,” and “actually present experiences;” and that the latter is related to the former as its object. The term “actually present experiences” is highly ambiguous. It can be traced in the two possible situations for the inner perception, which are:

1. Its object is not intuitively presented
2. Its object is intuitively presented and posited as object<sup>6</sup>

Perception is characterized with the peculiarity of grasping its object. It achieves adequacy if the object in it is itself actually present in *propria persona*. This object, therefore, becomes a real factor of perceiving. In this way adequacy is attributed to the inner perception.

Husserl says that this concept posits the distinction of inner and outer perception; this distinction is epistemologically confused and psychologically

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 537.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 542.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

misused.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the expression “inner experience” is highly ambiguous; Husserl needs different terms for inner perception.

Husserl says that thinkers like Brentano posit a close connection between the two concepts of consciousness, because they think that they may regard the consciousness in both the senses together without any absurdity.

The third concept treats consciousness as intentional experiences. This view has been laid down by Franz Brentano. Brentano made a distinction between physical and psychical phenomena and maintained that only psychical phenomena can be characterized as intentional. Husserl presents Brentano’s views as thus:

In perception something is perceived, in imagination something imagined, in a statement something stated, in love something loved, in hate hated, in desire desired, etc. Brentano looks to what is graspingly common to such instances, and says that ‘every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the medieval schoolmen called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object’, and by what we, not without ambiguity, call the relation to content, the direction to an object (by which a reality is not to be understood) or an immanent objectivity. Each mental phenomenon contains something as object in itself, though not all in the same manner.<sup>8</sup>

Husserl says that what is important for him in the Brentano’s treatment of psychical phenomena is that it provides essential specific differences of intentional relation. Each psychic phenomenon is different from other psychic phenomenon. Perception, judgment, hope, fear, etc., are of different kinds. The manner in which a mere presentation refers to an object differs from the manner of a judgment, which treats the same state of affairs as true or false. The manner of surmise, doubt, hope, fear, approval, disapproval, desire, aversion, etc are quite different.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 543.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 554.

Husserl says that most acts are complex experiences; they involve multiple intentions.<sup>9</sup> As for example, “emotional intentions” are built upon presentative and judging intentions, etc. To resolve such complexes is to come down on some primitive intentional characters whose descriptive essence makes impossible its reduction into other types of experiences. There are different species and sub-species of intention. So, we cannot reduce all differences in acts into differences in the presentations or judgments they involve.

He maintains that all experiences are not intentional. This is proved by sensations and sensation complexes. He says, “Any piece of a sensed visual field, full as it is of visual contents, is an experience containing many part-contents, which are neither referred to, nor intentionally objective, in the whole.”<sup>10</sup>

Brentano says about mental phenomena that “they are either presentations or founded upon presentations.”<sup>11</sup> Brentano said that we cannot judge unless there is something to be judged; we cannot desire unless there is something to be desired; we cannot hope if there is nothing to be hoped and so forth. Husserl says that this characterization does not seem to be a suitable starting point for his researches, because it presupposes a concept of “presentation,” which according to Husserl has yet to be worked out.<sup>12</sup>

Brentano treated each intentional experience as a phenomenon.<sup>13</sup> Husserl says that the term “phenomenon” involves dangerous ambiguities and as a result of which it suggests some doubtful theoretical persuasion. According to Husserl, “psychical phenomena” can be a justifiable term in the Brentano’s framework in so far as it refers to the psychological field of research as compared and contrasted to the “physical phenomena,” but Husserl adds, “phenomenon” in its dominant use, which is

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 555.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 556.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 557.

also Brentano's, means "an appearing object as such," this implies that each intentional experience is not only directed upon objects, but is itself the object of certain intentional experiences.<sup>14</sup>

Brentano characterized psychical phenomena with intentional "in-existence" of an object. "... every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the medieval schoolmen called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object...."<sup>15</sup> This notion has given rise to serious misunderstandings. Some scholars have interpreted the syllable "in" occurring in the term "in-existence" as locative and say that it only locates the intentional object in the consciousness itself. This term gives rise to the view that the real object existing in space and time is irrelevant for the intentionality, because its inexistence in the consciousness is just enough for the intentional purpose. In this way, it becomes quite difficult to distinguish the perception of a Pegasus from the perception of a tree existing in the garden.

Husserl says that it is quite misleading and questionable to say that the perceived, imagined, asserted, or desired objects etc. "enter consciousness," or to say conversely that consciousness enters into this or that sort of relation to them.<sup>16</sup> He says that these expressions promote two misunderstandings which can be stated thus:

1. We are dealing with a real event or a real relationship, taking place between "consciousness" or "the ego," on the one hand, and the "thing" of which there is consciousness on the other.
2. We are dealing with a relation between two things, both present in equally real fashion in consciousness, an act and an intentional object.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 554.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 557.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Regarding the first misunderstanding, he says that here we come to the view of ego or consciousness as a “relational centre.” He says that if we simply live in the act in question, as, in some play of fancy, in reading a story, in carrying out a mathematical proof, etc., the ego as relational centre of our performances becomes quite elusive.<sup>18</sup> From an objective standpoint, it is quite clear that in each act, the ego is intentionally directed to some object.

He adds that the expressions “The ego represents an object to itself,” “The ego refers presentatively to an object,” “The ego has something as an intentional object of its presentation” mean the same as “In the phenomenological ego, a concrete complex of experiences, a certain experience said, in virtue of its specific nature, to be a presentation of an object x, is really present.” So the sentence “The ego judges about the object” means the same as “Such and such an experience of judging is present in the ego.”<sup>19</sup>

Husserl’s point of stress is that in our description “relation to an experiencing ego” is necessary and indispensable, but the “ego-presentation” is not a part of the experiential complex. It appears as a part only in our description which involves some act of reflection. Therefore, we must avoid this misunderstanding.

Regarding the second misunderstanding, he says that intentional experiences have the peculiarity of directing themselves towards the presented objects, but they do so in an intentional sense. An object is “aimed at” or “referred to” in them. This simply means that certain experiences are present which are intentional in character. There are not two things present in experience. We do not experience the object and beside it the intentional experience directed upon it. There are not even two things present in the sense of part and whole. He says with emphasis that only one thing is present, i.e. the intentional experience. This alone constitutes the full presentation,

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 561.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

judgment, etc of this object. If this experience is present through its own essence, the intentional relation to an object is achieved.<sup>20</sup>

After this critical discussion, Husserl wants to fix his own terminology. He proposes to avoid the term “psychical phenomenon” and wants to retain the term “intentional experiences.” He says, “The qualifying adjective ‘intentional’ names the essence common to the class of experiences we wish to mark off, the peculiarity of intending, of referring to what is objective, in a presentative or other analogous fashion.”<sup>21</sup>

He examines the ground of the distinction between the “intentional” and the “non-intentional experience.” He says that the ground of making a difference between the two may be thought of an external one, so that the same experience(s) of the same phenomenal class, may at times have an intentional relation to an object, and at times have none. He says that the debate has been centered chiefly in the phenomena from the sphere of feeling. Husserl raises the question of the possibility of intentional feelings.<sup>22</sup>

He says that many experiences, classed as feelings have a relation to something objective. When we are pleased by a melody, displeased at a shrill blast, etc., then it seems obvious that every joy or sorrow is a directed act. Critics say that feelings are mere states, not acts or intentions. Where they relate to objects, they owe their relation to a complication with presentations.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 558–9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 562.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 569.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 570.

At this point Husserl posits Brentano's views and says, Brentano maintained that feelings have presentations as their foundation.<sup>24</sup> Brentano saw here two intentions built on one another –

1. Founding intention and
2. Founded intention<sup>25</sup>

Founding intention gives the presented object, whereas founded intention gives the felt object. He emphatically maintained that the former is separable from the latter, while the latter is inseparable from the former. Founded intention is based on the founding intention. Similarly, felt object is based on the presented object. Critics think that only one intention is involved here and that is the presenting one.

Husserl supports the view of Brentano on this issue. He says: “whether we turn with pleasure to something, or whether its unpleasantness repels us, an object is presented. But we do not merely have a presentation, with an added feeling associatively tacked on to it, and not intrinsically related to it, but pleasure or distaste direct themselves to the presented object, and could not exist without such a direction.”<sup>26</sup>

He says that if two psychological experiences are associated in an objective psychological sense, there is a phenomenologically discernible type of associative unity among the reproduced experiences therein. Together with the intentional relation, which each act has to its object, there is also a phenomenological mode of connection. As for example, the idea of “Naples” carries with it the idea of “Vesuvius,” here, the one reminds the other.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 571.



Husserl says that although such a phenomenologically associative relation is extrinsic, but it has not to be put on a level with the relation of the pleasure to the pleasant. In the above case, presentation is quite possible without the reproduction. But pleasure without anything pleasant is unthinkable.

Again, this is not the case of correlative expressions, such as, “cause-effect,” “father-child,” in which one is unthinkable without the other. He says that the specific essence of pleasure demands a relation to something pleasing. Similarly, desire, agreement, approval, etc., are all intentions and so they are genuine acts. They stand in the intentional relation to the concerned presentation. In this way Husserl maintains that the relation between the founding presentation and the founded act is not the causal but the intentional relation. He adds:

We are not dealing with an external causal relation where the effect conceivably could be what it intrinsically is without the cause, or where the cause brings something forth that could have existed independently ... Closure consideration shows it to be absurd in principle, here or in like cases, to treat an intentional as a causal relation, to give it the sense of an empirical; substantial-causal case of necessary connection.<sup>28</sup>

He discusses the difference between the “real” and the “intentional” content of an act. He says, “By the real phenomenological content of an act we mean the sum total of its concrete or abstract parts, in other words, the sum total of the partial experiences that really constitute it.”<sup>29</sup> He says that it is the task of pure descriptive psychological analysis to describe such parts. Such an analysis operates from the empirical, naturalistic point of view. This analysis tries to chop into pieces what is really given in experience. It does not search for their generic connections or their meanings.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 571–2.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 576.

He offers the example of “an articulated sound-pattern.” A purely descriptive psychological analysis of it finds only sounds and unifying forms of sounds. It does not find any sound-vibrations or organs of hearing, etc. It does not find anything that resembles the ideal sense that makes the sound-pattern a name, or the person to whom the name may apply.<sup>30</sup> Husserl does not make clear the complete meaning of real content at this place.

He then makes a move from the natural-scientific to an ideal-scientific or phenomenological standpoint.<sup>31</sup> This approach excludes all empirical interpretations and existential affirmations.<sup>32</sup> Here, what is inwardly experienced as pure experience is taken into account. This standpoint takes intentional content as the object of its study.

He says that three concepts are involved in the intentional content, those are:

1. The intentional object of the act
2. The intentional material
3. The intentional essence<sup>33</sup>

Intentional content concerns first of all the intentional object. Intentional content may be an objective thing, e.g., a house when a house is presented or it may be our own present experiences. The intentional object differs completely from the real object of the act. Husserl’s preliminary analysis of intentional object comes across the distinction between “the object as it is intended” and “the object which is intended.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 576–7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 577.

<sup>32</sup> Empirical interpretation operates from the naturalistic point of view; existential affirmation explains something as existent or non-existent.

<sup>33</sup> *Logical Investigations*, p. 578.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

In an intentional act, an object may be determined in a number of ways. It can be perceived, judged, desired, etc., that is to say, perceptual, judgmental, emotional intentions may be directed towards it. These acts disclose some features of the object, but yet other many more properties may be hidden. Therefore, its intentional unity may admit of new presentations which may present new features of the object. Husserl says, "In all of them the object which we intend is the same, but in each our intention differs, each means the object in a different way."<sup>35</sup> He takes up the example of "the idea of the German Emperor." This idea may present its object in a number of ways, such as, it may be:

1. The Emperor of Germany
2. The son of the Emperor Fredrick III
3. The grandson of Queen Victoria, etc.

In these expressions, the same idea has been presented in three ways. We can utter these expressions because these are based on the presentations which we have got. In these expressions, we describe the intentional content of the object. It is called intentional because we are conscious of it. There can be many more ways to express this idea. We cannot express those because we have not got the related presentations. The determinations which might be made on the basis of these are "extra-intentional."

In this way we can speak of "intentional" and "extra-intentional" content of the object of the same presentation.<sup>36</sup> The extra-intentional content comes within the intentional unity with the broadening of the outlook. He makes yet another distinction in this regard, i.e. between: (1) The objective reference of the act, taken in its entirety, and (2) The objects to which its various partial, constituent acts refer.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 579.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

Any intentional act, simple or complex, Husserl says, has its own appropriate, intentional objective reference. He says, “Whatever the composition of an act out of partial acts may be, if it is an act at all, it must have a single objective correlate, to which we say it is ‘directed’, in the full, primary sense of the word.”<sup>38</sup> The partial acts involved in the act as a whole refer to objects, which may not be the same as the object of the whole act. But it is true that each object referred by the partial act is intended by it. So, as much as this partial act intends its object, becomes the termination-point for the whole act in relation to this partial act. Partial acts help the whole act in intending the whole object. Husserl says that these partial acts function as terms of relations in which the primary object is seen as a correlated term.

He takes up the example of the act corresponding to the name “the knife on the table.”<sup>39</sup> This is a complex act; and admits some partial acts. The object of the one partial act may be the table; the object of other partial act may be the knife, and so on. But the object of the whole act is “the knife on the table.” Here, the primary sense “the knife on the table” is the intentional object, but in a secondary sense, its intentional object may be the table or the knife, and so forth.

Further, if we subject the phrase “the knife on the table” to judgment, in this connection, we will find that the real knife on the table no longer remains the full object, but the judged state-of-affairs, i.e. “the knife on the table” becomes the full intended object. We can elaborate this idea to other intentional acts. In wish, we do not wish the knife, but that the knife should be on the table. In questioning, doubting, etc., we find the intentional object in a sense proper to the act. So the object of intention undergoes changes in cases of desire, doubt, etc., although the same state of affairs is presented in a presentation, wished in a wish, doubted in a doubt.

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp. 579–80.

Next to this consideration, he makes a distinction between “the quality” and “the matter” of an act. He says, “Content in the sense of ‘matter’ is a component of the concrete act-experience, which it may share with acts of quite different quality.”<sup>40</sup>

If we set up a series of identical utterances, we will come to know that the act-qualities change, while the matter remains identical. In presentation, judgment, question, doubt, wish, etc., the same content (matter) may be present. He illustrates three utterances in this connection:

1. There are intelligent beings on Mars. (Presentation)
2. Are there intelligent beings on Mars? (Question)
3. If only there are intelligent beings on Mars! (Wish)<sup>41</sup>

These utterances are alike in matter, but differ in act-quality. The same matter “intelligent beings on Mars” is present in all three utterances, but the first utterance is a presentation, second is a question, and the third is a wish.

