

Phenomenology, Psychology, Epistemology

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This is my full original translation of Elsenhans' "Phaenomenologie, Psychologie, Erkenntnistheorie," an early long review article on Husserl's *Ideen I*, published in German in *Kant Studien* XX (1915). A revised version of this translation (with Andrea Staiti and Evan Clarke) appears in *The Sources of Husserl's Ideas I*, ed. Staiti and Clarke, De Gruyter (2018), 339-82. Please cite only from the translation. -JMR

Phenomenology has entered into the fundamental debates of contemporary psychology with increasing success. The significant achievements it has manifested and the scientific claims it has raised demand of us—if the confusion of the current situation is to come to some clarity—a debate with it, one in which, in addition to psychology, the theory of knowledge and logic have an essential interest. In such cases it is advisable from the multiplicity of occurrences to pick out those in which the relevant tendency of inquiry has found its most acute specification. In the case of Edmund Husserl not only is this consideration true, but he can be considered the proper creator of this tendency, even when it is a case of indications of another and attempts of a different type that have not been appealed to previously. His newest writing, the *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy*, contains a complete program on this topic with detailed scientific execution and justification.¹ The periodical that is publishing this treatise, the *Yearbook for Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, wants however,

¹ *Jahrbuch fuer Phaenomenologie und phaenomenologische Forschung*, edited by Edmund Husserl. Vol. I, Part I. *Ideen zu einer reinen Phaenomenologie und phaenomenologischen Philosophie*. Introduction. First Book. *Allgemeine Einfuehrung in die reine Phaenomenologie* by E. Husserl. *Zur Psychologie der Gesinnungen* by Alexander Pfander. Part 2. *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die material Wertethik* by Max Scheler. *Beitraege zur Phaenomenologie des aesthetischen Genusses* by Mortiz Geiger. *Die a priorischen Grundlagen des buergerlichen Rechtes* by Adolf Reinach. In addition, the earlier principle work, already appearing in the second edition: Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen*, 2 volumes, 2nd Ed. 1913 (cited as: Log. Unt.) Later the following shorter treatises of Husserl are considered: "Bericht ueber deutsche Schriften zur Logik in den Jahren 1895-99," *Archiv fuer systematische Philosophie*, Vol. X (1903) pp. 397-400 and "Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft," *Logos*, Vol. I (1910-11) pp. 316-318. Finally the following works by earlier researchers, to which Husserl's Phenomenology is closely related, are mentioned: W. Dilthey, *Ideen ueber eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie*, *Sitzungsbericht der Kgl. Preuss. Akad. der Wissensch. Zu Berlin 1894*, pp. 1309-1407. C. Stumpf, *Erscheinungen und psychische Funktionen*, *ibid* 1906. W. Dilthey, *Studien zur Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften 1905*. Th. Lipps, *Inhalt und Gegenstand: Psychologie und Logik. Sitzungsberichte der philosoph. Philol. Un der hist. Kl. Der K. bayr. Ak. Der Wissensch. 1905* pp. 511-669. Same author, *Bewusstsein und Gegenstaende, Psychologische Untersuchungen* edited by Theodor Lipps Vol. I 1907 pp. 1-203. Same author, *Die "Erscheinungen,"* *ibid.* pp. 523 ff.

above all to advance an evincible appetite in the widest circles “to get to know the character of the phenomenological method and the consequences of its achievements.” The broader treatises appearing up to now from Pfaender, Scheler, Geiger, and Reinach, which deliver a welcome illustration of the application of this method to specific single problems, should thus also to be brought into consideration in such an appraisal. Husserl’s own earlier works, especially his *Logical Investigations*, do not entirely agree throughout with the completely developed “Phenomenology” of the *Ideas*. For the *Logical Investigations*, in the face of the impossibility “of elevating the old work wholly and completely to the level of the *Ideas*,” a reworking is [instead] chosen, “which consciously leads the reader onward and upward, in such a way that, in the final Investigation the level of the *Ideas* is in essentials reached, so that the previous unclearnesses and half-truths, that we had to put up with, appear perspicuously clarified.”² In contrast, the treatise *Philosophy as Rigorous Science* already conforms fully on the standpoint of the *Ideas* and has its programmatic significance in the fact that it—under a brusque emphasis on the non-scientific character [*Unwissenschaftlichkeit*] of all previous philosophy—assigns to phenomenology the task of accomplishing a strong scientific foundation for philosophy.

A) Phenomenology and Psychology.

I. General Circumscription [*Umgrenzung*] of Phenomenology

Now in order to understand phenomenology in the sense of Husserl, currently under consideration, the first task must be to establish decisively its boundary vis-à-vis descriptive psychology. The difference between the two is already outwardly evident in the fact that phenomenology utilizes its own terminology fully deviating from the conventional descriptions of psychology. This makes the reading of the *Ideas* in particular extraordinarily more difficult. One might complain that the discussion of these central questions leans once again—with regard to terms—to some extent upon Aristotle and the Scholastics, and that its

² *Logische Untersuchungen/ Logical Investigations*, Foreword to the Second Edition (Trans. Findlay).

meanings [*Sinne*], burdened according to the new official language [*Schulsprache*] and by the striving toward a unified terminology, are inhibited on some important points. One may under these circumstances find it further understandable that the author has taken issue with almost every one of his critics over misunderstandings [of his meaning].³ But one would not thereby automatically be able to deny the right to such an individual shaping of his thought to one who has something new and valuable to contribute and who in the conceptual language of science in its current state finds no expressions that cover his concepts. The test whether these presuppositions apply must admittedly be all the more stringent when it is added that, as Husserl says, “in phenomenology, as it begins, all concepts or terms have to remain in flux to a certain extent, always primed to be differentiated in keeping with the progress made in the analysis of consciousness and the recognition of new phenomenological layerings within what is first viewed as an undivided unity.”⁴ The difficulties that already lie in a special terminology are thereby considerably increased.

The deviation in external form indicates the demarcation in terms of content between phenomenology and descriptive psychology and thereby a negative identification of their concepts is first manifested. Descriptive psychology, as empirical psychology, is an empirical science [*Erfahrungswissenschaft*], i.e., a science of facts and of realities, of real occurrences, which as such, along with the real subjects to which they belong, classify a spatiotemporal world. But phenomenology has nothing to do with particular facts from experience [*Erfahrungstatsachen*]. Although it delivers essential foundations for psychology, it is itself as little [a form of] psychology as geometry is a natural science. It does not seek to determine facts, but—and here we are arriving at a positive designation of phenomenology—knowledge of essences [*Wesenserkenntnis*]. It is not a factual science but a science of essences [*Wesenswissenschaft*]. He who completes this movement from psychological fact to pure “essence,” i.e., the “eidetic reduction,” thereby comports himself with regard to the world of facts as the

³ So against Kuelpe, A. Messer, J. Cohn, Cf. *Ideen* S. 11, 158/ 12, 151 [numbers following slash refer to pagination of Dahlstrom’s English translation]. In the first case cited, e.g., the claim is that the misunderstanding is so complete, “that nothing more is left of the *sense* of one’s own determinations.”

⁴ *Ideen* S. 170 f./ 163.

geometer does to the natural scientist. “The *geometer* who draws his figures on the board produces by this means factually existing lines on the factually existing board. But his experiencing of what is produced, qua experiencing, no more provides a *justification* for his geometric seeing of essences and thinking of them than his act of physically producing [the figures] does. Thus, it is the same whether he is hallucinating thereby or not and whether, instead of actually drawing, he imagines his lines and constructions in a world of fantasy. Matters are completely different for someone engaged in *research of nature*. He observes and experiments, i.e., he ascertains *existence* empirically, *the experiencing is for him an act that provides justification* and that can never be substituted by a mere imagining.”⁵

Secondly, phenomenology demarcates itself from psychology in that the former’s phenomena are unreal [*irreal*]. As the geometer does not research realities but “ideal possibilities,” so it is not real but rather “transcendentally reduced phenomena” with which phenomenology is concerned. It is thus—here we take its features thus far identified together in a positive determination—an *essence-doctrine of transcendentally pure lived experiences* [*Wesenslehre transzendental reiner Erlebnisse*].

Even as it describes lived experiences, it at the same time distinguishes itself from the exact sciences as a descriptive science. While, e.g., the exact geometrical concepts, as ideal concepts that express something that one cannot “see,” have a determination independent of all givenness of things, the descriptive concepts of phenomenology necessarily inhere in a certain indeterminateness [*Unbestimmtheit*]. Through this “vagueness,” which is connected to the fact that it has its application in flowing domains, it is further distinguished from mathematics.⁶

Phenomenology is thus even more precisely determinable as a “*descriptive* essence-doctrine of pure lived experiences.”

II. The Intuition of Essences [*Wesensschauung*]

⁵ Ideen 3f. 17/ 3. 18.

⁶ Ideen 138ff/ 133ff.

But this leads immediately to the further question: upon what method is this description grounded? If the essence-contents are “captured in unmediated insight,” in what does this capturing consist?

Since it is not a matter of the phenomena as facts but of their essence, one is at first inclined to look at this “capturing” as a function of thinking, which is carried out in concepts, judgments, and inferences. According to Husserl also the results of phenomenological knowledge are to be captured in conceptual expressions and to be strongly logically grounded in broader scientific reflection; but the cognitional content [*Erkenntnisinhalt*] as such is not won through conceptual thinking, but rather by means of unmediated intuition, the “intuition of essences.” The essence-contents designated by genus and species also must not be confounded with the purely logical subsumption of a lower concept under a higher one. Rather the general essence is likewise contained in the particular in a determinate [sense], likewise “to be conceived in the eidetic intuition in keeping with its own kind of being”⁷

Thus the method of phenomenology can be summarized in the following way: “It has to place before its eyes pure occurrences of consciousness as exemplars; it has to bring them to ever more perfect clarity; within this clarity it has to make an analysis of them and apprehend their essences, it has to pursue the discernible connections among the essences, and take up what is respectively seen into faithful conceptual expressions that allow them to dictate their sense purely through what is seen or, better, what is generally discerned, and so forth.”⁸

Thus the proper source of the knowledge of essences is intuition. An essence is objectively grasped in the intuition of essences similarly to how an individual object is grasped in individual or experiential [*erfahrenden*] intuition. The essence is in fact a “new type of object” which is captured in an “originally given intuition.” Husserl himself finds in this a certain approximation to positivism. “If positivism” he says, “means nothing less than an absolutely unprejudiced grounding of all sciences on the ‘positive,’ that is, on what is to be apprehended in an ordinary way, then *we* are the genuine positivists.

⁷ Ideen 25ff/ 26ff.

⁸ Ideen 123/ 119.

In fact, we do *not* let *any* authority ... curtail the legitimacy of recognizing every sort of intuition as an equally valuable, legitimate source of knowledge.”⁹

When one seeks to make a closer approximation from this concept of the intuition of essences that stands at the center of phenomenology, which is supposed to be neither a concept nor an empirical intuition, it seems obvious that one should consider historical connections. Husserl himself rejects the accusation of Platonic realism as a confusion of the object [*Gegenstand*] and the real [*Realem*], of actuality [*Wirklichkeit*] and real actuality [*realer Wirklichkeit*].¹⁰ Kant’s “*intuitus originarius*” is confined to an “original intuition” [*Urwesen*], Fichte’s intellectual intuition is “that intuition appearing to the philosopher of himself in performing the act, through which the ego [*Ich*] accrues to him,”¹¹ with Schelling it is, as distinguished from the sensuous, an intuition in which the producer is one and the same as that which is produced.¹² The connection is somewhat closer with Schopenhauer’s intuitive philosophical recognition of ideas, with his notion of philosophy as a “median between art and science” and as the stuff of ingenious thinkers who grasp the essence of things immediately.¹³

Husserl’s “intuition of essences” is distinguished from all of these historically precedent concepts of intuition through the highlighting of its depictive, its “descriptive” character and its objects as “pure” or “phenomenological givens” [*Gegebenheiten*]. In general, one fully encounters the foundational character of this phenomenology and its historical position most acutely when one takes the two foundational characteristics [*Grundmerkmale*] together: that it wants to be descriptive and non-empirical at the same time. It has in common with the empirical sciences that it is concerned with “givens,” but they are not empirical but rather “pure givens” or “phenomenological givens.”

III. “Pure Givennesses” and the Analogy of Mathematics

⁹ Ideen 10f. 13. 38/ 11f. 14. 38.

¹⁰ Ideen 40ff / 39ff (Cf. Natorp, *Allgemeine Psychologie I* (1912) S. 288ff.

¹¹ The most important debate of this concept in the second *Einleitung in die Wissenschaftslehre* (SW. I, 463), though, touches upon the work of Husserl on the point of the presentation of the relation between intellectual and sensual intuition.

