

Origins of Objectivity

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Introduction^I

"Objectivity" has a number of meanings. In this paper I will focus on two. The first sense, that of objecthood, refers to the status of being an object. "Possessing the character of a real object existing independently of the knowing mind," as Runes puts it.¹ Wiktionary defines this sense as "1. Of or relating to a material object, actual existence or reality," but while I will focus on material, perceptual objects, in principle an object is anything of which one could be conscious, so it includes Euclidean triangles, gravity, universities and democracy. This paper is about the nature of objecthood and how it comes about.

The second sense of objectivity refers to the status of being unbiased, neutral or truthful, as opposed to subjective. (*Wiktionary*: "2. Not influenced by the emotions or prejudices.") The two senses are related in that a proposition or thought is objective in the second sense in so far as it corresponds with, is normalized by, how objects really are, that is, objectivity in the first sense.

The paper will examine two accounts of the origin of objectivity in these two related senses. Tomasello, in a recent book, *The Natural History of Human Thinking* (NHHT from here on) offers an evolutionary, palaeoanthropological account of the human origin of objects and objectivity. The account has striking similarities with a transcendental account of objectivity offered by Husserl over 80 years ago, especially in his later work. I will offer as unbiased (objective, sense 2) an exposition as I can of Tomasello's "shared intentionality hypothesis" followed by an exposition of Husserl's phenomenological position. The third part of the paper will discuss whether these two accounts, empirical and transcendental, are equivalent. I will argue that the palaeoanthropology account is, in Husserl's terms, a transcendental theory of objectivity.

1 Tomasello

- **Introduction**

Tomasello opposes Descartes' claim that animals don't think. Europe has no native non-human primates, so Descartes' only experience was with non-primates. Behaviourists also hold that animals don't think; there is less excuse in their case. Tomasello has done empirical investigations with great apes that show that they *do* think.

What is thinking? Tomasello claims that thinking involves three components: representations, inferences and self-monitoring.^{II} Chimps have representations of their physical environment and can use them to infer from cause to effect and from effect to cause. Chimps also attribute mental

I Endnotes are quotations – proof texts -- from authors being discussed. Footnotes are my own – David Thompson's -- comments.

II Examples of "thinking:" Gazelles drink water. There is a waterhole over the hill. (*Representations*) So that's where I can find gazelles. (*Inference*) Oops. I forgot it's noon so the lions will be at the waterhole, so that's dangerous. (*Cognitive self-monitoring* = reflection). Early humans do this without language.

representations to other chimps which allows them to predict the behaviour of others, *intentional inferences*, as Tomasello calls them. Intriguing experiments lead him to hold that chimps monitor some of their own mental states: they know, for example, when they lack information needed for a decision and can go searching for it. Given the presence of these three components, we can attribute "thinking" to apes. Tomasello refers to this kind of thinking as "individual intentionality." Since this kind of thinking can be found in the great apes, in contemporary humans, and even in pre-linguistic human infants, Tomasello concludes that the common ancestor of the great apes and humans, about 6 million years ago, was also capable of individual intentionality. Nevertheless, human "objective-reflective-normative thinking" (NHHT 4) goes far beyond that of the common ancestor, so his question is, how did we get here from there? How and why did distinctively modern human thinking evolve over the past 6 million years?²

Tomasello holds that there are two major stages (and many minor ones) in this evolution. In contrast to the individual intentionality of the common ancestor, "early" humans developed "joint intentionality." He speculates that this first stage occurs with the arrival of *Homo heidelbergensis*, the common ancestor of Neanderthals and *Homo sapiens*, about 400,000 years ago. The second watershed is "collective intentionality" which he hypothesizes arrives with *Homo sapiens* – "modern" humans – about 200,000 years ago.³

- **Joint Intentionality**

Joint intentionality (the stage of *early humans*, before the arrival of language) involves the cooperative establishment of projects common to two individuals. Apes are not cooperative; even when two apes hunt together, each ape competes with the other ape for the prey. Within a joint project, however, each early human individual takes on a specific role and the other individual helps her to attain it. Importantly, this help includes giving information that is of benefit to the recipient for her role in the project. Tomasello's investigations of contemporary human infants show that one year olds, without language, are capable of engaging in joint projects, can interpret communication as helpful, and offer information of benefit to others. His experiments with chimps indicates that, because of their competitive nature, they cannot do any of these things.

- **Collective Intentionality**

- 1. Culture:

Tomasello's next evolutionary stage, collective Intentionality, is group-based. This is the stage of *modern humans*, of *Homo sapiens*. Unlike joint intentionality that involves each individual choosing a partner for *ad hoc* projects on the basis of their individual ability for collaborative work, collective intentionality involves setting conventional, trans-personal, cultural norms for "how things should be done" by everyone in the community. These norms originate in the group; group members feel obliged to obey them; and people can assume that everyone else in the group will also follow them, even those they have not previously met or not yet worked with in joint projects.

Collective culture is based on group identification: each of us identifies with the group and identifies other members as "one of us." Those who follow "our" norms are members of "our" community; they share our projects, our beliefs, our values and our practices. (Imagine a soccer

team.) Each of us can identify those humans from whom we can expect cooperation, even if we have never met them before or never embarked on a joint project with them. Their appearance and practices identify them as "one of us" and so we can rely on them to join a hunting party, to follow standard mating or marriage rituals, or to speak the same way as "we" do. We teach these norms to our children, so our ways of doing things (e.g., fishing techniques) are preserved, which promotes the "ratchet effect" by which knowledge and skills accumulate over time rather than dissipate (as they do with apes.) Since later generations inherit this culture, each member identifies not just (synchronously) with current members of the community, but with the ancestors (diachronically) – perhaps divine ancestors – by whom people were taught how to do things the traditional way, that is, “the way we have always done them” over generations, from time immemorial.

Norms are enforced primarily by group identity: someone who doesn't follow our norms is not "one of us;" they cannot be counted on; and so will be excluded from hunting parties or other collective ventures. Ultimately they may be exiled from the community. Individuals enforce these norms on others in an agent-neutral way (by gossip, for instance,) and feel pride or shame at the actions of other “team” members. Guilt, shame, and concern with reputation show that each individual enforces them on herself – “normative self-monitoring.” Thus, evolutionary selection weeds out non-cooperators within the group, and constitutes the group as itself a unit of evolutionary selection in competition with other human groups. This in-group/out-group psychology is unique to *Homo sapiens*, claims Tomasello, and is not to be found among the apes or among early humans.