By matter, Husserl means that part of the act which gives it direction to a particular object and not to other.<sup>42</sup> Quality characterizes the character of the act, it determines whether what is already presented is intentionally present as wished, asked, posited in judgment, etc.<sup>43</sup> He maintains that the act-quality is an abstract part of the act.

Our consideration of the matter and the quality of acts leads us to the standpoint that in an act’s descriptive content, quality and matter are two mutually dependent aspects. Keeping in view our research carried out so far, it seems plausible to say that if quality and matter are taken together, the act can be reconstituted. But

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 586.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 586–7.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 588.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 589.

there is a third concept involved herewith which is quite necessary for an act to be a complete act. This is “intentional essence.”

Husserl at first maintains that the intentional essence is the unity of quality and matter. He says, “In our ‘essence’ we really have the same presentation despite other phenomenological differences. Such essential identity comes out most clearly when we reflect how presentations function in forming higher acts.”<sup>44</sup> His view on this issue is not very clear. He relates the “intentional essence” to the “similarity of statements” made by the same person at different occasions in reference to the same presentation or to the similarity of statements made by different persons on one or more occasions with reference to the same presentation. He says that the intentional identity can be defined by this statement:

Two presentations are in essence the same, if exactly the same statements, and no others, can be made on the basis of either regarding the presented things (either presentation being taken alone, i.e., analytically).<sup>45</sup>

These are the main issues which have been discussed in the Vth *Logical Investigations*. Husserl’s treatment of these issues is very obscure. The ideas discussed in this section can be regarded as the precursor of his developed theory of intentional experience carried out in his work *Ideas* which I shall discuss in the next section. The discussion carried out in this section can be summarized in the following essential considerations:

Husserl maintains the distinction between the sense aspect of experience and the full perceptual appearing of the sense aspect. Together with that he maintains the distinction between the sense aspect and the external object or its features. He considers each intentional experience as a peculiar intentional experience which cannot be reduced in other intentional experiences. He maintains that each experience

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 591.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

is not intentional. He considers the term “intentional in-existence” a misleading expression. He maintains that the relation between the intentional act and the intentional object is not a causal but an intentional relation. Intentional content comprises three concepts – intentional object, intentional material, and the intentional essence. He distinguishes between the quality and the matter of an act.

### **3.2 Elucidation of Intentional Experience in terms of Hyle, Noesis and Noema**

We find Husserl’s developed concept of intentionality in *Ideas*. Here Husserl discusses it in terms of hyle, noesis, and noema. These three can be treated as the three phases of intentional experience. In *Ideas*, Husserl treats hyle as the sensory content, noesis as the meaning giving stratum and noema as the meaning. Husserl finds the solution of the problem of intentional inexistence in the notions of hyle, noesis and noema. The following discussion is intended to trace the development and application of these notions in Husserl’s theory of intentionality carried out in *Ideas*.

In *Ideas* sec 85, Husserl proposes a distinction between:

1. The Primary contents of experience , and
2. The Phases of experience which are bearers of the specific quality of intentionality<sup>46</sup>

Primary contents of experience, on his account, are unitary sensible experiences or “sensory contents,” such as, the data of colour, touch, sound, etc. He calls these “the concrete data of experience,” and says that these are found in the whole of experience as its component.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1969, p. 246, henceforth *Ideas*.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 246–7.

He takes the precaution of not confusing these with the appearing phases of things, their colour-quality, roughness, etc. In our previous discussion in the first section of this chapter, we saw that Husserl makes a distinction between the sense aspect of the experience and the external object or its features. He maintains this distinction here in *Ideas*.

Over these sensile phases, he says, lies an animating, meaning-bestowing stratum through which the concrete intentional experience takes its form and shape. The sensile elements are non-intentional; they do not contain anything intentional in them. This meaning-bestowing stratum makes them integral and indispensable part of the intentional experience. The concrete intentional experience takes its shape out of the sensile elements through the agency of the meaning-bestowing stratum.<sup>48</sup>

In section 85 of the *Ideas*, Husserl seems to suggest the sensile-part as the “matter” and the intentional-part as the “form” of the experience. Sensory-data function as the material for the bestowal of meaning in the intentional experience at different levels and the meaning-bestowing stratum operates on these data. Intentional experience, involving these sensory-part and animating-part, becomes a “unity” through the bestowal of meaning.

After this primary consideration, he says that the expressions “primary content” and “sensory experience” does not seem appropriate to him, because he thinks that the customary usages of these terms render that not only the material experiences are described as sensory but intentional experiences too are described as sensory. Moreover, he is aware that “mere sensory experiences” and “pure sensory experiences,” these expressions give rise to ambiguities. The term “sensory” itself is a highly ambiguous term. Sensibility, on the one hand, indicates the phenomenological residuum of the object which is mediated through the senses in our normal outer

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



perception, and on the other hand, it includes feelings and impulses which have their own generic unity.

Owing to these ambiguities, he proposes new terms viz. *hyletic* or *material data* or *materials* to designate this group. He says:

Thus at all events, we need a new term which shall express the whole group through its unity of function and its contrast with the formative characters, and we choose for this purpose the expression *hyletic* or *material data*, also plainly and simply *materials* (*stoffe*).<sup>49</sup>

Ambiguity lies also on the other side. He says that the animating part which brings these materials into the intentional experience has been designated under the rubric of “awareness” or “phases of consciousness.” These terms have become ambiguous through repeated equivocations. To overcome these ambiguities, he proposes the term *noetic phase* or *noesis*. He says that these noeses constitute the specifications of *Nous*. *Nous* is a Greek word which is translated as “mind” or “intellect.”<sup>50</sup> He says:

... the word “*Nous*” in one of its outstanding meanings recalls the word [“meaning” or] “sense” (*sinn*), although the “bestowal of sense” which takes place in the noetic phases includes a variety of things, and only as its basis a “sense-bestowal” as adjunct to the pregnant concept of sense (*sinn*).<sup>51</sup>

He says that there can be good grounds for referring to this noetic phase of experience as the psychological. Interpretation of intentionality in terms of psychological phenomena (as opposed to the physical phenomena) can strengthen this view. He says that this tendency has found its expression in the Brentano’s separation of the psychological from the physical phenomena. But due to this separation, says Husserl,

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>50</sup> Edward Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 7, Routledge, London & New York, 1998, p. 43.

<sup>51</sup> *Ideas*, p. 249.

Brentano failed to separate the empirical domain of psychology from the domain of the physical sciences, which was his prime goal. He says:

... Brentano did not indeed find the concept of the material phase, and for this reason, that he took no account of the separation on grounds of principle of the “physical phenomena” as material phases (sensory data) from the “physical phenomena” as the objective phases that appear in the noetic apprehension of the former....<sup>52</sup>

Brentano identified “psychical” with “intentional,” which in Husserl’s opinion, does not embody the specific mark of intentionality. This is why, he proposes to use the terms hyle and noesis. He says, “We therefore hold to the word noetic, and say: The stream of phenomenological being has a twofold bed: a material and a noetic.”<sup>53</sup>

He says that the phenomenological reflections and analyses concerning the material may be called “hyletically phenomenological,” and those that relate to the noetic phases may be called “noetically phenomenological,” and suggests that the noetic side is pregnant with more fruitful analyses.<sup>54</sup>

He says that although the peculiarity of intentionality as “consciousness of something” can be easily indicated, but it is quite difficult to grasp the phenomenological peculiarities of the corresponding essence. “Consciousness of something” gives the impression of the direction towards something, but it does not say more than this. He says, “... no headway is made by simply seeing and saying that every presenting refers to presented, every judgment to something judged, and so forth ....”<sup>55</sup> As his researches go forth, he comes across the distinction between:

1. The proper components of the intentional experiences, and

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 249–50.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 255.

## 2. Their intentional correlates<sup>56</sup>

He says that his preliminary eidetic enquiry (carried out in *Ideas*, section 41) revealed this distinction and helped him to make the transition from the natural standpoint to the phenomenological. But he feels that having made an advance in his thinking up to the section 88 of *Ideas*, he needs to distinguish the parts and phases of experience which he finds through a real analysis of experience, so that he can treat the experience as an object like any other. Intentional experience is the consciousness of something, so what can be said on essential lines about this “of something,” he asks.

He says that the progress carried out on essential lines comes forthwith to the meaning-bestowing strata of consciousness, i.e. noesis. When we say that consciousness is “consciousness of something,” we mean thereby that it is its essential nature to conceal “meaning” within itself. Consciousness, according to him, is not a title-name for “physical complexes,” fused “contents,” “bundles,” or “stream of sensations.” These terms are meaningless in themselves; they cannot render meaning to themselves. It is only the noetic phase that furnishes meaning to what is given in consciousness. He says:

Every intentional experience, thanks to its noetic phase, is noetic, it is its essential nature to harbour in itself a “meaning” of some sort, it may be many meanings, and on the ground of this gift of meaning, and in harmony therewith, to develop further phases which through it become themselves meaningful.<sup>57</sup>

Noetic phase includes in itself the directing of the glance of the pure ego upon the object intended by it. This glance may shift to other objects, but even after the shift of glance, it grasps the object. By virtue of its gift of meaning, it intends the

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

object as “something meant.” It relates the various features of experience and brings out the unity inherent therein.

Now he introduces the notion of noema, which is the central notion in Husserl’s phenomenology. The “noematic content” or “noema” is correlative to the real noetic content and is liable to display a variety of data in really pure intuition corresponding to the manifold data of the real noetic content. He says:

Corresponding at all points to the manifold data of the real (*reellen*) noetic content, there is a variety of data displayable in really pure (*wirklich reiner*) intuition, and in a correlative “noematic content” or briefly “noema”....<sup>58</sup>

He takes up the cases of perception, recollection, judging, and pleasure, and says that each of them has its own noema. As for example, taking up perception, he says, perception has its own noema, and on the basis of its noema, it has its perceptual meaning “the perceived as such.” Similarly, recollection has its own noema, and thereby its own “remembered as such” precisely as it is meant in it; judging has its own noema and on the basis of it, it has its own “the judged as such;” pleasure has its own “the pleasing as such” on the basis of the noema it has.

He says that we must take the noematic correlate everywhere which is referred to as “meaning” (*sinn*), precisely as it lies immanent in the experience of perception, judgment, pleasure, etc. If the experience is questioned in its pure form, the noema is found therein.

He takes up the example of the perception of a “blossoming apple-tree” as an illustrative analysis to make his point clear. He says, “Let us suppose that we are looking with pleasure in a garden at a blossoming apple-tree, at the fresh young green

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

of the lawn, and so forth.”<sup>59</sup> He analyses this event from two standpoints, viz. the natural and the phenomenological standpoint.

From the natural standpoint, he says, the apple-tree exists in the transcendent reality of space. The term transcendent here means external to consciousness, that is to say, the apple tree exists external to our consciousness. The perception as well as the pleasure is a psychical state, which, as a real human being, we enjoy. Between the real man or the real perception on the one hand, and the real apple tree on the other, there subsists a real relation. That is to say, the real man stands in a real relation to the real apple-tree. Husserl says that in certain cases, it may be the case that the perception is a mere hallucination and consequently, the perceived apple-tree does not exist in the real objective world. So the objective relation presumed earlier gets disturbed. Understood in such a way, he asks, what remains in such a haphazardous situation? He himself answers that only perception remains in such a situation.

Now he turns to the phenomenological standpoint. Phenomenological standpoint practices “bracketing” in this regard, so that the transcendent world enters into brackets and together with that, the real subsistence of the objective relation between perception and perceived is also suspended. But despite this all round suspension, he says, a relation between perception and perceived remains. This relation is of some different kind. This is a relation, which in its essential nature, comes before us in “pure immanence.” Husserl calls it a “pure phenomenological situation.”<sup>60</sup> Here hallucinations, illusions and deceptive perceptions of every kind fall away before the phenomenological suspension. Here we do not need to ask that whether our experience corresponds to the real world or not. The posited reality does not stand there for us but everything remains in a modified form. He says, “Even the phenomenologically reduced perceptual experience is a perception of ‘this apple-tree

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

in bloom, in this garden, and so forth', and likewise the reduced pleasure, a pleasure in what is thus perceived."<sup>61</sup>

Reduction brings a radical modification of meaning. In the reduced perception, we find "perceived as such," i.e., the material thing, plant, tree, blossoming, and so forth as such, e.g., "material thing as such," "plant as such," etc. Husserl emphasizes the inverted comma and says that they express the radical modification of the meaning of the words.<sup>62</sup> The tree as a thing in nature is different from this "perceived tree as such." This "perceived tree as such" belongs inseparably to the perception as its perceptual meaning. He says:

The tree plain and simple can burn away, resolve itself into its chemical elements, and so forth. But the meaning – the meaning of this perception, something that belongs necessarily to its essence – cannot burn away; it has no chemical elements, no forces, no real properties.<sup>63</sup>

Through such noematic analyses he finds the fundamental mark of intentionality in its having its intentional object. Every intentional experience has its intentional object. This intentional object is the objective meaning of the intentional experience. He says, "To have a meaning, or to have something 'in mind', is the cardinal feature of all consciousness, that on account of which it is not only experience generally but meaningful, 'noetic'."<sup>64</sup>

But only meaning or sense does not make up the full noema and noesis. Husserl says that the full noema consists in a nexus of noematic phases, and the sense-phase supplies only a kind of necessary "nucleatic layer" in which further phases are essentially grounded.<sup>65</sup> He says that the intentional experience is organized

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 260–1.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 261–2.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 262.

through the nucleatic layer of the noema in such a way that given a suitable viewpoint, a sense can be extracted from it.