¹² Schelling, *System des transcendentalen Idealismus* 1800 S. 50.

¹³ Schopenhauer, *Neue Paralipomena* (Nachlass her. Von Grisebach IV. Bd. §28ff).

We can very well understand what it means to describe a given within sense perception. This leads us to the meaningful thought that in this situation we are essentially passively constrained, —a thought that is expressed in Kantian epistemology in the doctrine of the “affecting Object” [*affizierenden Gegenstand*].¹⁴ However, what distinguishes the “originally giving” intuition of essence or “ideation” from perception as “originally giving experience” [*Erfahrung*], is not in turn “given” in the same sense as the individual object. It is much more thoroughly dependent on our “phenomenological attitude,” it is a bonus, that, at least insofar as it derives from us to a higher degree, is dependent in its appearance not—like the individual object—upon some “affection,” but rather exclusively upon our attitude. It belongs to the character of the intuition of essences that an appearance, a “being-visible” [*Sichtigsein*] of individuals—be it in instances of “experiential givenness” or of mere “phantasy givenness”—underlies it.¹⁵ But it utilizes this individual intuition only for exemplification, without in any way taking the individual as a reality. What sense does mere description have here? Is it really the case that the “pure essence” is there independently of us, in order to then be “grasped,” to be “described?” The aforementioned expressions, as also the procedures of “suspending” or “bracketing” everything that lies in the “natural attitude,” in the experience of the actually already discovered world, after which only the curious region of being of phenomenology shall remain,¹⁶ seem to point to these ideas. But this region of being does not have reality in the same way as the empirical world? But it is nonetheless a world of “pure givennesses,” a world of absolute existences [*Seins*], and it is not we who create them. The activity of essence-researchers is limited to the “phenomenological attitude,” through which this world of “pure givennesses” is opened up to them.

But the more boldly this statement of a special “phenomenological knowledge” must appear with regard to the activity or passivity of the knowing subject, the more urgently does the question arise: upon what, strictly considered, can this claim be based? Here it is characteristic of Husserlian phenomenology, that in the broadest scope the analogy with mathematics, especially geometry, is decisive. Geometry

¹⁴ [Cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, 33a]

¹⁵ Ideen 12/ 13.

¹⁶ Ideen 52ff. 94/ 51ff. 90.

appears as a form of essence-science [*Wesenswissenschaft*] in comparison to factual sciences [*Tatsachenswissenschaften*]. Like geometry, phenomenology also investigates not actualities, but essential contents [*Wesensverhalte*]. “Geometry and phenomenology as sciences of pure essence [*Essenz*] make note of no determinations about real existence.” This is also connected with [the fact] “that clear fictions serve them not only just as well but to a great extent as even better underpinnings than givennesses of currently actual perception and experience [*Erfahrung*].”¹⁷ Thus also for both not experience but the “intuition of essences” is the ultimately foundational act. It is no accident that within these mathematical parallels to phenomenology, in the progress from the *Logical Investigations* to the *Ideas*, geometry more and more takes the place of arithmetic as the typical example. Its intuitive character speaks more to the stronger tone of the “ideation of essences” of the *Ideas*. But in any case the underlying difficulties of such an intuition of “pure essence” are partly discovered through this analogy with geometry. What is possible here, seems also to be possible in an entirely different region, *without this coincidence being adequately justified through a fundamental agreement of the two regions*. In geometry it seems to us indeed that problem has been solved that was first so starkly formulated by Kant: How non-empirical intuitions are possible. Are we allowed to transfer this possibility to another region, where mathematical intuition fully breaks down? And are we justified in ascribing that particular connection of “irreality” and apodictic (and “eidetic”) necessity which doubtless is accorded to mathematics also to phenomenology, whose objects have an entirely different character? And if one finds the problem of our share in knowledge on the ground of mathematics solved in the connection—first belatedly worked out in a meaningful way by Kant—of a synthetic function with intuition, must not then the phenomenological-attitude-oriented [*phaenomenologisch eingestellte*], merely descriptive “essence-researcher” refuse every foundational analogy of this type?

However Husserl himself in no way misconceives the difference between phenomenology as a descriptive science and mathematics as an exact science. In comparison with the “formal” mathematical disciplines it is already meaningfully circumscribed, since phenomenology evidently belongs to the

¹⁷ Ideen 153/147.

“material,” “essence-” or “eidetic” sciences. It cannot be construed as a “geometry of lived experiences.”¹⁸ The procedure of the latter is specifically characterized by [the fact] that “a finite number of concepts and propositions, to be gathered in any given case from the essence of the respective domain, completely and univocally determine the totality of all possible configurations of the domain in the manner of a purely analytic necessity – so that, consequently, as a matter of principle, nothing more remains open in it.”¹⁹ Phenomenology, as a descriptive science, does not amount to a “mathematically definite manifold.” If phenomenology had to describe, e.g., an experience of the genus “phantasy of a thing” [*dingliche Phantasy*], what is “phenomenologically singular” is just “this phantasy of the thing, in the entire fullness of its concreteness, precisely as it flows by in the flow of experience, precisely in the determinateness and indeterminateness with which this phantasy brings its thing to appearances, one time from this side, another time from another side, precisely in the distinctness or fuzziness, in the wavering clarity, intermittent obscurity, and so forth that are directly proper to it.”²⁰ At the same time we experience in this connection, with all the desirable clarity, how the shift from empirical inner perception to phenomenological intuition of essences takes place. “Phenomenology lets *only the individuation* fall to the side *but* it elevates into eidetic consciousness the entire essential content in the fullness of its concreteness, and takes it as an ideally-identical essence that, like any essence, could be instantiated, not only *hic et nunc*, but in countless exemplars.”²¹ We hear further that also in further advancements to essences of “higher levels of specificity,” e.g., to the description of generic essences of any perception whatever, any memory whatever, any empathy whatever, any willing whatever, the intuition of essences remains dominant. No such dependence of accomplishments in higher levels on those of lower [levels] occurs, “as though the methodic requirement would be a systematic inductive procedure, ascending step by step up the ladder of levels of universality.” This includes, finally, [the fact] that “deductive theoretizations” [*Theoretisierungen*] by phenomenology are forbidden. Indirect conclusions are not

¹⁸ Ideen 133ff/ 128ff.

¹⁹ Ideen 135/ 130 [no citation in original]

²⁰ Ideen 140/ 134 [no citation in original]

²¹ On this and the following: *Ideen* 140f/ 134f and especially the instructive demonstration at *Log. Unt.* II. S. 439f./ *Logical Investigations*, Findlay Trans. pp. 606f.

straightforwardly denied to it, “yet since all of its knowledge is supposed to be descriptive, purely adapted to the immanent sphere, then inferences, all non-intuitive ways of proceeding, have merely the methodical significance of leading us to the matters that a subsequently direct discernment of essence has to bring to the level of being given.”

With this remark the all-encompassing dominance of intuition in the realm of phenomenology first emerges in its full acuteness. Only that which can be “brought to givenness” through the intuition of essences counts as real knowledge for it. Thereby it is also shown with full evidence that the phenomenological intuition of essences is not a positive intuition, which in the observation of its object engenders its essence, but rather a process which in its degree of passivity amounts to mere sensuous intuition. *The “pure essences” are there; it is only a matter of us “seeing” them.* What we contribute to this is only the “attitude.” Admittedly, Husserl himself occasionally emphasizes the spontaneity of the “originally given consciousness of an essence” or of “ideation,” whereas spontaneity is inessential to the sensuously given, to the experiencing consciousness: the individual object can “appear,” [can] be apprehended in consciousness [*aufassungmaessig bewusst sein*], but without a spontaneous “activity” on its own part. But this apprehension is more closely illustrated in this regard [by the fact that] in the case of ideation not the essence but rather the consciousness of it is a created thing [*Erzeugtes*], and the intuition of essences is to be expressly obviated from the skeptical objection that “essence” is a fiction, as the analogue of sensuous perception and not of “imagination” indicates.²² Is it possible, despite the caveat of the author, to follow this line of thought without thinking of Platonic realism? But the phenomena of “pure phenomenology” are still characterized as “irreal?” We must leave it at this: that they do not have the “reality” of real occurrences, which are classified according to their real existence in the spatio-temporal world. But since they are neither produced as “givennesses” from us, nor somehow able, as true judgments to be brought under the concept of “validity,” they must be accorded at least enough *measure of reality to make it possible for them to be discovered by us*, so as to be apprehended in [our] looking. Their “exemplification” in empirical givennesses changes nothing in this regard for this very reason, since

²² Cf. *Ideen*. pp. 42ff/ 41ff.

the latter are only “examples” in which each pure givenness is seen. Such a reality of “pure essences”—even when so very much “thinned” [*verduennte*]²³—may appear comprehensibly to us in the framework of certain systems of the past, but it could hardly find a place within modern thought which would justify its deployment in this form. And yet its presupposition, as we have seen, is a consequence of phenomenology not to be denied. The assumptions of this descriptive science lead—since its objects lie beyond experience and yet are also not produced by us—into the thick of a metaphysics,²³ one around which it is so hazardous, that its own content is supposed to arise not out of generally controllable thinking, but rather out of a likewise non-empirical intuition.

But even this last point still demands a special investigation. One could still say: there exists in fact a special way to gain access to knowledge of that “pure essence”; he who does not know how to go this way will naturally also deny that he must believe in the knowledge discovered in this way. In fact Husserl aligns himself with this viewpoint. The shift from the natural to the phenomenological attitude is not easy to complete. The new field does not lie “lie spread out before our view, with an abundance of separate givennesses, such that we could simply grab hold of them, and be certain of the possibility of making them the objects of a science, not to speak of being certain of the method, by which we are supposed to proceed here.”²⁴ In order to “bring the field of the subject matter [*Sachfeld*] – that of the transcendently pure consciousness – into [the scope of] a focus that apprehends it” at all, it is necessary “to shift focus painstakingly from the kinds of natural givenness of which it is continuously conscious, and which are, as it were, interwoven with the newly intended kinds of givenness,” whereby also everything is lacking “that works to our advantage for the natural sphere of objects, namely, the familiarity through practiced intuition, the benefit of inherited ways of theorizing and discipline-specific

²³ One can compare, for example, the following lines from *Ideen* p. 94/ 91: “...we direct our focus (the focus that apprehends and investigates things theoretically) on *pure consciousness in its own absolute being*. What is sought is, accordingly, what remains as the “*phenomenological residue*,” what remains, despite the fact that we have “suspended” the entire world with all the things, animate beings, human beings, ourselves included. We have actually lost nothing, but acquired the complete, absolute being that, correctly understood, contains every instance of worldly transcendence in itself, “constituting” them in itself.”

²⁴ *Ideen* 120/ 116.

methods,” the assurance that follows from manifold applications in science and in praxis.²⁵ But is it not then noteworthy, that this possibility of a knowledge free from all errors of experience [*Erfahrung*], which, once at hand, should lead to absolutely necessary and general acceptance of compelling results, was not already put into practice earlier, and until now has in no way borne fruit? This argument, although it is applied quite abusively, still has some proving power [*Beweiskraft*] here, where it is a matter of the cognitional operations of thinking [*Erkenntnistaetigkeiten des Denkens*] for centuries practiced and known in their originality and directed to the essence of things, to provide a new procedure on the side.

But in any case the question is not to be avoided, Which place does this phenomenological function have in the “stream of lived experience” [*Erlebnisstrom*] of the psyche itself? Indeed, the essence of phenomenology as a “pure lived experience” must in turn be phenomenologically identified.²⁶ With this backward reflectiveness upon itself it is not as if phenomenology is completely in the same situation as psychology and logic, which likewise execute their method on themselves. For in order to arrive at the essence of phenomenology, the essence-researcher must first discover and learn for himself the application of the method of [arriving at such] knowledge. In all respects, then, the phenomenological function must also itself be empirically discovered in the “flow of lived experience.” At the ground of the intuition of essences there thus always lies an individual intuition, be it from experiential- [*Erfahrungs-*] or from phantasy-givenesses. Such a starting point of individual essences must also have been at hand for phenomenology; indeed it would be virtually an indispensable presupposition of phenomenological knowledge. From this point of view it is not unproblematic for this entire direction of knowledge that so many researchers can discover nothing of this “intuition of essences” on their own; or moreover, that they always find the function that would be ascribed to this “intuition of essences” in the procedures of empirical descriptive psychology instead.

²⁵ Ideen 121/ 117.

²⁶ Ideen 122f/ 118f.