- 2. Language

The evolution of cultural normativity permits the invention of language. Each culture develops its own linguistic norms – a language – that helps to distinguish group members from outsiders. A language offers prefabricated representations or concepts that have proven useful in the history of the culture. It allows concepts to be more abstract, precise and effective and it enables us to go beyond causal inferences to formal and pragmatic inferences.

In discourse for decision-making among cooperating equals, according to Tomasello, argumentative pressure forces people to explain their logical forms (not just use them procedurally), to make assumptions explicit, and to offer justificatory reasons that conform to the rational norms of the culture. People who do not follow these norms, who are "unreasonable" – who don't play this game of asking for and giving reasons – get excluded from decision-making.

- 3. Modern Human Thinking

This collective normativity in public discourse is, secondarily, internalized to produce “mental,” “normative self-governance” that is, rational thinking. The primary function of reasoning is to convince others, but since each of us wants to think and decide as “any” rational person would do, we simulate internally the group's normative judgments of intelligibility and rationality.

The result is the new mode of “thinking” distinctive of "Modern Humans:" a web of justified beliefs – representations – interconnected by culturally sanctioned inferences – reason – that each individual applies to themselves in normative self-governance, that is, private mentality.⁴

- **Objectivity**

Tomasello claims that the "new [collective] form of human sociality can lead to a new form of human thinking, specifically, objective-reflective-normative thinking." (NHHT 141) In this next section, my aim is to explain what he means by "objectivity" and show how his account of the evolution of thinking – the shared intentionality hypothesis – explains its origin.

- Situations

Tomasello rejects the behaviourist notion that "cognition evolves by the complexifying of stimulus-response linkages" (NHHT 8) claiming instead that organisms are self-regulating systems that adapt to their situations. Cognition is one such adaptation. "A cognitively competent organism ... operates as a control system with reference values or goals, capacities for attending to situations causally or intentionally 'relevant' to these reference values or goals, and capacities for choosing actions that lead to the fulfillment of these reference values or goals (given the causal and/or intentional structure of the situation)." (NHHT 8) ⁵

For a competitive ape, the "situation" she lives in is individual; she needs to deal with only one perspective, her own. Early humans, however, were cooperative and, in adopting a joint project, partners came to have the same goals and values as each other, that is, they established a shared situation. This requires communication which, in this pre-linguistic world is managed by gestures, such as pointing, or pantomiming. Such communication can be interpreted only in the context of their joint project and the skills they both have to accomplish it.

For example, two early humans might set out to hunt a gazelle together. Approaching a waterhole, one might point with a spear to where she sees the gazelle so that the other can creep up behind it. The recipient can interpret the gesture correctly only against the common ground they share: the gazelle is what they are hunting and they both know that creeping up behind it is a good strategy. But it is also necessary that the other assumes the pointer intends to be helpful and that pointing the spear is part of a communicative act rather than the normal effective action of spearing. The communicator, for her part, looking at the situation from the perspective of the other and anticipating the recipient's problems, does whatever she can to assist the other in his interpretation, perhaps by not jabbing the spear too forcefully. Successful communication depends on this reciprocal and recursive process of her helping him to help her to help him to interpret the communicative act.

- Perspectives

Taking the recipient's perspective into account involves two requirements. First the communicator must experience the gazelle as not just a prey-for-her, but simultaneously a prey-for-him, for her partner. Indeed she must see it as a prey-for-both-of-them, that is, something with a certain independence from her own --and his – perspective.⁶

Secondly, since the two partners are in different places and so have different roles to play in the project, she must recognize that her partner has his own perspective that is different from hers. This is a recursive structure: she must tailor her communication to take account of this difference and assume that he realizes that she is taking his perspective into account when he interprets her gestures.⁷

Establishing the joint project takes each partner beyond their individual perspectives into the perception of a situation common to both of them. As a result, each partner not only *has* a perspective, but must recognize that their own perspective *is* a perspective, and that it is different from the other's. This structure – the same situation seen from different perspectives – is an early hint of the appearance-reality distinction and prefigures "objectivity," claims Tomasello, though we're not there yet.⁸

Perspective for Tomasello is not only spatial, but conceptual: "the same situation [can be viewed] simultaneously under different construals as, for example, berry, fruit, food, or trading resource." (NHHT 96) The communicator can take the recipient's construal into account only by realizing that her own conceptualization is but one way of looking at things.⁹

According to Tomasello's research, pre-linguistic children can appreciate a partner's perspective, while great apes cannot.

- Objects

The arrival of collective intentionality takes modern humans beyond the recognition by early humans that one's own perspective is not that of their partner's to the notion of a perspective-for-all-of-us – where "us" refers to all members of the collective. Objectivity involves deferring to the more objective reality of the group, the ever wider perspective embedded in a more encompassing, transpersonally constituted "view from anyone." Cultural identity brings with it norms governing how all members of the group ought to see things. Beyond my perspective, or that of any individual partner, there is an "objective" truth established by the community as a whole which sets the norms for correct action and belief. "Gazelles are edible; snakes are yukky." "This is Spring, so it's time to hunt seals." This is what "we" do, so if you are to maintain your identity as a member of our group, this is what you too should think and do. Those who do not follow the norms are ignored or excluded from the ritual, the meal, the hunt or the community.¹⁰

Such normative objectivity requires language. Indeed, it is specifically through language that cultural objectivity is achieved. Language allows not only communication between two partners, as even gesture and pantomime can do, but permits a kind of culture-wide communication.¹¹ By sharing the one language, all within the cultural group conceptualize the world in the same way. Indeed, until this point in evolution there is no "world" in the sense of a reality that is the same for all. Language and "world" – in this sense – are correlates.

Apart from being the medium for a shared world, a language is itself a prime example of a set of cultural norms that establish what is "objectively right" in a way that transcends individuals. This is the case not just for the form, the syntax, of the language, but also for much of the content. A language is a repository of accumulated knowledge: myths, stories and (later) encyclopedias. As a result, cultural objects are presented to children as "real." Chiefs, gods, medicines, star constellations, the animals of the forest, and so on were there "from the beginning," handed down from the ancestors, and are not dependent on individuals. Institutional ceremonies create social statuses and set up objective, institutional facts – Obama is President – that, "extraordinarily, are both objectively real and socially created." (NHHT 92) There is a public world of marriage, money and governments with a privileged, "transcendental" status like that of the physical world and which justify judgments of reality, truth or rightness.¹²