In the light of the noematic analysis which renders the intended object, he once again discusses the distinction between the real and the immanent object. He says that an easy solution lies on the scholastic side that intentional object is given in the experience with the intention; this intentional object lives within the experience, whereas the real object exists in the reality. He says that if we accept this solution then we are puzzled by the difficulty that the two realities must confront each other somehow or other. In this way we will be dealing with the problem of correspondence which may mislead our enquiry. Moreover, if we conceive the tree in the garden as the real object of perception, and an immanent tree or an inner image of the real tree as the immanent object of perception, then we will fall into absurdity, because then the “copy” as a real element in the psychologically-real-perception would again function as a reality for another image. This “representational form of consciousness” would furnish first intentionality, second intentionality and so on. This would lead us to the fallacy of infinite regress. He says, “... in ascribing a representative function to perception, and consequently to every intentional experience, we unavoidably bring an endless regress....”<sup>66</sup>

To avoid such errors, he says, we must abide by what is given in pure experience just as it comes to us. He says, “The ‘real’ object is then to be ‘bracketed’.”<sup>67</sup> As we carry out the phenomenological reduction, every transcendent setting receives its suspending bracket. With this suspension, all the values, judgments attached to it are simultaneously bracketed. Now, if anything in them or in relation to them is presented as self-evident, says Husserl, we will establish it, and during the whole course we will not make any judgment. He says, “But we allow no judgment that makes any use of the affirmation that posits a ‘real’ thing or

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

‘transcendent’ nature as a whole, or ‘co-operates’ in setting up these positions. As phenomenologists we avoid all such affirmations.”<sup>68</sup> He says that the bracketed matter is still there and belongs essentially to the phenomenon as its integral part. After this modification, there lies “the perceived as such” together with its noematic meaning – “this tree blossoming out there in space.” The inverted comma signifies that which belong to the essence of the phenomenologically reduced perception. He says, “We must now see to it with scrupulous minuteness that we do not put into the experience anything which is not really included in the essence....”<sup>69</sup>

After reduction, in memory, we find “the remembered as such;” in expectation, “the expected as such;” in imaginative fancy, “the fancied as such.” A noematic meaning dwells in each of these experiences and a central nucleus is attached with the noema, which differs in kind when the experiences differ in kind. The noematic correlates may be essentially different for perception, fancy, imaginative presentation, memory and so forth. When we tend to describe these noematic correlates, then “... we must never collect such data in a haphazard way, but grasp together characters that conform to certain essential laws, and fix their import with conceptual strictness.”<sup>70</sup> Husserl does not say anything more about these laws, namely what are these laws and how are they constructed.

He says that in the complete noema, there are certain strata, which group themselves about a central nucleus. He calls the central nucleus the “sheer objective meaning.”<sup>71</sup> This central nucleus can be described in purely identical objective terms, because there can be an identical element in experiences which are different but parallel. Here Husserl takes a somewhat different approach and says that if we set aside the previously enacted bracket, we will find that there lie different concepts of unmodified objectivities, but the same *object simpliciter* is present as it was before the

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.



bracketing. As for example, suppose we perceive a tree and then represent it as so-and-so, and then make a sketch of it. After the bracketing, we get “the tree as such,” but if we look back previous to the bracketing, we will find that the same tree which is the object simpliciter is present as an identical element in all these experiencing processes.

Husserl says that in the higher sphere of consciousness, a number of noses are built up, one over the other within the unity of a concrete experience which tend towards noemata in accordance with the law of essence, which provides that “... no noetic phase without a noematic phase that belongs specifically to it.”<sup>72</sup>

Perceptual experience gets its essence in noema. A single perception can include in itself many modifications. In the sensory perception of a tree, we see it at one moment as motionless, at another moment as swinging with the wind; now if we shift our spatial position then it will appear differently; if we change the position of our head or eyes it will seem still different.

Husserl says that observing from the natural standpoint, we attribute these modifications to the real object (tree) as its changes, or we attribute these to our own psychophysical subjectivity. But phenomenologically speaking, we have to describe what remains as phenomenological residuum when the reduction is practiced on the pure immanence and what should be counted as a real integral part of the pure experience. It has to be considered that the noema or “the perceived tree as such” is not affected by the suspending of the reality of the tree and of the world.

The colour of the tree-trunk is precisely the same as it was before the phenomenological reduction. But after the reduction, the colour as a bracketed phenomenon belongs to the noema. We find in the experience of the tree a colour-like something, its hyletic phase, but “the bracketed colour as such” does not belong now

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

to the perceptual experience as a real integral part of it, rather it belongs to the noema and the noematic colour manifests itself in varying perspectives.

In perspective variations, one and the same noematic colour gets manifested and remains unchanged within the unity of a continuously changing perceptual consciousness. Thus we see the tree as having the same colour and other characteristics, no matter the relative orientations e.g., the stir made by the wind, our moving of eyes and head affect the flow of perceptual experience in what a great extent.

Husserl considers the perspective-variation as self-evident data. He says that the perspective colour-variations which belong to some fixed colour of a thing are related to that fixed colour as continuous “variety” is related to “unity.”<sup>73</sup> He says that the unity and the variety belong to different dimensions. The hyletic element has its place in the concrete experience as its real integral part, whereas that which exhibits itself in variety has its place in the noema.

The material elements are animated through noetic phases. When the ego does not turn to them but to the object, the material elements undergo formal shaping and they get the “gifts of meaning.” We grasp it in the reflection upon the material elements. Then it immediately follows that the hyletic phases and the animating apprehensions belong to the real constitution of the experience. The noetic components can be indicated only by falling back to the noematic object and its phases.

We become aware of the hyle, noesis and noema within a same unity. But the real experiential unity of hyletic and noetic factors is totally different from the unity of the factors of the noema. As we perceive something, the noetic factor starts its meaning-conferring activity and thus hyle and noesis make a unity. But noema with

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 284.

its noematic unity belongs to the residue left only after the reduction, and with these we become aware of the mode in which what is real is specifically given in consciousness. Noema can be considered on its own account; it can be compared with other noema and can be studied in respect of its possible transformations.

He says that if we can find in the phenomenological reduction an absolute sphere of materials and noetic forms nicely articulated in accord with an immanent essential necessity, only then we can refer to the pure sphere of experience as “transcendental.” Here lies the only conceivable solution of the deepest problems of knowledge affecting the essential nature and the possibility of objectively valid knowledge of the transcendent.<sup>74</sup> After the reduction noema with its noematic unity belongs to the residue left and with these we become aware of the mode in which what is real is specifically given in consciousness.

Husserl says that consciousness must count as an independent region of being. But consciousness cannot be described without reference to the object intended in it. The description of consciousness leads back to the corresponding description of the object consciously known by it. He says that while the object simpliciter stands under radically different summa genera, all meanings of objects and all noemata belong intrinsically to a single supreme genus. But it is also true that the essences: noema and noesis are mutually inseparable. Intentional experience is said to have “objective reference,” or it is said that “consciousness is consciousness of something.” In regard to these two phrases, he says, we find the full noesis related to the full noema. To every noetic phase, there corresponds a phase in noema, and in the noema a noematic nucleus is characterized. He says, “... every lowest difference on the noematic side points eidetically back to lowest differences of the noetic.”<sup>75</sup> Husserl accepts a parallelism between noesis and noema.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 359.

Husserl says that since the publication of K. Twardowski's *Concerning the Theory of the Content and Object of Presentations* (Vienna, 1894), the words "act," "content," and "object" have become catchwords.<sup>76</sup> Husserl takes up the ordinary ambiguous phrase "the content of consciousness," under content he understands the "meaning" and says that in or through meaning consciousness refers to an object as its "own." He says, "Every noema has a 'content', namely, its 'meaning', and is related through it to 'its' object."<sup>77</sup>

The phrase concerning the relation of consciousness to its objective points towards a most inward phase of the noema. It is something which constitutes the necessary midpoint of the nucleus and functions as "bearer" of the noematically modified properties, namely, of the "meant as such." The noema possesses its peculiar content and by means of which it refers to the object.

In the above discussion, we saw that Husserl's interpretation of intentionality in terms of hyle, noesis and noema has a peculiarity of its own. It incorporates the notion of sense content, process of meaning giving, and the meaning given in a unity and interprets the consciousness as having a unitary character. Husserl finds the solution of the problem of Brentano's distinction between physical and psychical phenomena in the notions of hyle and noesis. Husserl maintains a parallelism between noesis and noema. The notion of noema provides the meaning which serves as the referring basis of consciousness towards the object known. The notion of the nucleatic layer of noema serves as a comprehensive basis for the diversified process of knowledge. Noema is made possible through the phenomenological reduction; which will be dealt in the next chapter. Our next section is focused on the concept of evidence.

### **3.3 Experience as Evidenz**

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 361–2.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 361.

In the Appendix to *Logical Investigations* VI, Husserl speaks of evidence in the context of the time-honoured distinction between external and internal perception. He discusses two pairs of distinction and tries to show from where the concept of evidence has arisen in epistemology and what its status is. The two pairs discussed are:

1. External perception and perception of self
2. Sensuous perception and internal perception<sup>78</sup>

For a naïve man, external perception is the perception of external things, their qualities, relationships, changes, interactions, etc. And perception of self is the perception of one's own ego, its properties, its states and activities, etc. A naïve man thinks that an external thing has many properties, so the ego also has many properties.

By sensuous perception, a naïve man understands perception by the sense-organs, i.e., through eyes, ears, etc. Sensuous perception includes the perception of external things, as well as of perceiver's own body and bodily activities, such as, walking, eating, etc. Inner perception concerns experiences as thinking, feeling, etc.

Husserl says that in philosophy both pairs of terms are expressed preferably in the pair "internal and external perception."<sup>79</sup> He says that after Descartes' separation of *mens* from *corpus*, and after Locke's introduction of two classes of perception corresponding to sensation and reflection, this distinction between external and internal perception has got force in philosophy and has been persisting.<sup>80</sup>

External perception is regarded as the perception of bodies. It arises from the effects of physical things operating through the senses on our spirits. Internal

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<sup>78</sup> *Logical Investigations*, p. 852.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 853.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

perception is regarded as the perception that our spirits or souls have of their own activities. It arises out of a reflection on the activities carried out by the mind on the basis of “ideas” owned through sensation.

Husserl says that this distinction has given rise to the philosophical position that evidence lies only in internal perception, and external perception is merely deceptive. He says, “We recall the traditional estimate of the relative value for knowledge of the two forms of perception: *external perception is deceptive, inner perception evident.*”<sup>81</sup>

Evidence has been regarded as one of the basic pillars of knowledge. Inner perception is thought to be the only case of perception where the object of perception truly corresponds to the act of perception.

Husserl says that even the Cartesian approach to find a basis for “clear and distinct” knowledge has given rise to this view. In his methodology of doubt, Descartes came to believe that “absolute evidence” can be had only in regard to the objects of inner perception. Objects of outer perception always remain within the arena of doubt. In this way, Descartes thought that outer perception lacks evidence.

This supposition of inner perception as the paradigmatic kind of evident experience has also an origin which is related to psychological interests. People of psychology were toiling to fix the domain of empirical psychology and thereby to establish its own justification as against the natural sciences. They wanted to mark off a peculiar territory of phenomena for it.

Husserl says that the distinction between inner and outer perception has furnished the distinction between psychical and physical phenomena. Outer perception is thought to be concerned with sensory qualities and inner perception is

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

thought to be concerned with the phenomena as presentations, judgments, wishes, hopes, etc., which have come to be known as psychical phenomena. These two phenomena constitute essentially distinct classes; therefore, an unbridgeable gulf has been established between the two. Husserl says, “It becomes now a good definition to say: psychic phenomena are the phenomena of inner perception, physical phenomena those of outer perception.”<sup>82</sup> In this way, drawing on the line of demarcating the peculiar territory of psychology, it was thought that psychology is the science of psychic phenomena, and natural science is the science of physical phenomena.

Husserl says that this line of thought has culminated in Brentano and his adherents. These thinkers have laid the claim that “Every psychic phenomenon is not merely a consciousness, but itself the content of a consciousness...”<sup>83</sup> It has been thought that in inner perception the object of perception is immanent in it. This view is responsible for the theory of “mental inexistence.” Husserl says that even Locke defines consciousness as the perception of what goes on in a man’s own mind.<sup>84</sup> So Husserl says that according to Brentano, inner perception distinguishes itself from outer perception on following lines:

1. By evidence and its incorrigibility
2. By essential differences in phenomena<sup>85</sup>

Husserl critiques this view. He does not accept the unfathomable gap between the inner and the outer perception. He says, “... inner and outer perception seem to me, if the terms are naturally interpreted, to be of an entirely similar epistemological character.”<sup>86</sup> He says that the perception of our inner states and the perception of an object standing in the outer space cannot be held different. The perception of the pain in my body is similar to the perception of a swinging tree. He says, “That anxiety

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 856.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 857.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 858.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 859.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

tightens my throat, that pain bores into my tooth, that grief gnaws at my heart: I perceive these things as I perceive that the wind shakes the trees, or that this box is square and brown in colour, etc.”<sup>87</sup> Moreover, he says that inner perception cannot be held evident in all cases. He says that we all have our own empirical personality; we perceive our psychic states with a bodily location.

He says that it can be an objection against him that he ignores the distinction between perception and apperception. He says that it must be decided that wherein lies the essence of perception. If the essence of perception lies in apperception then we cannot talk of perception in regard to the external things. But if the essence of perception does not lie in apperception then the talk of perception in regard to external things is misguided and is held non-evident. He takes outer perception and inner perception both as apperception. He says, “Outer perception is apperception, and the unity of the concept demands that inner perception should be so too.”<sup>88</sup>

He says that it is the essence of perception that something should appear in it. He takes the concept of apperception as the constitutive of appearances, and the appearances as the contents of apperception. He says that in the appearance of a house, we apperceive the actually experienced sense contents in a certain fashion – they are interpreted as those of a house. Similarly, we apperceive our own psychic phenomena.

He says that Brentano included under the rubric of physical phenomena not only the external objects but also the presenting contents. Husserl agrees with Brentano that regarding the perception of an outer object, our perception may lack evidence – we may doubt the existence of a house, but we cannot be deluded regarding the existence of our own experiential sense contents. Phenomenologically, we do not pass judgment on our experienced sense contents, we take them simply as

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 860.



they are, and we perceive them with certainty. This perception has the same claim of inerrancy and evidence as inner perception. He says that it will be quite irrational to doubt what is immanent in consciousness whether it is a sensuous content or an inner state. He says:

I may doubt whether an outer object exists, and so whether a percept relating to such objects is correct, but I cannot doubt the now experienced sensuous content of my experience, whenever, that is, I reflect on the latter, and simply intuit it as being what it is. There are, therefore, evident percepts of “physical” contents, as well as of “psychical”<sup>89</sup>

In this way, we have seen thus far that Husserl critiques the view which ascribes evidence only to the internal perception, and treats external perception as deceptive. Husserl’s phenomenological treatment of experience ascribes evidence to both the modes of perception: internal as well as external, but in a modified form. This approach applies the notion of noema as the prime source of evidence. Phenomenological reduction centers the focus of attention to the consciousness; this shift dissolves the difference between the internal and the external perception. As regards the question of evidence, both the modes come to have the same value.

