The *Cartesian Meditations*' Foundational Discourse: An Obsolete Project?

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Husserl's transcendental philosophy has frequently been disparaged in many of the central philosophical debates of the 20th century. And many of his most virulent critics have been adherents of phenomenological philosophy. Critiques have stressed the bankruptcy of the concept of *ultimate foundation* in relation to a transcendental subject that is allegedly solipsistic and conditioned by modern prejudices. Two essential insights have led me to reconsider such critical assessments.[1] On the one hand, the open-ended and infinite nature of Husserlian intentional analysis seems to indicate what could be characterized as a "withdrawal of ground"[2]

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1. For nearly two decades I have been engaged in an examination of this topic. The results have been published in several papers, the most relevant of which are the following: "De Boer sobre Husserl. Interpretaciones en conflicto en torno a la 'inmanencia' y la 'cosa misma'," *Areté* I, no. 2 (Lima, 1989), 319–59; "Entre la inmanencia y la cosa misma: en torno a la quinta investigación lógica de E. Husserl," *Areté* II, no. 2 (1990), 217–59, and *Areté* III, no. 1 (1991), 63–145; "Fundamentalismos y crisis de fundamentos. Consecuencias para la realidad peruana actual," *Boletín del Instituto Riva-Agüero,* no. 18 (Lima, 1991), 69–89; "Analyse intentionnelle et crise des fondements dans les recherches phénoménologiques d'Edmond Husserl," in Colloque franco-péruvien (ed.), *La notion d'analyse* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires de Mirail, 1992), 193–216; "Últimos fundamentos y filosofía primera en la fenomenología trascendental de Edmund Husserl," in Rosemary R. P. de Lerner (ed.), *El pensamiento de Husserl en la reflexión filosófica contemporánea* (Lima: Instituto Riva-Agüero PUCP, 1993), 51–84; "Ciencia, progreso y exilio del sujeto. En torno a ciertos mitos modernos y post-modernos," *Areté* VI, no. 2 (1994), 273–99; "Husserl, lector de Descartes," *Areté* VIII, no. 2 (1996), 319–37; and a comprehensive study, in preparation, entitled *First Philosophy and Ultimate Foundations in Edmund Husserl's "Cartesian Meditations"*.

2. Here I borrow Jean Ladrière's expression, *la retraite du fondement* (withdrawal or retreat of ground), and draw on his conclusions concerning the fate of this concept in early 20th-century speculative and scientific endeavors. See his "L'Abîme," in Jean Beaufret (ed.),

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or an endless deferral of a self-sufficient, "ultimate foundation" in Descartes's sense. On the other hand, a close examination of Husserlian concepts such as 'ground' and 'rational knowledge' reveals that their original Cartesian meaning has undergone semantic changes in Husserlian thought. In the present essay, I aim to lend support to these insights by examining the Fourth and, very briefly, Fifth Cartesian Meditations. The examination comprises four stages. First, it makes a case for focusing on the *Cartesian Meditations*, where Husserl's "Cartesian option" seems obvious. Second, it attempts to disclose a differentiated foundational discourse in the Fourth Meditation, one that is dedicated to the difficult and core issue of the "ego's self-constitution." Third, it reassesses the foundational discourse of the intersubjective transcendental theory sketched in the Fifth Meditation, after pointing out some misunderstandings concerning the sense of Husserl's transcendental "idealism" and "solipsism." And, finally, it asks whether the notions of 'ground' and 'reason'—whose sense is shown in the foregoing stage to have been transformed—do in fact belong to a project that is, as Husserl's critics claim, no longer feasible.

The guiding thesis here is that if these steps are taken and my hypotheses confirmed, then Husserl's work will be seen to be still able to contribute significantly to contemporary debates on the status of scientific discourse, as well as the nature and goals of practical discourse, where both are conceived of as being grounded in a radically understood human *praxis*.

§ 1. Foundational Discourse and First Philosophy

It is widely held—especially in post-Heideggerian circles—that Husserlian transcendental phenomenology involves two dimensions that are not easily reconciled. The first, under the title of *first philosophy* and supporting his "idea of philosophy" as a universal science that is apodictically and ultimately founded, includes the eidetic intentional analysis of the subject's transcendental experience.[3]

Savoir, faire, espérer: les limites de la raison (Brussels: Facultés Universitaires de Saint Louis, 1976), 171–91. All translations are mine unless otherwise noted. Wherever translations were available, I have consulted them but altered them, without notice, when I deemed it necessary.

3. Husserl examines the notion of *first philosophy* in his 1923–1924 "Lectures on First Philosophy," where he continues the project of a third book dedicated to "this first of all genuine philosophies . . . that will be able to make its appearance as a *science*," such as he announced in the preface to the first volume of his *Ideas* in 1913. See Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, ed. Karl Schuhmann, Husserliana III/1 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1976), 5; English translation: *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. First Book: General Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. F. Kersten (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1983), xii (henceforth cited as *Ideas I* with German and English page references, respectively). The lectures on first philosophy are con-

This dimension is said to suffer from Husserl's so-called "Cartesian anxiety."[4] Continental, post-Heideggerian thinkers often contend that Husserl's first philosophy or transcendental eidetic phenomenology fails to recognize the "factual" and existential dimension of human experience. Thus, when such thinkers discover that Husserl considers *facticity* to be the object of *second philosophy*—namely, metaphysics or "empirical philosophy of the factual"—they tend to interpret Husserl's view here as being schizophrenically divorced from his "clear transcendental project."[5] Indeed, since second philosophy is dedicated to problems of facticity—such as death, destiny, the sense of history, and ethico-religious issues[6]—Husserl's critics

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tained in two volumes: Edmund Husserl, *Erste Philosophie (1923/4). Erster Teil: Kritische Ideengeschichte*, ed. Rudolf Boehm, Husserliana VII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1956), and *Erste Philosophie (1923/4). Zweiter Teil: Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion*, ed. Rudolf Boehm, Husserliana VIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1959). Volumes from Husserliana are cited as *Hua* with Roman volume and Arabic page numbers after their full bibliographic reference has been given.

4. 'Cartesian anxiety' is Richard J. Bernstein's term for Husserl's inclination to explain and justify his philosophy against Descartes's thought and modern, subjectively oriented paradigms. See his *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1983), 16–20.

5. Commenting on the "dilemma" or tension inherent in Husserl's later work, Maurice Merleau-Ponty says, "either constitution makes the world transparent, in which case it is not obvious why reflection needs to pass through the world of experience, or else it retains something of that world, and never rids it of its opacity." See his *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), 419; English translation: *Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962), 365. In reference to that passage, Jacques Taminiaux remarks: "And to interpret Husserl's evolution means to underscore the contrast between the clear program of transcendental phenomenology and the obscure and infinite patience of the manuscripts and to recognize in them an at least tacit rupture with the logicism of the philosophy of essences and the growing awareness that the phenomena resist any return to the classical effort at intellectual adequation." See Jacques Taminiaux, *Dialectic and Difference: Finitude in Modern Thought,* ed. and trans. James Decker and Robert Crease (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities, 1985), 117–18.