Language, apart from its content, also supplies syntactical formal structures with slots for roles such as subject, action, objects, etc. – often designated by case ending – slots that can be filled by a potentially infinite number of words. This distinction between form and content allows conceptual content to take on a quasi-independent, fact-like status, usable in many different propositions. One can believe that gazelles are edible, deny they are edible, doubt they are edible, think it is possible they are edible, propose they are edible, and so on. That is, the same conceptual content can float free of the various syntactical forms or communicative motives – that is, from propositional attitudes (assert, deny, propose), from modalities (necessary, possible), and from epistemic status (observation, certain, supposition, hearsay.) "This distinction between content and attitude is also foundational to the idea of some kind of timeless, objective, propositionally structured facts that are independent of how anyone thinks or feels about them and, therefore, also to the general idea of an independent, 'objective' reality." (NHHT 103)¹³ It is against these standards that modern humans can judge beliefs to be true or false, right or wrong – something no other species does.¹⁴

Such agent-neutral thinking requires that one recognize a gap between the individual's own perspective and the culture's reality. Each individual contrasts their own perspective with what everyone should think.¹⁵ "Human thinking at this point is no longer a solely individual process, or even a second-personal social process; rather, it is an internalized dialogue between "what I do think" and "what anyone ought to think" (Sellars, 1963)." (NHHT 123)¹⁶ Tomasello puts it this way:

In the context of cooperative argumentation, modern humans made explicit the reasons for their assertions, thus connecting them in an inferential web to their other knowledge, and then this social practice of reason-giving was internalized into fully reflective reason. And the self-monitoring of modern humans for the first time reflected not just their expectations about the second-personal evaluations of specific others but, rather, their expectations about the normative evaluations of "us" as a cultural group. Given all of these new ways of behaving and thinking, the crack in the human experiential egg now became a veritable chasm: the individual no longer contrasted her own perspective with that of a specific other - the view from here and there; rather, she contrasted her own perspective with some kind of generic perspective of anyone and everyone about things that were objectively real, true, and right from any perspective whatsoever – a perspectiveless view from nowhere. (NHHT 122)

Hence, people become committed to forming beliefs they can back with reasons and justification, even privately. Thus, their group identification gives them an objective perspective.¹⁷ "Human thinking has now become collective, objective, reflective and normative; that is to say, it has now become full-blown human reasoning." (NHHT 123)¹⁸

Objectivity, then, according to Tomasello, originates in collective intentionality. Objects are constituted as realities by the shared norms of a culture, norms that are received from the ancestors by tradition. They are perspectiveless realities that transcend their subjective appearances to individuals. "Group-minded individuals thus constructed an 'objective' world." (NHHT 139)

2 Husserl

Husserl's central doctrine is that all consciousness is about objects. Objects may be perceptual – a table-- or conceptual – the number seven or democracy – but without some object, there can be no consciousness. Objects are always experienced with an actual/potential structure. For an object to be seen as a "real table," rather than as a one-sided façade, it is essential that, as well as the actual side I'm currently looking at, I experience it as having multiple other sides that I *could* potentially see from other perspectives if I moved around it. He speaks of the various side-appearances being unified under the meaning "one object" by the constitutive activity of my meaning-giving subjectivity, my transcendental ego.¹⁹ That's what it is to be a visual "object." (Note that for Husserl the term "transcendental" is always synonymous with "meaning-giving.")

Further, the actual visual object is given to me with the meaning "intersensorial object": its potential for being experienced by touch, or by my other senses, is part of what it means for me to be experiencing it as an "objective" reality. The intersensorial object must be unified so that it is the same reality that I can see and could touch, otherwise it is just a visual illusion.²⁰ Besides being an intersensorial object, Husserl claims that, even in this individual sphere, the intersensorial object has the added sense of a causal unity that continues in time, that is, as a "substance."²¹ If I could not also touch it and use it as an instrument for my actions, it would be only a visual illusion, not a reality.

So far we have been dealing with an object in my individual, primordial experience. And indeed, this, according to Husserl, is where we must start. In a method that he calls a "*reduction to my transcendental sphere of peculiar ownness*," (*Cartesian Meditations* [CM from here on] 93) I must first describe the meaning of the object as it is for me alone, stripping from it any references it might have for other subjects so that the meaning "experienceable by everyone, and so forth, *vanishes completely*." (CM 96)²² "This peculiar abstractive sense-exclusion of what is alien leaves us *a kind of 'world'* still, a Nature reduced to what is included in our ownness." (CM 98) Within this world, spatial objects are constituted as transcending my stream of actual subjective experiences, in the way mentioned above – that there are potential other experiences of the same object – but since we are within the sphere of ownness, these experiences must always be mine alone.²³ Only on the foundation of this purely individual world, says Husserl, can I build wider meanings of objectivity.

After a somewhat torturous account of how I can constitute the meaning "other subject" from within my individual experience, Husserl describes how another subject and myself can come to have a common world made up of objects that are the same for both of us. Again, he relies on the actual/potential structure.²⁴ In so far as you are another subject, you have potential perspectives on the world – an "appearance-system" – just as I have, except that your system is centred on your position over There, while mine is centred on Here.²⁵ You, of course, see my Here as your There.²⁶ By this iterative relationship, we can merge our appearance-systems and so constitute the one unified object as the same for both of us. The object is thus given a new meaning: "real for both of us." Analogously to the way my various individual perspectives get unified into the one object for me, the perspectives of other subjects are unified with mine into the one object for both of us.

Husserl moves quickly from "the Other" to others in general, to the surrounding world that "all of us" have in common, though again with the sense of potential. "[Intersubjective] unification is brought about or at least is certain in advance as possibly attainable by everyone." (*Crisis of European Sciences* [CES from here on] 163) He refers to this as "communalization,"

"reciprocal understanding" or "we-subjectivity." From here on, objectivity even for me as an individual carries the built-up meaning "also for others."²⁷ "Even what is straightforwardly perceptual is communalized." (CES163) This shared meaning can be constituted only if I acknowledge that others are also meaning-giving subjects, that is, if I accept others as co-constituters with me in the constitution of objects-for-us-all. So transcendental subjectivity, the constituting of meaning, is ultimately intersubjectivity.²⁸

This fully constituted object is "real" in a new sense. For an individual's intersensorial object, each visual perspective is but one "appearance" of the "real", intersensorial object. But the new understanding of "real" constituted by intersubjectivity relegates the individual's intersensorial object itself to a "mere representation" or "appearance" of the real object.²⁹ In each step of these constitutions of objectivity, earlier modes of objectivity are "repeatedly relativized." (CES 167), that is, relegated to the status of appearances of the new reality. "The thing itself is actually that which no one experiences as really seen, since it is always in motion, always, and for everyone, a unity for consciousness of the openly endless multiplicity of changing experiences and experienced things, one's own and those of others." (CES 164)³⁰

The set of all these object-for-all-us (more accurately, the world which forms the horizon for all these objects) Husserl calls the Life-world (*Lebenswelt*) or our "surrounding world," "the everyday common world." (CES 343) Within this world, "common to us all" we have a perfectly good practical "acquaintance with the things as they really are and [as they] can be exhibited [to be] again and again in their true being – in the only truth which normal, practical life knows and needs." (CES 344)³¹ Husserl calls this a "genuine, though restricted, kind of Objectivity ... Its Objectivity is restricted, though concretely the world is given to me and to everyone only as a cultural world and as having the sense: accessible to everyone." (CM 132)^{32 33} In our everyday life, such objects are taken for granted: their constitution is invisible; it is buried and forgotten. Only the phenomenologist reveals the underlying constitutive process.