Husserl’s development of the concept of evidence in *Cartesian Meditations* begins in reference to judgment. Here he discusses the evidentiality of judgment. This discussion comes across some concepts of evidence and gets culminated in the concept of apodictic evidence. The following considerations discuss these in detail.

In the first meditation of *Cartesian Meditations*, we get the idea of evidence in reference to judgment. Husserl reaches this idea through cognition. He relates the cognition with grounding and then explicates the way to the notion of evidence.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 864–5.

Here Husserl distinguishes between immediate and mediate judgments together with the notions of “judicative” doing and the judgment itself. Mediate judgments are related to some other judgments in such a way that judicatively believing them presupposes believing some other judgments. In this regard, we believe a judgment on the basis of our belief in some other judgment(s). So, clarification of the striving for grounded judgments demands that the correctness/incorrectness, truth/falsity of the judgments should be demonstrated. In cases of mediate judgments, this showing itself becomes mediate because it involves the showing of correctness/incorrectness of immediate judgments. Husserl says that one can return to the truth shown in these judgments at his will. One becomes aware of it as one and the same, and by his freedom, he can reactualize such a truth, this is an abiding acquisition which Husserl calls “cognition.” He says:

To a grounding already executed, or to the truth shown therein, one can ‘return’ at will. By virtue of this freedom to reactualize such a truth, with awareness of it as one and the same, it is an abiding acquisition or possession and, as such, is called a ‘cognition’.<sup>90</sup>

Husserl says that if we go further in this direction, we will come to the idea of “evidence” in explicating the sense of grounding or of cognition. He says:

If we go further in this manner... then, in explicating more precisely the sense of a grounding or that of a cognition, we come forthwith to the idea of evidence.<sup>91</sup>

He says that in a genuine grounding, the grounding is an agreement of the judgment with the judged state-of-affairs or to the judged affair-complex. In this way, judgments show themselves as correct.

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<sup>90</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Carians, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1977, p. 10.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

Husserl is of the opinion that judging is meaning. When we say that such and such exists, our judgment is then the expression of an affair or stare-of-affairs as what is meant. But in contrast to it, sometimes there is a pre-eminent judicative meaning, a judicative having of such and such itself. This having is called “evidence.” He says:

But contrasted with that, there is sometimes a pre-eminent judicative meaning [*Meinen*], a judicative having of such and such itself. This having is called evidence.<sup>92</sup>

What is peculiar to this “having” is that, in it, the affair or the complex of the affair becomes present as the affair itself, instead of merely meant “from afar,” the judger possesses this affair itself. He says, “A merely supposing judging becomes adjusted to the affairs, the affair-complexes, themselves by conscious conversion into the corresponding evidence.”<sup>93</sup> This conversion is characterized as a synthesis in which what was meant coincides with what is given itself.

In a broad sense, evidence is an experiencing of something *that is*. Husserl says that it is a mental seeing of something itself. If there happens some conflict with what evidence shows, then the negative of evidence occurs, which Husserl calls “positive evidence of the affair’s non-being.”<sup>94</sup> The content of negative evidence is the evident falsity.

Evidence can be more or less perfect. Pure and genuine truth is the correlate of the perfect evidence. “... pure evidence and genuine truth, are given as ideas lodged in the striving for knowledge....”<sup>95</sup> They help in the fulfillment of one’s own intention. If we engage in the search for knowledge, we can extract those ideas from the perfect evidence.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

Husserl says that truth and falsity, criticism and critical comparison based on evident data play their role even in the pre-scientific life. They are everyday theme; they involve some kind of everydayness. Everyday life gives rise to changing purposes, so the evidence in this respect becomes itself relative. In everyday life, relative evidences and truths work, because they are related to the judger's circumstances. But science does not rest satisfied with this relative evidence, it looks for truths that are valid once for all and for everyone. Husserl says that science does not attain actualization of a system of absolute truths, but rather it is obliged to modify its truths again and again. Despite this, science follows the idea of absolute or scientifically genuine truth, so it reconciles itself to an "infinite horizon of approximations" tending towards that idea. Science believes that it can surpass everyday knowing as well as the scientific knowing; it aims at systematic universality of knowledge. Husserl says:

According to intention, therefore, the idea of science and philosophy involves an order of cognition, proceeding from intrinsically earlier to intrinsically later cognitions; ultimately, then, a beginning and a line of advance that are not to be chosen arbitrarily but have their basis "in the nature of things themselves."<sup>96</sup>

Husserl elucidates his first methodological principle as thus:

It is plain that I, as someone beginning philosophically, since I am striving toward the presumptive end, genuine science, must neither make nor go on accepting any judgment as scientific that I have not derived from evidence, from "experiences" in which the affairs and affair-complexes in question are present to me as "they themselves."<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

He says that we must reflect on evidence all the time and examine its range so that we may know how far the actual giving of the affairs extends. And wherever we find the lack of evidence, we must not claim any final validity and we should consider our judgment as a possible immediate stage.

At the preliminary stage, we get bundles of pre-scientific evidences which are more or less perfect. If the evidence is imperfect, it is incomplete. Perfecting takes place as a synthetic course of further harmonious experiences. If the evidence becomes perfect, then it is adequate.

Husserl says that though adequate evidence guides the scientist's intent, but a different perfection of evidence has higher dignity for him, that perfection is "apodicticity."<sup>98</sup> It can occur even in evidences that are inadequate. This is absolute indubitability which scientist demands of all principles. In this absolute indubitable evidence, groundings are already evident in themselves, and they are grounded once again at a higher level by going back to the principles, and thereby higher dignity of apodicticity is obtained for them. Husserl characterizes the fundamental nature of apodicticity as thus:

Any evidence is a grasping of something that is, or is thus, a grasping in the mode "it itself," with full certainty of its being, a certainty that accordingly excludes every doubt.<sup>99</sup>

He says that what is evident at this moment can become doubtful at another moment; sensuous experiences furnish such cases again and again. In such a situation, instead of accepting the new evidence produced by sensuous experience, the possibility of becoming doubtful of our hitherto accepted evidence can be recognized in advance by critical reflection.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

Apodictic evidence is the certainty of the affairs; it is the peculiarity of it that it discloses itself to a critical reflection as the sign of the absolute unimaginableness of the non-being of the contradictory states-of-affairs. It negates the negative evidence. Thus it excludes in advance every doubt as objectless or empty.

He says that the multiplicities of modes of consciousness blend together synthetically and pertain to a meant object. These multiplicities include some syntheses which have the typical style of verifying in regard to the initial intending. When such a synthesis takes place, the meant object has the evident characteristic existing, or the evident characteristic non-existing.

In the third meditation of *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl says that evidence denotes a universal primal phenomenon of intentional life. It denotes a pre-eminent mode of consciousness which consists in the self-giving of an affair or an affair complex. This affair can be a universality, a value, or other objectivity. It is immediately intuited. This peculiar mode of consciousness is contrasted with the mode of consciousness which is capable of being indirect on non-presentative. He characterizes the achievement of evidence with the insight which gives the object as it is.

Evidence is not the acquisition of the ego which aims confusedly at something, but of that ego which achieves insight into this something. In our ordinary experiencing, evidence is only an occasional occurrence, but it is a possibility. All experience is laden with the possibility of being evident, but it needs attention and insight. He says, "Experience in the ordinary sense is particular evidence. All evidence, we may say, is experience in a maximally broad, and yet essentially unitary, sense."<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 57.

These are the main issues which have been discussed in the *Cartesian Meditations* in regard to the concept of evidence. The concept of evidence has an all round application in phenomenology as well as in philosophy in general. Every system and every method is directed towards the attainment of evidence. Husserl finds the source of evidence in the experience itself, but in a modified form. He regards the apodictic evidence as the complete self-evidence. The search for this apodictic evidence leads us to the transcendental subjectivity which I will discuss in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4

### Towards Transcendental Experience

Transcendental experience, in Husserl's philosophy, refers to the kind of experience that is focused on the experiencing ego itself. This experiencing ego is designated by Husserl as the pure or the transcendental ego. It does not mean then that the transcendental ego is a mysterious entity that enjoys mysterious experiences. On the other hand, transcendental ego is the phenomenological name of the ego who achieves this transcendental state through reduction and reflection. These two together with the transcendental ego and its status are to be discussed in this chapter. Husserl's treatment of reduction is not very clear; it has given rise to various misunderstandings. Although reduction is a unitary process which Husserl has used to bracket some entities and some standpoints related to them, but he speaks of more than one reduction and does not discuss their inter-relation. Lack of clarity always gives rise to misunderstanding and controversy. The first two sections of this chapter are focused on elucidating what Husserl means by reduction and how he applies it. The other theme of this chapter is transcendental subjectivity. Husserl praises transcendental subjectivity everywhere in his works and treats it as a step ahead of the Cartesian cogito. Transcendental subjectivity is directly related to the transcendental ego that is also called pure ego by Husserl. Transcendental subjectivity is achieved by transcendental reduction and transcendental reflection where the ego gets full concentration on its conscious experiences and thereby gets complete sense of what it comes across in its experiences.

#### 4.1 Phenomenological Reduction



Husserl starts this discussion in the *Ideas* with the question of the suspension of the natural standpoint and then tries to extend this suspension further to the pure ego, God and all the transcendent essences. He uses different terms for this suspension, such as, bracketing, disconnection, reduction, epoche.

Husserl says that the natural standpoint furnishes an incessant belief in the existence of an objectively standing natural world. He analyses the natural standpoint from a first-person perspective in the sections 27–30 of *Ideas*. Let us have a look upon what makes up the natural standpoint.

Husserl says that our first outlook upon life is that of natural human beings. Our imaging, judging, feeling, etc., take place from the natural standpoint. A natural human being remains aware of a natural world. This awareness is immediate. Everyone knows that he lives in a world and that this world is endless, that is to say, wherever he goes, he feels that he is in a world. Together with this spatial extension, the world is also endowed with temporal extension. Every one remains aware of the spatio-temporal extension of the world. He discovers it intuitively, that is to say, through the sense-organs of sight, touch, hearing, etc., he experiences the world, and gains the impression that the corporeal things of the world are simply present, no matter one pays attention to them or not. Together with the experience of the corporeal things, a natural human being comes in contact with other human beings and beings of many other kind, say, a dog, a cat, a rat, a lion, etc. He shares his feelings with his fellow beings and also shares some good or bad experiences of life with animals in some way or other. The attention of the natural human being towards other objects and lives determines his field of perception. Husserl says:

In this way, when consciously awake, I find myself at all times, and without my ever being able to change this, set in relation to a world which, through its constant changes, remains one and ever the same. It is continuously “present” for me, and I myself am a member of it. Therefore, this world is not there for me as a mere world

of facts and affairs, but, with the same immediacy, as a world of values, a world of goods, a practical world.<sup>1</sup>

The consciousness of a natural human being remains related to the world of which he himself is a member. He relates to it through diverse acts of consciousness, such as, approval, disapproval, joy, sorrow, desire, aversion, hope fear, decision, action, etc. Husserl says that all these acts taken collectively can be included under the Cartesian expression “cogito.”<sup>2</sup>

Husserl says that the natural human being remains aware not only of the concrete things and beings of manifold kind, but also of some ideal entities, such as, pure numbers and the laws they symbolize. He says that though these entities are not present in the real world of fact, but if we adopt an arithmetical standpoint, the world of numbers becomes present for us.<sup>3</sup>

The main point of importance for us, here, is the always present natural world which Husserl makes obvious through its comparison with the arithmetical world. He says that the arithmetical world happens to be there for us, only if we adopt the arithmetical standpoint, which is not always the case. As contrasted to this, we always remain in the natural world so long as we are natural human beings, which we all are normally. He says:

The arithmetical world is there for me only when and so long as I occupy the arithmetical standpoint. But the natural world, the world in the ordinary sense of the word, is constantly there for me, so long as I live naturally and look in its direction. I am then at the “natural standpoint,” which is just another way of stating the same thing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1969, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103–5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Husserl says that even our adopting of other standpoints does not hinder our being in the natural world. The only change occurred is that the natural world becomes the background for our acts of consciousness. For example, suppose I am walking in a garden and enjoying the fresh breeze. I am watching the things and the trees, flowers, etc. standing in the garden. Suddenly, I want to know, how many trees there are in the garden. Then, I start counting the trees. Now I am in the arithmetical world which is simply there for me. The natural world of which I was aware before this shift of standpoint does not vanish altogether, but remains as the background. He says, “The two worlds are present together but disconnected, apart, that is, from their relation to the Ego, in virtue of which I can freely direct my glance or my acts to the one or to the other.”<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, every other natural human being experiences this natural world as we ourselves experience it. Every natural human being experiences the natural world as one and the same world. There are differences between two persons’ experience of the same thing but it is only a matter of the different grades of clearness, importance, attachment, etc. He says, “Despite all this, we come to understandings with our neighbours, and set up in common an objective spatio-temporal fact-world as the world about us that is there for us all, and to which we ourselves none the less belong.”<sup>6</sup>

These are the considerations on what makes up the natural standpoint. Husserl says that so long as we adopt the natural standpoint, the fact-world of the natural standpoint persists during the whole course of our life of natural endeavour. Prior to any thinking and depending only on the experience, it has the character “present” or “out there.”<sup>7</sup> Whenever we make any existential judgment, this character functions as the essential ground or support for this existential judgment. We remain sure of the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

truth of our judgment because we hold that we have simply put into the judgment what we have confronted in our experience corresponding to it.

Husserl critiques the natural standpoint. He wants to change this attitude. In sections 31–32 of *Ideas*, he discusses the bracketing of the natural standpoint. He says, “Instead now of remaining at this standpoint, we propose to alter it radically.”<sup>8</sup> To carry out this alteration, says Husserl, there can be an approach like that of Descartes, i.e. to doubt everything whatever we come across. Husserl says that the attempt to doubt everything has its place in the realm of our perfect freedom.<sup>9</sup> We can doubt anything and everything. We can doubt even the thing of which we are absolutely convinced.

Husserl discusses the process of doubting. He says that to doubt is to doubt “being of some form or other.” This being can be expressed in such expressions as, “It is,” “It is this or thus,” etc.<sup>10</sup> Husserl says that the doubt cannot affect the form of the being itself. Doubt really is concerned with “the way of constitution,” i.e. the way the object is constituted.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, to doubt can mean to doubt the way the object is constituted. Doubt can be understood in yet another way. As stated above, to doubt can mean a Cartesian suspension of the thesis, i.e. to transform the thesis into its antithesis, or to transform the positive into its negative.<sup>12</sup> That is to say, to doubt the being of a tree for example can mean the positing of the non-being of the tree.