6. "Phenomenology or absolute science of factual reality" deals with the following, according to Husserl: "The intrinsically first being, the being that precedes and bears every worldly Objectivity, is transcendental intersubjectivity: the universe of monads, which effects its communion in various forms. But, within the de facto monadic sphere and (as an ideal possibility) within every conceivable monadic sphere, occur *all problems of accidental factualness, of death, of fate*, of the possibility of a '*genuine*' *human life* demanded as 'meaningful' in a particular sense—among them, therefore, the problem of the 'meaning' of history–, and all the further and still higher problems. We can say that they are the *ethico-religious* problems, but stated in the realm where everything that can have a possible sense for us must be stated." See Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge,* ed. Stephen Strasser, Husserliana I (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1950), 182; English translation of the former: *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960), 156 (henceforth cited as *CM* with

have deemed this dimension more accessible and free of the modern and Cartesian "difficulties" that allegedly afflict Husserlian first philosophy.[7] Contrary to this view, my examination of the foundational project in Husserl's first philosophy aims to show that the "withdrawal of ground" in the modern sense is not evident there at all. By showing that Husserl revolutionizes modern thought in one of his most "Cartesian" books, it becomes possible to see that between eidetics and facticity, first and second philosophy, there is neither a schizophrenic abyss nor an insurmountable inconsistency.

The modern foundational project, as it is criticized today, is generally thought to be a double process: it is held to be, on one hand, a regressive-analytic ("reductive," "reflexive," "resolvent") march towards foundation; on the other, a progressive-synthetic ("deductive," "constructive," "compositive") march towards "totalization." The "ground" to be reached reductively—conceived of as an immediate, "absolutely simple" region, transparent to an *intuitus mentis*, and providing autarchically the guarantee of its own validity—is deemed capable of supporting all that is given in a derivative or constructed way. If this view is today in crisis, it is because in different fields (scientific and speculative) it has been convincingly shown that there is no way of determining an axiomatic, self-sufficient, and ultimate domain of absolutely elementary entities that constitute human thought or even the cosmos in general. Only "provisional way stations" in indefinite foundational processes can eventually find acceptance. Even if today it may not seem reasonable to support the idea of an absolutely autarchic *foundation*, one might still argue in favor of the rational *activity* of "founding," in the sense of the ineluctable rational process of continually and indefinitely "transgressing the immediacy" of any alleged autarchic and self-sufficient ground.

Contrary to appearances, it can be seen—as I have demonstrated in previous investigations[8]—that the *structure* of Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* does

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German and English page references, respectively). Where it has been deemed necessary, translations have been modified without notice.

7. Authors as different as Jean-François Lyotard, Jürgen Habermas, and Karl-Otto Apel have criticized the so-called "Cartesian-Husserlian philosophy of subjectivity," not only for its "logocentric foundationalism" but also for the "solipsistic and incommunicable" evidences on which it is allegedly founded. See Jean-François Lyotard, "Argumentation et présentation: la crise des fondements," *Encyclopédie philosophie universalis* I: *L'Univers Philosophique*, ed. André Jacob (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989), 738–50, here 739–40.

8. In "Analyse intentionnelle et crise des fondements dans les recherches phénoménologiques d'Edmond Husserl," and "Últimos fundamentos y *filosofía primera* en la fenomenología transcendental de Edmund Husserl" (see n. 1), I have compared the structure of Descartes's six *Meditationes de prima philosophia* with Husserl's five *Cartesian Meditations.* At most, Husserl explicitly says that he is "following" Descartes in the first two meditations. No acknowledgment of Descartes is to be found in the last three. Thus, my conclusion in

not involve the resolving-compositive gesture of modern or Cartesian foundational projects. Indeed, in the first *three* meditations, Husserl aims to underpin his "idea of philosophy" with a concept of ultimate foundation understood as "evidence," which he terms 'validity foundation' (*Geltungsfundierung*) in unpublished manuscripts.[9]

In both the Second and the Third Meditations Husserl denies the existence of *adequate* experiences or evidences, whether transcendent or immanent, and recognizes only *apodictic evidences*—which admittedly contain *inadequate* elements. He notes that one could speak of adequate evidences only in the case of the *cogito sum*'s empty form, as well as of other ineradicable facts concerning the general *form* or *structure* of transcendental experience. Such would include, for instance, that past and future horizons belong to every present, that no past event may be annulled, and that a content belongs to every form. In fact, Husserl finds in his intentional analyses a flowing open-ended temporal domain of both *actual* (explicit) and *potential* (implicit) "givenness," one surrounded by *temporal* horizons on the noetic side and *worldly* horizons on the noematic side. *Evidence*, as *intuitive givenness*, is here established as a key aspect of the concept of foundation. Husserl says at the end of the Fifth Meditation that his "idea of philosophy" is that of an *absolutely founded* science, yet almost immediately thereafter he adds that its realization is possible *only* "in the form of an endless program" (*CM*, 178/152).

§ 2. Validity Foundation and Genetic Foundation in the Ego's Self-Constitution

The Fourth Meditation is a crucial investigation of deceptive brevity. Announcing an issue of seemingly limited importance, "Development of the Constitutional Problems Pertaining to the Transcendental Ego Itself," the meditation not

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the two essays just cited is that Husserl's "homage" is merely formal, and that already in the first lines of his work he abandons Descartes's main theses while nevertheless acknowledging the French philosopher's contribution to Western philosophy.

9. *Geltungsfundierung* is associated with the type of inquiry that characterizes "static phenomenology": "The idea of a static phenomenology: the universal structure of world validity, the discovery of the structure of validation in relation to the ontological structure, as that of the valid world itself"; see Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935*, ed. Iso Kern, Husserliana XV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 615. In contrast to static phenomenology, and the question of "validity foundation," genetic phenomenology investigates "the genesis in the monad, according to the mode in which those phenomena emerge"; see Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Zweiter Teil: 1921–1928*, ed. Iso Kern, Husserliana XIV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 40. Thus, genetic phenomenology, as we shall see, involves a different type of foundation: "genesis foundation" (*Genesisfundierung*). We shall also see that each sense of 'foundation' is related to a different two notion of 'constitution'.

only deals with *how* the *ego* becomes gradually conscious of itself—without which it could not be said of it that it *is* an *ego* (*CM,* 99/65)—but it also aims to show how these problems contain those relative to the consciousness of *everything else*.[10] In phenomenological terms, the self-constitution of the transcendental *ego* as an *Ich selbst* concerns phenomenology as a whole, since it comprehends "every constitutional problem in general." No wonder, then, that this meditation has been the source of deep misunderstandings. Paradoxically, it also contains Husserl's most revolutionary ideas concerning human rationality, the concept of ground, and the previously established demarcation between necessity and contingency, *episteme* and *doxa*.

Again, the first three meditations deal with the issue of *evidence*, the cornerstone of Husserl's "idea of philosophy" as a *universal* science. In the Fourth Meditation, he warns us that the foregoing elaborations have only a *preliminary* character. Intentional analyses already disclosed the *source* of *evidence* in the *intentional* activity of actual *or* possible conscious experience (cognitive, evaluative, practical, imaginary, etc.). This temporal and synthetic—that is, horizonal—activity is understood as *constitutive.* This means that the *ego*'s correlative intentional *objectivities*, according to their *sense* and *validity*, belong to it.[11] Now, in the Third Meditation, Husserl restricts the concept of *constitution* to the production of evidence and validity. By contrast, the constitution of sense or meaning is equivalent for Husserl to "apprehending" or "grasping" something in synthetic experiences as "the same" in a specific mode. Thus, for example, in *Ideas I* Husserl also first describes constitution as the apprehension of perceptual senses (noemata) or predicative meanings (noemata at the higher level of expression); only in the fourth and final part of *Ideas I* does he deal with problems of "reason" or the specific constitution of *evidence* (of evident noemata).