But the process of object constitution is not over. In some *Lebenswelten*, specifically the Western cultural tradition, a further level of meaning gets constituted: the scientific level.³⁴ Using Geometry as his Leitmotif, Husserl describes how the early Greeks, and, later, "Modern" scientists (Galileo, Newton) develop a "theoretical praxis" that constitutes new objects (triangles, gravity) that have a universal validity not just for "us" but for anyone whatsoever. "It is the art of theories, of discovering and securing truths with a certain new ideal sense which is foreign to pre-scientific life, the sense of a certain 'final validity,' 'universal validity.'" (CES 111)³⁵

Objectivity, then, for Husserl, comes in at least three grades. On the primal level, there are intersensorial objects for individuals; then there are cultural or *Lebenswelt* objects constituted by intersubjectivity; finally there are universal, scientific objects constituted by the unique community of scientists of the Western scientific tradition, a every specific form of intersubjectivity.³⁶

These ever-widening layers of objectification should not be misconstrued as discoveries of some pre-existing objects that are real-in-themselves, or real from a God's-eye view. Objectivity is a project.³⁷ "True nature in the sense of natural science is a product of the spirit that investigates nature..." (CES 297) *Lebenswelt* objects are the "material," the "thing-appearances" out of which the scientific project "constructs" the idealized objects of science. Scientific objectivity is the cognitive accomplishment of a method of idealizing the practical world; it is "the product of a development." (CES 344-347)³⁸

So Husserl's position is that all objectivity originates by being constituted by Transcendental subjectivity/intersubjectivity that unifies objects.

3 Analysis

- **Similarities**

The surprising similarities between Tomasello's account of the origin of objects and objectivity and Husserl's leads me to the central question of this paper: are they saying the same thing? Both start with the experience of individuals and claim that the merging of different perspectives constitutes objects in common that result in wider and wider modes of objectivity. In some ways they are complementary. Husserl focuses on how the "universal" objectivity of science originates in the cultural life-world, but only hints at the thinking of apes³⁹ or at the intermediate stage of pair-based objectivity.¹ Tomasello, on the other hand, focuses on the progression from apes to modern humans who live in isolated cultural communities, but says little about what happens when these communities start to interact with each other and a wider kind of objectivity arises that culminates in science.

- **Is Tomasello “naïve”?**

This is a very significant omission, not just because the origin of science is important in itself, but because Tomasello's own work is based on science and itself lays claim to scientific objectivity. The trajectory of his analysis points to his own investigations being constituted by a trans-cultural community of scientists adopting norms of objectivity that go beyond particular cultures. Are not the "objects" he himself refers to in his analysis – chimps pursuing monkeys, early humans hunting gazelles, evolution, culture – simply the construction of one more, still wider, perspective – the scientific point of view? Yet he writes as if the status of these objects is unproblematic, as if they are there "in-themselves," taken for granted before any investigation, and just waiting to be discovered. But since Tomasello's thinking is about "thinking" does he not need to give us some reflexive account of the status of what he himself is doing?⁴⁰

Tomasello acknowledges that chimps live in situations pragmatically defined by their own goals and values. But he seems to assume that he himself has a God's eye view, that his goal as a scientist is an absolute and unconditioned truth. Yet Tomasello is still an evolved primate!⁴¹ Husserl would say that Tomasello maintains a naïve realist view of the world in that he fails to perform the phenomenological reduction.

Husserl frequently criticizes psychologists for missing the significance of their own empirical work because they neglect to perform the (phenomenological/scientific) reduction and so fail to take the "transcendental turn."⁴² He would surely criticize Tomasello's palaeoanthropology on the same grounds. Husserl might claim that only the approach of a transcendental phenomenologist can rescue Tomasello from this dogmatic belief in a reality-in-itself that is independent of constitution by transcendental (inter)subjectivity, waiting there in-itself to be discovered.

¹ While Husserl does not explicitly distinguish a pair-based objectivity, his discussion about the constitution of another subject by my individual subjectivity brings with it an understanding of an objectivity which is basically for both of us. This is buried by the fact that he jumps rather quickly to lifeworld intersubjectivity which (unlike Tomasello) he treats as just more of the same.

- **Husserl's self-objectification**

But this is too simple. Husserl does not just dismiss psychological [or palaeoanthropological] investigations as empirical and naive: he treats them as insightful investigations that just fail to grasp the import of their own findings. He suggests that there is a kind of correlation in which whatever the phenomenologist discovers about transcendental (inter)subjectivity appears also in the world as something that a psychologist can investigate.

Husserl writes of transcendental subjects as "self-objectifying" themselves as "realities" in the world, as real minds incarnated in real human organisms, that can be studied by psychologists [and palaeoanthropologists].⁴³ Similarly he claims that "In this systematic procedure one ... attains the correlation between the world and transcendental subjectivity as objectified in mankind." (CES 187) This is why what phenomenologists describe about the meaning-giving activity of subjectivity or of intersubjectivity can be found in a parallel fashion in real psychological subjects or in real, historical cultural communities.

This self-objectification of the transcendental process implies that in one sense Tomasello and Husserl are saying the same thing, or something exactly parallel, about the origin of objectivity. The only difference is that Tomasello interprets what is being said as a scientific result based on empirical evidence, while Husserl insists it also has transcendental significance, that is, it involves the genesis of meaning.⁴⁴

- **The palaeoanthropological construction of meaning**

But is this a significant difference? Let me turn Husserl's correlation on its head (or should that be, on its feet?) If, as Husserl claims, the study of transcendental subjectivity can enlighten us about "objectified" mankind, can the study of mankind not therefore inform us about the processes of transcendental constitution? If transcendental subjectivity objectifies itself as mankind, then Tomasello's investigation of the evolution of human thinking mirrors the meaning-giving processes that Husserl labels transcendental subjectivity. Rather than blaming Tomasello for failing to take the transcendental turn, can we not accuse Husserl of missing the opportunity to "naturalize" his transcendentalism?