For there is no doubt that one of the weakest points of phenomenology lies in the unification of two contentions: one, that it is a matter of the grasping of “givennesses,” and the other, that this procedure itself should be dissociated from any kind of experience [*Erfahrung*]. In mathematics—whose analogy is among other things supposed to clarify the possibility of such a state of affairs—as Husserl himself admits, one cannot talk of “pure givennesses” in the same sense as in phenomenology. There it is a matter of objects, which as “irreal possibilities” are produced at will in the manner of “pure analytic necessity,” [whereas] here [it is a matter of] objects which in the first instance are given in experience [*Erfahrung*], and which in phenomenology, while also not empirical, nonetheless are grasped “in the complete fullness of their concreteness [*Konkretion*].” With respect to the uniqueness of a concrete given, on the other hand, we can take whatever “attitude” we wish [“uns einstellen”]; the radical distinction remains, which Kant characterized most sharply for all time with the words: “With regard to the latter (the ‘something’ that ‘contains an existence and corresponds to sensation’²⁷), which can never be given in a determinate manner except empirically, we can have nothing *a priori* except indeterminate concepts of the synthesis of possible sensations insofar as they belong to the unity of apperception (in a possible experience). With regard to the former (the form of intuition in space and time²⁸) we can determine our concepts *a priori* in intuition, for we create the objects themselves in space and time through homogeneous synthesis, considering them merely as *quanta*.”²⁹ This means that it expands the concept of givenness through things not understandable [*durch Unverstaendliche*] when one applies it to something which, although present as something concrete, nonetheless is not supposed to be discoverable in experience. Should there really be—to speak once more in the language of Kant—between the “receptivity of the impressions” through which an object is given to us, and the “spontaneity of the concepts” through which this will be thought “in relation to every representation,” a medium which can be ascribed together to spontaneity and to givenness?

²⁷ Elsenhans’ interpolation –Tr.

²⁸ Elsenhans’ interpolation –Tr.

²⁹ Kant, *Kritik der Reinen Vernunft*, in the section ‘The discipline of pure reason in its dogmatic use,’ Kerbach edition p. 555/ *Critique of Pure Reason* A723/B751 [Guyer and Wood trans. p.635.]

IV. The Relation of Phenomenology to Empirical Psychology, of Description to Conceptual Development

But to this non-unifiability in principle of the two concepts there now also comes the difficulty that lies in the relation of every “pure” givenness to the empirical givennesses and in the reciprocal relation of their conceptual development. The relationship of phenomenology to exact empirical psychology receives an especially detailed articulation from Husserl in the treatise over “Philosophy as a Rigorous Science.” The description of givennesses of experience is carried out in experimental psychology; the immanent analysis that goes hand in hand with it and the conceptual apprehension of the same is carried out by means of a pool of concepts, whose scientific worth is to be decisive for all further methodological steps. A psychology which only used the concepts identifying its objects (e.g. the words “perception,” “memory,” “imagined presentation” [*Phantasievorstellung*]) in the vague, fully chaotic sense which it had somehow appropriated in the “history” of consciousness, would have just as little claim to exactitude as would a physics that made do with everyday concepts of “hard,” “warm,” “mass,” etc. As a science of “the phenomena of physics” it would be required, in order to describe and designate these phenomena with conceptual exactness, to have appropriated the required rigorous concepts through methodological work, i.e., it presupposes the phenomenological analysis of the content of concepts, which it applies to experience, but which are themselves “a priori with regard to experience.”³⁰ It would have only its “natural attitude” at its disposal to belie this foundational shortcoming [*Grundmangel*], plus its eagerness to strive to be like the natural sciences and to see the most important things in experimental methods, whereas psychical nature would exist in a second entirely different sense and with regard to its essence only be able to be grasped in immanent exhibitions.

But Husserl in no way completely repudiates empirical psychology as such. Instead he accepts it as a science of the “psychophysical attitude” in which the “psychic,” with the entire essence belonging to it, preserves the correlation to a body and to the unity of physical nature. With this “indirect natural

³⁰ Husserl, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, S. 306ff/ Lauer Trans. 98ff.

objectivity” it is “intersubjectively” determinable “as individual being” [*als individuelles Sein*].³¹ In the *Ideas* this dependence of empirical psychology retreats even further from its connection to the psychical, putting the emphasis more on its psychophysical character. Lived experience [*Erlebnis*] as such constitutes the experientially given starting point, which at first is grasped in the “natural attitude” and from it thereafter goes over to the “phenomenological reduction.” In doing this, we “transform” the “determinations” [*Feststellungen*] in “exemplary cases of essential universalities” [*Wesensallgemeinheiten*], which we are then able to “make our own in the framework of an unadulterated Intuition [*Intuition*] and to study systematically.”³² Consciousness as “the given of psychological experience” is [the] object of both types of psychology, the empirical in the “scientific investigation of experiences” and “eidetic psychology” in the “science of essences.”³³ Thus in any case the same psychic experience can be the object of both modes of observation. The “essence-scientific” [*wesenswissenschaftliche*] research is said to be the foundation and indispensable precondition of the other.

But mustn't phenomenology itself also experience retroactive effects [*Rueckwirkungen*] and adjustments of content from empirical research? Can the essence-researcher then fully elude a realization of empirical givens, which he establishes in relation to the same object in a different way? In any case, the knowledge of essences is supposed to be fully separated from the knowledge of facts; ‘pure truths of essence’ should not contain the slightest claim concerning facts.³⁴ But it is nonetheless a matter of real occurrences, whose empirical investigation, even when it presupposes a preceding analysis of its essence, in its further course can leave this itself impossibly untouched? Let us home in on an example! “We transport ourselves, in a lively intuition (even if it be imagined), into any sort of implementation of an act, for instance, into an enjoyment of a sequence of theoretical thoughts [*Gedankengang*], freely and fruitfully elapsing. We carry out all reductions and see what lies in the pure essence of the

³¹ [*Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft*] *Logos* S. 319ff./ Lauer Trans. 117.

³² *Ideen* 146/ 140.

³³ *Ideen* 143/ 137.

³⁴ *Ideen* 13/ 14.

phenomenological matters. What is first is, accordingly, [the attention] being turned to the elapsing thoughts... and so forth.”³⁵ With this process are doubtless mixed together [1] associative presentations [*Vorstellungsassoziationen*] in many ways conditioned by it and modified with respect to their essence, [2] feelings of pleasure, and [3] other readily accessible factors of experimental and empirical-descriptive research. Should the essence researcher in the moment of “immanent intuition” divest himself of all of the experiences of empirical research known to him on the basis of these objects? And when the empirical science is directed to that which is seen phenomenologically, should he then ignore this being-directed? Naturally phenomenology answers this question affirmatively, since according to its fundamental thesis the intuition of essences should accord a superior credibility to all experiences. But thereby we are standing once again directly before *that stark separation of a world of “pure essences” and a world of facts of experience* [Erfahrungstatsachen], *which is supposed to establish the beginnings of all knowledge and yet at the same time is the boldest of all metaphysical hypotheses.*

So it is no wonder that Husserlian phenomenology, despite the protests of its originator, has again and again been confused with empirical descriptive psychology. Not only have Husserl’s own earlier expressions contributed to this; it also has to do with the timidity of the author who engrossed himself in his logical general perspective and in a terminology at last partly reminiscent of the scholastics –this step in the direction of a conceptual realism [*Begriffsrealismus*] that at least approaches that of Plato. Every real carrying out of his phenomenological program also shows that in every arbitrarily determined expression regarding a lived experience it is not possible to preserve a fundamentally sharp delimitation from empirical science of any kind. It is nonetheless correct that also empirical-inductive science in no way gains its knowledge exclusively through induction as such. Without regard to the general logical presuppositions of all inductive methods (that in spite of [the claims of] John Stuart Mill can never be derived from inductive methods themselves), the empirical description of psychic lived experiences also operates necessarily with word meanings that are in the first place still “vague,” which it—since it must after all begin somewhere—still cannot always first have achieved inductively. It is necessary throughout

³⁵ Ideen 146/ 140.

this connection to always keep in mind upon what in fact the process of the “description” depends. When we describe a psychic operation of perception, of memory, of imagination, of joy or of pain, we are thereby helping ourselves to these and other words for the indication of that which we intend [*meinen*] in a meaning [*Bedeutung*] which, even when only provisionally and in an inexact manner, nonetheless somehow must be defined. *Description is thus always already classification.* The later exact investigation or more penetrating analysis may deliver various adjustments and first deliver the stronger agreement between concepts [*Begriffsbestimmung*], but in order to be able to begin at all, we must sort out particular lived experiences for our observation from the “stream” of psychic occurrences and designate them in a specific way.

Thus one has no right to speak of a “merely descriptive psychology” as if in such a case something merely factual would be able to be depicted, without some scientific assumption that was already contained therein.³⁶ Every indication of a psychic occurrence drawn from the whole psychic connection [*seelische Gesamtzusammenhang*] and thereby isolated is already such an assumption. The indication itself arises from its pre-scientific level, which must have predated the scientific at some point, out of the acquisition of an individual linguistic heritage [*Sprachgutes*], which itself however is valid as a precipitate from multiple experiences [*Erfahrungen*]. This preliminary delimitation of the concept [*Begriffsumgrenzung*] then later merges with the modifications (which unfold through the investigation of the affected objects) in the exact scientific classification and determination of concepts. The science thereby accomplishes one of its most important cultural tasks [*Kulturaufgaben*], namely: to shape without error and dependably the knowledge of reality laid down in language through the definition of word meaning. This process is thus always an *intertwining of experiences, observations, comparisons, and conceptual work.*

Now from the standpoint of such considerations must it not appear impossible that phenomenology performs its “descriptions” of “essence” completely independently from all conclusions

³⁶ To Dilthey’s “Ideen ueber eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie” (*Sitzungsberichte der Kgl. preuss. Akad. Der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 1894, pp. 1309-1407), cf. my *Lehrbuch der Psychologie* (1912) pp. 48f.

derived from experience? Should we [still] hold on to the assertion, that “everything that is purely immanent to the experience and, once reduced, is peculiar to it,” is separated by an abyss from all of nature and physics, and not merely from all psychology?³⁷ Every attempt at a description seems to me to indicate the opposite. When for example Husserl describes the perceptual experience of a flowering apple tree, and in the “reduced perception,” i.e. in the “phenomenologically pure experience,” finds as ‘to whose essence it indissolubly belongs’ “the perceived as such, expressed as ‘material thing,’ ‘plant,’ ‘tree,’ ‘flowering,’ etc., so then is this description for him himself, as for the listener or reader, dependent upon his empirical knowledge of it, of what “plant,” “tree,” etc. is. This latter cognizance [*Kenntnis*] is itself modified with the progression of knowledge [*Wissen*], and also modifies the apprehension of “pure essences” which are described as the underlying basis of that knowledge [*Wissen*]. It is also incomprehensible, how the phenomenological cognizance of a lived experience should be independent of the ongoing empirical investigation of its qualities. Once this is admitted, however, then phenomenology is no longer a priori; then the entire edifice of the “pure science” has fallen.

V. The Single Application of Phenomenology as Descriptive Psychology.

In fact all attempts up to the present to apply phenomenology to the particular field of the life of the soul [*Seelenlebens*] attest to how little it is possible to keep the essential knowledge of a lived experience [*Erlebnis*] clear from any grounding in experience [*Erfahrung*]. Even the *Yearbook for Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* seems to me to archive multiple attestations to this. When, e.g., Alexander Pfander,³⁸ begins a psychology of dispositions [*Gesinnungen*] with a “phenomenology of dispositions,” to which he assigns the task “to penetrate as far as the direct grasping of the psychic self and then to give a fully accurate description of the psychic condition itself,” it becomes apparent already on the opening pages that this description is not merely tied to cases of the lived experience of dispositions

³⁷ Ideen p. 184/ 77. Cf. here and for the following the entire example on pp. 182ff/ 174ff. Also at this point we are still refraining from the concept of “intention,” for which, in the case of the pages under consideration here, the “description” is not essential and which cannot be dealt with without consideration of the epistemological questions to be posed later.

³⁸ A. Pfander. *Zur Psychologie der Gesinnungen*, Jahrbuch I, 325 ff.

