DE GRUYTER

PHENOMENOLOGY TO THE LETTER

HUSSERL AND LITERATURE

Edited by Philippe P. Haensler,
Kristina Mendicino, Rochelle Tobias

TEXTOLOGIE

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Contents

Philippe P. Haensler, Kristina Mendicino, Rochelle Tobias
Introduction

Regarding philosophical importance, Edmund Husserl is arguably *the* German "export" of the early twentieth century. In wake of the linguistic turn(s) of the humanities, however, his claim to return to the "Sachen selbst" instead of grappling with "mere words" became metonymic for what Hans-Georg Gadamer called the "abgründige Sprachvergessenheit" in Western philosophy (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 10; Gadamer 1986, p. 361). This view has been particularly influential in post-structural literary theory, which has never ceased to attack the supposed "logophobie" of phenomenology, as Michel Foucault would put it, when he charged the thoroughgoing rationality of phenomenology for suppressing "tout ce qu'il [le discours] peut y avoir là de violent, de discontinu, de batailleur, de désordre aussi et de périlleux" (Foucault 1971, pp. 52–53). *Phenomenology to the Letter* seeks to challenge this verdict regarding the poetological and logical implications of Husserl's work through a careful re-examination of his writing in the context of literary theory, classical rhetoric, and modern art. At issue is an approach to phenomenology *and* literature, where the "and" would not merely coordinate the nominal designation of separate fields or objects of inquiry, but would refer to two distinct, yet inseparably bound moments in Husserl's oeuvre, as well as in the broader range of literature within which phenomenology is inscribed.

Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, Husserl aimed to describe and analyze the experiential bases that precede the categories of formal logic as well as the objects and methods of empirical science. Phenomenology develops a philosophical account of the correlation of conscious intentionalities and the phenomena to which they correspond before any data, object, or relation can be construed as such. In elaborating the intentional structure of thought, Husserl not only granted full philosophical dignity to the world as it presents itself to us; he also examined the affective and passive conditions for conscious awareness and explored the historical factors, whose sedimentation colors what can be known and shared. Furthermore, in expansive meditations he charted the relationship between language and experience. His work thus intersects with the concerns of literary modernists in ways that call for a reassessment of the philosophical implications of twentieth-century literature as well as the literary implications of phenomenology. This volume analyzes the implicit dialogue that develops between literary modernism, as exemplified in works by Flaubert, Kafka, Hofmannsthal, Proust, Rilke, Benjamin, Beckett, Olson, and Blanchot, and phenomenological forms of inquiry that underscore

the operations of consciousness. At stake is not only the elaboration of a particular philosophical and aesthetic movement, however, but also a rethinking of affect, experience, and language that offers an alternative to the physiological and biological paradigms that dominate twenty-first century praxis and thought.

Although Husserl in many ways spawned the disciplines we know today as neuroscience and cognitive science, he was insistent throughout his career that philosophy should not be confused with psychology, which studies the mind as an empirical phenomenon, or in his vocabulary, as something "innerworldly." A mind so conceived is subject to external constraints, such as the time in which it is said to operate or the natural forces that are said to determine it (e.g., evolution or the microbial environment). Husserl sought to rescue philosophy from what he saw as a lapse into "psychologism" and to restore it to its rightful place as a transcendental method that explores, among other things, what makes psychological inquiry possible in the first place. The fact that the effort to provide a foundation for psychology requires an act of mind is an irony not lost on Husserl. Yet the irony also reveals that what distinguishes phenomenology from psychology is that phenomenology takes as its object the construction or constitution of objects, from everyday items to mathematical abstractions, and includes in this sweep imaginary beings, cultural phenomena, and the psyche itself as the object of psychology.

This is the origin of Husserl's notion of intentionality. Consciousness is, as the saying goes, always the consciousness of something. It is directed outside itself toward matters that transcend it in the sense that they represent a synthetic unity beyond consciousness that consciousness cannot vouch for as anything but a phenomenon, i.e., what appears to it. In Husserl's vocabulary, the object of consciousness is the *noema* – a term derived from the Greek *nous* – that corresponds to consciousness in action or *noesis*, and these actions range from thinking, remembering, anticipating, and calculating to imagining, dreaming, and fantasizing. However, in contrast to other philosophical approaches to consciousness, such as Franz Brentano's *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, fantasy and fiction in particular would become central to Husserl's phenomenological method; this is already visible in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, where Husserl introduces free imaginative variation as the condition for distinguishing, for example, color and extension as two essentially different moments of spatial phenomena (see *Hua* XIX/1, pp. 234–235). And after his methodological elaborations of the phenomenological reduction in *Ideen I*, which calls for the suspension of all positionality with regard to the existence of phenomena, Husserl will go so far as to affirm – "in strikter Wahrheit" – that "die 'Fiktion' das Lebenselement der Phänomenologie, wie aller eidetischen Wissenschaft, ausmacht" (*Hua* III, p. 148).

It was with an eye to this proximity of phenomenology and fiction, as well as to the broad range of intentional objects that fall under the purview of the phenomenologist, that students of Husserl in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Roman Ingarden, would develop groundbreaking phenomenological approaches to poetry and literature. But Ingarden's far-reaching attempt to establish an "erkenntnistheoretische Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft sowie [. . .] für die Wissenschaftslehre überhaupt" (Ingarden 1997, p. 1) also quickly reaches a limit that indicates the need for further, and differently accentuated pursuits of the intersections between phenomenological and literary avenues of thinking and writing. For even a minimal reflection upon the terms that Husserl adopts to designate the "noematic" objects and "noetic" operations of consciousness indicates a mutual implication of phenomenology and language that calls for a philological complement to phenomenological inquiry, before all talk of fiction or imaginative variation. It is in this respect that writers such as Ingarden, who proceeds from phenomenological premises to the analysis of literary objects, do not explore to the fullest extent the dynamic exchange between these two modes of writing and thought. To do so would call instead for an approach that crosses the disciplinary boundaries of phenomenology and literature without privileging the terms of either field, in order to address those problems of phenomenality, subjectivity, fiction, and language that both disciplines expose.

While the importance of phenomenology for literature has been long recognized, it is only in recent years that scholars such as William Galperin and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei have begun to disclose anew the ways in which Husserl's oeuvre speaks to how, already in British Romanticism, the phenomena of the everyday world "ghost[] a parallel or possible world that is 'only seen again' at which point it becomes visible [. . .] as well as thinkable for essentially the 'first time'" (Galperin 2017, p. 6), or the ways in which Husserl's "phenomenology offers much assistance in articulating how the inner boundaries of the unknown might be approached" in modern poetry such as Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus* (Gosetti-Ferencei 2007, p. 123). What distinguishes these studies from earlier phenomenological approaches to poetics is the emphasis that both authors place upon the textual specificity of literary objects, which also say more and other things than phenomenological discourse alone can accommodate: "While a phenomenological study is helpful in describing poetic and artistic renderings of quotidian life and ecstatic departures from it," writes Gosetti-Ferencei, "it is also indebted to the kinds of reflections that lie outside its scientific or philosophical purview" (Gosetti-Ferencei 2007, p. 244). Yet the lines of intersection between phenomenology and literature may also be traced differently, on the basis of their shared grounding in language and writing.

As the contributors to *Phenomenology to the Letter* seek to demonstrate, attending to the "letter" of phenomenology itself – which may enter into marked tension with its scientific "spirit" – raises the question of the relation that exists between phenomenology and literature, conceived not only in the narrower, ever contested sense of poetic works, but also in the related, broader sense of inscription that Husserl evokes, when, for example, he writes of precise terminological distinctions in *Ideen I*: "Der Unterschied [. . .] mußte sich *literarisch* ausprägen" (*Hua* III, p. 207, our emphasis).[1]

By Husserl's own lights, then, literature constitutes the medium in which the phenomenological analyses of transcendental subjectivity attain objective existence, with the consequence that one may follow Detlef Thiel and Wolfgang Orth in speaking of "Phänomenologie" as "Phänomenographie" (see Thiel 2003). And it is in keeping with this precondition for the existence of phenomenology that Eugen Fink would also insist upon the necessity of writing in his *VI. Cartesianische Meditation*:

> [E]s kann bei dem blossen E r k a n n t s e i n der wissenchaftlichen Wahrheiten nicht bleiben, sie müssen sich o b j e k t i v i e r e n in Sätzen, in Forschungsberichten, in Lehrbüchern.[. . .] Das "Verwissenschaftlichen" einer Erkenntnis (oder eines einheitlichen Erkenntniszusammenhanges) ist nicht zuletzt die V e r w a h r u n g derselben im Medium der intersubjektiven Sprache (und der intersubjektiven Schrift) und

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1 Here, Husserl addresses the difference between the "vorgestellten oder gedachten Objekt" of intentionality and "sein Vorgestelltes als solches," which remains, regardless of the non-existence of the former (*Hua* III, p. 207). Similarly, he notes in the "Beilage III" to the *Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, which has come to be known as the "Ursprung der Geometrie": "Aber der weiteste Begriff der Literatur umfaßt [. . .] alle [Gebilde der Kulturwelt], d.h. zu ihrem objektiven Sein gehört es, sprachlich ausgedrückt und immer wieder ausdrückbar zu sein [. . .]" (*Hua* VI, p. 368). Furthermore, Husserl's writing also conveys the impression that any distinction between a broader and narrower understanding of "literature" may blur and thereby confound attempts at strict delineation, even within the strict scientific writing that he seeks to develop. For example, in the *Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, it is the literary or "poetic" quality of contemporary philosophical literature that concerns him: "Ja, ist es in der Versplitterung der Philosophien und ihrer Literatur überhaupt noch möglich, sie im Sinne von Werken einer Wissenschaft ernstlich zu studieren, kritisch auszuwerten und eine Einheit der Arbeit aufrechtzuerhalten? Sie wirken, aber muß man nicht aufrichtig sagen, sie wirken als Impressionen, sie 'regen an,' sie bewegen das Gemüt wie Dichtungen, sie wecken 'Ahnungen' – aber tun das nicht ähnlich (bald in einem edleren, aber auch leider zu oft in einem anderen Stil) die mannigfaltigen literarischen Tageserzeugnisse?" (*Hua* VI, pp. 199–200). Much as phenomenological research calls for literary expression [*literarische Ausprägung*], then, the literary expression of philosophy – phenomenological or otherwise – may risk assuming a resemblance to poetic [*Dichtungen*] and journalistic writing [*literarische Tageserzeugnisse*], which would render philosophical literature simply literature, rather than science [*Wissenschaft*].

damit die H e r a u s h e b u n g aus der v e r g ä n g l i c h e n s u b j e k t i v e n Z e i t des
Erkenntnisprozesses in die Objektivität einer aller menschlichen Dauer überlegenen
Dauer. (Fink 1988, pp. 113–114)

These remarks raise the issue of literary language as a problem immanent to
phenomenology, and not merely a problem that phenomenology may be called
upon to explicate. Nor is it simply the case that the objective, scientific status of
phenomenological "Erkenntnis" is contingent upon its transmissibility via
propositions and printed sources; the very practice of phenomenology would,
as a consequence of the same premises, be contingent upon writing as well. For
the notion of a rigorous science, according to Husserl, demands not only that it
proceed "von unten aufwärts in evidenten Einzelschritten [. . .] und so in der
Tat letztlich begründeten und begründenden" (*Hua* VI, p. 195),[2] but also that it
develop within an intersubjective community of those who "miteinander erns-
tlich zusammenarbeiten[], miteinander wissenschaftlich verhandeln[] in Kritik
und Gegenkritik" (*Hua* VI, p. 199). Thus, although the phenomenological reduc-
tion may only ever take place at the level of transcendental consciousness –
and although Husserl expressly insists that both judgment and cognition are
possible "schon vor dem Ausdrücken" (*Hua* XX/2, p. 160) – both the method
and existence of phenomenology depend upon a literary medium that cannot
but be foreign to it. For writing, unlike the eidetic analysis of consciousness,
acts and produces empirical, worldly objects, "des 'exemplaires' sensibles, des
événements individuels dans l'espace et dans le temps," as Jacques Derrida
would put it in his incisive introduction to Husserl's "Ursprung der Geometrie"
(Derrida 1962, p. 94). Hence, Derrida goes on to draw the following conse-
quence from Husserl's corpus, a consequence that emerges from within the
logic of phenomenology, and that profoundly troubles its transcendental claims
to found oral and written expression in acts of consciousness: "Non seulement
la possibilité ou la nécessité d'être incarnée dans une graphie n'est plus
extrinsèque et factice au regard de l'objectivité idéale: elle est la condition *sine
qua non* de son achèvement interne" (Derrida 1962, p. 86).

This simultaneous necessity and foreignness of writing to phenomenology
is both what displaces the examination of phenomenology and literature from

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2 Husserl uses the word "Geist" in this sense, when he poses the question as to why, in the
wake of G.W.F. Hegel's system, subsequent critiques did not culminate in a unified scientific-
philosophical tradition, writing: "Warum führte Selbstkritik und Wechselkritik *bei den noch von
dem alten Geiste Beseelten* nicht zu einem Sichintegrieren von zwingenden Erkenntnisleistungen
in die Einheit eines von Generation zu Generation fortwachsenden, nur durch stets erneute
Kritik, Korrektur, methodische Verfeinerung zu vervolkommnenden Erkenntnisbaus?" (*Hua* VI,
p. 201, our emphasis).

the domain of phenomenology proper and what calls for a new return to the problems that written and spoken language may be seen to pose for the very establishment of phenomenology that they permit. *Phenomenology to the Letter* addresses these problems both by proceeding from the elucidating readings of Husserl that writers such as Derrida and, more recently, Claude Romano have offered, and by considering Husserl's oeuvre together with the radical interrogations of language practiced by writers of literature, aesthetics, and theory throughout the twentieth century. The various constellations of texts explored by the contributors to this volume are drawn together to elucidate the paradoxes regarding the phenomenon of language in and beyond phenomenology, as well as their consequences for philosophical inquiry, experience, and expression. These paradoxes arise not least of all through a marked divergence between what Fink calls the "wissenschaftlichen Wahrheiten" of phenomenology and its "Verwahrung," which can be traced throughout Husserl's and Fink's own literary production, and which, by their own testimonies, can neither be avoided nor amended. Already in *Ideen I*, Husserl had cautioned against – and thereby admitted – the semblance of historically inflected, ordinary language that everyday words retain, even when they are adopted within his corpus as technical terms:

> Im übrigen müssen diese und a l l e unsere Termini ausschließlich gemäß dem Sinne verstanden werden, den ihnen u n s e r e Darstellungen vorzeichnen, nicht aber in irgend einem anderen, den die Geschichte oder die terminologischen Gewohnheiten des Lesers nahelegen.[3]
>
> (*Hua* III, p. 69)

Thus, despite Husserl's emphasis upon the necessity of literary production for phenomenology – and despite his emphasis upon the sense that may be made of the words that appear in and according to "u n s e r e Darstellungen" – his remarks underscore the resistance of phenomenological texts to all but the most immanent reading, on the basis of phenomenological analyses and evidential insights that are to be reproduced by the reader herself. For his part, Fink more drastically emphasizes the inadequacy of language for imparting phenomenological analyses, insofar as "[d]ie Beheimatung der Sprache" lies "in der natürlichen Einstellung," where "alle Begriffe Seinsbegriffe sind," and where

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3 Similarly, in the *Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften*, Husserl considers the language of transcendental subjectivity that occurs in his writings as a "neuartige[] Sprache," and he goes on to gloss its novel distinction in a way that places emphasis upon the difference in sense that usual words attain in phenomenological usage. The newly fashioned language of the phenomenologist is "neuartig, obschon ich die Volkssprache, wie es unvermeidlich ist, aber auch unter unvermeidlicher Sinnverwandlung verwende" (*Hua* VI, p. 214).

all that there is to speak of is addressed "im Hinblick auf Seiendes" (Fink 1988, p. 94). Hence, language is not only foreign to phenomenology in the ways that Derrida had described in his influential, deconstructive analyses of Husserl's oeuvre. It is also fundamentally incommensurate with the attitude that is assumed in the phenomenological reduction, where all positions with respect to being are suspended, and where attention is turned instead to the conscious constitution of all that may or may not be said to be – to the operations that more properly pertain to what Fink calls pre-being, or *Vorsein*. With this observation, the very universal feature of positionality that allows Husserl to argue for the predicability of all acts and objects of intentionality in *Ideen I*–including the probable and the doubtful, the joyful and the wishful, and ultimately, the phenomenological (see *Hua* III, p. 268; 271) – is what also speaks against thetic predication in phenomenology itself. Thus, alongside the growing appearance of Husserl's corpus in print – which is owed to the outstanding editorial and philological work performed at the Husserl Archive in Leuven – comes an equally growing urgency to interrogate the role of writing in phenomenology anew.[4]

Responses to this problem quickly become circular upon the grounds of phenomenology alone. Fink, for example, renders the priority of phenomenological evidence and insight over language still more pronounced, when it comes to following the lines of phenomenological reflection:

> Phänomenologische Sätze können demnach nur verstanden werden, wenn die S i t u a t i o n d e r S i n n g e b u n g des transzendentalen Satzes immer w i e d e r h o l t wird, d.h. wenn die prädikativen Explikate immer wieder an der p h ä n o m e n o l o g i s i e r e n d e n A n s c h a u u n g verifiziert werden. Es gibt hier demnach kein phänomenologisches Verstehen durch das blosse Lesen phänomenologischer Forschungsberichte, sondern solche können überhaupt erst "gelesen" werden im Nachvollzug der Forschungen selbst. Wer das unterlässt, liest gar nicht phänomenologische Sätze, sondern liest absonderliche Sätze der natürlichen Sprache, nimmt die blosse Erscheinung für die Sache selbst und betrügt sich.   (Fink 1988, p. 101)

Yet if phenomenological propositions presuppose, as Fink puts it, "die S i t u a t i o n d e r S i n n g e b u n g des transzendentalen Satzes," the discrepancy between word and sense that he points out cannot be decisively resolved. For it would also have to follow that, even should those propositions serve as prescriptions that the

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4 For an especially insightful and novel inquiry into Husserl's usage of *Gabelsberger* shorthand during the course of his phenomenological research, whereby the speed of notation may be read to approximate the temporal process of thinking so closely, that one might advance the claim that "writing *is* thinking," see de Warren 2019.

phenomenologist *cum* reader follows and verifies anew, the insights that would thereby be confirmed or attained cannot be objectively guaranteed or verified, insofar as their objective verification would call for linguistic expression that remains upon the same problematic plane as phenomenological writing. At the same time, moreover, even if the required donation of sense or "Sinngebung" could be performed with silent certitude on the part of the transcendental reading subject, Fink's words concede that the necessity of writing engenders an equally necessary ambivalence at the level of the proposition itself. In this respect, strictly speaking, phenomenology cannot say what it means any more than it can objectively mean what it does without saying something. Pushed to an extreme, Fink would seem to suggest that phenomenology *needs* literature in much the same manner as art *needs* philosophy according to a statement by Adorno that easily permits its reversal to underscore what is unwritten and unspoken in Husserl's written theory of meaning: "Deshalb bedarf Kunst der Philosophie, die sie interpretiert, um zu sagen, was sie nicht sagen kann, während es doch nur von Kunst gesagt werden kann, indem sie es nicht sagt" (Adorno 1973, p. 113).