So instead of Husserl's rather mysterious claim that transcendental constitution objectifies itself in the world, in history, I want to claim rather that it is the evolutionary processes of nature that give rise to meaning. If there is any distinction to be made between the ("transcendental") process of giving meaning and the ("empirical") world of things meant, it is (as Merleau-Ponty points out) the difference between the past and present. In the present we have objects which are meaningful, but their meaningfulness originates in the unification of objects that occurs in the history leading up to the present.¹ In the past, evolution has constituted the objects that present subjects experience as

I Let me suggest that this is indeed the message of Husserl's "The Origin of Geometry." (CES 353-378) While his "transcendental" history of the constitution of geometric objects describes the building of "ideal" geometric objects from typical unities of the life-world is of the order of the constitution of meaning, Husserl aligns this constitution with the real-time historical inventions of Pythagoras and Euclid on the basis of the life-world pragmatic objects (pyramids, etc.) of the Egyptians. The status of this "objectified" history ties him in knots. The obvious conclusion, though Husserl himself is reluctant to accept it, is that the constitution of meaning – the transcendental process – takes place in real time, in dated history, in the real, objectified world. Perhaps it is because Husserl is so reluctant to accept this that he also leaves hanging the important question of the origin of the lifeworld. If the scientific objectivity of geometry has a temporal, historical aspect, is this not also true for the lifeworld? Husserl is clear that different communities of humans live in differently constructed lifeworlds. And he sees that animals also have a surrounding world. At this point he needs to connect the dots.

taken-for-granted, as handed down by ancestral tradition. This is an ongoing process in which one cannot cleanly separate an objectifying, transcendental process from the experiencing of empirical objects.

Husserl comes close to seeing this himself. He says:

As a psychologist [palaeoanthropologist?] I set myself the task of knowing myself as the ego already made part of the world, objectified with a particular real meaning, mundanized, so to speak ... the task of knowing myself precisely in the manner of objective, naturally mundane knowledge (in the broadest sense), myself as a human being among things, among other human beings, animals, etc. Thus we understand that in fact an indissoluble inner alliance obtains between psychology [palaeoanthropology] and transcendental philosophy. But from this perspective we can also foresee that there must be a way whereby a concretely executed psychology [palaeoanthropology] could lead to a transcendental philosophy. ... a radical, psychological unfolding of my apperceptive life and of the particular world appearing in it, in respect to the *how* of the particular appearances (thus of the human "world-picture")—this, in the transition to the transcendental attitude, would immediately have to take on transcendental significance as soon as I now, at the higher level, constantly take into account the meaning-conferring accomplishment which is responsible for the objective apperception, i.e., the accomplishment through which the world-representation has the sense of something really existing, something human and psychic, the sense of being my psychic life and that of other human beings—the life in which everyone has his world-representations, finds himself as existing, representing, acting according to purposes in the world. (CES 206-207)

4 Conclusion

One frequently recurrent error in Western thought has been to conceive of reality as "things-in-themselves." Before thought, there is a world of objects: gazelles and water-holes, stars and planets (like Pluto!), atoms and molecules, bosons and fermions, gravity and democracy. Us humans arrive late on the scene and have to overcome "appearances" – the distortions of our perceptual systems and subjective perspectives – in order to "discover" the truth about reality.

What Tomasello and Husserl have in common is that they turn this relationship upside down. Appearances are prior; reality as taken-for-granted things-in-themselves is a posterior construction based on these appearances. At each stage of this construction, reality is relativized: what is real on one level of construction gets demoted to become a mere appearance of the newly constructed broader, more general or more universal reality.¹ For Husserl this progression goes from primal experience by one sense modality to the intersensorial object, to a causal substance, to a reality accessible to myself and my Other, to the objects of the cultural lifeworld, and finally, he

¹ For examples, consider the following. To the Greeks and medievals, the rising of the sun each morning was a reality, perhaps brought about by Helios on a chariot, perhaps by St. Thomas' "secondary causes" (angels.) After Copernicus *et al.* this reality was demoted to an appearance, an appearance of an underlying astronomical reality. It *appears* the sun rises, but *really* the earth moves. For other examples, think of: whales appear to be big fish, but in reality are marine mammals; tables appear solid, but once we have molecules, the objects of science, the solidity of tables becomes just a subjective appearance. Once we have quantum states, even atoms, electrons and photons turn out to be only appearances: they appear when observations or measurements collapse the wave functions that are the newest "reality."

thinks, to the scientific notion of reality. For Tomasello, the situation given to an individual ape progresses to the early human construction of objects accessible to a cooperating pair of partners, to the modern human objectivity for everyone in the community determined by the norms of the culture. The central point here is that appearance is not a diminished version of a pre-existing reality (whether it is a Platonic form, a twinkle in the eye of God – God's *sensorium*, as Newton calls it – or a scientific object.) Rather, objective reality is the product of an historical construction and each step of this construction relativizes the reality/appearance distinction. Of course, when we look at things naively from within the historical stage in which we find ourselves, we "forget" this progression (Heidegger) and take our current construct for granted as if it were absolute. This is the "thesis of the world" that Husserl's phenomenological reduction aims to suspend. (Merleau-Ponty calls it the "prejudice of the world.")

Objects are not "things-in-themselves." Objectivity originates in the meaning-giving vagaries of evolutionary history.⁴⁵

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2015

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1 Dagobert D. Runes, *Dictionary of Philosophy*, 1942.

2 “A small group of philosophers of action ... have investigated how humans put their heads together with others in acts of so-called shared intentionality, or “we” intentionality. When individuals participate with others in collaborative activities, together they form joint goals and joint attention, which then create individual roles and individual perspectives that must be coordinated within them. ... In general, humans are able to coordinate with others, in a way that other primates seemingly are not, to form a “we” that acts as a kind of plural agent to create everything from a collaborative hunting party to a cultural institution.” (Tomasello, *A Natural History of Human Thinking* [NHHT] 3)

3 “This is the collaborative creature we are imagining here, and for the most clarity we may focus on its culmination in hominins of about 400,000 years ago: the common ancestor of Neanderthals and modern humans, the ever mysterious *Homo heidelbergensis*. Palaeoanthropological evidence suggests that this was the first hominin to engage systematically in the collaborative hunting of large game, using weapons that almost certainly would not enable a single individual to be successful on its own, and sometimes bringing prey back to a home base (Stiner et al., 2009).” (NHHT 36)