[*Erlebnisfaelle von Gesinnungen*] overall, but also that every phenomenological statement concerning the essence of the disposition is co-determined through experientially given discoveries [*erfahrungsmaessige Feststellungen*]. This appearance is revealed, not by means of a secretive intuition of essences but rather—just as in every other inductive-empirical comparison and observation, only with greater concern for conceptual analysis [*begrifflichen Zergliederung*—conclusions are drawn from that which is in fact “available” or occurs in dispositional impulses [*Gesinnungsregungen*]. Max Scheler, in his treatise over *Formalism in Ethics and the Material Ethics of Value*,³⁹ also sharply emphasizes the uniqueness of phenomenology vis-à-vis all empirical sciences. He speaks however of “phenomenological experience” [*Erfahrung*] and thereby approaches the empirical—at least in expression—more than Husserl; but this “phenomenological experience” is then even more sharply demarcated from all other types of experience, e.g., the experience of the “natural worldview of science.” We also thereby experience further details concerning the relationship of the “intuition of essence” (that is identical with every “phenomenological experience”) to the general concept (such as observation and induction). The essentiality or “whatness” that it provides is “hereby as such neither a general nor an individual [one]. The essence red, e.g., is co-given in both the general concept red and in every perceptual nuance of this color.” The intuited color can also be “more or less given—just as we can more exactly or less exactly ‘observe’ an object, or observe now this, now that characteristic of its movement—except it is either ‘intuited’ and thereby ‘self-‘ given (completely and without subtraction, neither through a ‘picture’ nor through a ‘symbol’), or it is not ‘intuited’ and thereby not given.” “Or also: the essentialities and their connections are to wit ‘before’ all experience of this sort or also a priori ‘given,’ but the propositions that find their fulfillment in them [are] a priori ‘true’.” “That which is intuited as such an essence or connection can thus never be sublated through observation and induction, can never be bettered or perfected.”⁴⁰

Entirely unequivocally, the “intuition of essences is here depicted as an absolute of knowledge [*Erkenntnis*], which in comparison to the entire preceding and following research does not indicate the

³⁹ *Jahrbuch* erster Band Teil 2, S. 405 ff. Regarding the following Cf. especially the demonstration regarding the a priori and the formal as such, S. 447ff.

⁴⁰ Loc. Cit. p. 447ff.

same “given” objects. Here we have not yet argued the question, how this assumption, which actually would secure a fully unassailable position for any opinion of any “essence researcher” whatever, is able to come to terms with the question concerning the criterion of knowledge. Here we are only casually determining how nearly this doctrine comes into contact with the otherwise very differently oriented [doctrine] of Jakob Friedrich Fries. Also for the latter there is such an “unmediated knowledge” of the absolute sort in the realm of intuition. But here the unmediated intuition is through the senses [*Sinne*] toward their “existence in the soul” [*Dasein im Geiste*], in which there are neither errors nor degrees of certainty.⁴¹ The motives, however, which lead to such an absolute starting point for all knowledge, are of very similar nature. Just as with Fries distinctions of certainty and of error are to be attributed simply to “mediated knowledge,” to “re-observable reflection”, so we hear in this case that there are only the “phenomenological experience” [*Erfahrung*] “of the facts themselves and in an unmediated manner”, “i.e., not mediated by symbols, signs, indication of any sort.”⁴² [Phenomenological experience] alone gives us, e.g., not merely some possibly given determination of the color red, but the red itself. The intuition—in one case the sensual intuition, in the other case the intuition of essences—is in both cases engrossed in revision by means of activities of correspondence and comparison. It is only that the “phenomenological experience” at the same time lies beyond “all experience of the natural world-view and of science” and defies any verification [*Kontrolle*] by the latter.

The carrying out of the program at this point, in the attempt to found a “material ethics of values” on the basis of phenomenology, meaningfully shows the impossibility of secluding every application of experientially obtained observation and comparison from the influence of the givenness. What Scheler claims against Kantian formalism in ethics is “an apriorism of the emotional and a separation of the false unity that has persisted until now between apriorism and rationalism.” “Emotional ethics,” as distinguished from “rational ethics” is by no means necessarily “empiricism” in the sense of an attempt to obtain moral values from observation and induction. “Feeling, premonition [*Vorziehen*] means here “The

⁴¹ Cf. my [Elsenhans’] work on “Fries and Kant,” 1906. II. S. 4ff.

⁴² Ideen 449. [Does not correspond to marginal pagination in *Husserliana* edition of *Ideen* and cannot find corresponding passage in Dahlstrom translation. Perhaps a mis-copied Scheler reference.]

loving and hating of the spirit has its own a priori shape, that is as independent from inductive experience as the pure laws of thought. And here as there there is an intuition of the act and its material, its founding and its connections. And here as there there is ‘evidence’ and the strictest exactitude of the phenomenological method.”⁴³ The apriori is thus here a given for intuition, its identifying mark: independence from experience is maintained, however, as a “givenness” it is discovered, and for this reason is thus still a posteriori.⁴⁴ When now the “circle of facts” [*Tatsachenkreis*] upon which such a “value-apriori material ethics” is supposed to be based is discussed in detail, when we hear that values are first given in feelings, that the “having of values is in no way bound to a striving,” when allusion is made to analogous facts of involuntary striving, when it is claimed that the “premonition” [*Vorziehen*] as an act is to be fully separated from the manner of its realization, that the hierarchy of values is only graspable “in” anticipating and posting them after the fact [*Nachsetzen*],⁴⁵ then we follow this argument beyond the “facts” [*Tatsachen*] upon which a material ethics “as distinguished from a voluntary construction” is supposed to base itself.⁴⁶ We follow it beyond the facts not without constant appreciation of the acuteness of the analysis, but with growing astonishment over it, that the author thereby believes that he finds himself beyond the all other empirically comparable observations and that he chases an “intuition of essences”, which through future empirical research directed to the same object will in no way be able to experience any revision. What we read are *penetrating descriptive analyses, which begin from facts of experience* [*Erfahrungstatsachen*] [*in order to*] *to dispute the conceptual foundations with special care.*

This result is also confirmed in the aesthetic treatise of Moritz Geiger⁴⁷ and newly illuminated from a particular perspective. Here also there follows a delimitation [*Abgrenzung*] in principle from the inductive-empirical method. That inductive method recognized in itself as obvious, according to which “the rank of all types of aesthetic enjoyments are to be sought, all possibilities tested, all aesthetic feelings

⁴³ Scheler, Loc. Cit., 465.

⁴⁴ With this thought phenomenology also comes very close to the “Anthropological Critique of Reason” from Fries. Cf. esp. 449.

⁴⁵ Loc. Cit., 434, 437, 443, 491.

⁴⁶ Loc. Cit., 446.

⁴⁷ Moritz Geiger, *Beitraege zur Phaenomenologie des aesthetischen Genusses, Jarbuch I*, part II, 567ff.

analyzed,” would “in order then to attain positive or negative results through the classification of the outcomes first at the end,” is repudiated. And in response to the then immediately appearing objection—that one would certainly choose the opposed way of deductive method—it emphasizes that induction would only be one method—in fact a very specific presupposition for containing within it the possibility of its application—for coming to knowledge on the basis of facts. The proposition, for example, “two straight lines intersect each other only at one point,” or the other: “orange lies between red and yellow on the color scale” is—so long as one is certain he has arrived at it through determination of the given and not through speculation—achieved not through induction, but through generalization.⁴⁸ The mathematical example is separate for us, since its application adheres to the here entirely graspable analogy we spoke of earlier between phenomenology and mathematics, and one can speak here of the “determination of the given,” if at all, only in an entirely different way, in a sense meaningfully demarcated from all that is “the empirical.” In contrast to this the second example is from the very beginning directly instructive for the methodological question of principle. The ordering of orange between red and yellow on the color chart is naturally dependent upon [the fact] that there really is a “color chart” which is itself most certainly discovered by way of inductive-empirical research. The lived experience of the quality “orange,” which first makes possible its relation to the lived experience ‘red’ and “yellow,” is naturally as little first a givenness from generalization as any other lived experience is. But as soon as we want to say anything at all about this lived experience and its relation to others—and this is what it is always all about in science—there is revealed in every expression—and also when it be only in the word-meaning of the supposedly “pure description”—the impossibility of fully abandoning all evaluation of earlier similar empirical and of artfully excluding everything that appears through inductive procedure. In our example the conclusion is only possible through the [fact] that empirical results already lie within the “color chart,” into which a new lived experience is integrated. We repeat: it must be admitted throughout, that induction holds some presuppositions within itself that it itself cannot verify. We emphasize further that induction, the more it wishes its procedure to appear like the portrayal given above, for the most part

⁴⁸ M. Geiger, Loc. Cit. p. 571f.

already in the posing of the question, and as a general rule also during the unfolding of the investigation, helps itself to content-ful-conceptual elements [*inhaltlich-begrifflicher Elemente*] which are meaningful for the outcome, without themselves consisting of individual data whose generalization must first be derived. But this does not change the fact that in every “determination” of this sort concerning givenesses, earlier experiences [*Erfahrungen*] and the outcomes of earlier researches are assumed along with it. How little it is possible to keep apart this empiricism from a mixing together with the phenomenological description of singular experiences is also shown by the further individual demonstrations of Geiger. In the distinction between aesthetic liking [*Gefallen*] and aesthetic pleasure [*Genuss*] he also refers to [the fact] that “whoever approaches the facts without bias,”—part of this is that one bring to mind the different facts presented to experience in a comparative manner—would not notice the customarily held identity of liking and pleasure.⁴⁹ The difficulty in the conceptual demarcation of aesthetic pleasure from other [types of] pleasure is first of all attributed to [the fact] that two problems are frequently confounded with one another: the value-aesthetic problem of the distinction between justified and unjustified aesthetic pleasure and the descriptive problem of the distinction between aesthetic and non-aesthetic pleasure. The handling of the latter problem as a “purely phenomenological problem” proceeds in almost all cases in the form of a comparative observation. The author recollects some singular experience of pleasure [*Genusserlebnis*] and other lived experiences that stand in contrast to it, e.g., fear, he continues by means of a comparison and observation of them, and seeks through conceptual analysis of that which is observed and that which is compared to arrive at the knowledge of their “essence.”⁵⁰

The a priori character of phenomenology is emphasized considerably more strongly than in the previously noted work in the philosophy of law of Reinach.⁵¹ Nonetheless it also seems to me here that the desired a priority of the proposition, supposed to be valid on the basis of the structures of law insofar as it wants to be oriented to the “simple facts” [*schlichten Tatsachen*], excludes every rigid distinction represented by Husserl between the phenomenological and the empirical. Already the first example

⁴⁹ Loc. Cit. 573 f.

⁵⁰ Loc. Cit. 584ff.

⁵¹ Adolf Reinach, *Die apriorischen Grundlagen der buergerlichen Rechtes. Jahrbuch II* pp. 65ff.

derived from the “great realm of the apriori doctrine of law” leaves no question regarding this. The procedure of the “pledge” [*versprechens*] is traced in its originality, its course, its components, [and] its special characteristics [*Sondermerkmalen*]. It is a matter of the peculiar bond which the promise creates between two people, of the duration of this bond, of the claim contained therein, of the agency responsible for this claim, etc.⁵² Also whoever in the reading of this explanation does not leave out of view the exceptional position of the “specifically-lawful foundational concepts” [*spezifisch—rechlichen Grundbegriffe*], for which the author likewise brings into application the analogy with mathematical laws, is not able to avoid the impression that the reader is here prompted to recall for himself the various cases in which he has himself lived through [*erlebt*] or observed pledging in order to deduce from these cases his knowledge of the essence of the pledge and to confirm the results of the author on the basis of his own experience. Certainly in the sense of the phenomenological method merely any given instance of “exemplification” should serve, and on this basis the intuition of essences be exercised. But the phenomenological method must nonetheless take account of [the fact] that the reader re-lives-through [*Nacherlebt*] the cases exhibited to him, in order to be convinced by the correctness of the description. But if we recall to ourselves the process that plays itself back for the reader, it proves itself [to be] fully impossible to exclude the singular case of the affected lived experience lying in memory, in which, commensurate with the peculiarity of human thought, a process of generalization has already with necessity taken place. Just as little is it possible to refuse the possibility that the once-established essence would come to receive a correction through later experiences. In short: at all of the seams of the seemingly so strongly sealed structure of the phenomenological method, inductive-empirical elements leak through. It is likewise all-too-bold an undertaking, to ground a science on the discovery of facts and in doing so to rule out the techniques of the factual sciences.