The "Verwissenschaftlichung" of phenomenology via linguistic expression and written documentation thus opens at the same time the impossibility of express verification for phenomenological insights, and the enduring possibility for distortion and misunderstanding. And should one attend more closely to the letter of Fink's words, it may even begin to appear – *nolens volens* – that all talk of literary "Verwissenschaftlichung" and "Verwahrung" indicates, via the prefix *ver-*, the promise [*Versprechen*] of a science and truth that will have already veered from its original constitution, a speaking that will have already itself been an instance of misspeaking [*Sich-Versprechen*]. It goes without saying that Fink does not explicate the consequences that these features of expression would entail for the transmissibility of phenomenology. Nor does he further explore the uncertainties and hazards that, according to the premises he sets forth, would have to attend the promise of language beyond or before all talk of phenomenology, as well as all propositions regarding being, predication, and apophantic truth, to the extent that the problem of reading would have to unsettle these functions of speech as well. But in addressing such problems with philosophical rigor, both Fink and Husserl indicate the predicaments that literary writers such as Beckett and Blanchot, among others, would trace in their prose, in greater or lesser proximity to Husserl. Hence, Blanchot will make explicit the effect – or affect – that follows from the void that separates writing and thought, or what Fink calls "Verwahrung" and "Wahrheit": "L'angoisse de lire: c'est que tout texte, si important, si plaisant et si intéressant qu'il soit (et plus il donne l'impression de l'être), est vide – il n'existe pas dans le fond; il faut franchir un abîme, et si l'on ne saute pas, on ne comprend pas" (Blanchot 1980, p. 23). Approaching similar

issues in a different way, Foucault opens his *Ordre du discours* by citing the conclusion of Beckett's *L'Innommable,* as a response of sorts to the "logophobie" that he traces in those tentatives such as Husserl's to promote "le mouvement d'un logos qui élève les singularities jusqu'au concept et qui permet à la conscience immédiate de déployer finalement toute la rationalité du monde" (Foucault 1971, p. 50). For from the outset, Foucault gives word of a language that precedes and escapes the mastery of consciousness, and tentatively sets his proper discourse under the auspices of this otherness and foreignness of speech:

> J'aurais aimé qu'il y ait derrière moi (ayant pris depuis bien longtemps la parole, doublant à l'avance tout ce que je vais dire) une voix qui parlerait ainsi: 'Il faut continuer, je ne peux pas continuer, il faut continuer, il faut dire des mots tant qu'il y en a, il faut les dire jusqu'à ce qu'ils me trouvent, jusqu'à ce qu'ils me disent [. . .] ils m'ont peut-être déjà dit, ils m'ont peut-être porté jusqu'au seuil de mon histoire [. . .].'
>
> (Foucault 1971, p. 8)

Whether one pursues the problems that attend the *logos* of phenomenology through further readings of Blanchot, Beckett, Foucault, or others, those who have written in the wake of Husserl – within and outside the phenomenological school – indicate that literature promises to address the mutual implications of language and phenomenality that phenomenology leaves unsaid. And they do so precisely by deviating from the phenomenological method in ways that Husserl's writings themselves might be seen to require, with and despite all intentions. For just as there *is* no phenomenology without literature – in the ontological sense of the term – there is also no phenomenological evidence within literature either, or at the very least none that would not assume a misleading appearance from the moment it appears in print. Rather, because language belongs, by both Husserl's and Fink's lights, to the constituted world that the phenomenological reduction radically suspends, addressing the dilemma – the double take that every given phenomenological "sentence" seems to demand – cannot take place within the attitude attained by way of the phenomenological reduction. Instead, from the moment the phenomenologist imparts words regarding transcendental evidence or insight, she will have left – at least in part – the transcendental attitude: "Da einerseits die phänomenologisierende Aussage den natürlichen Wortsinn verwandelt," writes Fink, "andererseits den neuen transzendentalen Sinn doch nur mit mundanen Begriffen und Termini [. . .] ausdrücken kann, geht das Phänomenologisieren in einer bestimmten Weise aus der transzendentalen Einstellung heraus" (Fink 1988, pp. 95–96).[5]

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5 Thus, Fink writes of the relation to language that emerges after the phenomenological reduction: "Bleibt zwar die Sprache als Habitualität durch die Epoché hindurch erhalten, so verliert sie aber

It is therefore perhaps only from a perspective that both departs from and parts ways with the procedures of "phenomenology" – in the sense of a strict philosophical "science" and method – that the analysis of the scientific *cum* literary character of phenomenology could occur. And it is for this same reason that, conversely, the insights that phenomenology may open into literary texts would have to proceed from a different approach than the epistemological one that Ingarden would apply to the study of literary texts. Instead, the relation between phenomenology and literature remains to be explored through readings and analyses that proceed with attentiveness to their foundation in language, in all its complexity and duplicity. It is to this shared *a priori* of language that the contributors to *Phenomenology to the Letter* turn, with various emphases, in investigations of phenomenological literature within and beyond the limits of Husserl's corpus.

Rhetoric and Thought: The Language of Phenomenology

The first section of this volume, "Rhetoric and Thought: The Language of Phenomenology," contains essays that explicitly approach the language of Husserl's own writing. In "Husserl's Image Worlds and the Language of Phenomenology," Michael McGillen turns to the centrality of intuition and forms of vision in Husserl's work, in order to elaborate the ways in which the descriptive discipline of phenomenology responds to the task of adequately rendering the visual intuition of phenomena in the medium of language. While recent scholarship emphasizes Husserl's importance for the "pictorial turn" in the humanities, the literary qualities of his language of phenomenological description, which is highly figurative and metaphorical, suggest that the linguistic and pictorial aspects of his images are closely connected. Considering Husserl's admission that figural expressions may play a provisional role in the development of philosophical concepts in light of Hans Blumenberg's theory of metaphorology, McGillen shows how prominent textual and visual metaphors in *Ideen I* such as *Klammer*, *Tafel*, *Blickstrahl*, and *Lichtkegel* drive the exposition of the phenomenological

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nicht den einzig a u f S e i e n d e s b e z o g e n e n A u s d r u c k s c h a r a k t e r. Sie ist wohl ein transzendentales Vermögen, wie letztlich jede Disposition und Fähigkeit des Ego, aber sie ist k e i n e t r a n s z e n d e n t a l e S p r a c h e, d.i. eine solche, die transzendentales Sein genuin angemessen e x p l i z i e r e n u n d p r ä d i k a t i v v e r w a h r e n kann" (Fink 1988, p. 95).

reduction and the theory of intentionality without ever being transformed into unequivocal concepts. Finally, he argues that Husserl's theory of image consciousness, which has been fruitful for analyzing modes of vision in picture theory, also provides insights into the metaphorical function of textual images in Husserl's phenomenological descriptions. Literary language and figural expressions persist in phenomenology because they provide a bridge between intuitions and descriptions, allowing us to say what it is that we see in images.

Adopting a broader perspective, Tarek R. Dika contends that the role of language in phenomenology persists as one of the most difficult questions that have raised serious doubts about the possibility of phenomenology. Phenomenology – and not only the Husserlian variety – is not possible without a concept of "sense" in no way dependent on linguistic "meaning." Confronting the problems that follow from this precondition in "*Auch für Gott*: Finitude, Phenomenology, and Anthropology," Dika examines Claude Romano's recent attempt to defend a version of phenomenology against the so-called "linguistic turn" in philosophy during the latter half of the twentieth century. Romano's phenomenology, unlike Husserl's, is avowedly anthropological: the rules that determine how phenomena appear are both non-linguistic and necessary, but only conditionally, "for us" humans. Romano's embrace of anthropologism, however, creates an unforeseen dilemma. On the one hand, he wants to show that these rules are not dependent on (nor, therefore, relative to) the linguistic conventions established by contingent historical communities. On the other hand, he reintroduces relativity at a more general, "species" level, a relativity whose conditions of intelligibility he does not pause to scrutinize. In a rigorous examination of this impasse, Dika thus argues that Romano's endorsement of anthropologism is aporetic: it falls back into the Kantian thesis that there are "things in themselves," and any such thesis breaks down, since it can have no positive content. Anthropologism is not false, but *absurd*. This renders the possibility of anthropologism as a coherent, articulable phenomenological (and, more broadly, philosophical) thesis questionable, and raises general concerns about the relation between finitude and truth in modern philosophy since Kant.

Turning back to Husserl's pre-phenomenological *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, Susan Morrow makes the case for the importance of this early work in conceiving of Husserl's relevance to literary studies. Whereas this relevance has already been recognized with regard to the affinity between the method of the phenomenological *epoché*, on the one hand, and the space of fictionality on the other, Husserl's earliest philosophical study devoted to the psychological origins of arithmetic concepts has received less consideration in this connection. Suspending Husserl's own disavowal of his early work and its "psychologism," Morrow

argues – through close readings of passages from *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* and "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" – that Husserl's reflections on the origin of the concept "multiplicity" constitute an unwitting poetological statement that reflects not only the manner in which the early Husserl constructs the psychological foundations of mathematical knowledge but also, moreover, the way in which the late Husserl's phenomenology understands the historicity of geometry and science as such. Consequently, the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* offers a poetics of epistemology.

In "Fort: The Germangled Words of Edmund Husserl and Walter Benjamin," Philippe P. Haensler, against the backdrop of the works of Jacques Derrida, puts into dialogue Husserl's late writings, particularly *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie* and its "Beilage III" ("Der Ursprung der Geometrie"), with Walter Benjamin's 1923 text "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers." The (twofold) goal of this comparative reading is to (a) suggest that Benjamin's essay, far from merely "using" or "appropriating" phenomenological vocabulary (such as "Intention" or "Meinen"), anticipates a series of key developments within Husserl's late oeuvre; and (b), vice versa, to formulate and defend the claim that Husserlian phenomenology, despite what might be the first impression, is deeply invested in the question of (literary) translation. Read side by side, the paper argues, Husserl's interest in the (trans-historic) "Stiftung" of sense and Benjamin's (messianic) reconceptualization of the relationship between an original and its translation(s) emerge as two sides of the same coin (if not two pieces of the same vessel); (non-)coincidence that, taking their respective "Wort-Leib" and the specific translational impossibilities inherent to it seriously, the "Beilage III" and "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" are, *in retrospect from the very beginning*, well aware of.

Phenomenology and Incommensurability: Beyond Experience

The contributors to the second section, "Phenomenology and Incommensurability: Beyond Experience," read Husserl's articulations of experience in the context of writings that challenge and even surpass the limits of experience that may be drawn from a strictly phenomenological point of view. In "'Beyond Experience': Blanchot's Challenge to Husserl's Phenomenology of Time," Jean-Sébastian Hardy turns his attention to a more neglected aspect of Husserl's theory of time-consciousness in recent scholarship: namely, to the dynamics of protention. This relatively under-examined operation of protention, Hardy contends, is all the more

surprising in light of Husserl's remark in his lecture course from 1905, where he asserts that a "prophetisches Bewußtsein" is, in principle, "denkbar" (*Hua* X, p. 56). In contrast to more direct scholarly approaches to Husserl's analyses of time, Hardy suggests that it is Maurice Blanchot's conception of the "désastre" – i.e., that which "ne répond[] pas à l'attente" (Blanchot 1980, p. 81) – that helps to problematize the presuppositions of the phenomenology of anticipation. In Blanchot's work, the event is not to be thought of as deception, surprise, rupture, or excess, all notions that are still negatively bound to an underlying and unquestioned stance of expectation. This distinction not only seems to set Blanchot's position apart from the negative eschatologies of Levinas, Scholem, Derrida, and others; it also implies that the disaster would be beyond experience and even beyond conceivability, since the delay of the event would turn out to define the inherited structure of our experience of time. By reading Blanchot's *L'écriture du désastre* along with *L'attente l'oubli* and "Sur un changement d'époque," Hardy argues that Husserl's concept of expectation bears traces of an implicit prophetic paradigm, therefore indicating that the affectivity of protention might be the product of an institution that is both originary and historical. According to Blanchot, losing all desire for the end of things through writing – and perhaps through writing alone – is the only way to bring about a transformation of presence.

The modification of presence is further explored in Henrik S. Wilberg's contribution, "Absehen – Disregarding Literature (Husserl / Hofmannsthal / Benjamin)," where the similarities between the aesthetic and phenomenological attitude are examined with regard to Husserl's elaborations of the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" in his *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie*. Taking as a point of departure Husserl's now-famous letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal from 1907, in which Husserl emphasizes the indifference to positionality that his thinking and writing share with Hofmannsthal's poetry, Wilberg goes on demonstrate that it is through a certain disregard and disengagement from the teleology of conscious acts that the phenomenological gaze gains access to a multiplicity of possible directions that exceeds the scope of thetic actuality. In order to bring into view the furthest-reaching consequences of the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" for a phenomenology of literature, however, Wilberg turns to Walter Benjamin's early essay, "Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin"; here, he shows that Benjamin's engagement with phenomenological thought exceeds Benjamin's more obvious references to Husserl's vocabulary. Rather, it is when Benjamin introduces his much-debated notion of "das Gedichtete" that he discloses a novel dimension of the poetic text that shows certain affinities to Husserl's thought. For "das *Gedichtete*," Benjamin asserts, can be glimpsed only through a certain disregard towards "gewissen Bestimmungen" within the poem. This disregard, in turn, opens poetic

writing to the infinite "Bestimmbarkeit" that both conditions each realized version of a given poetic text, and forges the relation of the poem to life (Benjamin 1985, p. 106). Finally, Wilberg argues that this particular modification of the reader's gaze towards the poeticized of the poem displays potentialities opened by the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" that reach beyond Husserl's explicit commentaries on this attitude.

To the extent that "das Gedichtete" differs from any single verbal realization of a given poetic work, Wilberg's essay also broaches the unsaid dimension of literary – and perhaps, phenomenological – language that Kristina Mendicino addresses in "Drawing a Blank – Passive Voices in Beckett, Husserl, and the Stoics." If the sense of what we say of subjective experience is to be understood independently of the words that express it, as Husserl insists, and as the Stoics had emphasized before him, then the question arises as to the sense of the subjective experience of words. For words, like color and other distinguishable qualities, would likewise be taken up through perception, such that their sensible character may convey, but also may replace and efface, the sense they should signify. Following the premises that are put forth in the Stoic doctrine of the *lékton* – which Husserl explicitly describes as one of the most important, albeit forgotten, advances in logic since Aristotle, and implicitly furthers in his redefinition of the "Satz" – thus leads to the consequence that any given instance of speech may come to appear as an ambivalent phenomenon, which can refer to words rather than to the other perceptual experiences that supposedly constitute the underlying foundation for linguistic description. Although neither Husserl nor the Stoics traced this implication of Stoic logic and phenomenology to its furthest-reaching consequences, Samuel Beckett does precisely this, perhaps most pronouncedly, in *L'Innommable*. The literary analysis of Beckett's prose may thus be seen to further the logical investigations of meaning and sense that once formed the first concern of phenomenology, and to offer the complement to philosophical discourse in the stricter sense.

Phenomenology of the Image and the Text Corpus

Taking up the role of materiality in the oeuvre of Charles Olson, Stefanie Heine in "Charles Olson: Phenomenologist, Objectivist, Particularist" proceeds to examine the American poet's sustained interest in phenomenology, as documented in his poetological essays and notes. After tracing Olson's conception of a phenomenological method, as inflected by his engagement with Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Heine considers Olson's

poetics against the background of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, where Husserl's remarks on the nature of words can be seen to shed surprising light upon Olson's writing practice. However, unlike Husserl, who insists that the intentional objects in linguistic communication are primarily meanings, rather than written or spoken signs, Olson places the inscription, positioning, and relations among words, *qua* physical entities, in the center of attention. It is their interactions upon the page, he suggests, that concern the poet *cum* perceiving subject in the moment of composition, allowing him to embrace the very dimension of language that should only play a secondary role in the work of the phenomenologist: namely, the "sinnliche Gegenständlichkeit" of words as "in die Welt hineingesetzte Realitäten" (*Hua* XX/2, p. 113). Yet insofar as these objects are iterable, and therefore ideal, Heine goes on to show how the tensions between materiality and ideality that mark Olson's poetics also call for a new analysis of the "Wortleib" – an analysis that discloses a different intentional dynamic than Husserl's investigations had done, where meaning had figured as the primary focus.

Claire Taylor Jones addresses a different sense of "Leib" in Husserl's corpus in "Icon as *Alter Ego*? Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation and Icons of Mary in Chronicles of the Teutonic Order." There, the conversion narratives involving Marian icons in two medieval chronicles of the Teutonic order, Peter of Dusburg's *Chronica terrae Prussiae* (1326) and Nicolaus of Jeroschin's *Kronike von Pruzinlant* (c. 1340), are introduced as contexts that solicit a new examination of Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation. Both Peter and Nicolaus tell the stories of two pagans who convert to Christianity after recognizing an icon of the Virgin Mary as capable of experiencing suffering and exercising a form of spiritual agency. In the Fifth Meditation, Husserl gives a rigorous phenomenological description of the *alter ego*, whose intentionality is perceived through its active body [*Leib*]. He also cursorily mentions what he calls cultural objects, which "refer us" to an *alter ego* and its actively constituting intentionality but cannot sufficiently ground recognition of another subject in the way that animate bodies do. Jones, by contrast, argues that icons, i.e., art objects imbued with saintly presence, put pressure on Husserl's distinction between living bodies and cultural objects in this meditation. Peter's and Nicolaus's accounts confirm the need for a different phenomenological description of intersubjectivity that does not rely on apperception of *alter egos* in animate *Leiber* or, to put it differently, that acknowledges apperception of suffering without the bodily movement required in Husserl's model.

Thomas Pfau's contribution, "*Absolute Gegebenheit*: Image as Aesthetic *Urphänomen* in Husserl and Rilke," addresses the role of the image in phenomenology, and the ways in which poetics provide a language for image experience

that Husserl does not himself offer in his elucidating lectures from 1905 on "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein." After an examination of Husserl's lectures, Pfau elaborates the "phenomenology of image experience" that may be gleaned from Rilke's monograph, *Auguste Rodin*, as well as his letters on Cézanne. There, Rilke's descriptions of image experience present a poetic complement to Husserl's *noematic* focus in his early lecture course, and expose the numinous, epiphanic implications of the image that Husserl hesitates to pursue. The noetic dimension of aesthetic appearance emerges through a confrontation with the unconditional givenness of images and their material conditions of possibility: color and light. In their mute yet insistent materiality, Rodin's sculptures and Cézanne's canvases first raise the possibility that the noematic may be anterior to the noetic. For in their alien, silent, and unfathomable "thingness," these aesthetic phenomena compel consciousness to suspend its quest for a lexical or referential decoding of the image object. Instead, Rilke sees the beholder of Rodin's sculptures becoming the unsuspecting witness and virtual collaborator in the thing's primordial creation. In its encounter with the aesthetic phenomenon, the noetic function approaches a condition of mystic silence: "[Es] entsteht eine Stille; die Stille, die um Dinge ist [. . .] die große Beruhigung der zu nichts gedrängten Dinge" (*KA* 4, p. 455). Anticipating Husserl's idea of a "transcendental reduction" (*epoché*), Rilke finds in Cézanne's paintings *prima facie* evidence of what he calls "die Dingwerdung, die durch sein eigenes Erlebnis an dem Gegenstand bis ins Unzerstörbare hinein gesteigerte Wirklichkeit" (*KA* 4, p. 608).