4 “And so, modern humans' creation of the various form[s] of collective intentionality – comprising cultural conventions, norms, and institutions, including language – led to a kind of agent-neutral, “objective” thinking comprising conventional and objective representations; processes of inferring that were reasoned, reflective, and aimed at truth; and normative self-governance in which individuals monitored and adjusted their thinking to fit with that of the group. Culture and language, as agent-neutral conventional phenomena, thus provide another setting within which a new form of human sociality can lead to a new form of human thinking, specifically, objective-reflective-normative thinking.” (NHHT 141)

5 “Relevant situations are thus determined jointly by the organism's goals and values, its perceptual abilities and knowledge, and its behavioral capacities, that is to say, by its overall functioning as a self-regulating system. Identifying situations relevant for a behavioral decision thus involves an organism's whole way of life (von Uexküll, 1921).” (NHHT 11-12)

6 “*The notion of perspective assumes a single target of joint attention on which we have differing perspectives* (Moll and Tomasello, 2007, in press). If you are looking out one window of the house and I am looking out another in the opposite direction, we do not have different perspectives – we are just seeing completely different things. We can thus operate with the notion of individually distinct perspectives only if (1) we are both considering “the same” thing, and (2) we both know the other is attending to it differently. If I see something in one way, and then round the corner to see it in another, this does not give me two perspectives on the same thing, because I do not have multiple perspectives available to me simultaneously for comparison. But when two people are attending to the same thing simultaneously – and it is in their common ground that they are both doing so – then “space is created”

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(to use Davidson's [2001] metaphor) for an understanding of different perspectives to arise.” (NHHT 44-45)

7 “This transacting in perspectives meant that early human individuals did not just experience the world directly for themselves, in the manner of all apes but, in addition, at least in some aspects, experienced the exact same world viewed simultaneously from different social perspectives. This triangulating process inserted for the first time a small but powerful wedge between what we might now call the subjective and the objective.” (NHHT 70)

8 “And so we have come to a tipping point. Based on their capacity to coordinate actions and attention with others toward joint goals, early humans came to understand that different individuals can have different perspectives on one and the same situation or entity. In contrast, great apes (including the last common ancestor with humans) do not coordinate their actions and attention with others in this same way, and so they do not understand the notion of simultaneously different perspectives on the same situation or entity at all. We thus encounter once again the dual-level structure of simultaneous jointness and individuality. Just as collaborative activities have the dual-level structure of joint goal and individual roles, joint attentional activities have the dual-level structure of joint attention and individual perspectives. Joint attention thus begin[s] the process by which human beings construct an intersubjective world with others – shared but with differing perspectives – which will also be fundamental to human cooperative communication. We may thus posit that joint attention in joint collaborative activity, as manifest even in very young children, was the most basic form of socially shared cognition in human evolution – characteristic already of early humans – and that this primal version of socially shared cognition spawned an equally primal version of perspectively constructed cognitive representations.” (NHHT 45-46)

9 “And so, while there is still some way to go to get to truth as an “objective” feature of linguistic utterances, if we want to explain the origin of humans' commitment to characterize the world accurately independent of any selfish purpose, then being committed to informing others of things honestly, for *their* not *our* benefit, is the starting point. The notion of truth thus entered the human psyche not with the advent of individual intentionality and its focus on accuracy in information acquisition but, rather, with the advent of joint intentionality and its focus on communicating cooperatively with others.” (NHHT 51-52)

10 “We are not talking here about an individual perspective somehow generalized or made large, or some kind of simple adding up of many perspectives. Rather, what we are talking about is a generalization from the existence of many perspectives into something like “any possible perspective,” which means, essentially, “objective.” This “any possible” or “objective” perspective combines with a normative stance to encourage the inference that such things as social norms and institutional arrangements are objective parts of an external reality. The generic nature of the communicative intention in both norm enforcement and pedagogy derives from the inherently generic group-

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mindedness and social normativity governing the way that "we" expect "us" to do things, which is then objectified into this is the way things are, or ought to be, in the world at large." (NHHT 92)

11 "Individuals thus [by language] "inherited" myriad ways of conceptualizing and perspectivizing the world for others, which created the possibility of viewing one and the same situation or entity simultaneously under different construals as, for example, berry, fruit, food, or trading resource. The mode of construal was not due to reality, or even to the communicator's goals, but rather to the communicator's thinking about how best to construe a situation or entity so that a recipient would most effectively discern his communicative intention." (NHHT 96)

12 "There are collectively accepted perspectives on things (e.g., how we classify the animals of the forest, how we constitute our governing council) and collectively known standards for how particular roles in particular cultural practices should be performed – indeed, must be performed – if one is to be a member of the group." (NHHT 92)

13 "The subterranean effect of this wave of group-mindedness and conformity, ... was new and culturally collective forms of cognitive representation, inference, and self-monitoring for use in thinking. Modern humans began representing the world "objectively" reflecting a kind of generic, agent-neutral perspective possible by any rational person." (NHHT 121)

14 "Because of the conventional and normative nature of language, new processes of reflection now took place not just as when apes monitor their own uncertainty in making a decision, and not as when early humans monitor recipient comprehension, but rather as an "objectively" and normatively thinking communicator evaluating his own linguistic conceptualization as if it were coming from some other "objectively" and normatively thinking person. The outcome is that modern humans engage not just in individual self-monitoring or second-personal social evaluation but, rather, in fully normative self-reflection." (NHHT 108-109)

15 "The normative judgment here is not simply mine alone, nor that of a specific other partner, but rather a judgment about whether that would be a good goal or decision or line of reasoning for any rational person, that is, for anyone from our group who does things the way that we do them." (NHHT 120)

16 "Operating in this public world required that individuals be able to take a kind of agent-neutral perspective on things, a kind [of] privileged, "transcendental" perspective that constituted the world "objectively" and that then justified personal judgments of true and false, right and wrong." (NHHT 115)

17 "This group-minded structuring of modern humans' activities and interactions, along with their conventional means of communication, meant that modern humans came to construct a kind of

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transpersonal, "objective" perspective on the world. Conventional communication became fully propositional, not only because of its conventional, normative, "objective" format and topic-focus structuring, but also because the speaker's communicative motives and epistemic/modal attitudes could be independently controlled in conventional signs, which meant that the propositional content was conceptualized independent of the motives and attitudes of particular individuals. Linguistic constructions enabled unprecedented creativity of conceptual combination, and moreover, they enabled full propositions representing a kind of generic, timeless, "objective" state of affairs, as in pedagogy ("It works like this") and the enforcement of social norms ("One must not do that")." (NHHT 139)