Likewise, the Third Meditation deals with a specific sort of constitution or apprehension, one that is synonymous with evidence or with *validity* foundation (Geltungs*fundierung*). Hence, in the first three meditations the transcendental *ego*,

10. As Husserl notes, "the ego itself has being, and its being is being for itself. Also, its being, together with all that specifically belongs to it, is constituted in the ego and continues to constitute itself for the ego." See Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, *Hua* I (see n. 6), 25; English translation of the latter: *The Paris Lectures*, trans. Peter Koestenbaum (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1975), 25 (henceforth cited as *PL* with German and English pagination, respectively). And also: "The ego's being-for-itself is being that is in a state of continual self-constitution, which, in turn, is the foundation for all constitution of so-called transcendentals, i.e., worldly objectivities" (*CM*, 109/75). And further: "Objects exist for me, and are for me what they are, only as objects of actual and possible consciousness" (99/65).

11. Up to that point, Husserl describes the transcendental *ego* as inseparable from its lived experiences and their correlates, i.e., from everything that belongs to the "I can" (*PL*, 25/25).

stripped of its anonymity by means of the reduction, is the *presupposition* of every constitution, an *absolute* stance behind which there is no other. However, in the Fourth Meditation it is a question of a "different *ego* on each of various levels of phenomenological problems."[12] Indeed, the *ego* ceases to be regarded there as the *source* of every constitutive problem, but is instead examined as the outcome of a deeper, immanent, and temporal process by which it constitutes itself, namely, by which it apprehends or temporalizes itself originally.[13]

Before examining this complex and differentiated process, let us summarize the sense of constitution operative here. As just noted, the constitution of meaning or sense amounts to "apprehending" or "grasping" something as something synthetically identified as the same. And since this process is temporal, Husserl also refers to constitution as a "temporalization." Indeed, the apprehension of an object takes place by means of multiple *actual* or *possible* appearances synthetically identified as belonging to "the same" object-pole—in which something is given that is more "than what is meant 'explicitly' at that moment."[14] Likewise, the *ego*'s self-constitution implies an apprehending of the *ego*'s unity, while identifying its "I-pole" beyond its multiple, synthetically interwoven, actual or possible *cogitationes*. Thus, the I's self-constitution—which involves the "identification" of multiple experiences and *cogitationes* as pertaining to and unified around an *ego*-pole—is certainly related to the frequently criticized thesis of the "centering of the subject" (*Zentrierung des Ichs*).[15]

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12. There is "an ambiguity in the notion of the ego" (*PL*, 25/26).

13. 'Self-constitution' is to be understood as 'self-consciousness'. Note that Husserl also uses in later texts (1931–1933) the following expressions as synonyms: 'foundation' (*Begründung*, *Fundierung*), 'constitution' (*Konstitution*), 'temporalization' (*Zeitigung*, *Verzeitigung*, *Verzeitlichung*), 'objectivation' (*Objektivierung*), and 'achievement', 'production', or 'acquisition of unities' (*Leistung*, *Erwerben von Einheiten*)—see, e.g., Edmund Husserl, *Späte Texte über Zeitkonstitution (1929–1934). Die C-Manuskripte*, ed. Dieter Lohmar, Husserliana Materialien VIII (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 1–4, 49–50, 53–55, 80 (henceforth cited as '*Hua-Mat* VIII'); E III 2, 24a–24b [tr. 49])—and these are intimately related to 'mundanization' or 'enworlding' (*Verweltlichung*), 'incarnation' (*Verleiblichung*), and 'corporealization' (*Verkörperung*) (see *Hua* XV, 403), and all of this being understood as a sort of 'making possible' (*Vermöglichung*) (see *Hua-Mat* VIII, 260, 262, 279). Quotations from the stenographic transcriptions of Husserl's MSS. are indicated by 'tr.' followed by the page number in brackets after the citation of the relevant MS.

14. Husserl refers to consciousness's intentional and horizonal property of "intending-beyond-itself"—from that which is actually given towards that which is co-intended and implicitly given—as an "*über-sich-hinaus-meinen* or *übergreifende Mehrmeinung*" (*CM*, 84/46).

15. In a 1921 manuscript (*Hua* XIV, 30), Husserl describes this centering function of the *ego*: "Its functioning center is what it is in whatever function, whether passive (affective) or active, so that the I is in each case given as an 'I endure by means of' (I am affected by), 'I feel this,' 'I experience that, I endure in my senses pleasure or disgust, I am passively related

It is generally accepted that the concepts of constitution and intentionality underwent changes between Husserl's first period—approximately 1900–1916, during which he developed "static phenomenology"—and his second period, from 1916 onwards, when his concern lay more with "genetic phenomenology." He also referred to static phenomenology as a "phenomenology of guidelines" (*Hua* XIV, 41), where reduction was understood as a withdrawal from worldly objectivities, values, and norms—taken as transcendental clues or guidelines—to the intentional and *constitutive* operations of the transcendental *ego*. In this first period, as noted above, Husserl regards constitution as being wrapped up with the problems of evidence or with "validity foundation" (*Geltungsfundierung*). Such static phenomenology is more clearly concerned with the claim of an *eidetic* description that wishes to fix, in possible types of a priori structures and functions, the complex life of consciousness. Its work is thus analogous to that of a "natural history" (*CM*, 110/76). If the *temporality* of consciousness appears as one of those structures, it does so only in a *formal*-abstract manner. During this period, the *hyle* or sensuous matter was not grasped as *intentional*. Rather, employing the Kantian dualism of form-matter, it was understood as "interpreted" from the outside by a certain apperceptive "act" generically termed 'intentional *morphe*'.[16]

But once Husserl begins to develop "genetic phenomenology," he reformulates his original conception of intentionality and temporality. Already in 1909 he became suspicious of the matter-form dualism as a means for describing the temporality of absolute consciousness, and he thus began to examine the latter from the viewpoint of its *hyletic* content. He soon came to see *hyletic* content as bearing a *sui generis* intentionality—though a pre-objectifying and pre-egological inten-

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to (tend to be), I tend to be affected by.'" ("Das Funktionszentrum ist was es ist, in irgend einer Funktion, einer passiven [affectiven] oder aktiven, und so ist das Ich entweder und je nachdem als 'ich leide durch' [bin affiziert durch], 'ich empfinde das,' 'ich erfahre jenes, ich leide im Empfinden Lust oder Unlust, bin passiv angezogen [strebend], bin strebend affiziert von.'") He adds: "'I think, I value, something pleases me, I am happy for, I am sad about, I long for, I love, I want'" ("'ich denke, ich werte, ich habe Gefallen an, Freude daran, ich bin traurig über, ich begehre nach, ich liebe, ich will'"). And nevertheless he points out: "the I-pole is what it is not as bearer, not a substrate of affection and action, etc., but precisely as I, receptive point of radiation, functioning center of affections, irradiation point, active center of activities, of acts. It is 'in' its states . . . and 'in' its self-orienting acts, as self-orienting towards what is alien to the *ego*, it is the affected one." ("der Ichpol ist, was er ist, nicht als Träger, nicht Substrat für Affektion und Aktion, etc., sondern eben als Ich, Einstrahlungspunkt, Funktionszentrum für Affectionen, Ausstrahlungspunkt, Tätigkeitszentrum von Tätigkeiten, von Akten. Er ist 'in' seinen Zuständen . . . und 'in' seinen sich richtenden Akten, sich richtend ins Ichfremde, das affizierte.") On the *ego*'s centering or polarizing character, see, e.g., Ms. E III 2 (1921), 11b–13b [tr. 23–29], and *Hua-Mat* VIII, 41–48.