These considerations do not interest Husserl. He does not want to take doubting in either of these senses. His method of doubting is quite unique. He does not want to abandon the thesis; nor does he want to posit a new thesis. Husserl wants to bracket the thesis. Bracketing, here, means that we do not make any use of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 107–8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 107–9.

thesis He says that the process of bracketing or disconnecting is not limited to the phenomenon of the attempt to doubt. We can use this bracketing as the refraining from judgment. He says:

... whilst remaining in itself what it is, we set it as it were “out of action,” we “disconnect it,” “bracket it.” It still remains there like the bracketed in the bracket, like the disconnected outside the connexional system.<sup>13</sup>

Bracketing does not mean the ignorance about the thesis.<sup>14</sup> An ignorant person remains unaware of the object of ignorance, but this does not mean that he has bracketed it. Bracketing involves awareness, or, better to say, great awareness. Husserl says that here we are dealing with a unique form of consciousness, which is fully aware of the original thesis but does not make any use of it.

Bracketing involves the “transvaluation” of the thesis.<sup>15</sup> This transvaluation, says Husserl, is a concern of our full freedom.<sup>16</sup> We do not accept the values that are attached to the thesis from the perspective of the natural standpoint. We bracket these values, and transvalue the thesis from our phenomenological perspective. In this way, the thesis of the natural standpoint becomes the “bracketed thesis” and the judgment related to it becomes the “bracketed judgment.” He says, “The thesis is ‘put out of action’, bracketed, it passes off into the modified status a ‘bracketed thesis’, and the judgment simpliciter into ‘bracketed judgment’.”<sup>17</sup>

By the practice of bracketing, Husserl does not deny the world, neither does he doubt that it is there or not; what he does is only to restrict any judgment in regard to the existence of the world. He says:

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 108–9.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

If I do this, as I am fully free to do, I do not then deny this “world,” as though I were a sophist, I do not doubt that it is there as though I were a sceptic; but I use the “phenomenological epoche,” which completely bars me from using any judgment that concerns spatio-temporal existence (*Dasein*).<sup>18</sup>

With the bracketing of the natural world, all the sciences related to it are also disconnected therewith.<sup>19</sup> These sciences present various judgments about the nature of the world and its phenomena. They present many standards to judge things of the world. But after the bracketing, no judgment presented by these sciences, can be used, even if their evidential value is perfect. Therefore, all the foundations laid down by the sciences of the natural standpoint are disconnected. And even if these are to be accepted any way, these can be accepted only after they are placed in the bracket. Thus, the judgments of the natural sciences can be accepted only as the bracketed judgments, not otherwise. In this way, Husserl says that the whole world presented as real in our experiences loses its value for us.

In the section 56 of *Ideas*, Husserl says that with the disconnection from the natural world, all the physical and the psychological objectivities, all varieties of cultural expression, works of technical arts and of fine arts, aesthetic and practical values, state, moral custom, law, religion, etc. are suspended. Husserl keeps these all under the rubric of “natural,” therefore, with the disconnection from the natural world, these all are bracketed therewith.<sup>20</sup>

Husserl treats “the disconnection from nature” as the methodological means” through which the direction of the mental glance upon the “pure transcendental consciousness” becomes possible. With the disconnection from nature, the man as a natural being who is linked with others in a personal bond is also suspended. That is to say, man possessing the animal nature is suspended. But can the phenomenological

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 110–1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 171.

ego itself be suspended, asks Husserl.<sup>21</sup> Phenomenological ego itself is the performer of the phenomenological reduction. Can it itself be bracketed? Does the phenomenological ego lose its form when we make use of the phenomenological reduction? In the section 57 of *Ideas*, Husserl discusses the question of the suspension of the pure ego. Here he uses the terms “pure ego” and “phenomenological ego” to denote the performer of bracketing. He says:

But how fares it then with the pure Ego? Is even the phenomenological Ego which finds things presented to it brought through the phenomenological reduction to transcendental nothingness?<sup>22</sup>

Husserl says in this regard, “Let us reduce till we reach the stream of pure consciousness.”<sup>23</sup> He says that after the performance of the reduction we shall come to know that pure ego is not an experience among other experiences, to which we will stumble in the transcendental reduction as the transcendental residuum. Pure ego, again, is not a constitutive factor of experience which we come across as the transcendental reduction takes place. Pure ego appears as something permanent, as something necessarily there. Pure ego belongs to every experience. Experiences come and go, but pure ego remains self-identical.<sup>24</sup> Husserl is of the opinion that the pure ego cannot be suspended altogether. He says:

In principle, at any rate, every cogito can change, can come and go, even though it may be open to doubt whether each is necessarily perishable, and not merely, as we find it, perishable in point of fact. But in contrast the pure Ego appears to be necessary in principle, and as that which remains absolutely self-identical in all real and possible changes of experience, it can in no sense be reckoned as a real part or phase of the experiences themselves.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.172.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 172–3.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

After the question of the reduction of the pure ego, Husserl contemplates on the suspension of the transcendence of God, in section 58 of *Ideas*.<sup>26</sup> He says that this transcendence is not given immediately, but it comes to knowledge in a highly mediated form. The transcendence of God appears as the polar opposite to the transcendence of the world.<sup>27</sup> The existence of a divine being not only transcends the world but also the absolute consciousness. God as the absolute differs from the absolute of consciousness; God as the transcendent differs from the world as the transcendent. Husserl wants to put it under suspension. He says, “We naturally extend the phenomenological reduction to this ‘Absolute’ and to this ‘Transcendent’.”<sup>28</sup>

After these suspensions, Husserl wants to extend the process of suspension to all other varieties of transcendent objects.<sup>29</sup> Now he brings the series of general objects, the *essences* to the fore, in sections 59–60 of *Ideas*. He says that they too are transcendent to pure consciousness. To every sphere of individual being, there belongs an ontology, e.g., to physical nature, an ontology of nature belongs; to animality, an ontology of animality belongs and so on. Husserl says that all these ontologies succumb to the reduction. Over against the material ontologies, there stands formal ontology to which object in general belongs. Husserl says that if we try to disconnect this formal ontology, we face some kind of doubt which affects the possibility of epoche. Husserl wants to make phenomenology an eidetic science; he knows that the purpose of eidetic science demands that in regard to every domain of being, there should be certain eidetic spheres where knowledge of essential forms can be ordered. It also demands that every scientific worker must be free to make appeal to formal logic. Therefore, it seems that we cannot suspend formal logic and formal ontology.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 173–4.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 173.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 175–9.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 175–6.



He says that if we look up more closely, the possibility of placing in brackets formal logic and all the disciplines of formal mathematics, such as, algebra, theory of numbers, etc opens up. He says that if the enquiry of pure phenomenology into pure consciousness sets the task of making “descriptive analysis” which can be resolved into pure intuition then the theoretical framework of the mathematical disciplines and the theorems developed within it cannot be of any service. Phenomenology is a pure descriptive discipline which studies the whole field of pure transcendental consciousness in the light of pure intuition.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, formal logic and the entire field of mathematics can be included in the “disconnecting epoche.”<sup>32</sup> As a phenomenologist, Husserl wishes to follow the standard: “To claim nothing that we cannot make essentially transparent to ourselves by reference to consciousness and on purely immanent lines.”<sup>33</sup>

The purpose of phenomenology is to establish the eidetic science as the theory of the essential nature of the transcendently purified consciousness. In carrying out this task, phenomenology brings under its domain all immanent essences. All essences are not immanent. He says that as the distinction between immanent and transcendent holds good for the individual objectivities, so it holds good also for all the corresponding essences. Some essences are immanent; some are transcendent. Drawing on this line, he says, thing, spatial shape, movement, colour of a thing, man, human feeling, soul, psychical experience, person, quality of character, etc, are transcendent essences.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, if we wish to construct the phenomenology as a pure descriptive theory of the essential nature of the immanent formations of consciousness, we must exclude from this limited field all the transcendent essences. Since phenomenology

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 176–7.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 177–8.

proposes to limit itself to the region of pure experience, therefore, no transcendent eidetic region can contribute to it. Husserl wants to extend the process of suspension to all transcendent eidetic domains. He says:

So, just as we disconnect the real Nature of physical science and the empirical natural sciences, we disconnect also the eidetic sciences, i.e., the sciences which study what belongs essentially to the physical objectivity of Nature as such.<sup>35</sup>

In this way, geometry, kinematics and pure physics of matter are put into bracket. Therefore, all empirical sciences dealing with the nature of animals, all mental sciences concerning personal beings are suspended, and together with these, all eidetic sciences corresponding to these objectivities are also suspended.

We have seen thus far that Husserl takes the natural standpoint as his point of departure and then extends this suspension further. This is the main theme of what Husserl calls the phenomenological reduction. It is quite difficult to decide the difference between bracketing, epoche, reduction, etc. In the enquiries carried out in *Ideas*, he uses the terms bracketing, epoche, disconnection, and suspension so far as he speaks of the bracketing of the natural standpoint; as he comes to the question of the bracketing of the phenomenological ego, God, transcendent essences, he uses the terms reduction and transcendental reduction. Sometimes in *Ideas* and also in *Cartesian Meditations*, he calls it phenomenological-transcendental reduction. The next section is focused on the question of the possibility of the delineation of these reductions.

## **4.2 Problematising Reduction as Method**

Husserl wants to develop a method proper to his phenomenology. He has developed his method gradually in the course of his thinking. It will be a mistake to trace the

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

method as distinct from the theory in his philosophy. His whole thinking points towards the method.

His method is popularly known as the method of reduction. Husserl considers reduction as a radical method in the course of philosophy. Reduction is a much debated issue in Husserl's philosophy. Herbert Spiegelberg mentions in his book *The Context of the Phenomenological Movement* about six or eight kinds of reduction. He says, "Around 1925 Husserl's phenomenological reduction began to proliferate into such a variety of operations that some of his students thought that there were as many as six to eight types of them, an impression which, in a letter to Roman Ingarden, Husserl himself called an excessive 'systematization'."<sup>36</sup>

David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre have reckoned three reductions as the three steps in Husserl's philosophy. These are: psychological reduction, transcendental reduction and eidetic reduction. According to them, psychological reduction focuses our attention on consciousness and its experiences; transcendental reduction eliminates all empirical or naturalistic considerations; and eidetic reduction generalizes the results attained through a transcendental study of consciousness.<sup>37</sup>

Husserl's treatment of reduction is not very clear to understand. As we move through his works, we come across the complication of his treatment of reduction. In *Ideas* and in *Cartesian Meditations*, he speaks mainly of the transcendental reduction which he calls phenomenological transcendental reduction. This reduction is concerned with the suspension of the natural standpoint, pure ego, God, and transcendent essences. This reduction has been discussed in the first section of this chapter.

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<sup>36</sup> Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Context of the Phenomenological Movement*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1981, p. 65.

<sup>37</sup> David Woodruff Smith and Ronald McIntyre, *Husserl and Intentionality: A Study of Mind, Meaning, and Language*, D. Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, 1982, pp. 94-5.

The method of eidetic reduction appears elusive in the *Ideas*; here he mentions the term eidetic reduction only in the Preface and in the Introduction. In the Introduction of *Ideas*, he says that the eidetic reduction leads us from the psychological phenomena to pure essence, or in respect of judging thought, from factual to essential universality. This reduction helps us to establish a science of essential being. He says:

As over against this psychological “phenomenology,” pure or transcendental phenomenology will be established not as a science of facts, but as a science of essential Being (as “eidetic” Science); a science which aims exclusively at establishing “knowledge of essences” (*Wesenserkenntnisse*) and absolutely no “facts.” The corresponding Reduction which leads from the psychological phenomenon to the pure “essence,” or, in respect of the judging thought, from factual (“empirical”) to “essential” universality, is the eidetic Reduction.<sup>38</sup>

Psychological reduction too is quite elusive in his works. We get glimpses of his thinking on psychology at some places in *Ideas* and *Cartesian Meditations*. We come across the term “phenomenological-psychological reduction” only in the *Crisis*, where he treats it as a peculiar method applicable to descriptive psychology.

In *Crisis*, section 69, Husserl says that the root of problems for psychology lies in the separation of inner and outer experience.<sup>39</sup> Psychologists treat inner experience as the abstractive experience and natural scientists treat outer experience as the abstractive experience, and each of these is treated as the reverse side of abstraction, that is to say, abstraction from the body furnishes the soul and thereby inner or psychic experiences and vice-versa.

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<sup>38</sup> *Ideas*, p. 44.

<sup>39</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. David Carr, Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 1970, pp. 235–6.

Husserl says that if we direct our attention to the inner or psychic experience, we come to know that we have not got it by abstracting from the nature of a human being. In our world-experience, we know that human beings are intentionally related to certain things, say animals, houses, trees, etc. That is to say, they perform certain intentional acts in relation to them. Now, if as a psychologist, we abstract from a man's physical living body, we will find that the intentional relation of man to world has not changed.<sup>40</sup> Man is always sure of the actuality of real things. And even the psychologist, who treats man as his subject matter of study, has his own certainty about these things.

Husserl thinks that abstraction is not a method proper to the attainment of the subject matter of descriptive psychology. He proposes the method of "phenomenological-psychological reduction" instead of the method of abstraction. He says:

Thus, in order to attain the pure and actual subject matter of the required "descriptive psychology," a fully consciously practiced method is required which I call the phenomenological-psychological reduction – taken in this context as a method for psychology.<sup>41</sup>

He says that a psychologist stands naïvely on the ground of the intuitively pre-given world.<sup>42</sup> In this world, there are various things, and men and animal with their souls. Psychologist wishes to know what is concretely and "essentially proper" to a man purely in his spiritual or psychic being.

Husserl takes up the case of perception<sup>43</sup> and analyses it from the perspective of the phenomenological-psychological reduction. He says that while perceiving, a

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 236–7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

person remains conscious of the perceived. The perceived exists or not or whether the perceiver is mistaken about it or not – these things are irrelevant for the psychologist. These things do not enter into the psychological description of the perception. What matters for the psychologist is the fact that the perceiver carries out the act of perception. Husserl says that the “essentially proper,” which the psychologist desires to achieve, can be attained only in relation to this act in which the method of epoche has a great role to play.<sup>44</sup>

Husserl says that this is an epoche of validity which consists in the abstention from the “co-performance” of the validity that the perceiving person performs. This epoche brackets all the validities attached to the act of perception. He says, “This is an epoche of validity: we abstain, in the case of perception, from the co-performance of the validity that the perceiving person performs.”<sup>45</sup>

Husserl says that validity cannot be modalized arbitrarily,<sup>46</sup> that is to say, one cannot transform certainty into doubt, pleasure into displeasure, love into hate, desire into abhorrence, etc. But, he says, one can abstain from validity without any hesitation, that is to say, one can put its performance out of play for certain particular purposes. This is the main theme of what Husserl calls the phenomenological-psychological reduction.