Fictional Truths: Phenomenology and Narrative

The final section of this volume is devoted to the complex relation between phenomenology and fiction, both in the technical sense of the term that Husserl adopts, and in the sense of fictional narrative. In "The Virtuous Philosopher and the Chameleon Poet: Husserl and Hofmannsthal," Nicolas de Warren explores the intricacies of Edmund Husserl's celebrated letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Although Husserl claims to have found "große Anregungen" in Hofmannsthal's aesthetics for the forging of his own phenomenological method, this paper examines how Husserl *imagined* this source of inspiration while at the same time actually drawing on insights from Hofmannsthal's aesthetics (see Husserl 1994, p. 133). In addition to a treatment of Husserl's envisioned analogy between the aesthetic attitude and the phenomenological attitude, de Warren further complicates Husserl's perception of Hofmannsthal

through a discussion of Hofmannsthal's "magical" conception of symbolism and the essential multi-lingualism of literary works.

Departing from the earlier, mathematical writings of Husserl in her contribution, "'A Now Not *toto caelo* a Not Now': The 'Origin' of Difference in Husserl, from Number to Literature," Claudia Brodksy re-evaluates the bases of the "process" of "differentiation" with which Husserl identified the "aim" of phenomenological "analysis" itself. The essay traces the arc of Husserl's thinking from *Über den Begriff der Zahl* (1887) and *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (1891), to the posthumously published "Die Frage nach dem Urpsrung der Geometrie" (1939), relating these to Husserl's intervening "steps" toward the development of a comprehensive theory of perception, consciousness, "I" and "other," and, underlying all these, temporality. The thesis of the paper is that Husserl's original understanding of "number" not as an independent means of identification but as a "concept" discernible only within a "collective" "group" of "'plural'" differing identities interrelated only by "the little [useful] word, 'and'" and unsubordinated to any single principle, is consistent with the overlapping theories of "interaction," "exchange," "reflection," "representation," "image-formation," "protention," and "retention" by which he "describes" mental "acts" as well as the methods of "bracketing" and "framing" that make such descriptions possible by marking the presence of externality within "the analyzing activity." The "question" of the transmissibility and reactivation of the self-identical "origin of geometry," resolved ultimately for Husserl in the material form of "virtuality" that it shares with all "intellectual products of world culture," i.e., its "transtemporal" "sedimentation" in *Schrift*, relates directly, the paper concludes, to the historically contemporaneous origin of modern literary theory in Lukács' analysis of literature. That is to say, taking the "sedimentation" of time itself as its thing-like object, puts the very future of literature, as a mode of representing and thus extending both consciousness and history, at risk, and, finally, to Proust's turning of the tables on that prediction by rendering time instead the "lost" object of necessarily interminable "research," very much in the mode of the differential, undelimitable investigations with which Husserl founds phenomenology.

This volume closes with Rochelle Tobias's examination Husserl's theory of other minds through the – unusual – lens of Kafka's "Die Verwandlung" in "Gregor Samsa and the Problem of Intersubjectivity." Tobias argues that Kafka's short story "Die Verwandlung" poses a unique challenge to Husserl's account of the apprehension of other minds by highlighting the experience of a being (Gregor Samsa) that is like-minded but not like-bodied and hence cannot be recognized as a subject. It might be tempting to dismiss Kafka's story as a mere play of the imagination, but such a judgment ignores the stakes of a work in which the protagonist is shown to constitute the world as an egological

sphere while, at the same time, being excluded from the community of his fellow beings or subjects by virtue of his appearance. Gregor Samsa's exclusion from the shared world of his family calls into question the normative basis of Husserl's claims that it is through the motor coordination of another body that I discern a mind at work; I "appresent" the consciousness of another that is never given directly to me but accompanies my perceptions. Kafka's implicit critique of Husserl's notion of analogical apprehension is all the more trenchant as his tale otherwise affirms the intentional structure of the universe so central to Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. How do we respond to the animal in our midst? How do we acknowledge another that may be like-minded but not liked-bodied and in whom we cannot recognize ourselves? To what degree do we – or can we – inhabit a shared sphere when the subjectivity of another remains all but inaccessible to me? For Kafka, the answer to these questions lies in fiction, which is unique among genres in its capacity to represent other minds in the third person.

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| Rhetoric and Thought: The Language of Phenomenology

Michael McGillen

Husserl's Image Worlds and the Language of Phenomenology

Abstract: Taking as a point of departure the centrality of intuition and forms of vision in Edmund Husserl's work, this contribution explores how phenomenology, as a descriptive discipline, contends with the challenge of finding a language adequate to the visual intuition of phenomena. While recent scholarship emphasizes Husserl's importance for the "pictorial turn" in the humanities, the literary qualities of his highly figurative and metaphorical language of phenomenological description suggest that the linguistic and pictorial aspects of his images are closely connected. Considering Husserl's admission that figural expressions may play a provisional role in the development of philosophical concepts in light of Hans Blumenberg's theory of metaphorology, the essay shows how prominent textual and visual metaphors in *Ideen I* such as *Klammer*, *Tafel*, *Blickstrahl*, and *Lichtkegel* drive the exposition of the phenomenological reduction and the theory of intentionality without ever being transformed into unequivocal concepts. Finally, I argue that Husserl's theory of image consciousness, which has been fruitful for analyzing modes of vision in picture theory, also provides insights into the metaphorical function of textual images in Husserl's phenomenological descriptions. Literary language and figural expressions persist in phenomenology because they provide a bridge between intuitions and descriptions, allowing us to say what it is that we see in images.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

One of the hallmarks of Husserl's phenomenology is the priority it gives to forms of vision and seeing as the basis of our knowledge and perception of the world. Indeed, his "principle of all principles" states,

> daß jede originär gebende Anschauung eine Rechtsquelle der Erkenntnis sei, daß alles, was sich uns in der "Intuition" originär, (sozusagen in seiner leibhaften Wirklichkeit) dar bietet, darbietet, einfach hinzunehmen sei, als was es sich gibt, aber auch nur in den Schranken, in denen es sich da gibt [. . .].   (*Hua* III, p. 51, emphasis in original)

The very term *Anschauung*, notoriously difficult to translate into English, is steeped in the visual motif of *Schauen* [to look, to behold], such that vision provides a framework for conceiving the intuition of sense impressions as such. And just as our knowledge derives from intuition or *Anschauung*, so too does

Husserl consider vision or seeing [*Sehen*] as a form of "o r i g i n ä r g e b e n d e s B e w u ß t s e i n" that provides the "Rechtsquelle aller vernünftigen Behauptungen" (*Hua* III, p. 43). To be sure, Husserl is concerned in his phenomenology with the "widest sphere of intentionality" [*die weiteste Sphäre der Intentionalität*] (*Hua* III, p. 210) – a range of experiences that includes not only seeing but also the attentional shifts involved in remembering, imagining, thinking, dreaming, feeling, and anticipating. Nevertheless, perception and the visual rhetoric of seeing serve as a model for all experiences of mental life in Husserl's work.[1]

Husserl's phenomenological approach thus provides a significant methodological impetus for studies of visual culture, and his theory of images serves as an important background, as recent commentators have noted, for the "pictorial turn" as described by W. J. T. Mitchell and others (Ionescu 2014, De Warren 2010, Alloa 2011). According to picture theory, images engage us with practices of representation and visual forms that cannot be reduced to a system of linguistic signs.[2] To be literate in reading images therefore demands practices of interpretation entirely different from those at stake in reading texts. Yet as much as the "pictorial turn" is understood to have succeeded and supplanted the "linguistic turn" in the humanities, Husserl's work serves as a reminder that the linguistic and the pictorial cannot be so easily separated from one another.[3] Indeed, a phenomenology that conceives of itself as a "purely descriptive discipline" must contend with the challenge of finding a language adequate to

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1 As Husserl writes in *Ideen I*, "Was bisher unter Bevorzugung der Wahrnehmung näher ausgeführt worden ist, gilt nun wirklich v o n a l l e n A r t e n i n t e n t i o n a l e r E r l e b n i s s e" (*Hua* III, p. 210). Husserl goes on to show how the attention of the subject can in fact shift seamlessly from the world of perception to the worlds of memory and phantasy (*Hua* III, p. 212). In each intentional experience, according to Husserl, we are dealing with a gaze [*Blick*] engaged in various modes of perception and reflection.
2 As Ionescu notes, Nelson Goodman's *Languages of Art* (1968) is characteristic of an approach that understands images through a theory of symbols, such that even though images are different from language, they share its mode of signification through a "*coding function* specific to all systems of signs" (Ionescu 2014, p. 96). By contrast, for picture theory, "learning how to 'read' an image actually means ceasing to treat the image as a text" (Ionescu 2014, p. 105).
3 As Mitchell puts it, the pictorial turn is "a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality. It is the realization that *spectatorship* (the look, the gaze, the glance, practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of *reading* (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.) and that visual experience or 'visual literacy' might not be fully explicable on the model of textuality" (Mitchell 1994, p. 16).

the visual intuition of phenomena if they are to be described "as they give themselves."[4] As Hans Blumenberg notes, the phenomenological method consists in "nichts anderes als Beschreibung von Phänomenen zu geben und dies auf der Grundlage der Anschauung und ihrer Evidenz. Da wird man von vornherein verstehen können, wenn er [der Phänomenologe, MM] Schwierigkeiten mit der Sprache hat, um seine Anschauung in Beschreibung umzusetzen" (Blumenberg 2002, pp. 65–66). For this reason, while Husserl's phenomenology attends to the visual dimensions of intuitions and images, and does so in a manner specific to their pictorial qualities, it is also compelled, in its search for an appropriate terminology and nomenclature for phenomenological description, to adduce textual figures in order to account for what the phenomenologist is able to see.[5] This translation of intuitions into descriptions, of visual experience into language, while not an explicit concern in Husserl's middle work, is nevertheless central to his phenomenological practice.

In what follows, I argue that Husserl's language of phenomenological description has important literary characteristics, and that his highly figurative and metaphorical language can be understood in terms of his theory of images, which provides insights not only into the pictorial dimensions of visual experience but also into the figural dimensions of writing and expression.[6] Husserl's

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4 In *Ideen I*, Husserl notes that phenomenology is a "rein deskriptive, das Feld des transzendental reinen Bewusstseins in der puren Intuition durchforschenden Disziplin" (*Hua* III, p. 127).

5 The search for an adequate terminology is an enduring concern of Husserl's work, as can be seen in his posthumously published manuscripts and notebooks. See Blumenberg, who reads the *Nachlassbänder* as a stenography of the constant search for revision and precision on Husserl's part: "Aber inzwischen im Besitz der Edition eines mehr als zwanzig Bände umfassenden und noch immer weiter anwachsenden Nachlaßwerks haben wir in weiten Partien der täglichen Stenogramme so etwas Einzigartiges wie Selbstprotokolle des arbeitenden Gründers und Meisters seiner Disziplin vor uns. Auch dort, wo es sich um die eigenhändigen Vorlagen seiner Vorlesungen handelt, sind Spuren der Unebenheit, der Versetzungen und Verwerfungen im Arbeitsgang von einer Stunde zur anderen, nicht ganz selten. Es gehört zu den schönsten Eindrücken, die wir von der Ernsthaftigkeit dieses Philosophierens haben, daß Husserl sich vor der Selbstverwarnung nicht scheut" (Blumenberg 2002, pp. 66–67).

6 My claim that attention to the metaphorical register of philosophical language need not come at the expense of insight into the specific function and logic of images runs counter to Alloa's criticism of philosophy for treating images solely in terms of their metaphorical figurality. According to Alloa, philosophy's attention to metaphor reflects the unbroken privilege of *Logos* and fails to recognize how images organize meaning in non-propositional terms: "Das Bild – diese Einsicht bricht sich heute immer breiter Bahn – kann nicht länger als subsidiärer Stellvertreter des Wortes oder als der Veranschaulichung des Begriffs dienend angesehen werden, vielmehr gibt es ein sich in Bildern organisierendes Sinngeschehen, das sich in Propositionalität nicht erschöpft. Die neuerdings geforderte Inklusion der Bilder in den Gegenstandsbereich der

discussion of *Bilder* and *Bildlichkeit*, I claim, needs to be understood in terms of the dual meanings of these terms, since *Bilder* refers both to images in the sense of pictures and to metaphors, and *Bildlichkeit* can imply both pictorial representation and metaphorical figurality. Husserl's contribution to a literary language of phenomena is thus at once imagistic and textual. To read Husserl's work in terms of its metaphorical and figural register does not reduce visual experience to a set of linguistic signs but rather treats the text of phenomenology itself as a language of images and metaphors.[7] If, indeed, Husserl's texts are saturated with images, then we must consider what implications this has for his phenomenological method, the concern of which is not only what is given in intuition as such but also how we can *describe* what we see or perceive.

A reading of Husserl's phenomenology in terms of its literary language makes several important contributions to our understanding of his work. First, it shows that Husserl's contribution to picture theory extends beyond his analysis of visual images to encompass the figural qualities of phenomenological description. Second, it demonstrates how Husserl's use of philosophical metaphors is not merely a provisional stepping-stone on the path to a rigorous and unequivocal language of concepts, but rather an enduring aspect of his philosophical project, thereby providing a case study of Hans Blumenberg's thesis of the centrality of metaphors in the history of philosophy. Finally, it provides insights into how the dynamic relationship between intuition and description in Husserl's work gives rise to an interminable search for a language of phenomena, the figural and literary qualities of which can be explained in terms of what Husserl calls "image consciousness." In order to demonstrate these claims, I will first address the problem of terminology, language, metaphors, and concepts in Husserl's work (I), then provide a close analysis of his use of textual and visual metaphors (II), and conclude by considering the metaphorical dimension of phenomenological description in terms of Husserl's theory of image consciousness (III).

Philosophie zeugt allerdings geradezu symptomatisch von einem nach wie vor ungebrochenen Privileg des Logos, wurde diese Inklusion doch in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten vornehmlich in Form einer Analyse *metaphorischer* Bildlichkeit praktiziert. Die Bedeutung von Bildern auf die Metaphernpflichtigkeit philosophischer Sprache zu reduzieren wiederholt die klassische Geste der Internalisierung, bei der die *pictures* auf die *images* und die äußeren Bilder auf die (sogenannten) inneren zurückgeführt werden" (Alloa 2011, pp. 9–10).

7 Compare Derrida 1974. Like Blumenberg, Derrida draws attention to metaphors in the "text of philosophy" that are not merely ornamental but part of the "inner articulation of philosophical discourse" (Derrida 1974, pp. 6 and 22).

1 The Language of Phenomenology: Terminology, Metaphors, Concepts

The problem of terminology or "philosophical language" plays an important role in Husserl's thought and in his phenomenological method. In the introduction to the first book of *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*, a key text in Husserl's oeuvre that provides a theoretical foundation for his system of transcendental phenomenology and the method of the phenomenological reduction, Husserl notes that when possible he avoids terms with unwanted philosophical baggage, thus introducing the "terminologically fresh eidos" [*das terminologisch unverbrauchte Eidos*] as an alternative to the historically overdetermined term "idea" [*Idee*] because of the Kantian meaning of the latter term (*Hua* III, p. 8).[8] At the same time, he recognizes that it is not possible to choose "artificial expressions" [*Kunstausdrücke*] that "fall entirely outside of the frame of the historical philosophical language" [*aus dem Rahmen der historischen philosophischen Sprache ganz herausfallen*] (*Hua* III, p. 9). Given the limitations of the language available for philosophical discourse, Husserl concedes that philosophical concepts can never have fixed definitions on the basis of "unmittelbar zugänglicher Anschauungen"; rather, the clarification and determination of concepts can only be the result of philosophical reflection (*Hua* III, p. 9). For this reason, Husserl notes the necessity of using "kombinierte Redeweisen" that make use of multiple expressions from "der allgemeinen Rede" (*Hua* III, p. 9).

Husserl strives for a terminology and conceptual language that is precise and unequivocal. In his methodological deliberations in *Ideen I*, he notes that in phenomenology, "[wir] vollziehen an exemplarischen Gegebenheiten transzendental reinen Bewußtseins unmittelbare Wesenserschauungen und fixieren sie *begrifflich*, bzw. terminologisch" (*Hua* III, pp. 139–140). Although Husserl recognizes that the words available for such concepts are often derived from "der allgemeinen Sprache" and may be ambiguous and have various senses, he claims that as soon as such expressions "coincide" [*sich decken*] with what is given in intuition, they attain a clear meaning and a fixed conceptual or scientific sense (*Hua* III, p. 140).[9] The phenomenologist is thus bound, according to

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8 On the status of *Ideen I* in Husserl's philosophical development, see De Boer 1978, esp. pp. 322ff. De Boer detects in *Ideen I* a key shift from descriptive psychology, in the tradition of Brentano, to a transcendental phenomenology in which the bracketing of the natural world points to a constituting subject or consciousness as its residue.

9 This coincidence of expressions and intuitions can be compared to the discussion of "Deckung" in Husserl's theory of expression in §§124–26 of *Ideen I* (*Hua* III, pp. 284–91).

Husserl, to "[einem] getreue[n] Ausdruck klarer Gegebenheiten" through "eindeutige Termini" (*Hua* III, p. 139).

Nevertheless, Husserl's work contains a persistent stratum of metaphorical and figurative language that is never fully translated into conceptual abstraction. In *Ideen I*, for example, Husserl invokes spatial metaphors such as *Horizont* [horizon] and *Hof* [court, halo], and geological metaphors such as *Kern* [core] and *Schicht* [layer]. Experience is pictured as a *Strom* [current] or *Fluss* [flow], while for the intentionality of consciousness and forms of attention, Husserl draws on visual metaphors such as *Strahl* [ray], *Blickstrahl* [ray of vision], and *Lichtkegel* [beam of light].[10] Qualifications such as "bildlich gesprochen" and "wir sprechen im Gleichnis" are frequent refrains in *Ideen I*, and they arise at moments in the text where a clear conceptual language is simply not available to capture the complexity of the matter at hand.[11] In Husserl's view, the absence of clear concepts is a problem that plagues the beginnings of phenomenology, whose progress is one of incremental terminological differentiation. He notes that in the initial stages of phenomenology, "alle Begriffe, bzw. Termini, in gewisser Weise in Fluß bleiben müssen, immerfort auf dem Sprunge, sich gemäß den Fortschritten der Bewußtseinsanalyse [. . .] zu differenzieren" (*Hua* III, p. 190). "Endgültige Terminologien" can only be expected, he concedes, at a very advanced state of development of the discipline (*Hua* III, p. 190).

In its early stages, by contrast, Husserl considers images and metaphors to be indispensable to the phenomenological method: "Für den Anfang ist jeder Ausdruck gut und insbesondere jeder passend gewählte bildliche Ausdruck, der unseren Blick auf ein klar erfaßbares phänomenologisches Vorkommnis zu

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10 For more on Husserl's use of metaphors, see Rother 2002. Rother notes that Husserl's metaphorical expressions have a "relativ zu einem Begriff stärker *bildhafte[r]* Charakter" and that such expressions point to "das Phänomen einer Übertragung" (Rother 2002, p. 76). Similarly, Zimmer argues that Husserl's use of the "Horizontmetapher" has the function of bringing "begriffliche Verhältnisse seiner Phänomenologie zu sinnhafter Evidenz," thereby illustrating Blumenberg's claim that "Metaphern ins Bewußtsein zurückholen, was theoretische Abstraktion notwendig aus ihm abblenden muß: den anschaulichen Vorstellungshorizont des Ganzen eines sinnhaften Hintergrundes, in den philosophische und wissenschaftliche Theorien eingebettet sind" (Zimmer 1999, pp. 257–258).