16. *Ideas I*, § 85; see Edmund Husserl, *Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907*, ed. Ulrich Claesges, Husserliana XVI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 46.

tionality—that he names *association*.[17] Hence, within the framework of a "genetic foundation" (*Genesisfundierung*), the notion of constitution undergoes a shift in—indeed, a radicalization of—its sense. Husserl thereby discovers that eidetic universal phenomenology, which he had held to clarify the constitution of all mundane sense and validity, is not the last word, but itself has its own genesis. A new, "genetic" sort of foundation, one different from "validity foundation," will now be tasked with accounting for the ultimate genesis of eidetic universal phenomenology.[18] Genetic foundation does not abandon the problems of validity foundation but is held to subsume all the problems of evidence or validity.

The consequences of these claims for Husserl's *idea of philosophy* and his notion of *scientific evidence* are immense. From his 1920–1921 *Lectures on Logic* on, in which he explores the essential connection between *transcendental logic* and *aesthetics*, Husserl questions the possibility of producing adequate evidence even within immanence; for although immanence is indubitable, it is nevertheless in perpetual flux.[19] Thus, the Fourth Meditation suggests simultaneously the primacy of *genetic* over *static* phenomenology and the roots of *validity foundation* within *genetic foundation*.

The "centering" *ego*, in terms of which self-constitution is examined in the Fourth Meditation, also has a somewhat different significance in both periods. It is noteworthy that Husserl first introduces the "pure I" (which critics were quick to dismiss as solipsistic and logocentric) between 1910 and 1913, precisely in the pe-

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17. See, e.g., Edmund Husserl, *Phänomenologische Psychologie. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1925*, ed. Walter Biemel, Husserliana IX (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1968), 128. As Donn Welton points out, to the originally conceived primordial syntheses as minimal unities of duration (retention, impressional now, protention) and to the 1907 kinaesthesic syntheses (see *Hua* XVI) Husserl adds associative syntheses of homogeneity and heterogeneity. See Donn Welton "Structure and Genesis in Husserl's Phenomenology," in Frederick A. Elliston and Peter McCormick (eds.), *Husserl: Expositions and Appraisals* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1977), 54–69, here 62.

18. Husserl still refers to the *eidos ego*, as is clear from the Fourth Meditation (see *CM*, §§ 34–35 and 40–41). Yet, contrary to a traditional language of "essences," which somehow freezes the pulse of temporal life in fixed and seemingly eternal structures, genetic-eidetic phenomenology has the merit of remaining vigilant regarding the *ego*'s temporality and its incessant flow. Husserl faces many difficulties here that, I contend, he succeeds in overcoming. He acknowledges that the *infinity* of actual and potential structural types pertaining to the *eidos ego* are not "compossible" in a "possible unitary *ego*" that would be a variant of *my ego.* For example, not all *egos* need share the complex theoretical activities falling under the generic concept of 'rationality' belonging to scientists. They are not even compossible in *my own ego* except when seen at different times. Consequently, the *eidos* of genetic phenomenology respects the *laws of compossibility*, i.e., of "coexistence" and "succession" that transcendentally speaking are laws of "motivation." See *CM,* 109/75.

19. *CM*, 86/109: "the realm of phenomena of consciousness is so truly the realm of a Heraclitean flux." See also *CM*, 49/75.

riod during which he begins questioning the framework of his *static phenomenology*. Some may find it surprising that Husserl initially fought against this "pure I" of Kantian provenance.[20] He ultimately felt compelled to admit it for essentially *ethical* reasons, however, after having examined certain lived experiences (recollection and empathy) that appeared to threaten the unity of consciousness from within and from without.[21] Hence, in 1913 the *pure I* is the indisputable source of *cogitationes* of all doxic, objectifying acts. It lives *through* its rational—cognitive or practical—position-takings, for which it is responsible, and pervades the whole (actual and potential) of consciousness life (*Ideas I*, 160/190–91). In this way, the ethical-practical dimension of transcendental phenomenology's constitutive enterprise begins to take hold.[22]

The demands of genetic phenomenology begin to appear already in 1912 with *Ideas II*.[23] From 1916 on, Husserl seeks to relate the pure I to the *personal* I, which he already describes as an incarnate individual or concrete monad. Indeed, the pure I, now understood as living "within" the personal I, will cease to appear solely as a "position-taking," responsible, "active" pole (an *Ausstrahlungszentrum*), but will also appear as an "affective receptive center" (*Einstrahlungszentrum*) of passively lived experiences (*Ideas II*, 213/224–25). Thus, in the Fourth Meditation, Husserl understands the "self-constitution of the I" as a wholly complex process of multilayered syntheses originating from the deepest dimensions of life and ruled by a "law of '*transcendental generation*,'" both "active" and "passive" (*CM*, 100–1/66–67).

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20. Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen. Zweiter Teil: Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*, ed. Ursula Panzer, Husserliana XIX/1 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1984), A 325 ff.

21. See Rudolf Bernet, *La vie du sujet. Recherches sur l'interprétation de Husserl dans la phénoménologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), 300–7, and Rudolf Bernet, Iso Kern, and Eduard Marbach, *Edmund Husserl. Darstellung seines Denkens* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1989), 190–98.

22. Rudolf Bernet, *La vie du sujet*, 306: "He [i.e., Husserl] will never abandon the idea that the true life of the subject consists in reacting lucidly to affective solicitations, to examine them critically in order to decide whether he should let them follow their course. Transcendental life—be it theoretical, axiological, or practical—always consists for Husserl in a 'position-taking' (*Stellungnahme*), . . . of 'doxic' essence. Impulsive intentionality has to be recaptured and submitted to an intentionality entirely dominated by the subject: the *subjectum* submitted to multiple impressions and associations (*Einstrahlungszentrum*) will be transformed into an active source of multiple intentional position-takings (*Ausstrahlungszentrum*)."

23. Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zur einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution*, ed. Marly Biemel, Husserliana IV (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1952); English translation: *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989); henceforth cited as *Ideas II* with German and English page references, respectively.

Above I hinted that for Husserl the primordial flux's passive stratum of sensory experiences is the "absolute beginning or origin [*Uranfang*]" of all transcendental constitution,[24] and a fortiori of the *ego*'s own constitution. At that level, an "impulsive intentionality [*Triebintentionalität*]" is given—that of *instincts*.[25]

In the Fourth Meditation Husserl merely touches on this issue. Two functions of impulsive intentionality are relevant here: it continually furnishes *active constitution* or synthesis with "material," while at the same time nourishing itself with deposited "sediments" of active syntheses. By 'material' Husserl is referring not to an amorphous or a rhapsodic flux of sensations as ultimate atomic elements but to an *intentional*—noetic-noematic (see *Hua-Mat* VIII, 70)—*hyle*, which is ruled by an a priori "universal principle," namely, that of *association*, whence the subject's "primordial history" develops (42; *CM,* 112–13/79). Thus, association is to be understood as a sort of *praxis* that exhibits, as Donn Welton remarks, "a style of possible actions" and a certain "surrounding world" (*Umwelt*).[26] It is the "irrational," impulsive domain of the passive primary temporal flux that is present from the embryonic stages of life onward, throughout the organism's development and into maturity, a condition that human beings share with animal subjects (*tierische Subjekte*). Thus, the *hyle* also exhibits a reception center (*Einstrahlungszentrum*)—albeit one that is unconscious—of intentions and instinctive associations. Husserl refers to it in several ways, including as 'pre-ego', 'quasi-*ego*', 'pre-consciousness' (*Vorbewußtsein*), 'last hyletic substrate' (*letzlich hyletischer Untergrund*), and 'affected pre-egological living being' (*lebendig-vorichlich Affiziertsein*).[27] These "tendencies" are driven by a *teleological* development that ultimately leads to an active, conscious, and rational life.[28]

By contrast, "active" constitution or genesis belongs to the transcendental, conscious, and rational *ego.* It is present at the "*lowest levels*, such as experiential grasping, explicating the experienced with respect to its parts, taking together, relating, and the like" (*CM*, 112/78), and all the way up to the higher activities of the spirit—such as those of logical "reason," ethical and aesthetic valuation, and voluntary decisions that produce norms. Husserl insists that "all the works of *practical*

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24. See, e.g., *Hua-Mat* VIII, 249 and 257. See also Nam-In Lee, *Edmund Husserls Phänomenologie der Instinkte* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1993), 55–56.