Keeping in view this primary consideration on the method of reduction, it seems inappropriate to consider these three reductions as the three steps of phenomenological reduction. At first, the relation of the psychological reduction to the transcendental reduction is not clear. Husserl himself does not say anything about this relationship. While discussing the psychological reduction in the *Crisis*, he says,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

“We shall leave open the question of how this reduction stands in relation to the transcendental reduction.”<sup>47</sup>

Apart from this, transcendental reduction and eidetic reduction can be treated as to have some kind of relation to each other. Husserl himself says in the preface to the *Ideas*, “Since the reduction to the transcendental and, with it, this further reduction to the Eidos is the method of approach....”<sup>48</sup>

The phrases “The reduction to the transcendental” and “Further reduction to the Eidos” need clarification. Husserl seems to say that at first we have to execute the transcendental reduction and then the eidetic reduction. By the transcendental reduction we bracket the natural world, God, and all the transcendent essences, and thus we are focused on the transcendental consciousness. Transcendental reduction seems to have two meanings in this connection: at first we bracket all that is “transcendent” to consciousness, such as, the world and its things and all the sciences, theories, attitudes and opinions related to them; and then we take the “transcendental turn” which brings consciousness itself to the fore. This transcendental attitude gets the pure transcendental consciousness as its finding. So, “The reduction to the transcendental” refers to the transcendental consciousness.

Now we come to the phrase “Further reduction to the Eidos.” In his discussion about the phenomenological transcendental reduction in sections 59 and 60 of *Ideas*, as discussed in the first section of this chapter, Husserl wants to extend this reduction to the essences that are transcendent. Now, it becomes quite confusing to decide which reduction deals with the essences. The term “eidetic reduction” gives the *prima facie* impression that it should be concerned with the bracketing of these essences. But Husserl uses transcendental reduction for this purpose. Then what purpose remains for supposing eidetic reduction as a separate reduction?

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>48</sup> *Ideas*, p. 12.

If we treat the eidetic reduction as that which leads from the psychological phenomenon to the pure 'essence', as Husserl says in the Introduction to *Ideas*,<sup>49</sup> then we cannot distinguish between the "eidetic intuition" and the "eidetic reduction" which appear separate in Husserl's philosophy. In the first section of the second chapter of this dissertation we have seen that Husserl has described the eidetic intuition as that which leads to the Eidos. Therefore, we are left with some vagueness which can be stated thus:

1. Either eidetic reduction and eidetic intuition should be identical
2. Or either of the two should be a methodical extravagance

Therefore, it seems quite difficult to delineate the eidetic reduction. But, apart from this vagueness, if we accept that there is a method which leads us to the Eidos then we can treat it as intimately related to the transcendental reduction.

In *Ideas*, section 33, Husserl speaks of different steps of bracketing and prefers the term phenomenological reductions, but at the same time, he treats the phenomenological reduction as having a unitary form. He says:

On grounds of method this operation will split up into different steps of "disconnexion" or "bracketing," and thus our method will assume the character of a graded reduction. For this reason we propose to speak, and even preponderatingly, of phenomenological reductions (though, in respect of their unity as a whole, we would speak in unitary form of the phenomenological reduction).<sup>50</sup>

In this way, we can consider that if after the execution of the transcendental reduction we are focused on the transcendentially purified consciousness, then we

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<sup>49</sup> See foot note number 38.

<sup>50</sup> *Ideas*, p. 114.



must focus on what we get into it. Our researches in the third chapter of this dissertation have made it clear that after the transcendental reduction we get the bracketed phenomena as such, e.g., “the tree as such.” All other transcendental achievements can be explicated as placed within the inverted comma.

We have seen in the third chapter of this dissertation while discussing the noematic meaning where Husserl says that “We must now see to it with scrupulous minuteness that we do not put into the experience anything which is not really included in the essence....”<sup>51</sup> Husserl also speaks of some kind of essential law, as stated in the previous chapter, which helps to get the transition from the hyletic-noetic phase to the noematic phase. Therefore, it can be considered that the “bracketed tree as such” can be reduced to its Eidos. In the first section of the second chapter of this dissertation, while discussing the eidetic intuition, we defined the Eidos as the necessity as contrasted to the contingency, which can be set out as Idea. Eidos is of generalized form. In this way, drawing on this line, we can consider that the phenomenological reduction at first gets the bracketed object and then it moves towards the grasping of the essence.

In the section 63 of *Ideas*, Husserl says that if all the transcendences are suspended seriously, a field of eidetic knowledge opens. He says:

If we observe the rules (*Normen*) which the phenomenological reductions prescribe for us; if, as they require us to do, we strictly suspend all transcendences; if we take experiences pure, in accordance with their own essential nature, then after all we have set down there opens up before us a field of eidetic knowledge.<sup>52</sup>

Husserl says that phenomenology is a pure descriptive science of essential being. It works within the limit of immediate intuition. He says that it proceeds

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

through placing instances. It places certain pure conscious events as instances, and brings these to complete clearness, and then proceeds to apprehend their essence. It follows up the essential connections to grasp the momentarily perceived. This procedure can make one an expert of a new domain, i.e., eidetic domain. Husserl prescribes following features as the essential components of the method of grasping the essence and says that if these are followed up deliberately, they can acquire the character of scientific method. These are:

1. To practice seeing
2. Apprehending
3. Analyzing generally within it
4. Acquaintance with its data
5. Scientific reflection upon the essential nature of the procedure, and upon the essential nature the types of presentation which play their part within it.<sup>53</sup>

He says that the apprehension of the essence has its own grades of clearness.<sup>54</sup> “The zero-limit is obscurity, the unity-limit is full clearness, intuitability, givenness.”<sup>55</sup>

He accepts the role of “fancy” in the apprehension of essences. Essences can be apprehended on the basis of “the mere present framing” of particular illustrations.<sup>56</sup> “... such presenting under the form of fancy... can... be so perfectly clear as to enable us to see and apprehend perfectly the essential nature of things.”<sup>57</sup>

He accepts the advantage of perception and also of the external perception because of their primordial datur quality. Representation, on the other hand, lacks this

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

quality. All objective phases get their givenness within the external perception. With the assistance of reflection, it offers necessary details for phenomenological analysis directed towards essences.<sup>58</sup> He says that it may be an objection against the primordial givenness of perception that perceptions have their different degrees of clearness, e.g., in fog, or in darkness perception lacks clearness. Husserl does not accept it as a genuine objection in this particular context. He says that perception is not always conditioned by fog, etc. He says, “Let it suffice that perception is not ordinarily conditioned by fog, and that clear perception, as it is needed, is always at our disposal.”<sup>59</sup> He accepts the privileged position of sense-perception in regard to the advantage of primordially. But, in phenomenology and in all eidetic sciences, he accepts, free fancy assumes a privileged position. He says:

There are reasons why, in phenomenology as in all eidetic sciences, representations, or, to speak more accurately, *free fancies*, assume a privileged position over against perceptions, and that, even in the phenomenology of perception itself, excepting the course that of the sensory data.<sup>60</sup>

Husserl sees that the geometer operates with “imagery” of figures or models. In fancy, he strives to achieve clear intuitions. Here he is free to think. He can recast figures arbitrarily. This freedom opens the entry into the realm of essential possibility. He cannot be free if he will proceed through actual drawing and modelling.<sup>61</sup>

Husserl says that the case of phenomenologist is similar to the case of the geometer. Phenomenologist deals with reduced experiences. Perception and representation as primordial data are at his disposal, but he can make only a limited use of these. He uses them only as “perceptual illustrations.” But for the quest of essences he has to depend mainly on fancy. Husserl says:

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

Here too at all events the freedom of research in the region of the essence necessarily demands that one should operate with the help of fancy.... It is naturally important... to make rich use of fancy in that service of perfect clearness which we are here demanding, to use it in the free transformation of the data of fancy, but previously also to fructify it through the richest and best observations possible in primordial intuition; noting, of course, that this fructifying does not imply that experience as such can be the ground of validity.<sup>62</sup>

In this way, we can assume that Husserl accepts the role of perception in our quest of essences, but he accepts the dominating role of fancy at the same time. He says that we can get profit from the gifts of art and poetry. He is not afraid of the objection that the free play of fancy can convert the whole endeavour of phenomenology into fiction. He says:

Hence, if anyone loves a paradox, he can really say, and say with strict truth if he will allow for the ambiguity, that the element which makes up the life of phenomenology as of all eidetic sciences is “fiction,” that fiction is the source whence the knowledge of “eternal truths” draws its sustenance.<sup>63</sup>

Next to this consideration, Husserl discusses the question of the method for phenomenology as a “descriptive eidetic discipline” in the sections 71-75 of *Ideas*. He says that the idea of phenomenology as a “descriptive” as well as an “eidetic” science is met with serious contradictions. Eidetic sciences are not descriptive; descriptive sciences are not eidetic.

Phenomenology, if it strives to be eidetic, has to look towards the old eidetic disciplines, such as, geometry and arithmetic. These mathematical disciplines alone represent the idea of a scientific eidetic. These eidetic disciplines have their peculiar

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., pp. 200-1.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

methods. Husserl is of the opinion that the methods of these eidetic sciences cannot be of any use for phenomenology. He says that for a naïve worker in phenomenology, the idea of an eidetic discipline non-mathematical in character may seem impossible. He analyses the troublesome situation.

He makes a distinction of essences and eidetic sciences into material and formal and says that phenomenology stands on the material-eidetic side.<sup>64</sup> So, for our present purpose, all the formal, mathematical disciplines can be excluded. Now, we have to make clear how phenomenology as a material-eidetic science is different from other material-eidetic sciences. He reckons geometry as the material-eidetic science. He says that if the question of method is to be decided on the basis of analogy, then we must ask, "... whether a *phenomenology* must be built up, or can be built up, as a '*geometry*' of experiences."<sup>65</sup>

He says that the problem of not accepting geometric method as the appropriate method for phenomenology is rooted in the fact that geometry does not proceed by description. Geometry deals with some "fundamental Constructs," such as, the idea of angle, triangle, rectangle, circle, surface, point, line, etc. Innumerable lines, triangles, circles, etc. can be drawn in the space, but geometry does not describe these. Geometric method proceeds with deductions based on axioms.

Husserl is of the opinion that this method cannot be applied in phenomenology. Phenomenology is a concrete eidetic discipline; it has to deal with experiential essences which are concrete. "Experiential essences (*Erlebniswesen*) which are not abstracta but concreta constitute its scope."<sup>66</sup> These experiences are manifold; they have many varieties of abstract phases. It is not appropriate for phenomenology to seek some "fundamental constructs of experience" and derive deductively all the varieties of concrete experiences together with their phases.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

Husserl discusses the contrast between geometry and descriptive natural sciences. Descriptive natural sciences are interested in actual forms intuited through senses. Geometry is not interested in this. Geometry deals with ideal concepts; these concepts express something which cannot be seen. Husserl is dissatisfied with the approaches of both.

Husserl contemplates on the idea of phenomenology as a “descriptive theory of the essence of pure experiences.” He says, “As concerns phenomenology, it aims at being a *descriptive* theory of the essence of pure transcendental experiences from the phenomenological standpoint...”<sup>67</sup> He says that phenomenology strives to grasp eidetically in pure intuition what is given in the reduced experiences. Consciousness is ever fluctuating in different dimensions. So it seems impossible to fix any “eidetic concreta.” Husserl gives a very intricate description of his peculiar method of description in the section 75 of *Ideas*.

He takes up the case of the eidetic description of perception. He says that it includes the description of the generic essence of perception, and the description of its subordinate species, such as, the description of the perception of physical thinghood, of animal natures, etc. He accepts that the highest generalities, such as, perception in general stand foremost; they make possible the comprehensive descriptions of the essential nature of things. He says, “But the highest generalities stand foremost: experience in general, *cogitatio* in general, and these make it possible to give comprehensive descriptions of the essential nature of things.”<sup>68</sup>

This position taken by Husserl is not very different from the position taken by the geometer. Geometer too deals with the things of the highest generalities. But Husserl takes a step further in saying that the descriptions done on the higher grades

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 210.

and that on the lower grades will be independent. He says, "... it belongs to the very nature of a general apprehension of essences and of general analysis and description that there is no corresponding dependence of what is done at higher grades on what is done at the lower."<sup>69</sup> He draws three consequences, that of avoiding inductive procedure, deductive procedure and analogy.<sup>70</sup> He maintains that these are not appropriate to the purpose of phenomenology. Inductive procedure proceeds through the gradual ascent of generality; deductive process is an unintuitable means; and analogy supply only conjectures prior to intuitions. He thus differentiates the phenomenology as the "eidetic descriptive science of the transcendental experience" from the eidetic science of geometry and from the descriptive natural sciences.

The above discussion makes it clear that Husserl's treatment of method should be understood in a unitary way. Husserl's purpose is to bracket some entities and standpoints and then to grasp the Eidos. He uses the transcendental reduction to bracket these entities and standpoints and to focus completely on the transcendental ego and its conscious experiences and thereby to see what is given in it. He uses the eidetic reduction to grasp the essence. It seems necessary to consider that the eidetic reduction presupposes the transcendental reduction. But we are still left with the unclarified relation between the eidetic reduction and the eidetic intuition. He accepts the role of free play of fancy in the grasping of the Eidos. He contemplates on the possibility of the phenomenology as the descriptive eidetic science of the transcendental experience. This consolidates his position of highlighting the idea of transcendental subjectivity.

### 4.3 Transcendental Subjectivity

Husserl's idea on transcendental subjectivity starts with *Ideas* and gets maturity in *Cartesian Meditations*. Husserl has used the terms "transcendental ego" and "pure

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 210–1.

ego” more frequently than the term “transcendental subjectivity.” We can understand the transcendental subjectivity in reference to the transcendental ego or pure ego. These two are synonymous terms for Husserl.