11 Rother, by contrast, reads such qualifications as evidence that Husserl was aware of the "Gefahren, die bei der Verwendung von Bildern, Vergleichen, Analogien oder 'Gleichnisreden' lauern" (Rother 2002, p. 77). While Rother is right to note that Husserl aims for an "*Überführung* von Metaphern – er selbst spricht von 'Bildern' – in eine 'trennscharfe' Begriffssprache" (Rother 2002, p. 77), he somewhat overstates Husserl's suspicion of metaphors, for while metaphors are open to misinterpretation, they also appear to be indispensable for Husserl as part of the process of concept formation.

lenken vermag" (*Hua* III, p. 190). Admittedly, Husserl attributes a provisional status to metaphorical expressions: as the discipline develops, they are to be replaced successively by unequivocal concepts. Yet he nonetheless recognizes the formative potential of literary language as a means of augmenting what the phenomenologist is able to see. We can observe here how closely description and vision, metaphor and picture are intertwined: phenomena are described on the basis of intuitions, yet what can be seen or pictured depends in no small part on the phenomenological expressions that inform our intuitions. As much as the "pictorial turn" purports to have surpassed the "linguistic turn," Husserl's attention to the language of phenomenological description suggests that these turns in fact have much in common, for a theory *of* images is inevitably a theory *in* images or metaphors.

Now, I would like to suggest that in Husserl's phenomenology the provisional status of verbal images and metaphors is never in fact overcome. What is more, I argue that Husserl's figurative expressions define his unique contribution to the history of philosophy, and that they follow from the phenomenological method itself, which aims to describe phenomena on the basis of intuitions or *Anschauungen* but must first find a language that can turn intuitions into descriptions. This approach to reading Husserl draws on central insights from Hans Blumenberg's work on metaphorology, specifically his insight that philosophical metaphors can be understood as a "katalysatorische Sphäre" (Blumenberg 1998a, p. 11) for concept formation yet cannot fully be transformed into theoretical abstraction. Arguing for the legitimacy of metaphors in philosophical language, Blumenberg claims that metaphors are not merely "remainders" or "vestiges" [*Restbestände*] on a path from *mythos* to *logos*, but should rather be viewed as "core elements" [*Grundbestände*] of philosophical language (Blumenberg 1998a, p. 10). Such metaphors, for Blumenberg, are "'Übertragungen', die sich nicht ins Eigentliche, in die Logizität zurückholen lassen" (Blumenberg 1998a, p. 10).

In admitting metaphors, images, and figural expressions as part of the early stages of phenomenology, Husserl grasps their productivity and formative qualities. While his stated aim is an unequivocal language of philosophical concepts, the nature of the medium of language itself, with its contingencies, historical variability, and its tendency towards polysemy, poses obstacles on the road from metaphors to concepts. In this light, it is perhaps more appropriate to recognize that key Husserlian concepts such as *Erlebnisstrom*, *Blickstrahl*, and *Lebenswelt* have the character of what Blumenberg calls "absolute metaphors," that is, that they belong to a stratum of expressions whose metaphorical substrate is so vital to their philosophical function that it can never be eliminated or subsumed under a more rigorous language of logical concepts. As Blumenberg writes,

> Der Aufweis absoluter Metaphern müßte uns wohl überhaupt veranlassen, das Verhältnis von Phantasie und Logos neu zu durchdenken, und zwar in dem Sinne, den Bereich der Phantasie nicht nur als Substrat für Transformationen ins Begriffliche zu nehmen – wobei sozusagen Element für Element aufgearbeitet und umgewandelt werden könnte bis zum Aufbrauch des Bildervorrats –, sondern als eine katalysatorische Sphäre, an der sich zwar ständig die Begriffswelt bereichert, aber ohne diesen fundierenden Bestand dabei umzuwandeln und aufzuzehren. (Blumenberg 1998a, p. 11)

The point here is that philosophical metaphors maintain a dynamic relation to the process of concept formation and differentiation. Figural expressions enter into Husserl's phenomenology because they provide possibilities for articulating and expressing intuitions that are given to sense experience, ones for which a clear conceptual language cannot be found. But they also remain a key element of the phenomenological language of description because their figural substrate proves irreplaceable.

2 Textual and Visual Metaphors in *Ideen I*

In order to explore in more concrete terms the literary qualities of Husserl's phenomenological language, I turn now to two sets of metaphors that play a prominent role in *Ideen I*.[12] Special attention to *Ideen I* is warranted not only by its programmatic exposition of the phenomenological method but also by the circumstances of its composition: as Husserl confided to his assistant Edith Stein, the text was composed within six weeks "as if in a trance" [*wie im trance*].[13] The first set of metaphors, which includes figures such as *Klammer* [bracket], *Einklammerung* [bracketing], *Tafel* [blackboard], and *Anführungszeichen* [quotation marks], has a strong textual dimension, while the second set, containing metaphors such as *Strahl* [ray], *Blickstrahl* [ray of vision], and *Lichtkegel* [beam of light], has a strong visual dimension. Husserl's textual metaphors play an important role in his elaboration of the method of phenomenological reduction, while his visual metaphors enrich his discussion of attention and the structures of intentionality. Together they help shed light on the larger question of the interplay

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12 Although it exceeds the scope of this essay to pursue this connection, it is worth noting that Husserl's reliance of metaphorical language extends to his later works as well, especially in relation to his theory of the "life world" or *Lebenswelt*.

13 See *Hua Dok* III/4I, p. 413. Cited in De Warren 2017, p. 65. Many of the key concepts of *Ideen I* were developed as early as 1907, especially in Husserl's lectures on *Ding und Raum*, but *Ideen I* provides the first comprehensive treatment of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology.

between the textual aspects of description and the visual constitution of intuition in phenomenology.

Let us begin with the image of the *Klammer* or bracket, which plays a key role in Husserl's method of phenomenological reduction. Husserl famously argued for a suspension of judgment – or *epoché* – with regard to the beliefs that we posit in the "natural attitude" towards the world. The method of phenomenological reduction not only allows us to perceive things "as they give themselves" but also makes evident how such things are objects of perception, which is to say that their appearance is an appearance for a consciousness. While acknowledging that the phenomenological *epoché* "effects a certain sublation of positing" [*eine gewisse Aufhebung der Thesis notwendig bedingt*], Husserl claims that the suspension of a judgment does not negate the judgment: "Es ist nicht eine Umwandlung der Thesis in die Antithesis, der Position in die Negation" (*Hua* III, p. 63). A conviction remains what it is in the phenomenological reduction, but it undergoes a modification, and here Husserl introduces a series of images:

> [W]ährend sie [die Thesis, MM] in sich verbleibt, was sie ist, s e t z e n   w i r   s i e   g l e i c h s a m "a u ß e r A k t i o n", wir "s c h a l t e n   s i e   a u s", wir "k l a m m e r n   s i e   e i n". Sie ist weiter noch da, wie das Eingeklammerte in der Klammer, wie das Ausgeschaltete außerhalb des Zusammenhangs der Schaltung. Wir können auch sagen: die Thesis ist Erlebnis, w i r   m a - c h e n   v o n   i h r   a b e r   "k e i n e n   G e b r a u c h", und das natürlich nicht als Privation verstanden. (*Hua* III, p. 63)[14]

Like the parenthesized in the parenthesis or the bracketed in the bracket, the conviction is still there, but its judgment or positing of existence has been suspended. Husserl is explicit that he is invoking a set of images here, and he notes that "das Bild von der Einklammerung" (*Hua* III, p. 64) is especially suited to judgments concerning the sphere of objects.

Elsewhere in *Ideen I*, Husserl extends the metaphor of bracketing to include the image of a blackboard or *Tafel*, emphasizing how the method of phenomenological reduction is conceived in terms of processes of writing, inscription, and annotation. It does not involve erasure but rather a certain marking up of a text. Here too Husserl is explicit that he is invoking a metaphor: "Bildlich gesprochen: Das Eingeklammerte ist nicht von der phänomenologischen Tafel weggewischt, sondern eben nur eingeklammert und dadurch mit einem Index versehen" (*Hua* III, p. 159). The textual metaphor of bracketing merges here

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14 Husserl distinguishes his approach from that of Descartes, for whom the moment of doubt is in fact an attempt at universal negation, insofar as the antithesis becomes a supposition of non-being (*Hua* III, pp. 63–64).

with the mathematical metaphor of providing a variable with an index, to speak, say, of x' (x prime) instead of x. In other words, the bracketing of a judgment does not alter its existence but only its function, so that it can have value in a phenomenological sense. Whether we consider what is bracketed as a text or as a formula, the act of bracketing does not imply a negation or erasure, but is itself an act of reading, annotation, and interpretation.

In his discussion of "Noesis and Noema," Husserl further extends the metaphor of bracketing by comparing it to the placing of an object in quotation marks. He gives the example of an apple tree blossoming in a garden: "Angenommen, wir blicken mit Wohlgefallen in einen Garten auf einen blühenden Apfelbaum, auf das jugendfrische Grün des Rasens usw." (*Hua* III, p. 203). When this perception is submitted to phenomenological reduction and the "reality" of the tree is placed in brackets, the perception of the tree appears not to change in the least. That is, the phenomenologically reduced experience of perception is still a "Wahrnehmung v o n 'diesem blühenden Apfelbaum, in diesem Garten usw.'" (*Hua* III, p. 204). The only thing that has changed is that the perception has been described "in noematischer Hinsicht" (*Hua* III, p. 205). The tree, in other words, is nothing but the "perceived tree".

In making this claim, Husserl draws a distinction between noesis and noema, which can be understood as follows: just as there is a moment of consciousness that provides form to intentional experiences by "bestowing sense" upon them [*Sinngebung*], which Husserl defines as "noesis" or a "noetic moment" (*Hua* III, p. 194), so too do the objects of perception, memory, and other intentional experiences have a correlative "noematic content" or "noema," which refers to their underlying sense. Even when the "reality" of the tree has been bracketed, its underlying sense as an object of perception remains. In order to indicate that in the phenomenologically reduced perception he is referring not to the physical thing but to the thing as it is perceived [*das Wahrgenommene*], Husserl puts "this blossoming apple tree in this garden" into quotation marks and notes:

> D i e   A n f ü h r u n g s z e i c h e n   sind   offenbar   bedeutsam,   sie   drücken   jene Vorzeichenänderung, die entsprechende radikale Bedeutungsmodifikation der Worte aus. D e r   B a u m   s c h l e c h t h i n, das Ding in der Natur, ist nichts weniger als dieses B a u m w a h r g e n o m m e n e s   als   s o l c h e s, das als Wahrnehmungssinn zur Wahrnehmung und unabtrennbar gehört. (*Hua* III, p. 205)

As a form of annotation, the quotation marks do not modify what we see but how we read what we see. The phenomenological reduction thus does not convert intuitions into linguistic signs but rather provides a textual model

with which the language of visual appearances can be read from a position of distance.[15]

We can observe a curious tension at this moment in *Ideen I*. Husserl rejects the scholastic distinction between an "immanent" object and an "actual" object, where the former designates the thing as a "mental" or "intentional" object, while the latter refers to its real existence (*Hua* III, p. 207). The consequence of such a distinction, he notes, is that it would imply that there are two realities that stand opposed to one another: the tree itself as an object of nature and a second "immanent tree" or an "inner image" of the real tree (*Hua* III, p. 207). This second "inner image" of the tree, according to Husserl, is not given. The actual object of our perceiving intention is the thing itself, the tree in the garden. Accordingly, the phenomenologically "reduced" object is by no means a "reproduction" [*Abbild*] or "image object" [*Bildobjekt*], which would stand in as a representation of the "real" object (*Hua* III, p. 208). Instead, the "reduced phenomenon" is the real object itself, as it gives itself, yet considered in its noematic sense, that is, as a thing perceived. Yet as much as Husserl insists that the "reduced phenomenon" is not a *Bildobjekt* that stands in for what it represents, in order to describe the "reduced phenomenon," he cannot help but speak figuratively and in images. Not only is the phenomenologically reduced "blossoming tree there in space" placed in quotation marks – thereby expressing its "change in sign" and "radical modification of meaning" (*Hua* III, p. 205) – but also the term *Einklammerung* itself, and Husserl flags these annotations by writing "understood with quotation marks" [*mit den Anführungszeichen verstanden*] and "speaking metaphorically" [*im Bilde gesprochen*] (*Hua* III, p. 209). The method of phenomenological reduction does not, as Husserl notes, produce "mental images" of objects of intuition that would stand beside these objects as a second reality. Yet in giving discursive form to the reduced phenomenon, phenomenology does

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15 On the function of quotation marks in Husserl's work, see Trizio 2016, who argues that Husserl uses quotation marks to create "a certain distance from what is being asserted or from the way in which a given word is used in common philosophical parlance" (Trizio 2016, p. 196). Quotation marks were also of considerable interest to Husserl's student Roman Ingarden, who took a phenomenological approach to literature in his 1931 *Das literarische Kunstwerk: Eine Untersuchung aus dem Grenzgebiet der Ontologie, Logik und Literaturwissenschaft*. Ingarden argued that quotation marks have a "manifestation function": "The function of quotation marks, therefore, projects in a particular, but still intentional, manner a state of affairs, that of manifesting. And only this state of affairs, in connection with the meaning and the character of the just then articulated sentence, leads, of itself, to the projection of a new intentional state, namely, the one that is manifested" (Ingarden 1973, p. 184). According to Linda Hutcheon, for Ingarden quotation marks "distance the reader (as would, in other art forms, a stage or a picture frame), and necessitate a conscious, intersubjective bracketing of experience" (Hutcheon 2013, p. 148).

conceive of the object figuratively as a *Schriftbild* or textual image of what presents itself in intuition. The tree as such, the thing in nature, to use Husserl's example, is endowed with figural qualities in and through the phenomenological reduction.

What presents itself in intuition, in turn, is developed by Husserl through a consistent rhetoric of visual metaphors. To grasp the eidos of a phenomenon is an act of "seeing essences" [*Wesenserschauung*] modeled on the form of "intuition" [*Anschauung*] in which objects appear by stepping into the visual field of a "gaze":

> Jeder mögliche Gegenstand [. . .] hat eben s e i n e Weisen, vor allem prädikativen Denken, in einen vorstellenden, anschauenden, ihn evtl. in seiner "leibhaftigen Selbstheit" treffenden, ihn "erfassenden" Blick zu treten. Wesenserschauung i s t also Anschauung.
>
> (*Hua* III, p. 15)

This metaphorics of vision is developed further in Husserl's theory of intentionality, which concerns a consciousness *of* something. Intentionality is conceived as a form of attention in which a subject's gaze focuses on an object and grasps it as an object of consciousness. Husserl describes this gaze as a form of vision that radiates like a beam of light:

> In jedem aktuellen cogito richtet sich ein von dem reinen Ich ausstrahlender "Blick" auf den "Gegenstand" des jeweiligen Bewußtseinskorrelats, auf das Ding, den Sachverhalt usw. und vollzieht das sehr verschiedenartige Bewußtsein v o n ihm.   (*Hua* III, p. 188)

According to Husserl, intentionality is possible for any given experience, but the mode of orientation of the self towards an object or *Ichzuwendung* characteristic of an "a k t u e l l e s cogito" does not take place in every experience:

> Nun lehrte aber die phänomenologische Reflexion, daß nicht in jedem Erlebnis diese vorstellende, denkende, wertende, [. . .] Ichzuwendung zu finden ist, dieses a k t u e l l e Sich-mit-dem-Korrelatgegenstand-zu-schaffen-machen, Zu-ihm-hin-gerichtet-sein (oder auch von ihm weg – und doch mit dem Blicke darauf), während es doch Intentionalität in sich bergen kann.   (*Hua* III, p. 188)

Experience is rather understood as "ein p o t e n t i e l l e s W a h r n e h m u n g s f e l d" in which many objects are "intuitively 'conscious'" [*anschaulich "bewußt"*] as a background of visual perception (*Hua* III, p. 189). The latency of such objects in the visual field can be overcome, Husserl notes, by a cogito that "catches sight" of them [*ein gewahrendes cogito*] (*Hua* III, p. 189). The "orientation of vision" or *Blickzuwendung* at stake in intentionality establishes these objects as objects of consciousness, but it does not, Husserl argues, constitute their "intuitive appearance" [*anschauliche Erscheinung*] in the first place (*Hua* III, p. 189). The theory of intentionality is thus structured in visual terms as an interplay between the

intuitive givenness of objects and the directed gaze of consciousness towards these objects.

In his reflections on the phenomenology of attention [*Aufmerksamkeit*], Husserl explicitly states that his concepts of "intellectual gaze" and "ray of vision" are metaphorical: "Wir sprechen im Gleichnis vom 'geistigen Blick' oder 'Blickstrahl' des reinen Ich, von seinen Zuwendungen und Abwendungen" (*Hua* III, p. 211). The metaphor of a "ray of vision" is mobilized to describe how attention can wander from perceptions to memories to phantasies, passing through various "noetic layers" [*noetische Schichten*], at times moving forward, at times being reflected back (*Hua* III, p. 212). The specific productivity of this visual metaphor, however, derives not from its ability to describe the noetic layers of consciousness, with its various forms of intentionality, but rather from its usefulness for demonstrating that such modifications of consciousness also have an effect on the noematic aspects of the objects of consciousness, that is, on their underlying sense. In other words, Husserl's visual metaphors allow him to demonstrate his claim that there is a correlation between noetic and noematic modifications, and more generally between noesis and noema. In order to make this claim, Husserl introduces further visual metaphors:

> Man pflegt die Aufmerksamkeit mit einem erhellenden Lichte zu vergleichen. Das im spezifi-schen Sinn Aufgemerkte befindet sich in dem mehr oder minder hellen Lichtkegel, es kann aber auch in den Halbschatten oder in das volle Dunkel rücken. So wenig ausreichend das Bild ist, um alle phänomenologisch zu fixierenden Modi unterschiedlich auszuprägen, so ist es doch so weit bezeichnend, als es Änderungen am Erscheinenden als solchen anzeigt. Dieser Beleuchtungswechsel ändert nicht das Erscheinende nach seinem eigenen S i n n e s bestand, aber Helligkeit und Dunkelheit modifizieren seine Erscheinungsweise, in der Blickrichtung auf das noematische Objekt sind sie vorfindlich und zu beschreiben.
>
> (*Hua* III, p. 213)

The "erhellende Licht" or "Lichtkegel" that Husserl constructs here as an image or metaphor for attention is not only highly visual but also has a theatri-cal component. A stage is being set here in which objects appear in the line of vision [*Blickrichtung*] of attention or alternatively stand outside its spotlight. Depending upon the intensity of the ray of vision and its direction, the way that objects appear on this stage will be different. At stake is an image or meta-phor [*Bild*] whose conceptual productivity Husserl puts to the test. While it lacks a certain precision for expressing the wide-ranging modalities of atten-tion, the image of the *Lichtkegel* has a denotative function and allows for a de-scription of the interaction between the intentionality of consciousness and objects of intuition. Husserl's references to processes of indication [*Bezeichnung*] and description [*Beschreibung*] suggest that the phenomenological work being

done by his visual metaphors concerns the translation of intuitions into descriptions, of forms of visual experience into textual images.[16]

3 Husserl's Image Consciousness as a Theory of Figurality

Having argued for the centrality of metaphors for Husserl's development of a language of phenomenological description, I now suggest that the figurality and literary qualities of this language can be understood in terms of Husserl's theory of images and image consciousness. In his 1904/1905 lectures on "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein," Husserl describes the figural relations that pertain between an image and its referent in terms of an "image consciousness" [*Bildbewusstsein*] that grasps the image as a representation (*Hua* XXIII, pp. 1–169). This theory of images has been central to picture theory's appropriation of phenomenology to analyze the modes of vision at work in the apprehension of images as pictures. My claim here is that "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein" also provides methodological insights into the function of images as metaphors in Husserl's development of phenomenology as a descriptive discipline in *Ideen I*. Insofar as it is mediated by a language of phenomenological description, the phenomenologist's gaze has important figural qualities that find expression in the literary language of phenomenology. Husserl's theory of *Bildbewusstsein* thus provides a theoretical account of the metaphorical displacements that we have observed in *Ideen I*.