So we arrive from different sides at the [singular] result that phenomenology, in the case that it does not want to take up the decisive objection to a Platonic metaphysics, despite all protests in fact

⁵² Loc. Cit. S. 692f.

cannot be divorced from descriptive psychology in the empirical sense.⁵³ Its historical right should not on that account be detracted from. It successfully enters as a factor worthy of consideration in the battle of contemporary science concerning the bearing of psychology, and its work arises here from motives whose remaining meaning must be recognized. In his treatise on “Philosophy as a Rigorous Science” Husserl has singled out with great clarity the weaknesses of modern exact psychology and emphasized the necessity of a “systematic science of consciousness whose research is immanent to the psyche.” He rightly disputes the “exactness” of a psychology that without preceding analyses works only with rough class concepts such as perception, imaginative intuition [*Phantasieanschauung*], testimony, calculation and miscalculation, measure, recognition, anticipation, retention, forgetting, etc., without providing a scientific fixing, a methodological treatment to their object-determinant concepts.⁵⁴ He has thereby on his part promoted the effort, growing ever more meaningfully out of the psychology of the time, to secure in its own right the recognition of the successful experimental work of the self-standing analysis of psychic phenomena and to set a dam against the imminent transformation of the complete science of psychology into a specialized region of natural science, “the absurdity of naturalizing something whose essence excludes the being of nature.”⁵⁵ It is thus no wonder that so many psychologists, who recognize certain inadequacies in the ruling enterprise and hold a self-standing psychological analysis to be indispensable alongside experimental methods, especially the school of Lipps, whose lifework lies entirely in this direction, draw nearer to phenomenology or expressly affiliate their scholarly equivalents with it. It is only to be regretted that the battle against the hereditary enemy [*Erbfeind*], against “psychologism,” and the conviction to only be able to free oneself from these consequences by the complete dissociation from everything empirical, has pushed the leader of this movement in a direction which, surrendering itself beyond all experience, it wants to undertake to distinguish an “intuition of essences” of pure givensesses amenable neither to the supervision of empirical science nor that of conceptual thinking. Also those who

⁵³ Cf. on his point also A. Messer, *Husserl's Phaenomenologie in ihrem verhaeltnis zur Psychologie*, *Archiv Fuer Psych.* XXII, 117ff.

⁵⁴ [*Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft*] *Logos*, S. 303f., 307/ Lauer Trans. 92f, 99.

⁵⁵ [*Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft*] *Logos* S. 312/ Lauer Trans. 107 (modified).

do not identify the empirical and the natural scientific treatment of psychology will not merely not deny their appreciation of the great work of thought which lies in the justification in principle of this direction; they will also see in phenomenology, as it is on hand for some executed work, a valuable confederate in the fight concerning a self-standing position for psychology in the whole field of contemporary science.

B) Phenomenology and Epistemology

I. The Ultimate Source of Legitimacy [*Rechtsquelle*] of all Knowledge.

A fundamental consideration of the position of phenomenology vis-à-vis phenomenology leads with necessity to epistemological questions. This despite the fact that phenomenology is not itself epistemology; it expressly ignores “the substantial and multifaceted problems of the possibility of the diverse kinds of knowledge and correlations of knowledge.”⁵⁶ However both the grounding of the central position of phenomenology within the realm of science in general and especially the epistemological significance [*Bedeutung*] of the principle of intuition lead to epistemological problems. According to Husserl, “[i]mmmediately ‘seeing’ – not merely sensory, empirical seeing but seeing in general, i.e., any kind of consciousness that affords [something] in an originary fashion – is the ultimate source of legitimacy of all rational claims.” “It has this legitimizing function only because and insofar as it affords [something] in an originary way.”⁵⁷ It is the *principle of all principles: that every originally given intuition is a source of legitimacy of knowledge*, that “whatever presents itself to us in ‘intuition’ in an originary way (so to speak, in its actuality in person) is to be taken simply as what it affords itself as, but only within the limitations in which it affords itself there.”⁵⁸ Every statement that does nothing further than deliver such givenesses to the appropriate expression, is therefore really “an *absolute beginning*, called upon to lay the ground in the genuine sense, a *principium*.” Naturally one can go further from this beginning, that which is seen can be [further] assimilated, concepts, judgments, conclusions thereby come to be established, but these later steps, all these “un-intuited procedural means” [*unanschaulichen*

⁵⁶ Ideen 48/ 47.

⁵⁷ Ideen 36f/ 36.

⁵⁸ Ideen 43f/ 43.

Verfahrungsweisen] have, as we heard earlier, only “methodological significance” [*methodische Bedeutung*], “to lead us toward the things that an ex post facto intuition of essences has brought to givenness.” Intuition in the special sense of phenomenology therefore remains here also the ultimate source of legitimacy of knowledge. With this intuitive knowledge of essences all its own phenomenology is therefore “the essential eidetic foundation of psychology and the humanistic sciences.”⁵⁹ It encompasses “in the extent of its eidetic generality” all knowledge and science, namely “in regard to everything that is *immediately discernible* in them.”⁶⁰ As applied phenomenology it accomplishes “for each intrinsically sui generis science, the ultimately evaluating [*letztauswertende*] critique, and, along with the latter, in particular the ultimate determination of the sense of the “being” of its objects and the intrinsic clarification of its methodology.” It is thus understandable, that phenomenology “is the secret longing of all modern philosophy.”⁶¹ In Descartes, in Locke and Hume, in Kant are its traces to be found.

With this [claim] the all-encompassing meaning of phenomenology, as it is conceived by its originator, is first brought into its proper light. It first delivers the authentic foundation for philosophy and through it for science in general. The principle that rules in it, that of “originally given intuition,” establishes an epitome [*Inbegriff*] of more certain original knowledge, which, independent of logical process liable to error or entirely subjective hypotheses, is able to constitute the starting point and at the same time the criterion for all further cognitions [*Erkenntnisse*]. That it can do this, however, is based essentially upon two fundamental characteristics [*Grundmerkmalen*] that are particular it: its presuppositionlessness and its unmediated evidence. The two are most intimately connected. That which is to be an absolute beginning, may be dependent on the other neither for its content nor for its validation.

II. Evidence

To begin with let us take a look at “*Evidenz*.” For the determination of this concept the opposition

⁵⁹ Cf here and in the following: Ideen 34, 11f, 121, 179 282ff./ 34, 12f, 117, 180, 270ff.

⁶⁰ Ideen 118/ 113. [The quote continues (uncited by Elsenhans) “...or at least would be if they were instances of genuine knowledge.”]

⁶¹ Ideen 118/ 113.

between thing and lived experience, between “transcendental” and “immanent” perception, is decisive. Every immanent perception should necessarily warrant the existence of its object. “If the reflecting apprehension is directed at my experience, then I have apprehended an absolute self, the existence of which is intrinsically undeniable. In other words, discerning its non-existence is intrinsically impossible.” “The intrinsic possibility of obtaining this evidence is inherent in every stream of experience and every ego as such. Each ego carries within itself the warrant of its absolute existence as an intrinsic possibility.”⁶² Also if an ego only had phantasies [Phantasien], only fictitious intuitions, the fictitious consciousness nonetheless would not itself be fictitious; rather it belongs here to its essence, as to that of every lived experience, “the possibility of reflection that perceives it and apprehends the absolute existence of it.”⁶³ A more exact determination of the concept of evidence still unfolds, however, out of the distinction between the “assertoric” seeing of an individual, e.g., the “attentive perceiving” [*Gewahren*] of a thing or an individual state of affairs, and the “apodictic” seeing, the act of insight of an essence or essential relationship [*Wesenesverhalt*], which furthermore, namely in the application of an essential insight to something assertorically seen, can also appear in a modification conditioned by their admixture. Both accord with evidence in general, but only the second to “apodictic evidence.”⁶⁴ It is strongly emphasized that in the case of evidence it is not just a matter of “a content somehow attached to the act, something added to it, of whatever kind,” but rather of “a distinctive mode of positing.” Evidence is “not some kind of mark of consciousness that is attached to a judgment [...] like a mystical voice calling us from a better world: Here is the truth!” Otherwise one would have to entertain the worry “that no theory of evidence as a marker of consciousness or a feeling can overturn. Such are doubts about whether or not a deceitful spirit (the Cartesian fiction) or a fatal alteration of the factual course of the world would have been able to bring it about that exactly every false judgment would be outfitted with this marker, this feeling of the necessity of the thought, of the transcendent ought, and the like.”⁶⁵

⁶² Ideen 85/ 82.

⁶³ Ideen 85 [Elsenhans incorrectly cites p. 285]/ 82.

⁶⁴ Ideen 85/ 82.

⁶⁵ Ideen 300/ 287.

If we begin immediately with this last point, we see ourselves challenged to pose the counter-question: Is then the theory of evidence represented here, is any such theory in general in the position to overcome skeptical objections of this sort, as they found their most extreme expression in the Cartesian fiction of the deceiving demon? Is then the “essence researcher” better at it, when another “essence researcher” in the case of the exemplification of a real or imagined experience [*Erlebnis*] determines the essence of this experience differently than he himself? How will he demonstrate the opposite to him who takes the alleged credibility of the “intuition of essence” for a self-delusion? He demands from him that he attempts to perform the “phenomenological reduction,” he emphasizes the difficulties and prejudices that the empiricist [*Empirist*] in particular has to overcome, in order to grasp the “pure givens” and expects that, so long as he is put in the right attitude [*ist richtig eingestellt*], the same unmediated evidence of the “intuition of essence” will be accorded to him. The empirical researcher finds himself in precisely the same situation who presupposes that another observer will be led, through the same consciousness of evidence that lead him himself, on the ground of a perception and observation of the same experience, to the same correct judgment. It is only that he does not thereby make claim to a previously unknown “seeing” or “intuition” from his detractor, but rather the same intuition- and thinking-bound method that has long been enshrined in the practice of science. The claim of a consciousness of evidence that accompanies valid judgment has not rightly understood the sense in which the validity of a judgment must be developed out of an inner perception of the evidence or entirely in an inductive derivation from the facts of evidence. While we are talking of the consciousness of evidence,⁶⁶

⁶⁶ What quality is accorded to this consciousness of evidence, whether its core is something like a feeling or something else, that is not the matter at issue here. Cf on the epistemological side of the question my work on *Fries und Kant* II, p. 96ff. On the psychological side my *Lehrbuch der Psychologie*, p. 289ff. [Concerning] Husserl’s remarks (Ideen p. 39ff/ 39ff): I have read with some astonishment that the previously mentioned presentations of the textbook are “psychological fictions without the least basis in the phenomena.” Should the feeling of intellectual satisfaction here alluded to, which Husserl himself cites with the “an enjoyment of a sequence of theoretical thoughts, freely and fruitfully elapsing” (Ideen 146/ 140.), should the much-discussed “feeling of acquaintance” [*Bekanntheitsgefuehl*] and also the “feeling of evidence [*Evidenzgefuehl*] substituted by Sigwart (the belief in the correctness of this feeling is according to Sigwart “the last anchorage of all certainty in general”), a bunch of appearances, whose occurrences—when we abandon the debate over the quality of feelings, which does not come into play here—are confirmed by various scientific observers, [should such occurrences] truly not have the “least foundation” in the “phenomena?” It seems to me: Here the oft-misused phrase: “He who lives in a glass

we determine it only on the basis of the psychological analysis of that psychic moment to which the carrying out of correct judgments is due, just exactly as Husserl phenomenologically recognizes the “intuition of essence” as the way to the recovery of correct judgments concerning lived experiences. The psychological ascertainment of the available feeling of evidence in a given case is naturally not the reason to evaluate a judgment as correct, but rather the lived experience of this evidence as such, which as a rule, in general, is not presented meaningfully to the judging [*das Urteilenden*] in consciousness. In a dispute consciousness of evidence stands against consciousness of evidence in exactly the same way that intuition of essence” stands against “intuition of essence.”