In the preface to *Ideas*, Husserl says that the transcendental subjectivity is a new field of experience; it is an absolutely independent realm of direct experience. He says that the whole course of philosophy since Descartes has been preparing the way for it. He accepts phenomenological reduction as the method of access to it. He says:

Under the title “A Pure or Transcendental Phenomenology,” the work here presented seeks to found a new science – though, indeed, the whole course of philosophical development since Descartes has been preparing the way for it – a science covering a new field of experience, exclusively its own, that of “Transcendental Subjectivity.” Thus Transcendental Subjectivity does not signify the outcome of any speculative synthesis, but with its transcendental experiences, capacities, doings, is an absolutely independent realm of direct experience, although for reasons of an essential kind it has so far remained inaccessible. Transcendental experience in its theoretical and, at first, descriptive bearing, becomes available only through a radical alteration of that same dispensation under which an experience of the natural world runs its course, a readjustment of viewpoint which, as the method of approach to the sphere of transcendental phenomenology, is called “phenomenological reduction.”<sup>71</sup>

The question of transcendental subjectivity is directly related to the question of the transcendental ego. In the previous discussion, we have seen that transcendental reduction is the method which leads to the transcendental ego. Besides the method of transcendental reduction, Husserl discusses the method of “transcendental reflection” through which the transcendental ego comes to know itself. Husserl is of the opinion that through the phenomenological reduction, transcendental ego is directly set up at the focus of reflection.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> *Ideas*, p. 11.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.



In *Ideas*, Husserl tries to understand the pure ego in its relation to its acts. Every ego lives its own experiences.<sup>73</sup> When the reflective glance of the ego is directed towards an experience, it becomes an object for the ego. One reflection can furnish the basis for new reflections, and thus this process can keep going on. When the really lived experience enters the realm of reflection, it presents itself as really lived.

Husserl takes up the example of joy<sup>74</sup> and says that as we reflect on joy we find it actually present and we also find that it is not a new experience; we have experienced it earlier but never set it before reflection. In this way, we can come to know the difference between the joy that is experienced but not noticed and the joy that is experienced and noticed.

He says that every variety of reflection has the character of the modification of consciousness. It is a modification which every consciousness can experience. Husserl calls reflection the consciousness' own method for the knowledge of consciousness generally.<sup>75</sup> It is by means of reflection that the pure ego comes to know itself. Pure ego is present in all its acts, such as in perceiving, recollecting, imaging, judging, wishing, approving, disapproving, and the like. But it apprehends itself therein as a human being only through reflection. Husserl says that perceiving, remembering, etc. must be distinguished from the reflection. In perception, we grasp the object of perception, but not the perception itself; e.g., perceiving a tree, we grasp the tree but we do not grasp the act of perception. It is only by means of reflection that the direction of the ego is turned towards the act of perception.

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., pp. 215–23.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp. 217–8.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

In *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl says that the task of reflection is to consider and explicate what can be found in the original process of knowing. Reflection thus yields a new intentional process. Its peculiarity is “relating back to the earlier process.”<sup>76</sup> Husserl calls this “awareness.” It is awareness of the earlier process, not merely the repetition of it. Thus, by virtue of reflection, a descriptive experiential knowing becomes possible.

Husserl speaks of two types of reflection: “natural reflection” and “transcendental-phenomenological reflection.”<sup>77</sup> In natural reflection of everyday life, we stand on the foundation of the world as already given as existing. In the transcendental phenomenological reflection, we come out of the foundation given by the natural reflection by means of the universal epoche. Now an essentially changed subjective process takes place. Our natural experience gets modified and thus becomes the transcendental experience. Transcendental experience is directed upon the transcendently reduced cogito. He says:

In transcendental-phenomenological reflection we deliver ourselves from this footing, by universal epoche with respect to the being or non-being of the world. The experience thus modified, the transcendental experience, consists then, we can say, in our looking at and describing the particular transcendently reduced cogito....<sup>78</sup>

We have seen in our previous discussion that with the execution of the phenomenological epoche, the whole world of natural setting is suspended, and together with that, the “I,” the man is also suspended. Then, only the pure experience as act with its proper essence remains. But even after this all round suspension, the pure subject of the act cannot be cancelled. This is the truth of the transcendental ego but it comes to know it only in the reflection. The various acts of experience refer to

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<sup>76</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Carians, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1977, p. 34.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33–4.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

this subject which is pure ego. In this way, we can make a reverse movement from reflection to reduction in order to explicate the way how the transcendental ego gets itself through its acts. Husserl says:

The “being directed towards,” “the being busied with,” “adopting an attitude,” “undergoing or suffering from,” has this of necessity wrapped in its very essence, that it is just something “from the Ego,” or in the reverse direction “to the ego;” and this ego is the pure Ego, and no reduction can get any grip on it.<sup>79</sup>

Husserl says that the “parenthesizing” of the objective world leads us to the acquisition of pure living together with all the subjective processes involved in it and also with everything meant in them as meant in them. He says:

... this “phenomenological epoche” and “parenthesizing” of the objective world – therefore does not leave us confronting nothing. On the contrary we gain possession of something by it; and what we (or, to speak more precisely, what I, the one who is meditating) acquire by it is my pure living, with all the pure subjective processes making this up, and everything meant in them precisely as meant in them: the universe of “phenomena” in the (particular and also the wider) phenomenological sense.<sup>80</sup>

The ego who is meditating remains untouched with its life by virtue of epoche irrespective of the existence on the non-existence of the world, and together with that, irrespective of its decision about the world’s existential status. The ego that remains by virtue of epoche is not a piece of the world. The ego here is not the entity that finds itself as a man in the natural self-experience, nor is it the separately considered psyche. In the natural standpoint, all men are the themes of sciences which claim to be positive or objective; these sciences are biology, anthropology, psychology, etc. The psychic life which psychology talks about is always the psychic life in the world.

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<sup>79</sup> *Ideas*, p. 233.

<sup>80</sup> *Cartesian Meditations*, pp. 20–1.

But phenomenological epoche disconnects the acceptance of the objective world as existent or non-existent. So, the world no longer is accepted in the field of judgment. With the disconnection of the world, all objective facts together with the facts furnished by man's inner experiences are put into brackets.

Husserl says that the being of the pure ego and its conscious experience is prior to the natural being of the world.<sup>81</sup> The existential status of the world as a natural being is secondary, because it continuously presupposes the realm of the transcendental being. This consideration comprises some subjective idealist elements. Husserl says that if we will consider it from the point of view of epoche, this objection will be overruled.

The world with all its objects derives its whole sense and existential status from the transcendental ego.<sup>82</sup> But this is not an anticipation of subjective Idealism. Husserl here means the sense and status of the world for the meditating ego itself and not for every one who is not meditating this way. The concept of the transcendental and its correlate must be derived exclusively from the ego's philosophically meditative position. Husserl frees himself from the objection of Idealism by saying that the reduced ego is not a piece of the world and conversely the world is not a piece of the ego. He says, "... just as the reduced ego is not a piece of the world, so, conversely, 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, as a complex of data of sensation or a complex of acts."<sup>83</sup> The ego bears within it the world as an accepted sense and the ego itself is presupposed by this sense as its bearer. He says, "... the Ego himself, who bears within him the world as an accepted sense and who, in turn, is necessarily presupposed by this sense, is legitimately called transcendental, in the phenomenological sense."<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

We have seen in the previous discussion that the pure ego remains as something permanent even after the application of the transcendental reduction on it. We have also seen that the cogito can change but pure ego remains self-identical. Husserl considers pure ego as the necessary condition for every cogito. Pure ego lives its life in every actual cogito. All experiences belong to the pure ego.

Husserl says that if the ego puts itself above all this life and refrains from any believing in the world as something existent and if it directs its glance exclusively to this life itself as consciousness of the world then it acquires itself as pure ego with the pure stream of its conscious experiences. He says:

If I put myself above all this life and refrain from doing any believing that takes “the” world straightforwardly as existing – if I direct my regard exclusively to this life itself, as consciousness of “the” world – I thereby acquire myself as the pure ego, with the pure stream of my *cogitationes*.<sup>85</sup>

Husserl says that with the pure ego, a quite peculiar transcendence presents itself simultaneously, which he calls a “transcendence in immanence.”<sup>86</sup> This transcendence plays some essential part in every cogito.

Husserl considers the ego cogito as the ultimate and apodictically certain ground for judgments. He says that any radical philosophy can be grounded on it.<sup>87</sup> It is a prejudice that under the name “ego cogito” one is dealing with an apodictic axiom which serves as the foundation for a deductively explanatory world science.<sup>88</sup> He says that it must not be accepted that in accordance with the principles inherent in the ego, we can conduct arguments and will get deductions. He says that this prejudice

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>86</sup> *Ideas*, p. 173.

<sup>87</sup> *Cartesian Meditations*, pp. 22–3.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

lies in the Cartesian standpoint, for Descartes took the cogito as the point of departure for inferences.

In *Cartesian Meditations* and in *Crisis*, Husserl criticizes Descartes in this regard. In the first meditation of the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl criticizes Descartes for his failure to make the transcendental turn.<sup>89</sup> Husserl says that a great deal of scholasticism lies hidden in Descartes' *Meditations* as unclarified prejudice. He expresses the Cartesian prejudice as thus:

... the prejudice that, under the name *ego cogito*, one is dealing with an apodictic "axiom," which, in conjunction with other axioms and, perhaps, inductively grounded hypothesis, is to serve as the foundation for a deductively "explanatory" world – science, a "nomological" science, a science *ordine geometrico*, similar indeed to mathematical natural science.<sup>90</sup>

Husserl says that Descartes, due to his obsession with geometry, was in search of an apodictic axiom also in philosophy which could serve as the indubitable premiss of the deductive inference. He used the ego cogito for this purpose. Husserl says that the discovery of the ego cogito was a great discovery, but Descartes could not understand its entire meaning and application. He simply used it as his point of departure, but could not meditate on the ego cogito itself. He could not see what is given in it. Thus, he could not get to the transcendental subjectivity.<sup>91</sup>

In *Crisis*, section 17–18, Husserl says that Descartes could not understand the depth of his discovery. He did not subject all his prior opinions, the world in its all respects to the epoche. He was so obsessed by his goal that he did not draw out what was most significant to the ego of the epoche. Husserl says that Descartes was dominated in advance by the "Galilean certainty of a universal and absolutely pure

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 23–5.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 24–5.

world of physical bodies.”<sup>92</sup> Descartes took for granted that sensibility points to a realm of “what-is-in-itself,” and with that, he took also the idea that it can deceive us. Descartes was concerned with the endeavour of a rational way of knowing what-is-in-itself with mathematical rationality.<sup>93</sup> Husserl says that Descartes could not take a “transcendental turn” at this point. Descartes used the ego cogito only as a means to prove what he had taken for granted already. He says:

It is obvious that Descartes, in spite of the radicalism of the presuppositionlessness he demands, has, in advance, a goal in relation to which the breakthrough to this “ego” is supposed to be the *means*. He does not see that, by being convinced of the possibility of the goal and of this means, he has already left this radicalism behind.<sup>94</sup>

Husserl does not want to use the ego cogito as the premise of an argument. He wants to concentrate on what is actually given in the field of it. He is sure that this field can be opened by the epoche. In Descartes’ philosophy, doubting could furnish only the ego cogito as something self-evident, and all the rest things were derived from deduction. In Husserl’s philosophy, no deduction is at work. On the contrary, Husserl says that he will accept nothing but what he finds as given in the field of ego cogito which has been opened by epoche. He says:

... if we remain true to the radicalness of our meditative self-examination and therefore to the principle of pure “intuition” or evidence – that is to say, if we accept nothing here but what we find actually given (and, at first, quite immediately) in the field of the ego cogito, which has been opened up to us by epoche, and if accordingly we assert nothing we ourselves do not “see.” Descartes erred in this respect.<sup>95</sup>

He asks in the *Crisis*, if the epoche puts out of play with one blow all knowledge of the world and thus loses its grasp on the being of the world, how can it

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<sup>92</sup> *Crisis*, p. 79.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Cartesian Meditations*, p. 24.

get a primal ground of immediate and apodictic self-evidence.<sup>96</sup> He says that if we refrain from taking any position about the being or the non-being of the world, we actually carry out the epoche radically and universally and thus we get the apodictic ground in our transcendental subjectivity. He says, “I am necessary as the one carrying it out. It is precisely herein that I find just the apodictic ground I was seeking, the one which absolutely excludes every possible doubt.”<sup>97</sup> In this way, he says, during the universal epoche, the absolutely apodictic self-evidence “I am” is at our disposal.<sup>98</sup>

Husserl distinguishes the ego from the soul.<sup>99</sup> The soul may be achieved through the abstraction from the body, as we have seen previously during the discussion of the psychological reduction. But the ego cannot be achieved through any abstraction. Husserl thinks that the ego cannot be identified with the soul. He says, “... a pure soul has no meaning at all in the epoche, unless it is as ‘soul’ in ‘brackets’, i.e., as mere ‘phenomenon’ no less than the living body.”<sup>100</sup>

Now, Husserl asks, what can be done with the transcendental ego philosophically?<sup>101</sup> In respect of knowledge, transcendental ego is prior to all objective being, as we have previously seen. All objective cognition takes place on the basis of the transcendental ego. So a question arises: can we consider the transcendental ego as the ground of objective knowledge only on this priority basis?

Husserl says that with the discovery of the transcendental ego a new idea of the grounding of knowledge emerges. It is the idea of the “transcendental grounding of knowledge.” Instead of using ego cogito as a premise for inferences, Husserl wants to direct his attention to the fact that the phenomenological epoche opens an infinite

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<sup>96</sup> *Crisis*, p. 77.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>101</sup> *Cartesian Meditations*, p. 27.



realm of being of a new kind. It is the sphere of a new kind of experience. It is the sphere of transcendental experience. He says:

... the bare identity of the “I am” is not the only thing given as indubitable in transcendental self-experience. Rather there extends through all the particular data of actual and possible self-experience – even though they are not absolutely indubitable in respect of single details – a universal apodictically experienceable structure of the Ego....<sup>102</sup>

For Husserl, the absolute evidence of the ego cogito extends into those manifolds of self-experience in which the ego’s transcendental life is given. It can be shown that some subjective processes, abilities, dispositions, etc. dependent on the structure of the ego are accessible to a possible self-experience. Husserl wants to open the infinite field of transcendental experience. The Cartesian evidence of the ego cogito remained barren, says Husserl, because Descartes neglected the fact that the ego can explicate itself *ad infinitum* by means of the transcendental experience.

In the fourth meditation of the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl says that the ego is the “identity pole” of the subjective processes.<sup>103</sup> He says, “The ego grasps himself not only as a flowing life but also as I, who live this and that subjective process, who live through this and that cogito, as the same I.”<sup>104</sup> He says that the ego constitutes itself continuously as existing. It remains conscious of its existence. Husserl speaks of two types of “polarization” in this connection. One polarization constitutes the object as a pole; where all the actual and possible consciousness is polarized towards an identical object. The other polarization takes the ego as the pole; where all the actual and possible consciousness is polarized as belonging to the one identical ego.