In his lectures on "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein," Husserl argues for a faculty of "phantasy" or "imagination" [*Phantasie*] that is distinct from the faculty of "perception" [*Wahrnehmung*] (*Hua* XXIII, p. 1–34). Phantasy is unique,

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16 To be sure, the translation of what can be seen into what can be said by no means creates an isomorphic relation or functional identity. As Rother notes, there always remains for Husserl a "Differenz" between "Gesehenes" and "Gesagtes" (Rother 2002, p. 77). Or, as Blumenberg glosses Husserl's phenomenology in a short text entitled "Worte und Sachen": "Auf dem Gesehenen lastete die Pflicht, es zu sagen, als eine uneinholbare Differenz" (Blumenberg 1998b, p. 137). Yet while Rother argues that the transference of what can be seen into what can be said corresponds to the transformation of metaphors into concepts (Rother 2002, p. 76), I would argue that metaphors themselves are already examples of the translation of intuitions into descriptions. Indeed, the fundamental difference between "Gesehenes" and "Gesagtes" accounts for the fact that metaphors are so prominent in phenomenology and that unequivocal concepts prove so elusive.

he suggests, because it makes present an absent object "as if" it were there.[17] In phantasy the object appears to us "im Bilde"; the "phantasy representation" is thus a "Verbildlichung" or a "Bildlichkeitsvorstellung" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 16). However, Husserl clarifies that the figurativeness or *Bildlichkeit* of images is not a quality of images themselves, but of a consciousness that is able to apprehend them as images: *Bildlichkeit* thus only has meaning for and through a consciousness, which Husserl will call "image consciousness" [*Bildbewusstsein*] (*Hua* XXIII, p. 17). The consciousness of images allows us to distinguish between the "image" [*Bild*] and the "thing" [*Sache*] to which it refers: the image makes a thing representable, but it is never the thing itself (*Hua* XXIII, p. 18). This relation between image and thing is made possible, finally, because the image itself has several aspects: the "image object" [*Bildobjekt*] is the object that *represents*, while the "image subject" [*Bildsujet*] is the object that *is represented*. In the case of physical images (in contrast to mental images), we can also refer to the image as a "physical thing" [*physisches Ding*], i.e., the image that hangs on the wall, the painted canvas, etc. (*Hua* XXIII, pp. 18–19).

Husserl's reflections on the theory of images aim to clarify the relation of image and thing on a spectrum between distance and identification, mediation and immediacy. Bearing in mind once again the dual meaning of *Bild* as both "picture" in the sense of a visual image and "metaphor" in the sense of a verbal image, these deliberations on the relation of image and thing pertain not only to how we see and read visual images but also to the status of figural or metaphorical language more generally in phenomenology. Although Husserl's choice of exemplary images (the portrait painting and the photograph)[18] may appear to privilege the visual register of the pictorial, his contextualization of his discussion of *Bildbewusstsein* within a larger discussion of *Phantasie* as a faculty of the imagination suggests that a more general phenomenology of *Bilder* is at stake here.[19] Images and figures, Husserl suggests, are only able to

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17 For more on the function of "rendering present" or *Vergegenwärtigung* in Husserl's theory of images, see De Warren 2010. According to de Warren, "Husserl's emphasis on the intentionality of depiction as the core of image-consciousness [*Bildbewußtsein*] steers a course between Gombrich's reduction of resemblance to illusion and Goodman's construal of images as a form of denotation governed by semantic conventions" (De Warren 2010, pp. 306–307).
18 For Husserl's discussion of the portrait painting, see *Hua* XXIII, pp. 22–23; for his discussion of the photograph of a child, see *Hua* XXIII, pp. 19–20. Husserl even considers images *of* images in terms of such visual media, as in his discussion of the "Raffaelsche Madonna, die ich in einer Photographie anschaue" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26).
19 In his lectures on "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein," Husserl makes clear that his concept of *Bildvorstellung* is to be understood in the widest sense possible: "Indem wir eine eigene Gattung von Vorstellung als Bildvorstellung, bildliche Auffassung festzulegen gedenken, müssen wir

function if there is a certain distance between image and thing. If the appearing image were phenomenally identical with its intended object, that is, if there were no difference between a "Bilderscheinung" and a "Wahrnehmungserscheinung," then we would not have a "consciousness of figurality" [*Bildlichkeitsbewusstsein*] (*Hua* XXIII, p. 20). In other words, "image consciousness" entails precisely a consciousness of a difference between the *Bildobjekt* and the *Bildsujet*. Husserl even makes the – at first glance – bold claim that the *Bildobjekt* does not exist at all, neither outside consciousness nor within consciousness; rather, what exists is a complex of sensuous contents, or a complex of "phantasms" [*Phantasmen*], upon which rests a consciousness that "grasps" these contents in terms of an "image consciousness" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 22). The image character of an object (whether physical or mental) thus lies not in the object itself, but in a consciousness that perceives it as an object that represents, as a *Bildobjekt*. The object becomes an image in a form-giving consciousness insofar as it is apprehended as such (i.e., through a particular kind of *Auffassung*).

Hence "phantasy representations" [*Phantasievorstellungen*] involve two distinct apprehensions and accordingly have a "twofold objectivity" [*doppelte Gegenständlichkeit*] (*Hua* XXIII, p. 25). Consciousness apprehends both the phantasy image, which appears, and the represented object (the *Bildsujet*), which is represented through the image. As Husserl concludes: "Und danach finden wir in der Phantasievorstellung eine gewisse Mittelbarkeit des Vorstellens, die der Wahrnehmungsvorstellung fehlt" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 24). This quality of the phantasy representation, namely that it involves an indirectness or mediacy of representation, I argue, provides a fitting characterization of Husserl's phenomenological descriptions, as evident in his recourse to images and metaphors in *Ideen I*. That is, we encounter the things themselves in Husserl's phenomenological descriptions through the mediation of figurative language. Significantly, Husserl clarifies that the "twofold objectivity" of the "phantasy representation" is "immanent" rather than "conceptual," such that its indirectness does not arise through the faculty of reflection (*Hua* XXIII, p. 25). This suggests that the mediation introduced by images and figural language has a different character than the mediation of concepts. Whereas conceptual mediation distinguishes between a thing as an object of the understanding and its intuitive appearance, Husserl's theory of images articulates the difference between the phantasy image and the represented subject in non-conceptual terms: the

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natürlich diese Sphäre soweit rechnen, als wirklich eine Auffassung vorliegt, die ihren Gegenstand bildlich vergegenwärtigt" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 17). Images such as paintings and photographs serve Husserl as representative cases that can shed light on the "Sphäre der Imagination" more generally (*Hua* XXIII, p. 17).

mediacy of representation at stake in images and metaphors does not involve a conceptual transformation but is apprehended already at the level of intuition. Recalling Blumenberg, this shows how metaphors can serve as a catalytic sphere for concept formation without being transformed into concepts.

On the other side of the spectrum, Husserl argues that the "phantasy representation" does partake of a certain immediacy. In a *Bilderlebnis*, he emphasizes, what one sees is not the "image," but rather the "thing" [*Sache*] pictured therein. Thus while one would never take the appearance of an image of the Berlin Palace to be an appearance of the palace itself, at the same time one would not look at the image and say to oneself, "Das ist ein Bild": "Vielmehr lebt man ganz und gar in dem auf die Erscheinung sich gründenden neuen Auffassen: im Bilde schaut man die Sache an" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26). In other words, one does not make a conceptual distinction between the "appearing object" and the "thought object." Rather, "das Bild fühlt sich unmittelbar als Bild" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26). Such an apprehension is, of course, not a mere perception but has the character of a "Repräsentation durch Ähnlichkeit" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26). However, this representation is, as it were, immanent to the image itself, even as it has a meaning that points beyond the primary appearance. Husserl speaks in this context of a "tint" or *Tinktion* in the consciousness of images: when we look at the image, we are immersed or dipped in the representation, which "tinges" our apprehension of it (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26).

For this reason, Husserl cautions against considering the two apprehensions of the "phantasy representation" – the appearing object and the represented subject, or the *Bildobjekt* and the *Bildsujet* – as two distinct experiences, for this would imply that there are two objects at stake and two distinct acts through which these objects are constituted:

> Nicht zwei gesonderte Vorstellungen haben wir und vor allem nicht zwei gesonderte Erscheinungen: Z.B. wenn wir ein Schloss vorstellen, gewissermassen zwei Schlosserscheinungen, derart, wie wir es etwa haben, wenn wir zwei Bilder nebeneinander legen oder nacheinander zwei Phantasievorstellungen vollziehen. Vielmehr sind hier zwei Auffassungen ineinander geflochten. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 27)[20]

Husserl in fact pushes this interweaving of appearance and representation almost to the point of complete identification. In the consciousness of images, he contends, there is a new representation but not a new intuition: "Diese neue

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20 As de Warren notes, Husserl's theory of image consciousness is unique precisely because it is not conceived as the "consciousness of imitation – as the relation between two *separate* appearances, a copy and its original" (De Warren 2010, p. 306).

Vorstellung liegt nun aber nicht neben der Vorstellung des Bildobjekts, sondern deckt sich mit ihr, durchdringt sie und gibt ihr in dieser Durchdringung den Charakter des Bildobjekts" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 31). The result is a consciousness of the identity of the *Bildobjekt* and the *Bildsujet*, and it is through this correspondence that we are able to see the *Bildsujet* in the *Bildobjekt* (*Hua* XXIII, p. 32). Like the figure of a "tint" or *Tinktion* in the consciousness of images, the motif of "saturation" or *Durchdringung* provides insights into the function of the descriptive idiom of phenomenology. When Husserl invokes metaphors such as *Horizont*, *Erlebnisstrom*, or *Blickstrahl*, these images do not stand beside the underlying phenomena but rather saturate them. The literary language of phenomenological description does not produce new intuitions, but it does profoundly shape and color how our intuitions are represented.

In the final analysis, however, Husserl admits that such a complete identification of *Bildobjekt* and *Bildsujet* takes place only in the limit case. As a rule, we are conscious of the discontinuity between the *Bildobjekt* and its *Bildsujet*, which is to say that we are aware of the "mere figurality" [*blossen Bildlichkeit*] of the phantasy representation (*Hua* XXIII, p. 33). Husserl thus attests to a conflict or *Zwiespältigkeit* in our consciousness of images, which oscillates between the convergence of *Bildobjekt* and *Bildsujet* and their separation:

> Deckung in den Momenten differenzlos empfundener Gleichheit, also in den Momenten genauer Bildlichkeit, bestenfalls in allen inneren Momenten, Scheidung aber in den mitverflochtenen intentionalen Charakteren, die dem Erscheinenden und Gemeinten Ergänzung zu verschiedenen geltenden Gegenständlichkeiten zusprechen.
>
> (*Hua* XXIII, p. 33)

The competing aspects of convergence [*das Ineinander, Deckung*] and separation [*Auseinandertreten, Scheidung*] are held in tension in the consciousness of images: the "as if" character of the image relation depends upon a correspondence of image and thing, but in order for the relation to be figural, a certain distance between image and thing must remain.

The moment of "supplementation" or *Ergänzung* in Husserl's account of the figural relation suggests that the image – as picture or as metaphor – is *more* than just the thing it represents; indeed, that the image has a distinct objectivity of its own that depends as much on the *act* of representation as it does on *what* is represented. The "intentional characters" that perform such supplementation depend, of course, on an "image consciousness" through which we are able to recognize the figurality of an image, but these "intentional characters" can also be thought of as belonging to the image itself. In this sense, the metaphors that Husserl develops in his phenomenology – *Klammer*, *Erlebnisstrom*, *Blickstrahl*,

Lichtkegel, *Lebenswelt*, etc. – do not merely illustrate his concepts, but have a distinct intentionality of their own.[21]

The phenomenological method aims to return to the "things themselves" by peeling away successively everything secondary to the thing, and in this way to describe intuitions and intentions in their immediacy. Yet if the language available for phenomenological description depends upon metaphors, then phenomenology will never be able to move beyond forms of indirectness, detours, and mediations. In this sense, the insights that Husserl develops in "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein" concerning the mediated relation of the *Bildobjekt* (or metaphor) and the *Bildsujet* (or thing) provide an account of the inherent figurality of the phenomenologist's gaze. To be sure, Husserl was suspicious of verbal images or metaphors because they are "only words" and never concepts. These suspicions motivated a seemingly interminable search on Husserl's part for terminologies that provide for conceptual precision without unwanted figural associations. In a set of notes composed between 1910 and 1912, for example, Husserl proposed "reproduction" as an alternative concept to "phantasy" or "imagination," noting that the term "imagination" is troubled by its association with "figurality" [*Bildlichkeit*] (*Hua* XXIII, p. 324). In this context, he writes:

> Das Wort Bildlichkeit ist aber selbst nur ein bildliches, und es spielt als Etymologie hier ein Bild mit, das gerade sehr schädlich ist. Also ziehe ich jetzt reproduktiv vor, das freilich auch nur ein Wort und nicht ein aus seinem gewöhnlichen und etymologischen Sinn geschöpfter Begriff sein darf. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 324)

Just as Husserl turns against figurality for its lack of conceptual rigor, he appears to recognize that all words are subject to figural associations that cannot be fully domesticated as a language of concepts. This sort of impasse, I suggest, can help to account for the persistence of figural expressions in phenomenology despite the claim of their merely provisional status.

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21 Commenting on Husserl's handwritten marginal comments in his manuscript for his 1907 lectures on "Ding und Raum," Blumenberg comes to a similar conclusion. Husserl criticizes his own use of the term "leibhaft" as "impressional" and takes back the metaphor, as it were. As Blumenberg comments: "Der von Husserl zurückgenommene Text seiner Vorlesung von 1907 enthüllt die immer wiederkehrende Fatalität, daß die Mittel der Beschreibung ihre eigenen – wenn es erlaubt wäre das zu sagen: – Intentionalitäten haben" (Blumenberg 2002, p. 87). The intentionality of metaphors has its counterpart in the intentionality of pictures, which meet our gaze as we look at them. Compare De Warren 2010, p. 325: "When we look at an image, something begins to gaze back at us. It is as if the intentionality of looking [*Anschauung*] reverses its course in mid-stream, so to speak, and counters the intentionality of my consciousness *looking at the image-object*."

On a certain level Husserl himself recognized just how incisive images and figural expressions can be for clarifying the *eidos* of phenomena. In *Ideen I* he claims that "free phantasies" [*freie Phantasien*] have a "privileged position" [*Vorzugsstellung*] over perception, despite the originary status of the latter (*Hua* III, pp. 146–147). Making a comparison between the geometer and the phenomenologist, he notes:

> [I]n der Phantasie hat er die unvergleichliche Freiheit in der willkürlichen Umgestaltung der fingierten Figuren, in der Durchlaufung kontinuierlich modifizierter möglicher Gestaltungen, also in der Erzeugung einer Unzahl neuer Gebilde. (*Hua* III, p. 147)

Husserl acknowledges that "originäre[] Anschauung" can stimulate "[die] freie[] Umgestaltung der Phantasiegegebenheiten," but he disputes that experience as such grounds the validity of phantasy (*Hua* III, p. 148). Making the bold claim that "'Fiktion' das Lebenselement der Phänomenologie [. . .] ausmacht," Husserl refers to the unparalleled utility of history, art, and especially literature for phenomenology (*Hua* III, p. 148).[22] As much as Husserl himself may have resisted such a conclusion, the analysis of his rich metaphorical language suggests that literature and the free variation of phantasy are not merely sources for phenomenology but part and parcel of the act of phenomenological description itself.

Literary language and figural expressions thus play an important role in phenomenology because they provide a bridge between intuitions and descriptions. Husserl's struggle with language – a struggle to find fitting terms and an adequate nomenclature for phenomena – underscores the dynamic relationship between intuition and description, for phenomenological descriptions are not ends in themselves but conduits to more refined intuitions.[23] Indeed, at the heart of phenomenology is a dialectic of what can be seen and what can be

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[22] As Husserl writes: "Außerordentlich viel Nutzen ist zu ziehen aus den Darbietungen der Geschichte, in noch reicherem Maße aus denen der Kunst und insbesondere der Dichtung" (*Hua* III, p. 148).

[23] Similarly, Blumenberg writes that "die Beschreibung nicht das *Endprodukt* der phänomenologischen Arbeit ist. Sie ist nur wie die *Anleitung* zur erneuten Erzeugung der Anschauung durch den Benutzer der Beschreibung" (Blumenberg 2002, p. 94). Elsewhere Blumenberg claims that even a flawless language of phenomenological descriptions does not replace intuition but rather serves as a guide to the intuition itself: "selbst die einwandfreie, ihrem Risiko enthobene Beschreibung die Anschauung nicht ersetzt, sondern immer nur dazu anleitet, sie selbst zu haben" (Blumenberg 2002, pp. 87–88). Blumenberg thus cautions that the problem of finding adequate terminology for phenomenological description is not simply a problem of language. I would add that what is really at stake is how to mediate between language and vision.

said: intuitions and phantasies provide the impetus for the generation of a metaphorical language of description, while the images and figural expressions thus produced make visible and intuitive figures that otherwise would have remained indistinct and shrouded in darkness. The "pictorial turn" cannot therefore dispense with the linguistic register of images and their expression, for without a literary language of phenomena, we cannot really say what it is that we see in images.[24]

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24 While I would agree with Ionescu's claim that "the perception of images points to a type of thinking that is specific to visuality," his claim that "pictures [. . .] primarily constitute their own image-object that is autonomous from language" strikes me as untenable in light of the centrality of description for phenomenology (Ionescu 2014, pp. 103, 108).