III. Reflection and Self-observation and the Overcoming of Doubt concerning their Outcomes

But no! We can neither leave it at this mere juxtaposition, since a decision between true and false must be possible, nor at the apparently equal rights of the moment grounded in the correctness of the judgment, since a nearer consideration of the supposed “apodictic evidence” of the “intuition of essences” leads us with necessity beyond it. Naturally this mere having does not suffice for a lived experience; it must be viewed with regard to its essence. But even this seeing [*Erschauen*] does not suffice, when it conveys this knowledge otherwise, when it wants also to possess it for itself [?] as a clear and complete knowledge. It must grasp it in concepts and name these concepts with words. The seen essence must thereby in the first place pass through reflection. Over the difficulties that lie in this Husserl has also had something to say. He brings the difficulty into connection with the difficulties of self-observation, which lie in the identity of that which is observed and of that which is lived through in experience. [*Erlebenden*]. Indeed [it is true that] phenomenology has no claim of existence [*Daseinsfeststellung*] to make concerning essences, thus also no “experiences” [*Erfahrungen*] and “observations” in the natural sense in which a factual science must depend upon such things; but it nonetheless “as the condition in principle of their possibility” makes “the establishment of essences on the basis of unreflective lived experiences.” This it owes, however, to

house should not throw stones” is truly difficult to suppress. Whoever asks us to perceive “pure essences,” pure “givenesses” which as representing an “absolute being” are neither concepts nor an intuitive content, must, I believe, be more cautious with the accusation of fiction.

reflection, more specifically the “reflected intuition of essences” [*reflektierten Wesensintuition*]. Here the skeptical objections with regard to self-observation also come into consideration for phenomenology, insofar as these objections “can be extended ... from the immanently undergone reflection to every reflection in general.”⁶⁷ Husserl is of the view, however, that also this skepticism, like every genuine skepticism, shows the intrinsic absurdity “that it implicitly presupposes, in its argumentation, as conditions of the possibility of its validity, i.e., just what, in its theses, it denies.” “So, too, anyone who simply says: ‘I doubt the epistemic meaning of reflection,’ maintains something absurd, since he reflects in making assertions about his doubts, and since setting forth this assertion as valid presupposes that the reflection actually and doubtlessly (namely, for the cases in question) *has* the doubted epistemic value, that it does *not* alter the objective relation, that the unreflected experience does *not* forfeit its essence in the transition into reflection.”⁶⁸ Since further in the argumentation the topic under discussion will consistently be of reflection as if a fact and similarly of unreflected experiences as facts, so there would also be presupposed a knowledge [*Wissen*] of unreflected lived experiences from beneath unreflected reflections, while at the same time the possibility of such knowledge would be put into question. Not the least ground of justification then remains leftover for the certainty that there is and could be in general an unreflected lived experience and a reflection. Here as everywhere skepticism loses its power “if we turn from verbal argumentations to the intuition of essences, to the intuition that affords things in an originary way, and to its legitimacy, a legitimacy that is primordially its own.”⁶⁹

This sharply executed position-taking with regard to skepticism in whose overcoming lies one of the strongest motives of phenomenology, as well as the attempt in this way to effectively disable the problem of self-observation, is, however, as will now be shown, dependent throughout upon the already-discussed question of the relationship of the lived experience to statements concerning the lived experience. The analysis of self-observation already leads with necessity to this question.

⁶⁷ Ideen 151ff/ 148.

⁶⁸ Ideen 155f/ 149.

⁶⁹ Ideen 156/ 150.

Observation is not identical with perception and just as little is self-observation identical with inner perception. The zoologist who observes an animal does not merely perceive it like a random person on a nature walk, but rather he directs his attention to the object that interests him and—this is the point that especially interests us—all the conceptual presentations [*Vorstellungen*] bind themselves unmediatedly and in an inseparable way with the sensuous perception, presentations which the observer already possesses from similar objects and which now “position themselves rightly” [*bereit stellen*] in order to make possible the scientific grasping of the objects, in this case especially their classification. Also the behavior of the psychological observer is not fundamentally distinct, insofar as also he has no choice but, in view of the observation, to bring into application the concept previously obtained through the object.⁷⁰ But even from this point, the phenomenological grasping of the essence of the lived experience is to be distinguished in two separate directions. In one sense it is to be a pure seeing which is directly characteristic of the failure of logical mediation and one of the guarantees of its infallibility. And then the intuition of essences, which can also help itself to any imagined experiences [*Phantasieerlebnisse*] whatsoever for exemplification, demarcates itself most sharply over against every determination from facts. But with what right, then, is any experience in general denominated with a specific name, when the “essence researcher” does not already possess concepts from lived experiences, which make it possible for him to place a lived experience directly under this and no other concept and to designate it accordingly? The “having” of the lived experience as such thus really means nothing as yet; any value for knowledge first arises in the moment in which the lived experience can be named and thereby is elevated out of the sphere of the mere “having” that in the case of many experiences is shared by men and animals, into the sphere of knowing.

In this consideration is also with necessity implicated in its entirety every argumentation though which Husserl strives to overcome skepticism. When he sees in the absurdity of a skepticism which doubts the possibility of stating anything at all concerning the content of an unreflected lived experience

⁷⁰ Cf. here my *Lehrbuch der Psychologie* S. 36ff and my essay over self-observation and experiment in psychology (1897).

and the achievement of reflection, and sees that in the argumentation of the skeptic talk is always of reflection as if from a fact, and likewise from unreflected experiences as facts, and thus that that the knowledge of reflection and of unreflected experiences that is called into question is presupposed as possible, the weakness of such a skepticism has been correctly exposed. But thereby it does not yet follow that every knowledge can be exclusively grounded as “unmediated knowledge” “though reflectively given intuition” in the Husserlian sense. In fact this view points with necessity beyond itself. It is uncontested that many lived experiences, e.g., joy or anger, are modified under the influence of the reflections directed toward them. We must now however assume, if we do not wish to fall into that unstoppable skepticism, that it is nonetheless possible to determine their availability and to recognize their essence; and this assumption certainly fundamentally implies the presupposition that “the unreflected experience does *not* forfeit its essence in the transition into reflection.”⁷¹ But this presupposition refers to an indivisible moment of time; and for such moments themselves it is never determinable whether the lived experience is joy, anger, reflection, or something else, when he who is reflecting has not arrived at it from earlier lived experiences and does not have a criterion, concerning these experiences, of what joy, anger, [or] reflection is. [Thus] we see: the intuition of essences as supposedly unmediated and absolute knowledge leads always further over into thinking and never allows itself, insofar as it aspires to knowledge, to fully separate from it. Overall, where we wish to do research into “givenesses,” and it is also the “essence” of these “givenesses” [that concerns us], we [must] stay on the ground of the empirical science, which Kant proved to us is the inseparable conjunction of intuition and thinking.

This demand for a criterion is strengthened even more, however, when we recall that there is not a function of consciousness that is limited to an indivisible moment in time. Even reflection, which coincides with self-observation insofar as it thereby arrives at scientific knowledge of the psychic, takes a certain time into consideration in order to accomplish its effect. Then however there always remains the possibility that the quality of that which is observed may already itself be capable of changing between the moment in which the reflective capacity is initiated and the moment in which it manifests its full

⁷¹ Ideen 155/ 149.

effect. Here only memory and the comparison of the remembered moment under the direction of a concept derived from lived experiences help in the case of the experience under consideration. Let us assume that the quality of an experience was “a” and the complete availability of the same were designated with “aaa”. Then the change arising under the influence of the reflection could be symbolically displayed in the series: “aaa, aab, abc, bcd,” etc. Every configuration can, when it is past, become reproduced in memory and in this respect does not underlie the modifying influence of the reflection; and the remembered moment can be compared with other remembered moments and with the lived-experienced [*Erlebbaeren*] moment. It can [then] be determined on the basis of the naming of the communicated concepts, e.g., A, that the series from “bcd” on in no case belongs any longer to the lived experience that is meant. Thus insofar as the reflection in general is to be knowledge, it is never merely “given intuition,” but rather always already application of concepts, an intertwining [*Ineinander*] of intuition and thinking.

The consequences for the concept of evidence are not difficult to draw from this. One may apply the word “evidence” also to the particular intuitions, or one may, like Husserl, name this the “insight into an essence or essential relationship [*Wesenesverhalt*]”. In either case the concept first achieves knowledge-value [*Erkenntniswert*] through [the fact] that it finds application in a judgment formulated as a statement, whether this itself is grounded in intuition or in another judgment. The “intuitional [*anschauliche*] evidence,” in every case in which it is supposed to really convey knowledge, is thus always at the same time “conceptual evidence.”⁷² It won’t do to take some intuited content of knowledge, which refers to some given, and eliminate it fully from the previously acquired knowledge already existent in concepts and judgments. We may perhaps at some time, so live in a momentary present [*Gegenwartsaugenblick*], that past and future sink away and the lived experience in which we are engrossed appears completely isolated within the complete “stream of experience” [*Erlebnisstroms*]. But for knowledge this isolation, even if it is supposed to be possible in developing consciousness, would be worthless insofar as the knowledge of such an experience [*Erlebnis*] in general first becomes knowledge,

⁷² This distinction is especially strong in W. Wundt’s *Psychologismus und Logicismus, Kleine Schriften I*, pp. 627f.

when the experienced is set in relation to a judgment that makes use of the already available concept. To the mystic and the Ecstatic his own consciousness is dissolved in the dedication to the all-one and thereby also every tie to any other connection in his thinking. As soon, however, as he speaks of that which fills his whole being, in order to share this lived experience with others, he make use of certain concepts, which bring what is said into relation to his other knowledge [*Wissen*] and—despite the fundamental denial of all human diminishment [*menschliche Verkleinerung*], as it is most sharply and boldly represented in Plotinus' *Enneads*—make it in some way dependent upon human-conceptual presentations [*Vorstellungen*].

IV. The Question of the Criterion and its Relation to Evidence

For the further penetration of this problem of evidence it is necessary to bring the relationship between the concepts of evidence and criterion closer into view. By evidence here we mean where the truth of a judgment, be it merely in intuition or gained independently from it, is immediately clear. It is naturally not the truth itself, nor does it get sorted into the same category as the content of the true judgment. It is rather the *psychological expression for the truth-character of the truth* [*Wahrheitscharakter der Wahrheit*]. The conceptual determination [*Begriffsbestimmung*] of evidence that Husserl gives in the *Logical Investigations* is not so far from this conception as it may seem upon first glance. There the claim is: “truth is an idea whose particular case in evident judgment is actual lived experience.” And a proper definition of evidence is given in the proposition: “the experience of the agreement between meaning [*meinung*] and what is itself present, meant, between the actual sense [*Sinn*] of the assertion and the self-given state of affairs, is evidence, and the idea of this agreement is truth.”⁷³ If we abandon the concept of truth which contains the adoption of Platonic concepts, and the thesis that the evidence of the judgment can be rooted exclusively in “original givenness,” in the unmediated “intuition of essences”—a thesis which we believed we had to reject simply because the formulation of the judgment raises the content of the judgment to the claim to evidence [*Evidenzanspruch*], necessarily extending the assertion of evidence

⁷³ Husserl, *Log. Unters.* I, p. 190f/ Findlay Trans. 195 (modified). Cf. also here my book on Fries and Kant II, 96ff.

to the contained expression of the conceptual relationship, which also depends upon the previous experience—then it agrees therein with our conception that the truth-character [*Wahrheitscharakter*] of the truth is lived through in a particular lived experience. For also for Husserl the evidence is not the living-through [*Erlebens*] of the content of truth as such, but rather a procedure in which the very “being of truth” [*Wahrheitsein*] of this content is lived through. Which quality one ascribes to this lived experience, if it is considered as a feeling or as something different, is here unimportant. In contrast [to this] is the question that is naturally the most radical: in what sense this evidence is to be considered as a criterion. If we begin from the original meaning of κριτήριον, whereby there is “a means to be decided,” a “decisive marking [*Kennzeichnen*],” we then arrive first at the notion that the criterion is a means of deciding between truth and untruth. This is the case first of all for the judging subject himself. We can also designate this subjective side of the criterion the “subjective criterion” for short. Now this “subjective criterion” goes together with the evidence. Its effectiveness, however, consists, as was already mentioned, naturally not in [the fact] that that which is judged is established by the lived experience of evidence [*Evidenzerlebnis*] itself and thereby the conclusion drawn that the judgment that accompanies it is true; rather the consciousness of evidence [*Evidenzbewusstsein*] assists it only as a factual motive [in order] to complete the judgment. That is also why it has as lived experience of the one no meaning for the agreement of the other to the same judgment. When these agree with each other, they do it naturally, on the other hand, not because they have in some way drawn the conclusion from the somehow established consciousness of evidence of the other, that the judgment contained therein be true, but rather because, on the basis of the lawfully—not “accidentally,” as Husserl wants—arriving consciousness of evidence, which we admittedly believe psychologically we can best grasp as a feeling, they can do absolutely nothing else than to grant their agreement. It thus makes no sense to claim otherwise when confronted with this feeling of evidence; for either it is there or it is not there. We can *only lead* other judges [*Urteilende*] whom we would like to persuade—and that is what it is really a matter of, naturally—to *complete the acts of intuition and acts of thought by which this feeling of evidence arises*. The correctness of the execution of this act is the “objective criterion” of truth, the only one to which we can refer when it

is a matter of researching the truth together in the debate with others. Also, where the conditions of human knowledge are themselves made into the object of research, as is the case, e.g., in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, [the criterion] does not act essentially differently. Beginning from every intertwining of intuition and thinking that we call "experience" [*Erfahrung*], the conditions of possibility of this experience must be conveyed in a correctly executed regress, and the objective criterion appears here as the principle of the "possibility of experience." Since this research work, however, insofar as it itself is cognition [*Erkenntnis*], already presupposes the possibility of the known [*Erkennens*], it cannot itself first prove this possibility, but rather it must rely upon [the fact] that this last, subjective criterion, which forms the background of all recognition of truths, does its part. But the objective criterion is also indispensable here, since in it alone is based the possibility of finding a common ground for the decision between truth and untruth.