25. Husserl first examines this issue in his 1920–1921 "Lectures on Logic" in the context of an investigation of the teleological "tendency" towards truth—as a goal of agreement or universal consensus—which characterizes theoretical consciousness. See Edmund Husserl, *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis. Aus Vorlesungs- und Forschungsmanuskripten, 1918–1926*, ed. Margot Fleischer, Husserliana XI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966), 262.

26. Welton, "Structure and Genesis in Husserl's Phenomenology," 64 and 66.

27. See also *Hua* XV, 177; Lee, *Husserls Phänomenologie der Instinkte,* 210–11; *Hua-Mat* VIII, 42, 53, 59; and E III 2 [tr. 44].

28. See *CM*, 100–1/66–67. On instincts, tendencies, and teleology, see, e.g., Mss. E III 2 and E III 4*,* as well as *Hua* XV, 378–86, 403–7, 416–24, 597, and 602.

reason, in a maximally broad sense," thus even theoretical *praxis* (111–12/77),[29] belong to this spiritual sense-constitutive "activity."

Furthermore, he conceives of this sense-constitutive activity—*motivated* or nourished as it is by passive, sedimented life—as essentially *communalized* or intersubjective, as we shall soon see. The egological center of radiation (*Ausstrahlungszentrum*) is here called the primordial I (*Ur-Ich*); it is the source of ultimate validity (*Urboden aller Geltungen*) or of *ultimate responsibility* of theoretical and practical position-takings. As such it is the "genetic" heir of the static "pure I," and, in Husserl's last analyses, the "reflective" or operating (*fungierendes*) I, which he describes as escaping all objectification, and thus as *ungegenständlich.* So the primordial I is far from exhibiting a pure and transparent identity. It is always already preceded by the "enigma of the living present" (*Rätsel der lebendige Gegenwart*), which also eludes reflection and objectification. Husserl designates the "living present" as the ultimate, absolute ground of all our validations,[30] and as the "absolute flowing-static present" underlying every "foundation," "constitution," "temporalization" (*Zeitigung*), "objectification," and "ontification." He describes it as follows in an unpublished manuscript: "The explication of the flowing present's self-development in-and-for-itself in the form of a process, an event that flows in succession, is again performed in a self-involving, namely continuous, flowing present, and so *in infinitum.*"[31] The primordial *ego* constitutes itself as a unitary pole of a flowing manifold by means of responsible, *reflective* acts that have as their permanent background the living present's movement of self-differentiation. The primordial *ego*'s genesis has an ethical character because it *chooses responsibly* to constitute itself in an effort of self-renewal, prior to which it does not exist as a "subject." Thus, as Yoshimichi Saito remarks, for Husserl: "*Reflection is nothing but the constant act by which the self of the pre-reflective dimension tries to establish itself*

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29. Thus, in active genesis the *egos* actually always produce "new configurations of objects, in this case ideal objects, which for us have lasting reality" (*Hua* XV, 30), and that become "solidified" in judgments whose content we can always reactivate or retrieve in further lived experiences. Husserl is not abandoning his early critique of psychologism. Instead, while insisting on the *ideal*—neither empirical nor natural—character of logical objectivities, he explains that those idealities do not precede their production. His concern here is to point out how the "history of a meaning" takes place, starting from its most rudimentary stages and continuing on up to its retrieval in judgment, "where it becomes a permanent possession in our intentional life." See Robert Sokolowski, *The Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1970), 182.

30. *Hua-Mat* VIII, 35: "Die lebendige Gegenwart als der letzte absolute Boden aller meiner Geltungen."

31. *Hua-Mat* VIII, 28: "Die Auslegung, das Sich-in-sich-selbst-Entfalten der strömenden Gegenwart in Form eines Vorgangs, eines im Nacheinander verlaufenden Ereignisses, vollzieht sich wieder in einer und zwar kontinuierlich sich einschliessenden strömenden Gegenwart und so in infinititum."

as a subject while holding itself responsible for the pre-reflective dimension."[32] This idea that pervades Husserl's texts from the genetic period—as is manifest, for example, from Husserl's texts on renewal all the way to the *Crisis*[33]—underlies and is implicit in the brief and compact arguments of the Fourth Meditation.

Thus, instead of disposing of the subject as an "offspring of Modern Age,"

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32. Yoshimichi Saito, "The Transcendental Dimension of 'Praxis' in Husserl's Phenomenology," *Husserl Studies* 8 (1991), 17–31, here 22.

33. In his *Kaizo* articles on "renewal" (*Erneuerung*)—see Edmund Husserl, "Fünf Aufsätze über Erneuerung," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922–1937)*, ed. Thomas Nenon and Hans Rainer Sepp, Husserliana XXVII (The Hague: Kluwer, 1989), 3–124, here 20—Husserl remarks: "The renewal of man, of the human individual and of human collectivities, is the supreme issue of all ethics. Ethical life is essentially a life that consciously subjects itself to the idea of renewal, allows itself to be voluntarily guided by it and allows itself to be configured by it." Shortly thereafter he says (21): "Moral philosophy is only an absolutely non-independent part of ethics, and this should necessarily be conceived of as the science of the whole active life of a rational subjectivity in the perspective of reason that unitarily and integrally regulates it. . . . The name of 'reason' itself should thus be taken in its pure generality such that ethics and the science of practical reason should be conceived of as equivalent. And furthermore, ethics is not merely individual ethics but also *social ethics*." The latter contention should be considered in connection with Husserl's view that the subject's self-constitution is not independent of an inter-subjective self-constitution (see § 3 below). These ideas remain in force, mutatis mutandis, all the way to Husserl's final work, i.e., the *Crisis*. (See Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, ed. Walter Biemel, Husserliana VI [The Hague: Nijhoff, 1954]; English translation: *The Crisis of the European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr [Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1970]; henceforth cited as *Crisis* with German and English page references, respectively.) This is evident not only in that text's main corpus but also in the Vienna Lecture (*Crisis*, 314–48/269–99) and in the famous § 73 of the Biemel edition, which appears as appendix IV in the English translation (269–76/335–41). In the latter, Husserl writes (272–73/336): "*Reason* is the specific characteristic of man, as a being living in personal activities and habitualities. This life, as personal life, is a constant becoming through a constant intentionality of development. What becomes, in this life, is the person itself. Its being is forever becoming; and in the correlation of individual-personal and communal personal being this is true of both, i.e., of the [individual] man and of unified human civilizations. Human personal life proceeds in stages of self-reflection and self-responsibility from isolated occasional acts of this form to the stage of universal self-reflection and self-responsibility, up to the point of seizing in consciousness the idea of autonomy, the idea of a resolve of the will to shape one's whole personal life into the synthetic unity of a life of universal self-responsibility and, correlatively, to shape oneself into the true 'I,' the free, autonomous 'I' that seeks to realize its innate reason, the striving to be true to itself, to be able to remain identical with itself as a reasonable 'I'; but there is an inseparable correlation here between individual persons and communities by virtue of their inner immediate and mediate interrelatedness in all their interests—interrelated in both harmony and conflict—and also in the necessity of allowing individual-personal reason to come to ever more perfect realization only as communal-personal reason and vice versa."