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Tarek R. Dika

Auch für Gott: Finitude, Phenomenology, and Anthropology

Abstract: In his *magnum opus, Au cœur de la raison: la phénoménologie*, Claude Romano develops a phenomenological theory of essence, which, unlike Husserl's, is avowedly anthropological. Material a priori necessities, Romano insists, are only conditionally necessary. They only determine how human beings experience phenomena. They do not determine how God, angels, and other non-human species of consciousness experience phenomena. Despite Romano's legitimate concerns about Husserl's denial of anthropologism, his own embrace of anthropologism creates problems of its own. On the one hand, Romano asserts that material a priori necessities do not depend on the linguistic conventions of contingent historical communities. On the other hand, he reintroduces relativity at a more general, "species" level. Romano's anthropologism restores (wittingly or not) the Kantian thesis that there are unknowable "things in themselves," and any such thesis is absurd, at least according to Husserl. In short, in his theory of essence Romano maintains two mutually contradictory theses: on the one hand, the negation of material a priori necessities is inconceivable, but on the other, these necessities are only conditional, and so their negation must be conceivable.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

It is apparent, therefore, that a thing in space [. . .] is able to be intuited not merely by us humans but also by God (*auch für Gott*) – as the ideal representative of absolute knowledge – only through appearances in which it is and must be given "perspectively," changing in manifold but determinate ways and thereby in changing "orientations."

<p style="text-align:right">(Husserl, Ideas I)</p>

No God can change anything in this regard any more than God can change anything in regard to the case of "1+2=3" or that of any other essential truth.   (Husserl, *Ideas I*)

1 The Finitude of Experience?

Phenomenology is not possible unless it can define a concept of "sense" that in no way depends on linguistic "meaning."[1] For Husserl, sense (*Sinn*, as opposed to linguistic meaning, for which he reserves the term *Bedeutung*) is not a property of sentences, but rather of experiences whose contents do not depend on language, even if they can be linguistically expressed (see *Hua* III/1, p. 285; Husserl 2014, p. 245). For example, the proposition, "All spatial things must be perspectivally perceived" expresses a universally binding, a priori necessity, but this necessity does not, according to Husserl, depend on language. That all spatial things must be perspectivally perceived defines their phenomenological essence (i.e., how they must appear or be given to consciousness), not an arbitrary linguistic rule. Husserl terms these necessities "material a priori necessities" in order to distinguish them from merely formal or linguistic necessities (e.g., "All bachelors are unmarried men," etc.). Material a priori necessities are properly phenomenological; they constitute the essence of a definite class of phenomena. All experiential contents are constituted by these necessities, and Husserl denies that they are linguistic partly in order to avoid the threat of "anthropologism," i.e., the thesis that material a priori only determine how human beings experience phenomena. Natural languages are contingent historical facts, and as such they can play no constitutive role in the experiences phenomenology describes. Husserl's critique of psychologism in the philosophy of logic and his critique of historicism in the human sciences depends on his resolute denial that the consciousness described in phenomenology is "human" in any philosophically demanding sense. The phenomenological method (the *epoché*) brackets even the human being, and so the consciousness it describes is pure, absolute consciousness (see *Hua* III/1, pp. 103–106, Husserl 2014, pp. 88–90).

In his *magnum opus, Au cœur de la raison: la phénoménologie* (Romano 2010/2016), Claude Romano develops a phenomenological theory of essence, which, unlike Husserl's, is avowedly anthropological. Material a priori necessities, Romano insists, are only conditionally necessary. They only determine

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1 Cf. Claude Romano 2010/2016, p. 172/187: "If there is one claim that seems to be shared by almost all phenomenologists – perhaps the only one – it is that according to which phenomena are presented to us with an autochthonous meaning that is not projected onto them by our language patterns. Whether it be the face, which, in Levinas, speaks to us before any word, the flesh and expressive gestures, which are, according to Merleau-Ponty, at the root of language itself, affectivity, the event, and even Heidegger's *Sinn des Seins* – in all these cases, it is indeed with a prelinguistic meaning that we are dealing."

how human beings experience phenomena. They do not determine how God, angels, and other non-human species of consciousness experience phenomena. The "essences and essential structures that are interesting from the phenomenological point of view" are "bound to phenomena such as they appear to us" and not as they are "in themselves, from the point of view of a divine understanding" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 459/247; 430/231; cf. Romano 2010/2016, p. 400/214).

Despite Romano's legitimate concerns about Husserl's denial of anthropologism in phenomenology, in this paper I argue that his embrace of anthropologism creates problems of its own. On the one hand, Romano asserts that material a priori necessities do not depend on the linguistic conventions established by contingent historical communities. On the other hand, he reintroduces relativity at a more general, "species" level. Romano's anthropologism restores (wittingly or not) the Kantian thesis that there are unknowable "things in themselves," and any such thesis is absurd, at least according to Husserl. For Husserl, spatial things appear to God no differently than they appear to me – perspectively (see *Hua* III/1, p. 351; Husserl 2014, p. 302). Colors appear to God no differently than they appear to me – as extended in space. To deny that they so appear is to assert (or at least strongly imply) that human beings cannot access things "in themselves, from the point of view of a divine understanding." When it comes to material a priori necessities, however, for Husserl there is *no difference* between "phenomena such as they appear to us" and "the point of view of a divine understanding." A spatial thing perceived non-perspectively is inconceivable, not only for human beings, but also for God, precisely because *there simply is no such thing*. It is, therefore, absurd to assert that God can perceive spatial things non-perspectively, or that he can perceive a non-extended color, etc. *A fortiori*, it is absurd to assert that human beings *cannot* perceive spatial things non-perspectively, if "cannot" expresses an incapacity as opposed to an absolute impossibility. Any contrast between phenomenological necessities that are valid only "for us," but not "in themselves, from the point of view of a divine understanding" is nonsensical. Anthropologism is not false (falsity, like truth, presupposes sense), but rather absurd. To deny the unconditional necessity of material a priori necessities is to dress nonsense in the semblance of finitude. In short, in his theory of essence Romano maintains two mutually contradictory theses: on the one hand, the negation of material a priori necessities is inconceivable, but on the other, these necessities are only conditional, and so their negation must be conceivable.

In §2, I briefly rehearse some of the problems associated with Husserl's theory of sense and language. In §3, I discuss Romano's interpretation of Husserl's theory of essence and the reasons behind his (Romano's) endorsement of anthropologism.

Finally, in §4, I show how anthropologism is ultimately absurd along the lines briefly described above. The absurdity of anthropologism raises serious doubts, not only about the possibility of anthropologism in phenomenology, but also about the possibility of any phenomenology that assigns a privileged role to the concept of human finitude.

2 Husserl on *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*

For Husserl, language expresses or communicates the pre-linguistic sense of experience; it does not constitute experience. As he puts it in an important and well-known passage in *Ideas* I, §124:

> But here we are looking exclusively at "to mean" and "meaning" [*"Bedeuten" und "Bedeutung"*]. Originally, these words related only to the linguistic sphere, to that of "expressing." But it is almost unavoidable and at the same time an important step in knowledge to expand and suitably modify the meaning of these words, through which it finds application in a certain way to the entire noetic-noematic sphere, thus to all acts, regardless of whether they are interwoven or not with acts of expressing. So, too, for all intentional experiences, we always spoke of "sense" [*"Sinn"*] – a word that is generally used in a way equivalent to "meaning." For the sake of clarity, however, we prefer the word meaning for the old concept and, in particular, in the complex expression "logical" meaning or meaning that "expresses" something. We use the word sense as before with the more encompassing scope in mind. (*Hua* III/1, p. 285, Husserl 2014, p. 245)

Here, Husserl identifies "sense" and "*noema*," which he defines in *Ideas* I, §88 as the correlate of intentional acts:

> Each perception, for example, has its noema, at the lowest level, its perceptual sense [*Sinn*], i.e., the perceived as such. Similarly, the respective remembering has its remembered as such precisely as what is meant by it, what it is conscious of, exactly as it is "meant" in it, as that in it, of which it is "conscious."
> (*Hua* III/1, p. 203, Husserl 2014, p. 175)

The noematic sense of an experience in no way depends on its linguistic expression. As early as *Logical Investigations* II.1.1.1, §§11–12, Husserl made an important decision about language: its function consists exclusively in the expression, not the production, of sense (see *Hua* XIX/1, pp. 48–54, Husserl 1970/1, pp. 194–198). He explicitly distinguishes between sense and linguistic expression because "the expression seems to direct interest away from itself towards its sense, and to point to the latter" (Husserl 1970/1, p. 279). For example, if I assert that the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point, I am

directing interest away from my assertion and toward what my assertion asserts. The expression of a sense arises and passes away, but the sense does not:

> What this assertion asserts is the same whoever may assert it, and on whatever occasion or in whatever circumstances he may assert it, and what it asserts is precisely this, *that the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point*, no more and no less. One therefore repeats what is in essence "the same" assertion, and one repeats it because it is the one, uniquely adequate way of expressing the same thing, i.e., its meaning [*Bedeutung*]. In this selfsame meaning [*Bedeutung*],[2] of whose identity we are conscious whenever we repeat the statement, nothing at all about judging or about one who judges is discoverable. [. . .] My act of judging is a transient experience: it arises and passes away. But what my assertion asserts, the content that the three perpendiculars of a triangle intersect in a point, neither arises nor passes away. It is an identity in the strict sense, one and the same geometrical truth.   (*Hua* XIX/1, pp. 49–50, Husserl 1970/1, p. 195)

In the phenomenologically privileged case of perception, Husserl similarly distinguishes between the noematic sense of an experience and its linguistic expression. Thus, when "we are looking with a certain enjoyment at a garden, at a blossoming apple tree, at the fresh, new green of the lawn, and so forth" (*Hua* III/1, p. 203; Husserl 2014, p. 175), this experience, while described in a natural language by means of the concepts "garden," "apple tree," "green," and so forth, is not itself dependent on these concepts. The garden appears to me in the unity of time, relative to the mobility of my body, whose movement constitutes phenomenological space and successively discloses the garden in different profiles, effectively producing a sense whose identity is such that it can be enjoyed and reproduced by any other subject. Indeed, given the intersubjective foundations of Husserl's phenomenology, the possibility that other subjects may enjoy the same experience is constitutive of my "solitary" experience of the garden, since I experience the garden precisely as a garden that anybody – any real or possible subject – can also experience (see Zahavi 2001). Language, which enables me to express the noematic sense of experience, plays no role in the constitution of sense. On the contrary, as Husserl puts it in *Ideas* I, §124, an object that

> stands there in perception, with a determinate sense [. . .] does not require the slightest "expression," either in the sense of the sound of a word or in that of its meaning [*Bedeutung*]. [. . .] If, however, we have "thought" or asserted: "this is white," then a new layer is there with it, a layer that, in keeping with the perception, is "meant as such" [*Gemeinte als solchem*]. [. . .] Whatever is "meant as such," every intending in the

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2 In *Logical Investigations*, Husserl employs the terms *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* interchangeably and as equivalent to what he would later term *Sinn* in *Ideas* I, §124.

noematic sense (and, to be sure, as the noematic core) of any arbitrary act, can be expressed through "meanings".

(*Hua* III/1, p. 285–286, Husserl 2014, p. 246, translation modified)

The function of expression consists only in its universal form: "'Expression' is a remarkable form that can adapt to every 'sense' (the noematic 'core') and elevate it into the realm of the '*Logos*,' the conceptual and, with that, the universal" (*Hua* III/1, p. 286, Husserl 2014, p. 246). Many problems arise here. If language, qua expression, does not merely, as Husserl goes on to write, "mirror" [*widerspiegeln*] a pre-linguistic sense, but rather elevates it into the realm of the "conceptual and, with that, the universal," then it does seem to affect sense in a decisive way: it effects a transformation without which sense would not have the universality of conceptual form. Husserl even goes so far as to claim that language not only "has the distinction of mirroring, so to speak, every other intentionality in terms of form and content," but also that it (language) has the distinction of "coloring and thereby impressing upon them its own form of 'conceptuality'" (*Hua* III/1, p. 286; Husserl 2014, p. 246). This presumably explains why he goes on to write, "This talk of mirroring or mimicking [*Spiegeln oder Abbilden*] is to be taken up with caution" (*Hua* III/1, p. 286, Husserl 2014, p. 246), since the function he assigns to language here is not that of a simple reproduction or reflection, but rather of a veritable transformation of noematic sense into expressible form. Even the concept of expression comes under pressure at Husserl's hands. "Expression," no less than "mirroring" and "mimicking," suggests a simple transposition of sense from one, pre-linguistic layer of intentionality to another, linguistic layer without modification or transformation, whereas Husserl concedes that some modification and transformation does in fact occur in expression. But how can language both "color" the sense expressed and yet remain "unproductive," as Husserl writes in *Ideas* I, §124?[3]

Other problems immediately follow. Even supposing the solidity of Husserl's distinction between sense and expression, how, exactly, does the former find its way into the latter and become transformed by it? (It would be question-begging to assert that sense and expression bear an "isomorphic" relation to one another. This does nothing more than presuppose what has to be established.) Natural languages are always anchored in contingent, historical communities. Is every language equipped with the expressive powers needed to elevate every sense into its own "realm"? If not, does this open up the possibility of a sense that is not only pre-linguistic, but also resolutely *non*-linguistic and, therefore, ineffable, as opposed to Husserl's axiomatic claim in *Ideas* I, §124 that every sense can

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3 Cf. Derrida 1982, pp. 155–175.

be expressed? All of these problems, which I cannot discuss in more detail here, strongly suggest that Husserlian phenomenology is perilously naïve when it comes to language. The so-called "linguistic turn" of the latter half of the twentieth century would seem to confirm this suspicion. After Wittgenstein and Derrida, philosophers no longer distinguish between pre-linguistic sense and linguistic meaning.[4]

Nevertheless, the "linguistic turn" oftentimes seems no less problematic than the *doxa* it purports to refute, at least if language is defined as a fully autonomous, arbitrary system of signs established by contingent historical communities. All such communities have different and perhaps even incommensurable languages,[5] such that the sense of experience becomes wholly relativized to these communities and a thoroughgoing historicism becomes the dominant tendency in the human sciences.[6] Language, no longer expressing a sense constituted in the efficacy of lived experience, becomes a condition of the possibility of sense (and, therefore, experience). The relation between "language" and "world" becomes deeply enigmatic; no description of linguistic practices has any bearing – "reflects" anything about – the world. Elizabeth Anscombe, perhaps Wittgenstein's most gifted student, described this predicament as "linguistic idealism" (see Anscombe 1997). Kant's a priori categories of the understanding are replaced by language, and the world once more becomes an elusive "thing in itself" forever hidden behind the ways in which various communities arbitrarily "represent" it. The finitude of the human subject, transcendental or linguistic-pragmatic, remains fundamentally intact, and defines the linguistic turn in its most recent forms.

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4 Rightly or wrongly, Husserl's assumptions about language have frequently been traced back to Aristotle's concept of the sign as the expression of an activity occurring in the soul in *De Anima* III. 3–8 and *De Interpretatione* 1: "Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul, and written marks symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of – affections of the soul – are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of – actual things – are also the same" (Aristotle 1984, p. 25). Versions of this assumption can be found in a number of modern philosophers. For a more detailed discussion of the linguistic turn, the standard reference remains Rorty 1965.

5 Davidson 1973–1974 denies the possibility of radically incommensurable languages.

6 For Husserl, historicism, like naturalism, collapses into relativism, whose incoherence as a philosophical position is not difficult to demonstrate, for if it exempts itself from the relativism it universally proclaims, then it is no relativism at all, and if it does not so exempt itself, then it is no less relative than anything else. See Husserl 1965. Cf. Derrida 1988, p. 137: "Husserl has shown better than anyone else, relativism, like all its derivatives, remains a philosophical position in contradiction with itself."

3 The New Phenomenology of Sense

Romano remains committed to the thesis that the contents of experience are constituted by pre-linguistic, properly phenomenological necessities common to all subjects in their *sensible constitution* – what Husserl famously referred to as a "*logos* of the aesthetic world" (*Hua* XVII, p. 297, Husserl 1969, p. 386). This *logos* is a logic that expands Kant's transcendental aesthetic (the theory of the a priori principles of sensibility). In addition to space and time, the a priori principles of sensibility also include material a priori necessities. Due to these necessities, sensible intuitions are not formless or "blind," but rather have a form of their own *prior to the conceptual activity of the understanding*. Romano's burden of proof is clear: he must avoid both the Charybdis of an empiricism according to which experience reduces to a brute reception of formless sense-data, and the Scylla of an idealism according to which the form of experience is due only to the conceptual activity of the understanding.

John McDowell's analytic neo-Kantianism combines the elements in Kant, Wittgenstein, and Sellars that Romano finds most problematic. For McDowell, "we need to conceive our perceptual experience as an actualization, in sensory consciousness, of conceptual capacities," so that the "content of [sensible] intuitions is of the same general kind as the content of judgments. And of course the content of judgments is conceptual" (McDowell 2006, p. 1065; cf. McDowell 1994). There is no need to "apply" concepts to non-conceptual sensible intuitions. There are no such intuitions; concepts are already effective in sensibility itself, and these concepts compose the content of judgments. The sense of these concepts depends entirely on linguistic custom (see McDowell 1984). McDowell clearly leaves no room for Husserlian pre-linguistic senses or material a priori necessities. To admit the possibility of such senses would be to succumb to what Sellars termed the "myth of the given" (see Sellars 1997). For McDowell, mere sensory stimulation is all that would remain if conceptual capacities were removed from the picture, and sensory stimulation is a purely causal relation. Intentionality must be conceptual in order give form to sensible intuitions and relate to objects.

McDowell is very Kantian indeed. Very briefly, Kant derives the categories of the understanding (successfully or not) from the table of judgments, and these categories ensure that experience always has a content that can be placed into one of the logical forms of judgment, thereby ensuring the possibility of objectively valid judgments of experience. The sensible intuitions given via the faculty of sensibility [*Vermögen der Sinnlichkeit*] are wholly determined by the categories of the faculty of understanding or judgment [*Vermögen zu urteilen* or *Urteilskraft*]. For McDowell no less than Kant, experience must yield the

conceptual contents needed in judgment.[7] In McDowell's case, these contents are purely linguistic.

There are two levels to Romano's third way. The first is his insistence on the importance of life in cognition. Inspired by Gibson's ecological phenomenology (see Gibson 1986), Romano argues, against contemporary neo-Kantianism, that the content of sensible experience is not determined by the concepts of a natural language, but rather by my purposes as a living being endowed with practical intelligence. I see a heap of stones and immediately distinguish between those that are suitable for my purposes and those that are not. The distinction is perfectly normative: some stones fit the bill, others do not. This norm depends not on language or concepts, but rather on my purposes alone. Conceptual capacities can, of course, play a role here, and in fact they always do, but in principle the sense of the experience does not depend on language any more than a bird's capacity to distinguish between materials that are and are not suitable for the construction of a nest depends on language. The sense of experience arises vitally, not discursively.