But right here is the point where the principle of the intuition of essences scarcely allows a satisfactory solution to appear as possible. The communal searching for the truth is dependent upon the possibility of being persuaded otherwise by the correctness of the givennesses that are one's own. This however once again presupposes the possibility of bringing the other to [the view] that he is subject to certain criteria of truth commonly valid for both parties. Since an outer necessity is not possible, it can only be a matter of an inner psychological necessity, which as such is at first of the subjective sort, but which is tied to the objective in the empathically comprehensible [*nacherlebbare*] moment of every one who is thinking.

For phenomenology *there is basically no such objective criteria at all.*⁷⁴ It demands of one who wants to know the essence of the object coming under consideration the "phenomenological attitude," and whoever performs this phenomenological attitude, "grasps" or "sees" without further ado the essence of this object, of the lived experience. He who is of the view that one cannot perform such an intuition of essences, is referred to the difficulty of the procedure, to the necessity of practice and the presupposition of a complete dissociation from all the prejudices of the common empirical procedures. Such a procedure

⁷⁴ Cf. on this point R. Hoenigswald, *Principles of Thought-Psychology*, 1913, S. 30.

of knowledge places itself, however, beyond all other criteria of knowledge. Every objection against a result of such essence-research, and which fact known to experience it was extracted from, will have held against it that it does not stem from the correct method. For as soon as even once the *possibility of a correction to essence-research through empirical research* is admitted, the special right and the foundational meaning are taken from the former. Such a position seems unassailable and is thus at the same time—at least from the standpoint of epistemology—helpless against every attack. For since it claims a special way of knowledge, not overseable through the previously tested methods and only viable through a special “attitude-taking” [*sich “einstellenden”*], it also enables the opponent, on his part, to establish for himself a special procedure to assess the truth, which evades previously tested oversight of science. But even those researchers who assent to such an esoteric doctrine are hardly able to critically confront one another. At the very least the critical adjustment [*Ausgleich*] would refer to the research which has grown from the same grounds only in a secondary manner. Since the intuition of essences as such is absolute, it is not subject to any correction through inductive derivation from givens. Contention stands against contention; the one views this as the essence of a lived experience, the other that.

All of these difficulties fall away, when we remove the scholastic-apriori clothing of Husserl’s phenomenology and see in it the energetic attempt, carried out with exactness, to make certain the authentic conceptual foundations of a modern descriptive psychology⁷⁵ and a procedure free from the admixture with natural-scientific methods. The work of phenomenology up to now and its historical right allows it, as we have just seen, to be considered from this standpoint without difficulty. But there is still a final fundamentally more important standpoint that speaks against phenomenology’s full identification with psychology, one that requires separate treatment.

V. The Presuppositionlessness of Phenomenology in its Relation to Epistemology

⁷⁵ Cf. here Also H. Maier, *Logik und Psychologie, Festschrift fuer Riehl (1914)*, S. 360ff.

Psychology is, according to Husserl, an empirical science which as such already presupposes a philosophical working-out of its domain of experience, namely a “systematic science of consciousness whose research is immanent to consciousness.” This very research is phenomenology. It is the presuppositionless foundation of all philosophy in general. If one requires from a scientific philosophy an epistemological justification, and on the other hand, from an epistemological investigation which raises earnest claims to the level of science, that it satisfies the principle of presuppositionlessness, according to Husserl this principle can mean nothing more than “the strict exclusion of all statements not permitting of a comprehensive phenomenological realization.”⁷⁶ Phenomenology is capable of meeting this requirement since it, without being required to premise any of the evidence of needed assumptions, presuppositionlessly describes only “pure givenesses.” It thereby delivers absolute beginnings and authentic descriptive foundations of all knowledge and through this makes it possible to lead philosophy out of the stage of the non-scientific over to that of “rigorous science.”⁷⁷

With this we come into contact with what is perhaps the strongest theoretical motif [*Denkmotiv*] of all of phenomenology. Husserl is aware how near he comes to Descartes’ attempt to overcome universal doubt through reflection upon an unmediated certainty, a given in consciousness. Indeed it seems at first to be only a modern version of that very fundamental thought of Cartesianism, when to the possibility that an ego [*Ich*] in its stream of experience has “only imaginations,” “only fictionalizing intuitions” [*fingierende Anschauungen*], is posed the proposition: “What I have in mind may be a mere figment, but the [act itself of] having it in mind, the fictionalizing consciousness, is not itself fictionalized, and the possibility of reflection that perceives it and apprehends the absolute existence of it belongs essentially to it, as it does to any experience.”⁷⁸ But two things characterize the essential difference. The role of Cartesian doubt is played by the universal “suspension” or “bracketing” of the complete world of experience [*Erfahrungswelt*], which leaves left over only the world of “pure consciousness,” the “world as *Eidos*.” But secondly, the criterion of the—from this standpoint—

⁷⁶ Log. Unt. II, 19/ Findlay trans. 263.

⁷⁷ E. Husserl, *Philosophie als Strenge Wissenschaft, Logos* 289 ff./ Lauer Trans 71ff.

⁷⁸ Ideen 85/ 82f.

progressing knowledge is not found rationally, in the clearness and distinctness of thinking, but rather intuitionally, in the “intuition of essences.” The second of these distinguishing characteristics has already occupied us in detail, but the first is thoroughly decisive for the type of presuppositionlessness claimed by phenomenology in its relation to epistemology.

This important point contains new light, when we put up against phenomenology the standpoint of another modern philosophical attempt, to develop from a given standpoint and preferably presuppositionlessly the foundations of philosophy. According to the empirio-criticism founded by R. Avenarius the “natural concept of the world” [*natürliche Weltbegriff*] is—similarly to Husserl’s “natural attitude”—the natural starting point of all philosophizing. The world-concepts of philosophy are only appearances of variations [*Variationserscheinungen*] of the same. This natural world-concept collapses, however, seen from a formal standpoint, at once into two logical components of different value: a “manifold of factual discoveries,” and a “hypothesis.” The first, the “empirio-critical indication” [*empirio-kritische Befund*] further divides into two major parts, the “I” and the “environment,” whose reciprocal relation is unresolvable and thus is called “empirio-critical coordination in principle.” The second component of the natural world-concept consists in [the fact] “that to the movements of fellow human beings, which movements, insofar as they are only considered as a discovery from my spatial perspective [*örtlichen Standpunkt*], are really accorded only a mechanical meaning, I attribute a more-than-mechanical meaning.”⁷⁹ But now while the ruling psychology puts inside us this still passably “a-mechanical” [conception] as a “sensation” that has its place in the brain, through this “introjection” the entire natural world-concept is falsified, and this develops first through the distinction, foreign to it, between an outer and an inner world. The “critique of pure experience” then, is supposed to once again suspend this introjection, in order to re-establish the unvaried natural world-concept.⁸⁰ The path, however, along which this occurs, shows that that which is “discovered” is already considered in the light of a

⁷⁹ Cf. R. Avenarius, *der menschliche Weltbegriff*, Leipzig, 1891 S. 144ff and “Bemerkungen zum Begriff des Gegenstands der Psychologie,” *Vierteljahrsschrift fuer wissenschaftl. Philosophie* 1894. 174. 153.

⁸⁰ R. Avenarius, *Kritik der reinen Erfahrung*, 1888, I VII.

determinate science.⁸¹ The human individual appears as “highly developed organism” with a “plurality of sub-systems,” the “environment–components” as conditions of alteration for the organism, the central nervous sub-system C, correlated with the brain, fully takes the place of that which for natural knowledge is something like an “I” or as self-consciousness, and the entire system stands throughout under the criterion of preservation the entire organism.⁸²

What thus emerges here is not a variation of appearance of the natural world-concept, but rather an *abolishment of it in favor of a scientific world-concept of a different type*, namely the biological, a abolishment of it in favor of a scientific world-concept of a different type, namely the biological, which has already determined the manner of the description of that which is discovered.

VI. The Concept of Intention and the Picture Theory

Now it seems to me that Husserl’s phenomenology, while formally the same, when nonetheless material, contains a completely differently oriented admixture of natural and a scientific world-concepts. “I and environment,” the “epirio-critical coordination in principle,” equates in Husserl to “intentionality.” This concept follows Franz Brentano’s demarcation of “psychic phenomena,” that allows every psychic phenomenon to be “characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction towards an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity.”⁸³ Also for Husserl consciousness is a combinatory designation for “any kind of ‘psychic act’ or ‘intentional lived experience.’” It is thereby however not, as Brentano’s manner of expression can suggest, a matter of a real procedure or a real referencing, that passes between the consciousness or the I and the object “of consciousness” [*“bewussten” Sache*], also not a matter of a

⁸¹ [The German page contains a second footnote #1, presumably in reference to the first Avenarius citation above –Tr.]

⁸² Avenarius, *Kritik der reinen Erfahrung I*, 32ff. The question, how far already psychological presuppositions are co-contained [*mitenthaltten*] in that which has been discovered, which it seems to me should be answered in the affirmative (cf. my book *Fries und Kant I*, 15ff), should here be abandoned.

⁸³ [English trans: Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 88–89.]

relation between two things found alike to be real in consciousness: “act and intentional object.” In the intentional lived experience an object is “meant” [*gemeint*], it is “aimed” at the experience, “in the manner of the presentation [*Vorstellung*] or at the same time the judgment, and so on” and therein lies nothing other than [the fact] “that even certain experiences are present, which have a character of intention and specifically the objectivating [*vorstellenden*], judging, desiring intention, and so on.”⁸⁴ This intention of such a lived experience can naturally be present to it in consciousness, without the object itself having to exist and perhaps without it even being able to exist at all. “I think of Jupiter as I think of Bismarck, of the tower of Babel as I think of Cologne Cathedral, of a regular thousand-sided polygon as of a regular thousand-faced solid.”⁸⁵ Thereby emerges a fundamental and essential distinction between being-as-lived-experience and being-as-thing. It belongs to the essence of the lived experience that it is perceptible in immanent perception, to the essence of a spatial thing, however, that it is not.⁸⁶ We therefore designate the thing as “transcendent per se” [*schlechthin transzendent*]. To this principle distinction-quality [*Unterschiedheit*] of the essence of being, the most paramount of all, which there is everywhere, between consciousness and reality, between immanence and transcendence, belongs however also a “principle distinction of the ways of givenness.” We perceive a thing insofar as it “is presented in profiles” [*sich abschattet*] according to its various determinations. A lived experience, an experience of feeling, for example, does not present itself in profiles. “If I look at it, I have something absolute, it has no sides that could display themselves one time one way, another time another way.”⁸⁷

The epistemological meaning of intentionality becomes even clearer according to the negative side in the rejection of any kind of “picture” or “sign-theory.” [*Bilder- oder Zeichentheorie*]. When one says that the thing itself is “outside,” in consciousness is a picture as representative, one completely overlooks the most important point, namely, “that in a pictorial presentation, on the ground of the

⁸⁴ Log. Unters. II, 366ff./ Findlay Trans. 553ff (modified).

⁸⁵ Log, Unters. I, 373 /Findlay trans. 559, Cf. Ideen S 64 f./ 62f.

⁸⁶ Ideen 76ff/ 73ff.

⁸⁷ Ideen 81. 76ff/ 79. 73ff.

appearing “picture object,” we mean the object pictured (the ‘picture-subject’)”⁸⁸ The picture theory does not permit one to clarify how “we get over the picture given in consciousness alone and are able to obtain it as picture of an object foreign to consciousness.” Even the reciprocal similarity that is asserted between picture and thing does not make the one into the picture of the other. Consciousness itself must first lend to the object appearing to it perceptually the “validity” or “meaning” [*Bedeutung*] of a picture. The conception as picture thus itself already presupposes one of the objects intentionally given to consciousness, and would obviously lead to an infinite regress, since the object itself must always again be constructed through a picture. The sign theory also succumbs to the same objection. For even it presupposes a “founded act of consciousness” whereby the sign is drawn to the object. It is in general a grave error, when one “makes a real [*reelen*] distinction between the merely immanent” or “intentional” objects on the one side, and the “real” [*wirhlichen*] and “transcendent” objects potentially corresponding to them on the other. One needs, in fact, only to say it and anyone must recognize it: 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 the two. The transcendent object would in no way be the object of this presentation, if it were not its intentional object.”⁸⁹

Thereby is designated with all desirable exactness the epistemological position or—as we would better say in the phenomenological sense—the non-epistemological or pre-epistemological position of phenomenology.