18 "[M]odern human individuals came to imagine the world in order to manipulate it in thought via "objective" representations (anyone's perspective), reflective inferences connected by reasons (compelling to anyone), and normative self-governance so as to coordinate with the group's (anyone's) normative expectations." (NHHT 81)

19 "[In] perception, I still have the full consciousness of the thing, just as I already have it at the first glance when I see it as this thing. In seeing I always "mean" it with all the sides which are in no way given to me.... Something similar to this can be studied in every modality of the sense-perception (touching, hearing, etc.) of the same thing. ... In running their course they function in such a way as to form a sometimes continuous and sometimes discrete synthesis of identification or, better, of *unification*. This happens not as a blending of externals; rather, as bearers of "sense" in each phase, as meaning something, the perspectives combine in an advancing *enrichment of meaning* and a *continuing development of meaning*, such that what no longer appears is still valid as retained and such that the prior meaning which anticipates a continuous flow, the expectation of "what is to come," is straightway fulfilled and more closely determined. Thus everything is taken up into the unity of validity or into the *one, the thing*. (*Crisis of European Sciences* [CES] 158)

20 "In pre-scientific experiential life we stand within the Heraclitean flux of the changing data of sensible things; and throughout the alteration of these data we do have, with naive experiential self-evidence, the certainty of coming to know, through seeing, touching, feeling, hearing, etc., the same thing through its properties and of confirming it, through "repetition" of the experiences, as something which objectively and actually is, and is such-and-such; ..." (CES 343)

21 "There emerges here the problem concerning the origin of the "thing-phantom", or "thing pertaining to the senses", with its strata (sight thing, <touch thing, > and so forth) and their synthetic unity. The thing-phantom is given (always within the limits set by this primordial reduction) purely as a unity belonging to modes of sensuous appearance and their syntheses. The thing-phantom, in its variants as "near thing" and "far thing", all of which belong together synthetically, is not yet the "real thing" of the primordial psychic sphere. Even in this sphere the "real thing" becomes constituted at a higher level, as a causal thing, an identical substrate of causal properties (a "substance")." (*Cartesian Meditations* [CM] 145)

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22 “From the phenomenon world, from the world appearing with an Objective sense, a substratum becomes separated, as the *"Nature" included in my ownness*, a Nature that must always be carefully distinguished from Nature, pure and simple – that is to say: from the Nature that becomes the theme of the natural scientist.” (CM 96)

23 “As soon as we exclude from consideration the intentional effects produced by "empathy", by our experience of others, we have a Nature (including an animate organism) that is constituted, to be sure, as a unity of spatial objects "transcending" the stream of subjective processes, yet constituted as merely a multiplicity of objects of possible experience – this experience being purely *my own* life, and what is experienced in this experience being nothing more than a synthetic unity inseparable from this life and its potentialities.” (CM 104)

24 “[As] I penetrate more deeply into him [someone else], into his horizon of ownness, I shall soon run into the fact that, just as his animate bodily organism [that is, his body] lies in my field of perception, so my animate organism lies in his field of perception and that, in general, he experiences me forthwith as an Other for him, just as I experience him as *my* Other. Likewise, I shall find that, in the case of a plurality of Others, they are experienced also by one another as Others, and consequently that I can experience any given Other not only as himself an Other but also as related in turn to *his* Others and perhaps – with a mediatedness that may be conceived as reiterable – related at the same time to me. It is also clear that men become apperceptible only as finding Others and still more Others, not just in the realm of actuality but likewise in the realm of possibility, at their own pleasure.” (CM 130)

25 “It is implicit in the sense of my successful apperception of others that their world, the world belonging to their appearance-systems, must be experienced forthwith as the same as the world belonging to my appearance-systems; and this involves an identity of our appearance-systems.” (CM 125)

26 “I do not apperceive the other ego simply as a duplicate of myself and accordingly as having my original sphere or one completely like mine. I do not apperceive him as having, more particularly, the spatial modes of appearance that are mine from here; rather, as we find on closer examination, I apperceive him as having spatial modes of appearance like those I should have if I should go over there and be where he is.” (CM 117)

27 Only by starting from the ego and the system of its transcendental functions and accomplishments can we methodically exhibit transcendental intersubjectivity and its transcendental communalization, through which, in the functioning system of ego-poles, the "world for all," and for each subject as world for all, is constituted.” (CES 185-186)

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28 “... there occurs a *universal superaddition of sense to my primordial world*, whereby the latter becomes the *appearance "of"* a determinate "Objective" world, as the identical world for everyone, myself included. Accordingly *the intrinsically first other* (the first "non-Ego") is *the other Ego*. And the other Ego makes constitutionally possible a new infinite domain of what is "other": an *Objective Nature* and a whole Objective world, to which all other Egos and I myself belong. This constitution, arising on the basis of the "*pure*" others (the other Egos who as yet have no worldly sense), is essentially such that the "others"-for-me do not remain isolated; on the contrary, an *Ego-community*, which includes me, becomes constituted (in my sphere of ownness, naturally) as a community of Egos existing with each other and for each other – *ultimately a community of monads*, which, moreover, (in its communalized intentionality) constitutes the *one identical world*.” (CM 107)

29 “If one attends to the distinction between things as "originally one's own" and as "empathized" from others, in respect to the *how* of the manners of appearance, and if one attends to the possibility of discrepancies between one's own and empathized views, then what one actually experiences *originaliter* as a perceptual thing is transformed, for each of us, into a mere "representation of" ["*Vorstellung von*"], "appearance of" the one objectively existing thing. From the synthesis these have taken on precisely the new sense "appearance of," and as such they are henceforth valid. “The" thing itself is actually that which no one experiences as really seen, since it is always in motion, always, and for everyone, a unity for consciousness of the openly endless multiplicity of changing experiences and experienced things, one's own and those of others.” (CES 164)

30 “In this communalization, too, there constantly occurs an alteration of validity through reciprocal correction. In reciprocal understanding, my experiences and experiential acquisitions enter into contact with those of others, similar to the contact between individual series of experiences within my (one's own) experiential life; and here again, for the most part, intersubjective harmony of validity occurs, [establishing what is] "normal" in respect to particular details, and thus an intersubjective unity also comes about in the multiplicity of validities and of what is valid through them; here again, furthermore, intersubjective discrepancies show themselves often enough; but then, whether it is unspoken and even unnoticed, or is expressed through discussion and criticism, a unification is brought about or at least is certain in advance as possibly attainable by everyone.” (CES 163)