Second, the contents of any experience are constituted by material a priori necessities: "On the hither side of the naïve inductions and habitual anticipations that have practical value for us, there is a common basis of strict essential truths, a domain of material a priori [necessities] that are not at all dependent on the requirements of life or its native predictions" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 912/507). In addition to the examples briefly discussed in §1, another excellent example of material a priori necessities comes from the domain of colors. The proposition, "There can be no transparent white," is necessarily true. Why? Romano identifies three possible explanations. The first is that the negation of the proposition is (or can be reduced to) a formal contradiction, so that the proposition is logically necessary (necessary in virtue of logical form alone). This would be the strategy pursued by the early Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle, for whom the only type of necessity is logical necessity. However, the negation of the proposition, "There can be no transparent white," is not a formal

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7 Cf. Longuenesse 1998, p. 7: "The *Vermögen* [*facultas*] is the possibility of acting, or tendency to act, that is proper to a substance. Following Baumgarten, Kant writes that a *conatus* is associated with every *Vermögen*. This *conatus* is a tendency or effort to actualize itself. For this tendency to be translated into action, it must be determined to do so by external conditions. Then the *Vermögen* becomes a *Kraft*, in Latin *vis*, force. Following this line, *Vermögen zu urteilen*, specified according to the different logical forms presented in Kant's table, can be considered as a *possibility* or *potentiality* of forming judgments. The *Urteilskraft* which Kant describes in the Analytic of Principles and in the *Critique of Judgment* [*Kritik der Urteilskraft*] is the actualization of the *Vermögen zu urteilen* under sensory stimulation."

contradiction. Consequently, it is not necessary in virtue of logical form. The second is that the proposition depends on experience. This clearly cannot be so: experience yields only generalizations from induction, and generalizations admit of exceptions. The proposition, "There can be no transparent white," admits of no exceptions. Consequently, it is not necessary in virtue of experience. The third is that the proposition expresses a linguistic rule prohibiting a definite move in the language-game of color. The proposition is neither true nor false, but only prescribes a rule for the employment of the relevant words. This is the standard strategy of the later Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein's later philosophy is based on two fundamental categories: the "grammatical" and the "empirical." Wittgenstein's use of these categories is by no means straightforward, but in the end, his only way of making philosophical sense of necessary propositions about color is by interpreting them as linguistic rules (see Wittgenstein 2007). For Husserl, by contrast, the proposition, "There can be no transparent white," expresses a material a priori necessity, which defines the very essence of the phenomenon in its sensible givenness independently of the conceptual activity of the understanding. Husserl would agree that the proposition is necessary, and he would also agree that it expresses a type of rule, but he would not agree that the rule is a linguistic one, although it can ground one. (It does not matter that I must experience the relevant colors in order to know that the proposition is necessary a priori. I can discover a priori necessities via experience no differently than I can discover a priori necessities about triangles via demonstration, without having known these necessities beforehand. What matters is not how I discover a necessity, but rather whether, after having discovered it, I can conceive of its being otherwise. I cannot do this in the case of the proposition, "There can be no transparent white.")

Material a priori necessities are neither Humean inductive generalizations from experience, nor Tractarian logical necessities, nor yet arbitrary linguistic rules or "grammatical" necessities à la the later Wittgenstein.[8] They are proper phenomenological necessities.

According to Romano, however, material a priori necessities are only conditionally necessary: "Are not propositions on colors valid solely for animals having a physiological constitution such as to allow them to perceive such a thing as color?" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 66/28). "If so," he continues, "it is not at all

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8 Cf. Dika and Hackett 2016, pp. 11–16; 65–97. Romano's insistence on the role played by material a priori necessities in experience strongly distinguishes his defense of phenomenology from that of Hubert Dreyfus in his debate with John McDowell. Dreyfus' defense of phenomenology focuses exclusively on the practical intelligence or know-how involved in various everyday activities, not on the material a priori necessities of experience. For the debate and its aftermath, see Schear 2013.

obvious that the propositions of the phenomenologist would be valid for angels and even gods," so that "it becomes difficult to free" material a priori necessity "from all dependence with respect to an anthropological fact, and 'anthropologism' is partially restored" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 66/28). What distinguishes material a priori necessities from mathematical necessities is that the latter are true in any possible world, while the former are only true in worlds where subjects capable of having the relevant experiences exist. The dependence of phenomenological essences on the factual existence of such subjects is inevitable in a philosophical science devoted to describing the material a priori necessities of *experience*. By definition, there are no subjectless experiences. For these reasons, Romano freely admits that material a priori necessities are only conditionally, not unconditionally, necessary.

One could argue, as Romano does, that the conditional necessity of material a priori necessities is not as problematic as it seems. Husserl himself distinguishes between two types of a priori necessity: "pure" necessities (mathematical and logical necessities) and "empirically bound" necessities (such as the necessities that define the mode of givenness of colors or sounds). "One must distinguish," Husserl writes, "between a *pure* a priori and an a priori *bound to the empirical* [*empirisch gebundenes Apriori*], bound to the empirical and yet such that the empirical is 'inessential' ['*außerwesentlich*'] to it" (Husserl 1999/1973, p. 454/374). Romano cites this passage as evidence for Husserl's tempered anthropologism (Romano 2010/2016, p. 65/27). To intuit a phenomenological essence, one must freely vary an individual color or sound in the imagination and identify the invariable constituents of the experience, so that the relevant a priori necessity can be given in evidence. The individual color or sound is empirical, and since every act of free variation must start with empirical facts, the material a priori necessities intuited in free variation in some way depend on them.

But Husserl does not endorse a form of anthropologism here; he only admits that acts of free variation start with empirical facts. Clearly, the givenness of these facts depends on the existence of a subject who can experience them. Anthropologism, however, requires an additional premise: that the material a priori necessities intuited in acts of free variation are only necessary for *one species of consciousness in the genus of possible forms of consciousness*. It is not clear that Husserl would accept this premise, and he frequently categorically denies it. Whenever Husserl discusses material a priori necessities, he always insists that they are necessary not only "for us," but even "for God." This claim may strike the contemporary reader as bizarre, since it seems to casually assume that the "divine point of view" can be positively described by the phenomenologist. Husserl, however, presupposes no such thing; his claims about the unconditional necessity of material a priori necessities are based on the fact

that the possibility of their being otherwise cannot even be conceived. The inconceivability of the negation of material a priori necessities is precisely what constitutes them as necessities. For example, in *Ideas* I, §150, Husserl argues that a spatial thing can only be perceived "through appearances in which it is and must be given 'perspectively,' changing in manifold but determinate ways and thereby in changing 'orientations'" (*Hua* III/1, p. 351; Husserl 2014, p. 302). This necessity, he emphasizes, holds not only for "'us humans,'" a position he associates with Kantianism (which Husserl deems guilty of anthropologism), but "also [for] God – as the ideal representative of absolute knowledge" (*Hua* III/1, p. 351; Husserl 2014, p. 302). Anything else would be absurd in the strict, Husserlian sense: a spatial thing that would be given without perspectival adumbration cannot even be conceived. Thus, he concludes, the proposition that expresses this necessity is absolutely or unconditionally, not conditionally, necessary. If one were to object here, "Husserl makes the error of projecting *our* way of conceiving things onto God," Husserl would always be free to respond, "What do you mean by '*our* way of conceiving things?' The objection begs the question; it has not been shown that there is anything exclusively *human* about the relevant necessities."

4 Anthropologism and the Aporia of Finitude

Toward the end of *Au cœur de la raison*, Romano reaffirms, against Husserl, his commitment to anthropologism: "It is difficult to consider the essences and essential structures that are interesting from the phenomenological point of view otherwise than as bound to phenomena such as they appear *to us*, that is to say, to the *human* experience" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 440/231). The restriction to "human experience" should "lead to the rejection of the idea of descriptions valid 'for men and gods,' the abandonment of all divine point of view – even as a mere methodological fiction – in philosophy" (Romano 2010/2016, p. 66/2). Therefore, he concludes, "the experience that phenomenology can endeavor to describe is [. . .] the experience possessed by those that we ourselves are as *human beings*. [. . .] The horizon of anthropology thereby turns out to be *impossible to overcome*" (Romano 2010/2016, pp. 465–466/247–251). Does the reintroduction of anthropologism, however minimal, restore the Kantian thesis that experience is essentially finite? According to Kant, the conditions under which human beings experience objects (space and time) are only conditionally necessary: "We can accordingly speak of space, extended beings, and so on, only from the human standpoint. If we depart from the subjective condition under

which alone we can acquire outer intuition [. . .] then the representation of space signifies nothing at all. [. . .] For we cannot judge at all whether the intuitions of other thinking beings are bound to the same conditions that limit our intuition and that are universally valid for us. [. . .] The proposition: 'All things are next to one another in space,' is valid under the limitation that that these things be taken as objects of our sensible intuition" (Kant 1998, A26/B42–A27/B43, p. 177). Beyond the conditions under which human beings experience objects, there are things in themselves, which human beings cannot experience, but other beings (*intellectus archetypus*) can. Romano parts with Husserl at the very place at which he seems to need him most. By affirming the finitude of experience, Romano effectively reintroduces all of the problems his reconstruction of phenomenology was undertaken to overcome. If the goal of replacing a neo-Kantian paradigm with a phenomenological paradigm was to overcome the consequences of a Kantian species of relativism, it is not clear that this goal has truly been achieved. A common presupposition – the finitude of experience – binds the Kantianism Romano opposes to the Husserl that he defends. As I argued in §1, the claim that the "essences and essential structures that are interesting from the phenomenological point of view" are "bound to phenomena such as they appear *to us*" and not as they are "in themselves, from the point of view of a divine understanding" (Romano 2010/2016: p. 440/231) entails that the negation of material a priori necessities is conceivable. The negation of material a priori necessities, as Romano himself acknowledges is not conceivable. Consequently, anthropologism is absurd. If the negation of material a priori necessities is absurd, then so is the Kantian affirmation of the finitude of human experience. The concept of finitude cannot support anthropologism in phenomenology.

To conclude, finitude in the Kantian sense is not a *fact* about human beings, but rather a *metaphilosophical concept* employed in order to place limits on how philosophical theses about experience, knowledge, and truth should be understood. It is not clear that finitude can play this metaphilosophical role in phenomenology or even in philosophy in general. Every philosophically substantive proposition that aims to express a fact about human finitude boils down to a proposition of the form, "God can x, but human beings cannot x," where "x" is a necessary proposition whose negation is absurd. For example, the sense of the word "cannot" in the proposition "I cannot perceive things non-perspectivally" expresses finitude only if the proposition, "God can perceive things non-perspectivally" is true. Since, however, the latter proposition is absurd, *so too is the former as an expression of incapacity, powerlessness, or finitude.* The concept of finitude breaks down as soon as it is employed. The semblance of tragic finitude vanishes into the thin air of mere nonsense. Any

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substantive philosophical thesis about experience, knowledge, and truth that employs the concept of human finitude is nonsensical. For the proposition, "I cannot perceive things non-perspectivally" to have any content, it must express an absolute impossibility, not my finitude. For all intents and purposes, the human being is *not* finite in the relevant sense. This is the only rigorous response to the aporia of finitude. To the extent that anthropologism depends on substantive philosophical theses about the finitude of experience, it inherits all of the problems that the aporia of finitude inevitably generates.

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Susan Morrow

"irgend etwas und irgend etwas": Husserl's *Arithmetik* and The Poetics of Epistemology

Abstract: This article makes the case for the importance of Husserl's pre-phenomenological *Philosophie der Arithmetik* in conceiving of Husserl's relevance to literary studies. Whereas this relevance has already been recognized as concerns the affinity between the method of the phenomenological *epoché*, on the one hand, and the space of fictionality, on the other, Husserl's earliest philosophical work on the psychological origins of arithmetic concepts has received less consideration in this connection. Suspending Husserl's own disavowal of his early work and its "psychologism", I argue – through close readings of passages from *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* and "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" – that Husserl's reflections on the origin of the concept of multiplicity constitute an unwitting poetological statement that reflects not only the manner in which the early Husserl constructs the psychological foundations of mathematical knowledge but also, moreover, the way in which the later Husserl's phenomenology understands the historicity of geometry and science as such. Consequently, the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* offers a poetics of epistemology.

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A certain affinity between literature and Edmund Husserl's phenomenology has long since been remarked upon, namely, that the intentionality particular to the experience of literature is like that of the phenomenological *epoché*.[1] For in order to experience something as literature, to the extent that this means intending something like fiction, one must suspend the thetic character of the statements that make up the literary work, such that they no longer count as positing anything. The literary attitude, so understood, is defined in distinction from the natural attitude, whose theses it regards without participating in them. Husserl's procedure of bracketing has clear resonances with intertextual or transtextual aspects of literary works, the effect of which can be to reveal the generic qualities of the specific texts and discourses they cite, as well as the

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1 For a recent article examining this connection between literature and phenomenology, and describing Derrida's keen interest in it, see Johnson 2015, pp. 386–411.

rules and norms governing their formation.[2] Where the intertext is itself thetic – where it assumes the natural attitude and engages in positing – the generic qualities and norms revealed by its bracketing bear on its capacity for articulating knowledge claims.

Following this analogy between the method of phenomenology, on the one hand, and certain attitudes and practices often thought to characterize literature on the other, one can read the "Beilage III" to *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie* (henceforth referred to as „Der Ursprung der Geometrie") as a reflection on the history of science as a genre or field of knowledge. In order to reveal the *a priori* structure of anything posited as a scientific tradition, we might say, Husserl has to adopt a fictionalizing attitude toward historical fact. He has to regard something that is posited as historical (here, the science of geometry) as though it were fictional, and he has to regard this positing itself as though it were a literary device – as when a novel begins with a statement from a fictive editor or translator professing the narrative's authenticity. The *a priori* intentional structure of geometry's historical being is thus accessed and described within the space of fiction. And what Husserl thereby describes, moreover – this invariant structure to which the history of any possible scientific tradition must conform – is itself the general logic according to which a history of science can be told.

As suggestive as such an approach may be, it informs only part of what I will carry out here, for the simple reason that I wish to question whether Husserl's relevance to literary studies can be found only in his *phenomenological* work. Husserl, as we know, was not always a phenomenologist; he began his philosophical career with a publication on the psychological foundations of arithmetic, a project he would later view as belonging to *Tatsachenwissenschaft*. Can it be said, then, that the affinity between literature and Husserl's thinking begins with his abandonment of psychologism and its natural attitude towards psychic phenomena – that is, with the adoption of a fictionalizing attitude towards those phenomena and a new interest in the rules to which facts conform? In this paper, I attempt to complicate this picture of Husserl's relevance to questions of the relationship between literature and knowledge. I will do this by arguing that his early *psychological* work reveals something about how his late *phenomenology* itself constructs the *a priori* form under which the history of any science is to be subsumed. Whereas "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" can be read

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2 I borrow the term *transtextuality*, of course, from Gérard Genette, who identifies it as "l'objet de la poétique" and defines it as "la [. . .] transcendance textuelle du texte" or "tout ce qui le met en relation, manifeste ou secrète, avec d'autres textes" (Genette 1982, p.7).

as an attempt to reveal the generic structure of any science as an historical phenomenon, I aim to show that *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* contains a clue to the way "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" identifies and articulates this structure.

My wager is that there is a parallel between an early line of thought elaborated in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* concerning the psychological genesis of fundamental arithmetic concepts and Husserl's much later phenomenological inquiry into geometry's historical origin. Specifically, I will make the case that a particular passage from *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* can be read as a self-reflexive or poetological statement that not only reflects the manner in which the early Husserl accounts for the psychological genesis of arithmetic concepts but that also applies to his late, phenomenological description of geometry's origin. I will claim further that memory functions in both *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* and "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" as an index of the presupposition on which Husserl's psychological account of arithmetic and his phenomenological account of geometry's *a priori* historical structure, respectively, are based. If the hypothesis of this parallel holds, the consequence, I contend, will be that Husserl's psychological project, *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik,* outlines a certain poetics of epistemology. It thus merits attention within the study of the relationship between literature and knowledge.

1 Psychology and Phenomenology

Because this essay draws on both Husserl's psychological and phenomenological work, the way in which Husserl himself distinguished between these approaches provides an important frame of reference for the discussion that follows. Some preliminary remarks on this distinction are therefore in order before proceeding.

Die Philosophie der Arithmetik (1891) is Husserl's first published work and an expansion of his 1887 habilitation project, *Über den Begriff der Zahl: Psychologische Analyse.* It represents an attempt to ground basic arithmetic concepts in psychology – in the sense of the term espoused by Franz Brentano as the study of mental or psychical phenomena. Husserl summarizes the scope of the book's undertaking in the preface:

> Den hier vorliegende I. Band behandelt in dem ersten seiner beiden Teile die der Hauptsache nach psychologischen Fragen, welche mit der Analyse der Begriffe von Vielheit, Einheit und Anzahl, soweit sie uns eigentlich und nicht durch indirekte Symbolisierung gegeben sind, zusammenhängen. Der zweite Teil betrachtet dann die symbolischen Vorstellungen von Vielheit und Anzahl und versucht zu zeigen, wie die Tatsache, daß wir fast durchgehends auf symbolische Zahlbegriffe eingeschränkt sind, den Sinn und Zweck der Anzahlarithmetik bestimmt. (*Hua* XII, pp. 6–7)

An outgrowth of Husserl's studies with Brentano, to whom it is dedicated, and from whom it borrows the distinction between authentically [*eigentlich*] and symbolically [*symbolisch*] given concepts,[3] *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* precedes Husserl's self-described breakthrough to his own phenomenological project in *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900).[4] Looking back from the threshold of this discovery, Husserl the budding phenomenologist will have this to say about the inadequacy of his earlier efforts to furnish mathematics with a solid epistemological basis by means of psychological investigations:

> Diese psychologische Fundierung wollte mir in gewissen Zusammenhängen nie recht genügen. Wo es sich um die Frage nach dem Ursprung der mathematischen Vorstellungen oder um die in der Tat psychologisch bestimmte Ausgestaltung der praktischen Methoden handelte, schien mir die Leistung der psychologischen Analyse klar und lehrreich. Sowie aber ein Übergang von den psychologischen Zusammenhängen des Denkens in zur logischen Einheit des Denkinhaltes (der Einheit der Theorie) vollzogen wurde, wollte sich keine rechte Kontinuität und Klarheit herausstellen lassen. Um so mehr beunruhigte mich daher auch der prinzipielle Zweifel, wie sich die Objektivität der Mathematik und aller Wissenschaft überhaupt mit einer psychologischen Begründung des Logischen vertrage. Da auf solche Weise meine ganze, von den Überzeugungen der herrschenden Logik getragene Methode – gegebene Wissenschaft durch psychologische Analysen logisch aufzuklären – ins Schwanken geriet, so sah ich mich in immer steigendem Maße zu allgemeinen kritischen Reflexionen über das Wesen der Logik und zumal über das Verhältnis zwischen der Subjektivität des Erkennens und der Objektivität des Erkenntnisinhaltes gedrängt. (*Hua* XVIII, pp. 6–7)

Husserl here identifies both the accomplishment of his previous work and its shortcomings. Significantly, he considers the psychological analysis of the origin of mathematical concepts to have been a success. Nonetheless, his view of that achievement has been critically altered by subsequent doubts *vis a vis* the possibility that psychology can account for the objectivity and unity characteristic of mathematics and of all fields with a claim to knowledge. The underlying problem is that of the relation between "the subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content of knowledge". The psychological investigations of *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*, it is implied, remain within the orbit of the subject, clarifying how it is that arithmetic concepts arise within this sphere as objects of consciousness, but unable to explain how ideal objects thus arisen can be objective in another sense – that is, how they can be anything other than purely personal, psychical

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3 See Lothar Eley's introduction in *Hua* XII, p. xxii.
4 Husserl retrospectively describes *Logische Untersuchungen* as "ein Werk des Durchbruchs" in the foreword to its second edition (*Hua* XVIII, p. 8).

entities, how they can be intersubjectively valid objects which are posited as "there" for everyone.