Husserl recasts the grounds of this concept, linking the subject to a new sense of self-constitution within the framework of a *genetic foundation* that is to be understood as *responsibility*—a thoroughly ethical notion. In this sense, the subject is seen not as a pre-existent "founding entity" but as the goal of a practical, universal *task*.

This transcendental, multilayered, and centering *ego*—zig-zagging between the identity and difference of its active and passive genesis in the flowing-away and flowing-in of the living present—by no means remains at the abstract level of "consciousness in general." Rather, Husserl understands it to be an *individual I*, with an essentially *natural* component of primary instincts, as well as a *free*, *rational* component that enables it to assume with responsibility the meaning of the world and of its own life. On one end, its ultimate source of genesis is found in *instincts*; on the other end, its *reason* is the ultimate bearer of responsibility. This incarnate and concrete *individuality*—whereby the active position-takings become deposited as sediments, as permanent "acquisitions," convictions, habits or dispositions—exhibits a *style* or a "fixed and abiding" *personal* character (*CM*, 101/67). Within this *style* it undergoes development and experiences changes as *freely motivated*.[34] Nonetheless, beyond his description of the personal *ego*, Husserl uses the term 'subject' in the strict sense to refer to the transcendental *ego* conceived of as "monad" or as "*ego* in its concretion" (i.e., "concrete *ego*"). Indeed, in addition to the personal *ego*'s permanent properties or habitualities and its "sedimented" experiences, the monad also includes the *intentional correlates* of its lived experiences or position-takings. These correlates allow us to talk about the monad as being situated in a *worldly and familiar context*, or in a horizon of known objects and people—in short, in a surrounding world. The concrete *ego*'s unitary character, thanks to its I-*pole*, never ceases to appear (*PL*, 26/25–26; *CM*, 102–3/68); but both are ultimately unpredictable and never adequately given. And so Husserl asks himself: "How could a monadic subject . . . be univocally determined and recognizable in its full determinacy?" (*Hua* XIV, 14).

It should be noted here that when, in the Fourth Meditation, Husserl equates the self-constitution of the *ego* with the *constitutive problems in general*, he is specifically referring to the *ego* as a *monad*. On the one hand, the *ego*'s self-constitution as a monad is a revolutionary concept because the passive and active syntheses at its source are not primarily *cognitive*—and much less logical-theoretical—but rather evaluative and practical. On the other hand, it marks a breakthrough because these same constitutive functions allow the *ego* to configure a world that has both value and meaning. Consequently, Husserl's theory of the *ego*'s constitution as a *subject* is founded not on an autarchic and theoretical-solipsistic interest but on a practical-ethical one. As Husserl puts it:

34. See Ms. E III 2 [tr. 7–15].

> The totality of life is a process of permanent longing, desiring, of conscious aspiration, conscious action towards goals, a process of giving in to blind inclinations . . . or of yielding to instigations of desires and instincts . . . , and a process of spontaneous valuing and free election in favor of values and against anti-values; . . .—thus, a . . . process of free actions "according to duty."[35]

§ 3. Validity Foundation, Genetic Foundation, and Transcendental Monadology

Critics often assume that Husserl's "phenomenological" *ego* is equivalent to his "transcendental" *ego*. Yet the phenomenological *ego* appears as an "impartial spectator" that *describes* its transcendental domain in a solitary fashion and that assumes that its own *ego* instantiates structures and functions that belong to *any* possible *ego* in general. It seems content with simply phantasizing itself "as if" it were otherwise, and not having to phantasize others (*CM*, 106/72). However, this does not mean that the transcendental monadic *ego*'s constitutive and foundational functions are solipsistic. Nonetheless, even such a renowned philosopher as Paul Ricoeur—echoing other critics, such as Lévinas and Derrida, under the influence of Heidegger's interpretation[36]—has crudely misinterpreted the Fourth Medita-

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35. Ms. B I 21 1, 5b [tr. 6]: "Der Lebensprozess ist ein Prozess des ständigen Getriebenseins, Begehrens, Wünschens, bewussten Hinstrebens, bewussten Handelns nach Zielen, ein Prozess des Nachgebens an blinde Neigungen, . . . oder Sichhingebens an Antriebe von Wünschen, Begierden . . . und des spontanen Wertens und freien Sichentscheidens für Werte und gegen Unwerte . . . – also ein . . . Prozeß der freien Handlungen 'nach Pflicht.'"

36. That is, since Heidegger's critique of the alleged Cartesianism of *Ideas I*—due to the "abyss of sense" that Husserl supposedly introduces in its second part between "immanence and transcendence"; see Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*: *Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1985), 94 ■. Continental philosophers under his sway have tended to interpret Husserl's work along these lines. I exclude Merleau-Ponty here since I concur with Dan Zahavi that not only is Merleau-Ponty's work deeply connected to Husserl's but also that some of the former's interpreters characterize his thought, often without adequate textual evidence, as "antithetical" to Husserl's and more akin to Heidegger's. For example, Lévinas criticizes Husserl for allegedly reducing "alterity" or "heteronomy" to the field of the subject's "autonomy," since Lévinas contends that the intentional correlation falls prey to a theoretical and intellectualistic objectification of the noetic and noematic poles as well as of the correlation itself, and since "empathy" as the subject's lived experience by which the other is "presentified" is incapable of escaping the reign of self-sameness. (See Emmanuel Lévinas, "Le même et l'autre," in *Dieu, la mort et le temps* [Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 1993], 160–65, here 162). For Lévinas, intentionality should be abandoned in favor of both the asymmetrical relation of *responsibility* for the other and of dialog and commitment. Jacques Derrida's reading of Husserl since *La voix et le phénomène* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967) has profoundly influenced the general appraisal of Husserl's work (not only the *Logical Investigations*). Derrida maintains that not only is Husserl's thought representative of West-

tion along these lines, asserting that it suffers from two defects: solipsism and transcendental idealism.[37] Let us briefly respond to these criticisms.

Ricoeur's misunderstanding of *transcendental idealism*, to which Husserl adheres at the end of the Fourth Meditation, is *naturalistic* in origin. Husserl argues *ad nauseam* against the absurdities and contradictions of discourses that *presuppose* that they *develop within the world* and yet hope to justify their "outside," namely, discourses that, before seeking to abandon consciousness, already *presuppose* the validity of a realm "outside" consciousness itself. The only way to overcome this naturalistic Cartesian inconsistency (as a result of which immanence and transcendence are *both* worldly and natural *entities*) is to recognize that whatever difference we may discern between immanence and transcendence, this difference is already established by the *ego* itself in its *transcendental lived experience*. This is easier to understand if one recalls that transcendental experience is a synthesis of actual and possible life-experiences of *implicit* intentional horizons.

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ern "metaphysics of presence" (in Heidegger's sense)—and its constellation of motives: totalization, foundation, dominion—but also that the transcendental *ego* accessed by means of the reduction has the status (in Husserl) of an absolutely non-mediated immanence, as a pure instantaneous self-presence where a silent voice that listens to itself in the absence of the world reigns undisputed. Thus, Heidegger's followers, be they deconstructionists or not, tend to interpret Husserl's work as idealistic, intellectualistic, and solipsistic, from start to finish. For a critical view that attempts to show how Heidegger's early work is very much in consonance with Husserl's seminal work, contrary to Derrida's claims, see Jacques Taminiaux, "'Voix' et 'phénomène' dans l'ontologie fondamentale de Heidegger," *Revue philosophique de France et de l'Etranger* 2 (1990), 395–408.