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., pp. 65–6.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

Drawing on the above discussion, we can explicate the transcendental subjectivity more clearly. Transcendental subjectivity is the possession of the transcendental ego who achieves this transcendental state in its phenomenological life through reduction and reflection. Transcendental subjectivity is preceded by psychological subjectivity which gives rise to psychological idealism. On the contrary, transcendental subjectivity gives rise to transcendental-phenomenological idealism.<sup>105</sup> This form of idealism does not involve itself in accepting or rejecting the existence of the real world of nature. It only tries to clarify the meaning of the world.

Transcendental subjectivity remains untouched with the existence or the non-existence of the world. The world derives its sense from the transcendental subjectivity as something meant by it and meant in it. Transcendental subjectivity is transcendence in immanence. It bridges the gap of the inner and the outer.

Transcendental subjectivity does not proceed through inference, but through direct encounter together with its method of reduction and reflection. It is apodictically self-evident to itself. It achieves this self-evidence not through speculation but through its peculiar method of epoche. It gives knowledge the transcendental grounding. It extends its absolute evidence to all its experiences. It can unfold itself without any limit or restraint. Husserl says that the transcendental subjectivity is the absolute being. He says, "... only transcendental subjectivity has ontologically the meaning of Absolute Being, that it only is non-relative, that is relative only to itself...."<sup>106</sup>

Husserl's phenomenological scheme is: "*ego – cogito – cogitatum.*"<sup>107</sup> The two extremes are the two poles; these are related to each other through the middle. In the case of transcendental experience, it can be presented as thus: "Transcendental

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<sup>105</sup> Ideas, p. 18.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>107</sup> *Cartesian Meditations*, p. 50.

Ego – Transcendental Experience – Transcendental Object.” It is different from the Cartesian scheme which is: “*ego – cogito.*”

Descartes could include only the “ego” and the “cogito” as the essential components of his scheme of clear and distinct knowledge. He could become apodictically certain only of these two. He derived the existence of the world and its objects through deductive inference. He could not remain meditated on the ego cogito. Husserl says that due to this, as we also discussed earlier, Descartes remained staying at the threshold of the transcendental subjectivity. Descartes indeed discovered it but could not take advantage of it. Husserl’s method brings the *cogitatum* inside its scheme. He does not feel the need of using any kind of inference in this regard. On the contrary, he treats the cogitatum as the transcendental clue.<sup>108</sup>

This is the peculiarity of the transcendental subjectivity that through reduction it puts the controversy about the existence or the non-existence of the external object to an end. It bars all kind of judgment in regard to them. It directs its concentration only on its conscious experiences and therein looks as a disinterested onlooker what is given. The ego of the natural reflection is interested in the world, but the ego of the transcendental reflection is a disinterested onlooker.<sup>109</sup>

In this way, the discussion carried out in this chapter incorporates the method part of Husserl’s phenomenology and his notion of transcendental subjectivity. We come to know that Husserl’s method is primarily to bracket and then to reflect on what remains as given after the bracketing. We thus proceed to grasp the essence. Meanwhile we come to realize that our naïve subjectivity has been transformed into the transcendental subjectivity, wherein all our conscious experiences get their complete sense.

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 50–3.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

Husserl's method furnishes a new and radical way to address the problems related to the notion of experience. Let me highlight some of the major findings as well as interpretations of Husserl's conception of experience.

In the second chapter, I discussed three issues – eidetic intuition, adumbration, and horizon of experience. We discussed that Husserl regards eidetic intuition as a genuine mode of experience. The object of this intuition is Eidos or essence. This intuition is not hostile to the empirical intuition. Husserl accepts that the empirical intuition can be transformed into eidetic intuition. These two intuitions are, therefore, interdependent; and consequently, the science of empirical fact and the science of essence are also interdependent.

Eidetic intuition is not a mystic experience; essence is not a mysterious reality. Eidetic intuition is not a prerogative of some peculiar persons; any one can have access to them. Husserl mentions some methods which can make one at home to the eidetic intuition. Husserl mentions that the transformation of empirical intuition into eidetic intuition is an essential possibility, that is to say, it demands an eidetic approach.

Husserl accepts that our perception gets adumbrated, but he does not stop here. The adumbrated stage of perception can be transcended. Husserl has indicated the phenomenological mutual belongingness of percepts in this regard. There can be many percepts of a single object. All these percepts portray the object differently but the same object is present in all these percepts. Husserl accepts the syntheses of

fulfillment. Each individual percept is a mixture of fulfilled and unfulfilled intentions. Unfulfilled intention is fulfilled by new percepts.

Our experience is always within some horizon. The exact locating of horizon also determines the accuracy of perception. An experience does not stand aloof; it always remains in connection with other experiences. Husserl accepts that the complete horizon can never be discovered completely. This view may seem incompatible with the phenomenological ideal of objective knowledge. But we must accept that after all phenomenology is not a magic to achieve all objectivity in a completely accurate sense.

In the third chapter, I discussed the development of Husserl's conception of intentional experience, and his conception of evidence. Husserl uses the term "consciousness" to deal with the problems related to experience. He accepts that consciousness is intentional in character. He gets the specific mark of intentionality in the phrase "consciousness of something." He has presented a very intricate discussion of intentionality in *Logical Investigations*. He does not accept the Brentano's concept of "intentional in-existence." He says that it is an inaccurate position to hold that the perceived, imagined objects, etc. enter consciousness. He says that consciousness is not a relational centre. Intentional experience has the peculiarity of directing itself towards the presented object, but it does so in an intentional sense. The object is aimed at or referred to in it. Husserl denies the view that in a conscious experience two things are present – the act and the intentional object. On the other hand, he accepts that only one thing is present – an experience which is intentional in character. In our conscious experience, we do not experience two things – the object and the intentional experience directed upon it. Husserl is of the opinion that in our conscious experience there is only one thing present, i.e. the intentional experience. Husserl distinguishes between the intentional object, the intentional material, and the intentional essence. He accepts that the act-quality changes, while the matter remains identical.

Husserl has presented his developed theory of intentionality in *Ideas* where he presents it in terms of hyle, noesis and noema. In these three terms he has found the accurate description of intentional experience. These three may be regarded the three stages of the intentional experience, but in a unitary way. Hyle, on his account, is the sensory content of experience. Noesis is the meaning-bestowing stratum. Husserl has refuted the Brentano's distinction between the physical and the psychical phenomena. He says that Brentano did not find the concept of the material phase, and due to this, he failed to separate the empirical domain of psychology from the domain of the physical sciences. Instead of regarding the physical and the psychical phenomena as the two distinct kinds of phenomena, Husserl accepted the material phase and the noetic phase as the two integral part of the intentional experience. He says that the phenomenological being has a twofold bed: a material and a noetic.

Consciousness, on Husserl's account, is not a title-name for fused contents, bundles, etc. He accepts that it is the peculiarity of the "consciousness of something" that it conceals a meaning within itself. To conceal meaning in itself is its nature. He brings out the notion of noema in regard to the conception of meaning. He accepts noema as correlative to noesis. A variety of data can be displayed in noema. Every intentional experience has its own noema, and on the basis of this noema it has its meaning, such as, perception has its own noema, and on the basis of which it has its own "the perceived as such," recollection has its own noema, and on the basis of which, it has its own "the remembered as such," and so on.

Husserl finds the fundamental mark of intentionality in its having its intentional object. He accepts this intentional object, the objective meaning of the intentional experience. Full noema consists in a nexus of noematic phases. Sense-phase supplies only a kind of nucleatic layer, in which further phases are grounded. Intentional experience is organized through the nucleatic layer of noema.

Husserl criticizes the philosophical position which holds that evidence lies only in inner experience and that outer experience is merely deceptive. He depicts the way how the distinction between inner and outer experience has furnished the distinction between physical and psychical phenomena. Husserl treats inner and outer experience to be of similar epistemological character. He treats them both as apperception. Husserl's phenomenological method brackets the judgment about the existence or the non-existence of the world. He argues that as long as we hold our belief in the existence or the non-existence of the world, we are likely to be deluded. But, after the bracketing, we are focused only on what is given in experience. We take them as simply as they are.

Husserl takes evidence as the experience of something that is. He calls it a mental seeing of something itself. Evidence consists in the self-giving of an affair or affair-complex. Husserl considers apodicticity as the perfection of evidence. This is absolute indubitability. He accepts the importance of critical reflection as the means to recognize the lack of evidence in advance. Apodictic evidence discloses itself to critical reflection. Husserl maintains that all experience can be evident, it needs attention and insight.

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I discussed Husserl's phenomenological method and his conception of transcendental subjectivity. Husserl has propounded the method of phenomenological reduction. Reduction has been treated to be of multiple kinds by most of the interpreters of Husserl. These interpretations are quite misleading for a naïve researcher in Husserl's phenomenology.

The research carried out in this dissertation comes to the finding that reduction is mainly concerned with bracketing some entities and some standpoints, or better to say, some attitudes, related to the existential status of these entities. Husserl, at first, starts with the bracketing of the natural world, natural standpoint, and all the sciences

related to it. He has used the terms bracketing, suspension, and epoche in this regard. After the bracketing of these entities and standpoints, he meditates on the possibility of the bracketing of the phenomenological ego, God, and all the transcendent essences. Here, he uses the terms transcendental reduction, phenomenological reduction, phenomenological suspension, disconnection, etc.

Husserl's use of these different terms do not furnish enough ground to suppose that epoche and reduction are the two types of phenomenological reduction. Husserl has talked also of psychological reduction and eidetic reduction. We have discussed that these three cannot be treated as the three steps of reduction. If we will be focused on delineating the territory of these reductions, then we are likely to miss the original meaning of reduction and the message conveyed by Husserl.

Husserl is not hostile to the view that there can be many grades of the phenomenological reduction; he himself has given the name of the fourth chapter of the second section of *Ideas* – “The Phenomenological Reductions,” and accepts that the systematic theory of the phenomenological reductions as a “whole” has a great importance for the phenomenological method. But, he does not say that, at first, we should bracket this, then that, and so on, without any alteration of the sequence.

Indeed, he says that, we can be focused on the ego only after the bracketing of the natural standpoint, and then further to the Eidos, only after the focus on the “transcendental.” This is the gist of his method of phenomenological reduction. These three seem to make up the three grades of phenomenological reduction, but if we bring the bracketing of the phenomenological ego, God and of the transcendent essences, then even this sequence do not seem to be appropriate. Perhaps, this is the reason why the interpreters of Husserl explained reduction to be of six or eight kinds.

To me, it seems to be a futile exercise to trace the different “kinds” of bracketing. On the other hand, we should understand its application. Reduction is



meant to get focus on the transcendental ego, and thereby to the apprehension of the essences.

Another question in regard to reduction is that of its possibility. To a naïve mind, it may seem to be difficult or impossible. Reduction, if it were a denial of the existence of the world, etc., it would make no sense. Reduction is only the attempt to “put into bracket,” and the suspension of the “judgment.” It is not the transformation of the thesis into anti-thesis, the positive into negative. Again, it is not the ignorance of the thesis. Bracketing is only the suspension of the thesis. This suspension is meant to free us from the prejudices. In this way, it is not only possible but also necessary.

Phenomenological reduction is not the only method of phenomenology. Husserl has also accepted transcendental reflection, free play of fancy, shaping illustrations as the genuine methods of phenomenology. Besides these, he has also spoken of the practice of seeing, apprehending, analyzing, etc. These all make up the whole method of Husserl’s phenomenology.

The research carried out in this dissertation has highlighted the vagueness related to the relation between eidetic intuition and eidetic reduction. These two should be identical, or either of them should be treated as a methodical extravagance.

Husserl’s phenomenological method is meant to bring out the transcendental ego and transcendental subjectivity. He accepts transcendental subjectivity as a new field of experience which can be approached through the transcendental phenomenology. Husserl has accepted transcendental reduction and transcendental reflection as the methods of approach to this transcendental field of experience. He has tried to understand the transcendental ego in its relation to its acts. Its acts relate necessarily to the intentional object, as per the phenomenological motto – the “consciousness of something.”

Husserl's phenomenological scheme is *ego – cogito – cogitatum*. In this scheme, *cogitatum* plays the role of the transcendental clue. Husserl's scheme is different from the Cartesian scheme: *ego – cogito*. Cartesian approach treats the *ego cogito* as the apodictic self-evident axiom; on the basis of which, desired deductions can be derived. Husserl's approach does not treat the *ego cogito* as the self-evident premise of the deductive argument. On the other hand, it believes that the *ego cogito* can unfold itself *ad infinitum*. This is a transcendental approach which remains focused to the *ego cogito* and tries to see and analyze what is given in it.

To highlight the idea of the transcendental subjectivity, Husserl gets the self-evident apodictic ground of knowledge and believes that any objective science can be based on it. Transcendental subjectivity furnishes the transcendental grounding of knowledge. This grounding furnishes the basis of the descriptive eidetic science of experience. The apprehension of the Eidos becomes possible in the transcendental subjectivity. This Eidos serves as the eidetic basis of the eidetic science of experience. This science is descriptive, because it describes what is given in the transcendental experience.

To conclude, overall in this dissertation, I have discussed in detail eight major issues. Those are: (i) distinction between empirical intuition and eidetic intuition, (ii) Husserl's advance over the empiricist theory of perception, particularly discussing the nature of adumbration, (iii) possible horizon(s) of experience, (iv) discussion on intentionality as discussed by Husserl in *Logical Investigations*, (v) and the above idea of intentionality expressed in terms of hyle, noesis and noema which Husserl discussed in detail in *Ideas*, (vi) debate on internal and external forms of experience, being merged / dissolved through concept of evidence, (vii) nature of phenomenological reduction and problems related with general conception of reduction, and finally (viii) the discussion on transcendental subjectivity. Though I have studied these eight issues, I have found that these issues / problems should not be, rather cannot be, discussed isolated in segregated ways. Rather study of one issue

/ problem necessarily leads us to the other problem(s). To put in short, all these problems / issues are inter-related and cannot be treated in isolation.

I have also come to this finding that Husserl in his works (particularly, *Logical Investigations*, *Ideas*, *Cartesian Meditations*, and *Crisis*) tries to open up the field of transcendental subjectivity and thereby comprehend knowledge of an “object,” grasped through essence. He uses the methods of reduction, reflection, free play of fancy, shaping illustrations, etc. for this purpose. Transcendental subjectivity is the independent realm of direct experience which can be regarded as the apodictic ground of all knowledge and evidence.

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