31 “It [the life-world] is the spatiotemporal world of things as we experience them in our pre- and extrascientific life and as we know them to be experienceable beyond what is [actually] experienced. We have a world-horizon as a horizon of possible thing-experience [Dingerfahrung], Things: that is, stones, animals, plants, even human beings and human products; but everything here is subjective and relative, even though normally, in our experience and in the social group united with us in the community of life, we arrive at "secure" facts; within a certain range this occurs of its own accord, that is, undisturbed by any noticeable disagreement; sometimes, on the other hand, when it is of practical importance, it occurs in a purposive knowing process, i.e., with the goal of [finding] a truth which is secure for our purposes.” (CES 138-9)

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32 “[M]en belonging to one and the same world live in a loose cultural community – or even none at all – and accordingly constitute different surrounding worlds of culture, as concrete life-worlds in which the relatively or absolutely separate communities live their passive and active lives. Each man understands first of all, in respect of a core and as having its unrevealed horizon, *his* concrete surrounding world or *his* culture; and he does so precisely as a man who belongs to the community fashioning it historically. A deeper understanding, one that opens up the horizon of the past (which is co-determinant for an understanding of the present itself), is essentially possible to all members of that community, with a certain originality possible to them alone and barred to anyone from another community who enters into relation with theirs.” (CM 133)

33 “... all cultural Objects (books, tools, works of any kind, and so forth), ... moreover carry with them at the same time the experiential sense of thereness-for-everyone (that is, everyone belonging to the corresponding cultural community, such as the European or perhaps, more narrowly, the French cultural community, and so forth.)” (CM 92)

34 “This sense [of scientific objectivity] has come to be taken so much for granted by us that we have difficulty even making clear to ourselves that we are confronted here with the product of a development into whose original motives and original self-evidence we must inquire.” (CES 344)

35 “In this [the theoretical, scientific] attitude, man views first of all the multiplicity of nations, his own and others, each with its own surrounding world which is valid for it, is taken for granted, with its traditions, its gods, its demons, its mythical powers, simply as the actual world. Through this astonishing contrast there appears the distinction between world-representation and actual world, and the new question of truth arises: not tradition-bound, everyday truth, but an identical truth which is valid for all who are no longer blinded by traditions, a truth-in-itself.” (CES 285-286)

36 “All the levels and strata through which the syntheses, intentionally overlapping as they are from subject to subject, are interwoven form a universal unity of synthesis; through it the objective universe comes to be—the world which is and *as* it is concretely and vividly given (and pre-given for all possible praxis). In this regard we speak of the "intersubjective constitution" of the world, meaning by this the total system of manners of givenness, however hidden, and also of modes of validity for egos; through this constitution, if we systematically uncover it, the world as it is for us becomes understandable as a structure of meaning formed out of elementary intentionalities.” (CES 168)

37 “*Objectification* is a matter of *method*, founded upon pre-scientific data of experience. Mathematical method "constructs," out of intuitive representation, ideal objects and teaches how to deal with them operatively and systematically. It does not produce things out of other things in the manner of handwork; it produces ideas. Ideas arise through a peculiar sort of mental accomplishment: idealization.” (CES 348)

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38 “Exact objectivity is the accomplishment of method, practiced by men generally in the world of experience (the "sense-world") — practiced not as a commercial praxis, as a technique of shaping and reshaping things pregiven in experience, but as a praxis in which those imperfectly determining thing-representations make up the material; and it involves a general attitude of thought such that, taking an exemplary individual thing as an example of "any given thing at all," the open, endless multiplicity of its imperfect but perfectible subjective representations is thought of as having been run through.” (CES 345)

39 “And what about animals? There arise problems of intentional modifications through which we can and must attribute to all these conscious subjects ... their manner of transcendental, precisely as "analogues" of ourselves. The meaning of this analogy will then itself represent a transcendental problem. This naturally extends into the realm of the transcendental problems which finally encompass all living beings insofar as they have, even indirectly but still verifiably, something like "life," and even communal life in the spiritual [*geistige*] sense.” (CES 187-188)

40 “Only a radical inquiry back into subjectivity—and specifically the subjectivity which *ultimately* brings about all world-validity, with its content and in all its prescientific and scientific modes, and into the "what" and the "how" of the rational accomplishments—can make objective truth comprehensible and arrive at the ultimate ontic meaning of the world. Thus it is not the being of the world as unquestioned, taken for granted, which is primary in itself; and one has not merely to ask what belongs to it objectively; rather, what is primary in itself is subjectivity, understood as that which naively pregives the being of the world and then rationalizes or (what is the same thing) objectifies it.” (CES 69)

41 “But precisely here lies the difficulty. Universal intersubjectivity, into which all objectivity, everything that exists at all, is resolved, can obviously be nothing other than mankind; and the latter is undeniably a component part of the world. How can a component part of the world, its human subjectivity, constitute the whole world, namely, constitute it as its intentional formation, one which has always already become what it is and continues to develop, formed by the universal interconnection of intentionally accomplishing subjectivity, while the latter, the subjects accomplishing in cooperation, are themselves only a partial formation within the total accomplishment?” (CES 179)

42 “Scientific discipline for us is not that of the psychologist. For the latter the world, presupposed by it as unquestionably existing, is the ground; and it is precisely this ground that the epoche has taken from us.” (CES 179)

43 “How can we make it more concretely understandable that the reduction of mankind to the phenomenon "mankind," which is included as part of the reduction of the world, makes it possible to recognize mankind as a self-objectification of transcendental subjectivity which is always functioning ultimately and is thus "absolute"?” (CES 153)

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44 “Only in this way, in an essential system of forward steps, can we gain an ultimate comprehension of the fact that each transcendental “I” within intersubjectivity (as coconstituting the world in the way indicated) must necessarily be constituted in the world as a human being; in other words, that each human being “bears within himself a transcendental ‘I’”— not as a real part or a stratum of his soul (which would be absurd) but rather insofar as he is the self-objectification, as exhibited through phenomenological self-reflection, of the corresponding transcendental ‘I.’” (CES 186)

45 Tomasello, citing Nagel, puts it this way: “To acquire a more objective understanding of some aspect of life or the world, we step back from our initial view of it and form a new conception which has that view and its relation to the world as its object. . . .The process can be repeated, using a still more objective conception.” (Nagel, 1986 p.4) In this formulation, “objectivity” is the result of being able to think of things from ever wider perspectives and also recursively, as one embeds one's perspective within another, more encompassing perspective. In the current view [Tomasello's own], more encompassing means simply from the perspective of an ever wider, more transpersonally constituted generic individual or social group – the view from anyone.” (NHHT 122)