37. As is clear from his introduction to his French translation of *Ideas I*, Ricoeur prefers Husserl's later work, the *Crisis*, over *Ideas I*, since the latter still suffers, on Ricoeur's view, from a tension between the Cartesian and Kantian idealistic or transcendental motives and the properly phenomenological motives of the world's givenness (or, as he puts it, between "constitution" and "intuition"). This critique deepens in his *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1967): "Husserlian phenomenology . . . appears as a struggle between two tendencies: (1) As description restricted to the things just as they are given, phenomenology is a generous effort to respect the diversity of appearing and to restore to each of its modes . . . its quota of . . . otherness; (2) In its capacity as an idealistic interpretation of its own descriptive activity, Husserlian phenomenology is a radical effort to reduce all otherness to the monadic life of the ego, to ipseity. From this comes the discomfort which Husserl's writings produce in his readers. . . . The Fourth Meditation has thus brought the fundamental difficulty of the *Cartesian Meditations* to its culmination with complete clarity. This is the difficulty of transcendental solipsism. If phenomenology is 'elucidation of myself'—'egology'—how will the otherness of Others be justified? How, in consequence, will the genuine objectivity of the world common to all of us be constituted?" (113–14). For Ricoeur, this solipsism is allegedly overcome in the Fifth Meditation. Nevertheless, Ricoeur's final judgment reads as follows: "This system leaves out all of the ultimate questions" (142), the questions of "contingent facticity" such as "death, destiny, the possibility of authentic life, the problem of the sense of history, and the like" for "It is only a system of 'sense possible for us'" (ibid.).

Regarding "solipsism," the objection is the following: even if other *egos* are part of the monadic *ego*'s surrounding world, they could be held as belonging to its "immanence," and their *alterity* would not have been properly justified. However, without entering into the details of Husserl's arguments, a careful reading shows that the constitution of the "other" in the Fifth Meditation cannot legitimately be understood as providing an "escape route" (inferential or otherwise) from an "immanent" *cogito* to a "transcendent" world with its *alter egos*.[38] Rather, Husserl's descriptions aim to shed light on the *explicit* and *implicit* intentional processes in which the *sense* of the *alter ego* is "constituted," that is, is "announced." Furthermore, he wishes to lay bare the explicit and implicit intentional processes in which the *evidence* of *alter egos* is constituted, namely, in which they are *verified* as being "there," as other experiencing subjects in their own right.

Husserl is in fact attempting not to answer the traditional objections to solipsism but to establish a stronger concept of *transcendence* and, consequently, of *evidence*; for one of the express goals of the Fifth Meditation is to elaborate a "*transcendental theory of the objective world.*" Indeed, *transcendence* (in a strong, "objective" sense) is here not simply the (ideal) "correlate" of all of *my* actual or

38. Ricoeur seems to introduce an interpretation of this kind, for he apparently reads Husserl's Fifth Meditation under the shadow of Descartes's third metaphysical meditation—where the *cogito* strives to break through its isolation by demonstrating God's existence and deductively to regain what it had eliminated by means of methodical doubt. Ricoeur (*Husserl*, 115) maintains that "the problem of the Other plays the same role in Husserl that the divine veracity plays in Descartes, for it grounds every truth and reality which goes beyond the simple reflection of the subject on itself." Other interpretations, though critically stressing different aspects of Husserl's best-known elaboration of the problem of intersubjectivity in the *Cartesian Meditations*, tend to share this view regarding Husserl's difficulties in overcoming solipsism. Generally speaking, they disqualify Husserl's strategy due to its "thoughtless presuppositions," its paradoxes or paralogisms, its alleged "circular arguments," its dependency on a sort of "metaphysics of representations," or its supposed radical incapacity to span the bridge among isolated monads, and so on (see Julia V. Iribarne, *Husserls Theorie der Intersubjektivität*, trans. from the Spanish by Menno-Arend Herlyn with Hans Rainer Sepp [Freiburg/Munich: Alber, 1994], 38–43, 149–75). Some of these critiques stem, e.g., from: Alfred Schutz ("Das Problem der transzendentalen Intersubjektivität bei Husserl," *Philosophische Rundschau* 5 [1957], 81–107), Jean-Paul Sartre (*L'être et le néant* [Paris: Gallimard, 1943]), Bernhard Waldenfels (*Das Zwischenreich des Dialogs. Sozialphilosophische Untersuchungen im Anschluß an Edmund Husserl* [The Hague: Nijhoff, 1971]), René Toulemont (*L'essence de la société selon Husserl* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962]), Michael Theunissen (*Der Andere. Studien zur Sozialontologie der Gegenwart* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2d ed., 1981]), John Sallis ("On the Limitation of Transcendental Reflection or is Intersubjectivity Transcendental?" *The Monist* 55 [1971], 312–33), and Klaus Held ("Das Problem der Intersubjektivität und die Idee einer phänomenologischen Transzendental Philosophie," in Ulrich Claesges and Klaus Held [eds.], *Perspektiven transzendentalphänomenologischer Forschung* [The Hague: Nijhoff, 1972], 3–60).

possible experiences but the (ideal) "correlate" of *all* lived experiences (explicit or implicit) *of each and every one*—of every monad, individual, person. If we remain at the level of the Fourth Meditation, we cannot explain this strong sense of transcendence.[39] Hence, it is to a stronger concept of solipsism (which is the correlate of a stronger concept of transcendence) that the Fifth Meditation wants to offer a solution. In the preceding meditations, Husserl repeatedly pointed out that any talk of a "separation" from the other *presupposes* that other's constitution in me (*CM*, 174–77/148–51), and that the meaning of constitution is not that of a *real* (immanent) inclusion of the other in me.

According to many critics, Husserl's exposition of intersubjectivity in the Fifth Meditation is inadequate; but even granting this, that exposition is in no way dispensable or trivial. This becomes clear when those critics' assessment is considered in view of the mass of manuscripts that Husserl dedicates to this subject from 1905 on.[40] Julia Iribarne, who has worked intensively on this issue,[41] points out that part of this meditation's difficulty is due to its lack of an adequate distinction between the *static* and the *genetic* approach to the constitution of the other. Apparently, Husserl became aware of this distinction only a few months after having finished writing it (in October or November 1929).[42] This is undoubtedly true. But I contend that, in addition, whereas Husserl begins the Fifth Meditation by announcing his intention to remain within the framework of a *static* phenomenology, he does so in order to keep his discussion at the level of a *first* philosophy that serves the purposes of a *validity foundation* of eidetic claims. In any case, Husserl soon felt compelled to describe the "secret history" of the structural strata belonging to this *Geltungsfundierung*; he came to recognize that the founding problems of evidence were subsumed and ultimately resolved by what he terms *Genesisfundierung*. And it is the difference between Husserl's "static" (eidetic) and "genetic" approach to phenomenological research, on the one hand, and both senses of "genesis," "constitution," or "foundation" intertwined in Husserl's genetic phenomenology, namely, active "validity" foundation, and passive "genetic" foundation proper, on the other hand, that the criticisms of the Fifth Meditation, and of the *Cartesian Meditations* in general, have entirely overlooked or ignored. Thus, most critical interpretations, themselves trapped in a Cartesian context that they have supposed to be

39. Let us recall: *all* eidetic possibilities of a possible *ego* are not "com-possible" as possibilities of *my* own concrete *ego*; in other words, not all possibilities of an *ego* are com-possible with those of other *egos*. See *CM*, 107–8/73–74.