If we are beginning first with the polemic against the picture theory, it is advisable first and foremost to remember that the view that our perceptions can only reach out to things through mere presentations-in-profile [*Abschattungen*] of the same, while lived experiences do not present themselves in profile, nonetheless has quite a few similarities with the picture theory, insofar as the shadows [*Schatten*] can be considered as a picture reduced to contours of that which is “presented in profile” [*Abgeschatteten*]. Our interest is in the first place to be directed toward the deeper question, to what

⁸⁸ Log. Unters. II, 422ff./ Findlay Trans. 593 (modified); Ideen 78ff. 99. 186/ 75ff. 95f. 179.

⁸⁹ Log. Unters. II, 424f / Findlay trans. 595f

extent phenomenology manages to falsify, to contrast imported presuppositions with a presuppositionless acquisition of “givenness” in the relation of thing and perception. This question again goes together most closely with the other [question] of the relation between the naïve and the scientific approach [*Betrachtungsweise*], of the “natural” and the “scientific world-concept.” It appears, namely, that the objection previously used here against a correctly understood picture- or sign theory only proves convincing when both approaches are mixed with one another, that however in the pure separation of the two it dissolves. Let us focus on some example. “Before me, in the dim light, lies this white paper. I see it, touch it. This seeing and touching of the paper ... is a *cogitatio*, an experience of consciousness. The paper itself with its objective make-up, its extension in space, its objective place relative to the spatial thing that is called “my body” is not a *cogitatio* but instead a *cogitatum*, not the experience of perception but instead the perceived. Now, something perceived can itself very well be an experience of consciousness, but it is evident that something like a material thing, for example, this paper given in the experience of perception, is intrinsically not an experience but instead a totally different kind of being.”⁹⁰ That this paper perceived by me as “material thing,” can be “a being of a totally different kind,” a transcendent thing even as I perceive it, I can only claim when I put myself in the standpoint of naïve thinking. If I do this, however, I must also do it with complete consistency. For naïve thinking this thing exists “outside” of perception. One first speaks of a picture when the thing is no longer perceived, no longer seen, heard, or felt by touch. He can from any of these make a picture, which is similar to the perceived thing. This similarity, however, does not put the picture and the thing on the same level, so that they would be interchangeable; for the picture is in him. If he arrives at a case where he can compare the picture with the thing itself, then the choice of which he “means,” despite the similarity of “content” that for him coincides with the object [*Gegenstand*], is given, however the thing itself is thereby sufficiently characterized, in that it is “outside.” Also an infinite regress need not be generated; for the picture is only required because the object itself is not there; the picture itself does not demand this mediation.

⁹⁰ Ideen 61f/ 60.

If we now go from here over to the scientific approach, we thereby desist from the oldest picture theories, from the clarification of sensuous perception through Empedocles and Democritus out of the little pictures coming off of things, arising from the penetration of the sense organs. In a debate that historically presupposes Kant's philosophy we cannot speak of the relation between thing and perception without being aware of the dependence of the "thing" upon us, the perceivers, upon our forms of intuition and thought. *The object of knowledge of necessity becomes a problem.* Nor does the object that we "mean" [*meinen*] escape it. If we speak once of "intentional lived experiences" and if all lived experiences are known as something "conscious" [*bewusst*], then we stand directly upon the ground of the fundamental Kantian thought, and we can no longer speak of the relation to the object contained in any lived experience as if the object thereby "meant" is given independently of our representation and thought. Even the "intuition of essences" cannot elude it; also for it must the object become a problem, after it is once seen as lived-through [*miterlebt*] and thereby implicated in the subjectivating process. Then it can no longer be a matter of a mere description of givens; for the "given," the "object" of perception is with regard to its content already known as an apparition from our minds [*Geist von unserer Geist*]. As Natorp said in a debate with Husserl, in place of mere description stands "reconstruction."⁹¹ To uncouple the relation to the object from this implication is then only possible when we remain in the standpoint of the naïve approach [*Betrachtungsweise*], for which content and object of perception together with all sense-data are "outside" our consciousness. With this, however, the entire doctrine of "lived experience" [*Erlebnis"-lehre*] collapses.

If we turn back further once again to picture theory and to sign theory (of which the latter comes into consideration only for the scientific approach), it becomes apparent that even compared with a consistently followed-through scientific-epistemological approach at least the objection mentioned here does not prove to be cogent. If we place ourselves, e.g., in the Kantian standpoint and assume that the unmediated relation of an awareness to its object in intuition is only possible insofar as the "object affects the mind in a certain manner," then in the moment of intuition the "picture" or "sign" of the object

⁹¹ P. Natorp, *Allgemeine Psychologie I* (1912), S. 286ff. 33ff.

collapses into the object itself. In the reproduction, however, the relation to the object lies indeed only in the “picture’s” similarity with this [object] itself or in the representing [*Vertretung*] of it through the “sign,” which itself also demonstrates that the “picture” or “sign” can be erroneously sourced to another similar object. An infinite regress is not the necessary consequence, since the representation of the object through a picture or sign is conditioned by the absence of an outer “affection,” but a representation of the representation needlessly appears. Here it is not a matter of the epistemological difficulties that doubtless adhere in other ways to such a mode of presentation. It is only to be shown that a critical debate with the picture theory does not of necessity lead to the doctrine of intention, that rather the difficulties emerging at this juncture stem from a mixing up of the naïve and the scientific-epistemological standpoints, in which on the one hand the “object” is considered to be a “something” independent from its making-present [*Vergegenwärtigung*], and on the other hand the perception of the “object” in its entirety is considered to be a lived experience of consciousness [*Bewusstseinsenerlebnis*].

Hereby however, at the same time, the *presuppositionlessness* of phenomenology is qualified on an important point. The “absolute being of the immanent,” that as such makes possible the unmediated “intuition of essences” as the foundation of all science, borrows its absoluteness from the contrast against the “merely phenomenal being of the transcendent.” But the latter is neither “transcendent,” as “thing” in a naïve sense, nor “transcendent” in the epistemological sense of “merely phenomenal.” It first gets this character because in the presuppositionless consideration of “givennesses” in the transfer from the “natural” to the “phenomenological attitude,” an entirely specific concept of “lived experience” comes into play. Thus we see: as in the other excellent attempt to move outward without prejudice from “discoveries” [*Vorgefundenen*], in that of Avenarius, one is more and more tempted to call it a biologizing approach to observation, while here it is certainly possible to take an epistemological approach, which does not, however, agree with the psychologizing⁹² approach [*psychologisierende Betrachtungsweise*]—[i.e.] is not in agreement with the “natural world-concept,” which modifies the description of the immediately given almost imperceptibly in a certain direction.

⁹² In the widest sense, which also encompasses phenomenology.

VII. The Necessity of a Presuppositionless Starting Point that is given in “Practical Realism”

But also here, as in the earlier mentioned espousal of phenomenology as a natural science over against an independent descriptive psychology, a motivating thought [*Denkmotiv*] lies at the foundation, whose fulfillment in such a closed logico-systematic form in itself already secures for phenomenology its meaning [*Bedeutung*] and its historical right. If epistemology concerns itself with the presuppositions of all knowledge to be found in knowing as such, then it is an even more important question, to what extent it itself is presuppositionless or can ground itself in presuppositionless beginnings. In no case does it thereby have the choice, somehow to act on the assumption of “givennesses,” at the very least on knowledge of them, of their objects, as a “givenness.”

This itself clearly emerges in an epistemology that seeks as carefully to avoid every empirical impact in its motivation as Kantian epistemology. If Kant seeks the principles of knowledge as conditions of the possibility of experience, or—what here means the same—to verify the knowledge of experience, then this demonstration is only convincing when experience must be possible, namely, because it is real [*wirklich*]. Experience as an “*Ur-fact*,” as Kuno Fischer says,⁹³ thus forms the starting point of Kantian epistemology, and indeed “experience” [*Erfahrung*] not in some merely empirical sense of the “raw material of sensuous impressions,” but rather in the more pregnant sense of the already carried out processing of this raw material through the activity of the understanding, since its availability in this sense is presupposed by the transcendental deduction of the categories. But since this experience also cannot—without generating an intolerable circle—be the philosophically processed experience of the epistemologist, already separated into its component parts, then it must, at least as a starting point, be the pre-scientific, or better the pre-epistemological, the “common” [*gemeine*] experience. It thus also

⁹³ K. Fischer, *Kritik der Kantischen Philosophie*, pp. 91, 99 ff. Similarly, when also from another [different] standpoint, A. Riehl, *Philos. Kritizismus I*, 303: “The concept of experience is the constant ground, the sole presupposition of Kantian epistemology.”

consummates theoretical reason, always considered, like the “practical” in Kant, as something of a “transition” from the “common” “knowledge of reason” to the “philosophical.”⁹⁴

This train of thought, especially the question, how the a priori character of the principles of knowledge conducts itself to this end, is one we cannot further pursue here.⁹⁵ We only assert that even among modern researchers, even among those for whom no concessions to empiricism are supposed, the inevitability of such a starting point is admitted to follow. Rickert can be cited as an example, who strongly emphasizes the necessity of an object presupposed by epistemology, namely that of cognition itself.⁹⁶ Whether this cognition is the cognition of a single science or of practical life, makes—at least in the relation in principle to epistemology—no essential difference. The independent researcher also stands as such in the “naïve” or “natural” standpoint. So too those epistemologists who, like, e.g., Kuelpe, expressly put the single sciences at the foundation of their investigations, in order to examine the processes of “realization” discovered in them,⁹⁷ thereby presuppose as a starting point cognition that is not yet affected by epistemological reflection. But also the epistemologically reflecting individual sees himself forced to return again and again to this starting point. Whether he now expressly makes the cognition itself into the object of his investigation or goes back in a regressive procedure behind it to its conditions: if he does not want permanently ungrounded assumptions to enter into his theory, he must always further realize what cognition, uninfluenced by his own theory, is. And he is capable of this; for regardless of how far he may have distanced himself, also in his science, from the natural standpoint, in practical life he sees himself always under the spell of the natural outlook, which has also been called “naïve realism,” but which is better called practical realism, insofar as it applies also to those who have overcome it scientifically but continue to stand in it in practical life.

⁹⁴ Cf. the caption of the first section of the *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*: “Transition from the Ordinary Rational Knowledge of Morality to the Philosophical” [as in Ellington Hackett Translation].

⁹⁵ I must also for this purpose make reference to my [Elsenhans’] book on *Fries and Kant*, I, 30ff.

⁹⁶ H. Rickert, “Zwei wege der Erkenntnistheorie, Transzendentalpsychologie und Transzendentallogik.” *Kantstudien* XIV, H. 2, p. 4 f. Same author, “Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis,” 2. A. (1904) S. 1 f.

⁹⁷ O. Kuelpe, “Die Realisierung, ein Beitrag zur Grundlegung der Realwissenschaften I (1912) S. 2 ff.

In what way this “practical realism as starting point” which thus accompanies not only the beginning, but also the complete epistemological reflection, is modified by this, we cannot further pursue here. We only highlight two consequences which ensue for the questions touched upon in principle by our considerations. First, that epistemology cannot be merely psychology, since it otherwise would rule out as a possibility in advance the assumption always to be found in practical realism of a being independent of the subject and all its representations [*Vorstellungen*]; Second, that psychology must have a comprehensive meaning for epistemology—in which it may remain preliminarily undecided whether in the form, e.g., of Husserlian phenomenology or Rickertian transcendental psychology or some other empirical psychology—since a theory of knowledge is unthinkable without exact knowledge of the process of cognition which according to practical realism is “in” the subject and goes before it. Psychology certainly presupposes epistemology—but only in the systematic order of science, not in its operation; not in this latter sense, because its most important procedures, which connect to the representations, feelings, and desires of practical life, simply presuppose the same practical realism which also provides the starting point of epistemology, and in their facticity [*Tatsachlichkeit*] are not touched by any epistemological destruction of this standpoint. In contrast, the application of numerous epistemological results are subject to psychology’s cognition just as much as epistemology itself, which falls prey to a similar circle, and which must accept applying its findings to its own investigation.

This retention once again presupposes that there is a starting point still unaffected by the investigation itself and thereby confirms the necessity of starting from what we have called practical realism. For an epistemological reflection that wishes to examine itself without a self-provided “given,” this circle is insurmountable.

Epistemology as a science destroys this its own starting point, but it always turns back to it and orients itself by means of it. Just as for the astronomer the apparent movement of the heavenly bodies, whose perception he shares with the layman and whose appearance he sees through, always again serves as the starting point and constant orientation for his scientific measuring of the universe, so must the thinker always again turn back from the height of his abstractions to the “natural world-concept,” which,

although he sees through its untenability, remains not merely the self-evident arena of his activity, but also in his deepest research and boldest ideas the starting point and means of orientation.⁹⁸

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⁹⁸ [I would like to thank Alex Cooper and Hugh Hunt for various suggestions regarding the translation. All errors that remain are mine.]