40. The manuscripts published so far may be found in Hua XIV and XV (see n. 9 above) and Edmund Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Erster Teil: 1905–1920*, ed. Iso Kern, Husserliana XIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

41. See Iribarne, *Husserls Theorie der Intersubjektivität*.

42. See ibid., 52.

Husserl's, have entirely missed the *sense* of Husserl's arguments and stratagems, which seek to account for the emergence and validation of a strong concept of transcendence from the shared implicit and explicit experiences of each and every possible *ego* in general.

Admittedly, Husserl did not systematize his monadological theory and, as a result, it would seem to allow for many different interpretations. One possible approach recognizes two types of analysis. On the one hand, *reflective* analyses, both static (constitution of the "transcendental other") and genetic (constitution of the "worldly other"), which include first the "perceptual" constitution of the *alter ego* and then the constitution of social or cultural intersubjectivity (the intermonadic community). On the other hand, *pre-reflective* analyses, which include only genetic analyses of instinctual intersubjectivity. Another interpretation recognizes three levels articulated in a unitary monadological transcendental theory: 1) the level that Kern calls "idealistic monadology," which corresponds to both static and genetic reflective analyses (analyses of the constitution of the transcendental and worldly *alter ego*, respectively); 2) the level of "social monadology"; and 3) the level of "pre-reflective monadology."[43]

Perhaps most of the misinterpretations mentioned above stem from the fact that Husserl's manuscripts on intersubjectivity were only published some 40 years ago, and that only since then has it becomes more widely known that Husserl dealt with this problematic from the moment he introduced the reduction, in about 1905,[44] and that genetic phenomenology shed new light on intersubjectivity from the 1920s on. Moreover, the breadth of Iso Kern's sizeable editions may have dissuaded serious examination until only fairly recently.

§ 4. Foundational Discourse in Science and Ethics: An Obsolete Project?

Considering the *Cartesian Meditations* as a whole, and drawing essentially on the Fourth Meditation's conclusions, one can see that the type of foundation dealt with in the first three meditations and in the static and genetic *reflective* theory of intersubjectivity in the Fifth Meditation—namely, validity foundation (*Geltungsfundierung*)—develops within the framework of an *eidetic-transcendental* conception of *first philosophy*. *Genetic foundation*—which (as can be seen in the Fourth Meditation) reveals the *pre-reflective* life of consciousness—develops within the framework of the transcendental *facticity* that Husserl **ranges under**/includes among the general problems of metaphysics or *second* philosophy. In fact, when Husserl introduces *genetic foundation*, which is also concerned with problems of *validity*, he de facto revolutionizes the sense of *rational* knowledge, the notion of

43. Iribarne, *Husserls Theorie der Intersubjektivität*, 181–96.
44. Iso Kern, "Einleitung," in *Hua* XIII, xvii–xlviii, here xxiv–xxv.

ultimate foundation, and the allegedly clear demarcation between necessity and contingency. In sum, then, *validity foundation*, the type of constitution described in static phenomenology and reflective genetic phenomenology (transcendental eidetic phenomenology), is concerned solely with tracing back the already constituted objectivities (merely intended and/or verified senses or meanings) to their respective "active" lived experiences whence they emerge. By contrast, *genetic foundation*, which embraces validity foundation as a wider class relates to one of its members, is concerned with tracing back the origins of those same "active" lived experiences (in which mundane objectivities are constituted) to deeper, "passive," temporal, and pre-egological processes. Hence, *genetic foundation* also concerns validity, but at the deepest level of the emergence and genesis of validity (of sense and verified meaning).

As a consequence, rationality in general—which, as theoretical reason, concerns sense and validity; as practical reason, concerns means, ends, and norms; as valuing reason, concerns evaluation—can first be seen against the background and in the context of perceptual experiences and further of the most primitive, *doxic*, instinctive experiences whence it cannot be wholly sundered.

In this way the philosophical idea of an *ultimate foundation* of the totality of human experience—theoretical, practical, and evaluative—acquires a *sui generis* meaning, beyond the limited Cartesian and modern notion of foundation that has widely been deemed an obsolete project. We therefore consider Husserl's phenomenology to have the necessary conceptual tools to offer new perspectives and solutions in contemporary debates surrounding the status of scientific discourse and the nature and goals of practical discourse. Indeed, scientific discourse has meanwhile largely overcome its traditionally reductive, positivistic, and purely mathematical interpretations and has introduced a degree of indeterminacy, unpredictability, and human perspectivity that better accords with Husserl's view of rationality as an infinite task.[45] In contemporary debates on the nature and goal of practical discourse, Jürgen Habermas and Karl-Otto Apel, for example, have maintained that modern rationality and its foundational discourse is not altogether condemned to failure and have argued for the feasibility of a reinterpreted transcendental project along neo-Kantian lines.[46] Husserl's approach to practical

45. I have in mind the Copenhagen School in Quantum Physics, centered on the theories developed by Niels Bohr and in collaboration with Werner Heisenberg. See "Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics" (first published May 3, 2002; substantive revision January 24, 2008) at *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/qm-copenhagen). See also Ilya Prigogine, *The End of Certainty* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

46. See, e.g., the transcendental-pragmatic foundation of discourse ethics in Karl-Otto Apel's and Jürgen Habermas's work: Karl-Otto Apel, *Ethics and the Theory of Rationality: Selected Essays* II, trans. Eduardo Mendieta (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities,

rationality offers not only the advantages of the transcendental point of view but also the multifarious perspectives of temporally and historically rooted life-world experiences, rendering it better able to respond to postmodern challenges. The *open-ended* path towards the "ultimate foundation" as a voluntary, practical goal can thus be traversed by means of a radical monadic and inter-monadic self-meditation, in the spirit of autonomy and absolute self-responsibility.

I wish to conclude this presentation with two quotations from one of Husserl's unpublished manuscripts on ethics and science:

> But universal ethical reflection not only concerns me; . . . My self-responsibility includes a responsibility for the being of others in practical reason. . . . The being-with another human being is a communicating, a living in common. . . . All are responsible for all. There does not exist a merely private ethics; rather, individual ethics and social ethics, universal human ethics, are all *one* ethics.[47]

> Isn't the ethical question, universally conceived, a consideration with respect to which anything and everything belonging to the world and the knowledge of it must take place? And, conversely—if from the start the knowledge of the world in the form of universal world science is in question—must not the ethical human being thereby be in question as well?[48]

1996), and Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Cambridge: Polity, 1984–87). See also the latter's debate with representatives of postmodernity, in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 1987), esp. with Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1984).

47. Ms. A V 22, 12a–13a [tr. 21–23]: "Nun betrifft aber ethische universale Besinnung nicht nur mich; . . . Meine Selbstverantwortung befasst eine Verantwortung für das Sein der Anderen in praktischer Vernunft. . . . Das Miteinander der Menschen ist ein Kommunizieren, ein Miteinanderleben, ... Alle sind an allem schuld. Es gibt keine bloße Privatethik, sondern Individualethik und Sozialethik, universale Menschheitsethik sind eine Ethik."

48. Ms. A V 22, 17a [tr. 2]: "Ist die ethische Frage, universal gefasst, nicht ein Gesichtspunkt, unter dem alles und jedes, was zur Welt und ihrer Erkenntnis gehört, vorkommen muss, und muss nicht umgekehrt, wenn von vornherein Erkenntnis der Welt in Form universaler Weltwissenschaft in Frage ist, darin der ethische Mensch mit in Frage sein?"