Although the breakthrough to phenomenology for Husserl meant a turning away from psychology in favor of examining fundamental problems of epistemology – problems that he felt to underlie the possibility of mathematics and psychology alike as sciences – Husserl would feel persistently dogged by the conflation of phenomenology with psychology on the part of his critics. Against such a construal of his mature work, Husserl insisted on distinguishing his undertaking from that of psychology using an analogy with the *a priori/a posteriori* distinction between mathematics and natural sciences. This distinction takes precedence in the introduction to *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie* (1913), where Husserl characterizes psychology, on the one hand, as an empirical science of facts [*Tatsachen*] which posits the phenomena it studies as real occurrences [*reale Vorkommnisse*], and phenomenology, on the other, as a pure science of essences [*Wesen*] which abstains from positing any phenomena as real in order to consider them, one might say, in respect of the underlying condition of possibility on which their putative actuality rests (*Hua* III, p. 6).

Given Husserl's later insistence on the distinction between phenomenology and psychology, *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* has a tenuous position in the arc of his thinking. On the one hand, its psychologistic outlook on the theory of knowledge is one Husserl will thereafter abandon. Its theory of the psychological genesis of basic arithmetic concepts is empirical and unable to carry out the fundamental epistemological task of bridging the subject-object divide: it is ultimately an account of mental facts which can never demonstrate that mathematical concepts are necessarily valid for everyone. Fundamentally, if also obviously, psychology lacks the technique of phenomenological reduction whereby a given phenomenon is treated not as a fact but rather as the occasion for discerning the transcendental, intentional structures of consciousness on which such phenomena rest. On the other hand, as we shall see, *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* already relies explicitly on Brentano's notion of intentionality as the feature distinguishing psychical phenomena from another class of phenomena taken up in consciousness: physical phenomena, among which Brentano counted all sense-data. This is clear from its analysis of the authentic – that is, intuitively given or grounded – concept of multiplicity [*Vielheit*] and its argument for the psychological origin of the latter. The intentional quality of psychic phenomena is that common to experiences [*Erlebnisse*] such as imagining, wishing, and loving – namely, that none of these experiences can avoid being directed towards an object; in each case, something is imagined, wished, or loved. For that reason, intentionality reveals a certain co-belonging of subject and object

as the very structure of the consciousness underlying such experience. This was to be the key insight in Husserl's phenomenological solution to the epistemological gap between subject and object. *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* thus reveals the continuity of Husserl's preoccupation with intentionality throughout his work.

Having covered some preliminary differences Husserl sees between psychologistic philosophy and phenomenology with respect to both their object and their approach, and having indicated, nonetheless, the degree to which they share the insight of intentionality, we can now take a closer look at *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* and begin to consider the case for the thesis announced above. My claim, once again, is that we can find in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* a discussion which, though not presented as a poetological reflection, in fact applies to the construction not only of that text but, later, of the "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" as well.

2 Die Philosophie der Arithmetik

2.1 Grounding an Arithmetic Concept in Psychology: The Project of the First Four Chapters and its Execution

The position of *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* in Husserl's intellectual biography aside, the work exhibits certain striking parallels with Husserl's late essay, "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" (1936). There is, to begin with, its distinction between authentically and symbolically given concepts – a distinction anticipating the account Husserl will give in "Der Ursprung" of the gradual loss of geometry's intuitive "evidence" [*Evidenz*] as the preservation, communication, and expansion of that science become entrusted to writing. Beyond this connection, there is the fact that both texts aim to shed light on the content of mathematical knowledge by referring to its genesis or origin.[5] In order to appreciate another parallel between the two texts, the one for which this essay will be making the case, more must be said about the genetic account of mathematical concepts found in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*. I limit myself here to the first four chapters of the book, which derive from Husserl's habilitation project and contain his complete account of the authentically given concept of *multiplicity*.

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5 In keeping with Husserl's distinction between psychology and phenomenology, one would distinguish here between a genetic explanation of mathematics that is empirical and one that is *a priori*.

In *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*, Husserl understands authentically given concepts as those which are abstracted from concrete phenomena. This abstraction is their origin or genesis. As a corollary of this view, he equates the content of a concept with the character of the particular things that are its instances, since the latter are taken to be the basis for its abstraction and hence the source of its content.[6] The concept of interest to Husserl in the first four chapters of the book is that of multiplicity. Accordingly, he looks for the content of that concept in the concrete phenomena from which it derives, by determining the essential feature that all such phenomena have in common. The task of Husserl's analysis is, therefore: first, to identify the phenomena from which the concept of multiplicity is abstracted; second, to characterize the essential feature they all share and to distinguish it from other features for which it may be mistaken.

Husserl dispenses with the first task in short order, regarding it as an unproblematic fact that we already know the kind of phenomena from which to abstract the concept of multiplicity: "In Betreff der konkreten Phänomene, welche für die Abstraktion der in Frage stehenden Begriffe die Grundlage bilden, besteht keinerlei Zweifel. Es sind Inbegriffe, Vielheiten bestimmter Objekte. Was mit diesem Ausdrucke gemeint ist, weiß jeder" (*Hua* XII, p. 15). Husserl thus names the phenomena from which the concept of multiplicity is abstracted *Inbegriffe*, though his insistence that we simply *know* which phenomena provide the basis of the relevant abstraction has the consequence that this term is little more than a placeholder. We either know which phenomena provide the starting point for our genetic-psychological concept analysis, or this analysis cannot be carried out at all. In any event, *Inbegriff* refers to that concrete phenomenon which counts as an instance of the concept of multiplicity – to those particular things which are so constituted that we may subsume them under the concept in question. We might call such phenomena multiplicities or collections of particular objects.

The second task of Husserl's analysis – determining the feature shared by all *Inbegriffe* – requires more work. Husserl claims that the distinctive feature of every *Inbegriff* is not to be found in the characteristics of its manifold contents – for anything whatsoever may be among the contents of an *Inbegriff* – but rather in its characteristic as a *whole*: "die Verbindung der einzelnen Elemente zu dem Ganzen" (*Hua* XII, p. 18). He names the relation between the parts of an *Inbegriff* a *kollektive Verbindung* or collective combination. Now, the challenge arises in characterizing this relation more precisely and in

6 Dallas Willard connects this genetic method of concept analysis to the work of Husserl's habilitation advisor Carl Stumpf. See Willard's introduction to his translation in Husserl 2003, p. xvi.

distinguishing it from other relations with which it may be confused. For that reason, Husserl dedicates the second chapter of the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* to refuting what he takes to be incorrect analyses of the concept of multiplicity, all of which are said to mischaracterize the kind of relation connecting the elements of those concrete wholes or *Inbegriffe* from which that concept is abstracted. These rejected accounts of the *Inbegriff*'s distinctive feature include its characterization as the co-belonging of a plurality of elements in one consciousness; the simultaneity of those elements; their temporal sequence or succession; their being situated within a single spatial synthesis; and, finally, their standing in a relation of difference to each other.

As an introduction to his own account of collective combination in the third chapter, Husserl refers to Brentano's distinction between physical and psychical phenomena, distinguishing on this basis between *relations* that are physical and psychical in their phenomenal character. An important difference between the two types of relation is the fact that physical relations are externally perceived, whereas psychical relations are perceived in the domain of reflection because they are relations first established by the intentionality proper to psychical acts. With the awareness of certain psychical acts there arises an awareness of a relation not otherwise perceived. Husserl argues that collective combination is a relation of a psychical and not a physical kind – that it is bound up with some psychical act. Husserl's thought might be summarized as follows: in the same way that an act of noticing [*Bemerken*] contains or includes [*umfaßt*] something noticed [*das Bemerkte*] as its content [*Inhalt*] (*Hua* XII, p. 68) – to use one example Husserl gives of a psychical act – so too does a unitary psychical act [*ein einheitlicher psychischer Akt*] that directs itself towards *multiple* things contain those things intentionally as its content (*Hua* XII, p. 69). In co-intending them, it relates them. Such a relation can obtain between things of any kind whatsoever, and therefore is not grounded in the things related. It obtains between things solely in virtue of their being co-intended in a single act directed towards them all: "Die Inhalte sind hier eben nur durch den Akt geeinigt, und es kann daher erst durch eine besondere Reflexion auf ihn diese Einigung bemerkt werden" (*Hua* XII, p. 69). As this quote suggests, the psychical act that first establishes the relation between a number of things by co-intending them does not contain this relation itself as its intentional object or content. Rather, that act is directed towards those *things* – it intends *them* and not their relation. Nonetheless, to the extent that we are aware of this act of co-intending in the domain of inner perception or reflection, we can also be conscious of the relation established by that act.

With this, Husserl has completed the second task requisite to the analysis of the concept of multiplicity: the positive description of the feature shared by all concrete phenomena from which it can be abstracted. *Inbegriffe* were

identified as the phenomenal basis for this abstraction; collective combination – a certain relation between the parts of a whole – was identified as the feature all *Inbegriffe* have in common; and it remained only to determine what kind of a relation this was.

Having made this determination, Husserl draws a number of conclusions from it. One conclusion concerns what his account of collective combination implies about *Inbegriffe*:

> Ein Inbegriff entsteht, indem ein einheitliches Interesse und in und mit ihm zugleich ein einheitliches Bemerken verschiedene Inhalte für sich heraushebt und umfaßt. Es kann also die kollektive Verbindung auch nur erfaßt werden durch Reflexion auf den psychischen Akt, durch welchen der Inbegriff zustande kommt. (*Hua* XII, p. 74)

Because *Inbegriffe* are characterized as wholes whose parts are related to each other in a collective fashion, they themselves first arise through the psychical act that establishes this relation, namely, an act of multi-directional interest-taking and noticing. The concrete phenomenal basis for the abstraction of the concept of multiplicity is thus itself shown to derive from a psychical act. At the end of the third chapter, Husserl also draws conclusions about the relationship between collective combination and other types of relation. Because every relation is a complex phenomenon comprising multiple parts, Husserl argues that collective combination is fundamental to every other relation: "Diese psychische Relation ist also eine unerläßliche psychologische Vorbedingung für jede Beziehung und Verbindung überhaupt" (*Hua* XII, p. 75). Due to its special status among relations, Husserl continues, collective combination has no proper name of its own in common language but is instead indicated where the conjunction "und" connects two or more names (*Hua* XII, p. 75).

With this much accomplished, the fourth chapter pieces together the process whereby the general concept of multiplicity is abstracted from a particular, given *Inbegriff*, claiming that this abstraction occurs when each of the latter's parts are regarded not as definite things but merely as "something or other" [*irgend etwas*] (*Hua* XII, p. 79). As a result, Husserl argues, the content of the general concept of multiplicity is adequately indicated in common language by the expression "irgend etwas und irgend etwas und irgend etwas, usw." (*Hua* XII, p. 80).

With this overview of Husserl's genetic-psychological analysis of the concept of multiplicity in place, I break off my general reconstruction and proceed to a closer consideration of one passage from Husserl's account of collective combination. I intend to show that this moment constitutes a self-reflexive statement revealing the conditions of possibility for the kind of analysis the text itself carries out.

2.2 The Critical Supplement Concerning "Das Analysieren" and Its Connection to Husserl's Psychological Project

As mentioned in the overview just given, Husserl refutes at length a number of alternative accounts of the concept of multiplicity in the second chapter of *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*. Among these, the one he takes most seriously is the theory grounding that concept in the relation of difference. In short, this theory holds that there can be no wholes of the sort Husserl calls *Inbegriffe* where there are no objects that differ from each other. Husserl's refutation of this theory does not take issue with its contention that the elements composing an *Inbegriff* must differ from each other. What is wrong, in his view, is further to suppose that difference belongs to the content of the concept of multiplicity.

> Es ist wichtig, dass man auseinanderhalte: "zwei verschiedene Inhalte bemerken" und "zwei Inhalte als voneinander verschiedene bemerken". Im ersten Falle haben wir, vorausgesetzt, daß die Inhalte zugleich einheitlich zusammengefaßt werden, eine Inbegriffsvorstellung, im zweiten eine Unterschiedsvorstellung. (*Hua* XII, p. 54)

No difference is itself intended in the psychical act that first constitutes an *Inbegriff*. Noticing a number of things is not the same as noticing their difference.

Husserl proceeds to attribute the conflation of multiplicity with difference to a certain ambiguity in the use of the term *Unterschied*. On the one hand, he says, "difference" refers to one possible result of a *comparison*: the negative judgment that two things are not identical [*gleich*]. On the other, it can refer to the result of an *analysis*: "dasjenige, was durch Analyse herausgehoben und besonders bemerkt worden ist" (*Hua* XII, p. 56). Analysis, Husserl clarifies, is not a judgment. It is not the same as distinguishing one thing from another. On the contrary, he argues, all comparison (including distinction) presupposes that the terms its compares have been separately and specifically noticed to begin with, and this is only possible through analysis. "Die Urteilstätigkeit des Unterscheidens setzt evidentermaßen bereits ausgeschiedene, für sich bemerkte Inhalte voraus" (*Hua* XII, p. 57). Analysis precedes all comparison.

This last point has bearing on Husserl's own account of the concept of multiplicity. While it is not necessary to notice a difference between various things in order take interest in them jointly, he claims, it *is* necessary to notice those elements separately. "Damit eine konkrete Inbegriffsvorstellung entstehe, ist es nur erfordert, daß ein jeder der darin befaßten Inhalte ein für sich bemerkter, ein ausgeschiedener sei" (*Hua* XII, p. 57). As noted above, Husserl will end up characterizing collective combination as a relation first established by a psychical act. To reiterate, this act consists in co-intending multiple, separately noticed things by taking interest in them jointly. We now see Husserl's reason for

emphasizing this point about separateness. Like comparison, the possibility of a single interest directed at multiple objects presupposes that the objects in which it takes interest are separately noticed. Should we not then say that analysis precedes the taking of a unitary interest in multiple objects – that although the act of interest-taking first constitutes the relation between these objects, it is analysis that renders them separate? Indeed, Husserl will acknowledge the priority of analysis in chapter three, when he argues that the psychical act whereby an *Inbegriff* arises is necessarily preceded by separate acts that take notice of each of the things to be collectively combined. "Für die Auffassung eines jeden der kolligierten Inhalte bedarf es eines besonderen psychischen Aktes; ihre Zusammenfassung erfordert dann einen neuen, der jene gliedern-den Akte offenbar in sich schließt, also einen psychischen Akt zweiter Ordnung bildet" (*Hua* XII, p. 74).

Thus begins the line of thinking in the text that I wish to identify as self-reflexive or poetological. That is, the reflections and statements that follow from Husserl's distinction between distinguishing and analyzing have implications not only for how he understands the concept of multiplicity but also for the structure of his own argument. Clearly, for Husserl, in order for there to be a single act that takes interest in a number of things, there must be *separate acts* that take notice of them. However, none of these latter acts constitutes an analysis in his sense of the term. They are, in each case, acts not of analysis but of taking notice. What brings about the separation of these acts? Analysis, I contend, refers not to any act but to their separation. This question leads Husserl to considerations that indirectly expose the presuppositions of his own account.

These considerations are found in the "Kritischer Zusatz" or critical supplement to chapter two, which comes just before his explanation of the psychological nature of collective combination in chapter three. At the end of this supplement, Husserl draws a distinction between *psychische Akte* or *Tätigkeiten* – psychical acts such as willing, judging, or loving – and *psychische Geschehen,* psychical events or occurrences that cannot be inwardly perceived in reflection as acts. In a fascinating passage, Husserl identifies analysis as such an event and construes memory as its index, the sole grounds for registering its occurrence. We can only become aware of the fact that analysis has transpired by *comparing* a memory of an *unanalyzed* whole with a whole that presents itself as comprising separate constituents – an *Inbegriff*:

> Das Unterscheiden wird von Sigwart wiederholt mit dem Vergleichen zusammengestellt, als psychische Tätigkeiten, mit Reflexion auf welche die Begriffe von Gleichheit und Unterschied gewonnen würden. [. . .] Sicher käme nicht in Betracht das Analysieren; denn dieses ist überhaupt keine psychische Tätigkeit in dem eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes, d.h. eine solche, die in den Bereich der Reflexion fiele. Man unterscheide

zwischen einem psychischen Geschehen und einem psychischen Akte. Psychische Akte sind das Vorstellen, Bejahen, Verneinen, Lieben, Hassen, Wollen, usw., von welchen uns die innere Wahrnehmung (Lockes reflection) Kunde gibt. Ganz anders verhält es sich mit dem Analysieren. Niemand kann eine analysierende Tätigkeit innerlich wahrnehmen. Wir können die Erfahrung machen, daß ein zuerst unanalysierter Inhalt dann zu einem analysierten wird; wo früher *ein* Inhalt war, wird jetzt eine Vielheit bemerkt. Mehr aber als dieses post hoc ist innerlich nicht zu konstatieren. Von einer psychischen Tätigkeit, durch welche aus der unanalysierten Einheit die Vielheit erst wird, lehrt die innere Wahrnehmung nichts. Das Faktum aber der eingetretene [sic] Analysen kommt zu unserer Kenntnis, indem wir die Erinnerungsvorstellung des unanalysierten Ganzen mit dem gegenwärtigen des analysierten vergleichen. Es treten solcher Art Akte des Vergleichens und Unterscheidens auf, welche jedoch die vollzogene Analyse voraussetzen. (*Hua* XII, pp. 62–63)

The separation of the contents composing an *Inbegriff* or, for that matter, of the elements distinguished in a comparison, does not itself arise from comparison or from *any* psychical act. Separation – the fact that there are separate acts of noticing – is rather the condition under which second-order acts can intend multiple objects together, and in co-intending them, can give rise to an analyzed whole. No act can bring this condition about. It is unaccountable from the standpoint of the subject whose acts presuppose it.

In concluding this discussion of *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik,* I wish to show that this passage from the "Kritischer Zusatz" reveals the self-reflexive nature of the text's own argument. First of all, memory's capacity to reveal the fact that analysis has transpired depends, in this passage, on its involvement in an act of *comparison.* Analysis itself is not remembered. Rather, its having-already-occurred is inferred, and memory provides the grounds for this inference. In that sense, it is not memory itself which discloses the event in question, but the belated comparison which does so. In this belated awareness, the occurrence of analysis is recognized as a difference – here in Husserl's first sense as the outcome of a comparison – as the non-identity of the two things presented. This comparison brings us to the point where the text's discussion points back at itself. *If Husserl holds that all comparison presupposes analysis, then the comparison through which the very occurrence of analysis is revealed must itself be preceded by an analysis constituting memories and perceptions as separate acts.* Memories can be distinguished from other acts only if an analysis is presupposed. For that reason, memory itself (or rather the text's appeal to it) also points to an analysis without ever entering into a comparison of the sort Husserl describes in this passage. Memory, as an act distinguished here from other acts, presupposes a difference for the basis of its very identity, and difference, as we know, in turn presupposes analysis for Husserl. Memory is here a term in a relation of difference, and such a relation can be identified, for Husserl, only where this is, first of all, a multiplicity. The starting point for

Husserl's account, the framework within which he explains how the concept of multiplicity arises, is ultimately the model of the subject itself as an analyzed whole consisting of a multiplicity of acts. And, according to his own argument, the very possibility of such a model itself presupposes analysis. This analysis, however, is not one whose occurrence is revealed by the difference between an *Erinnerungsvorstellung* and *das Gegenwärtigen* of some analyzed whole. We are dealing here with an analysis at the level of the text's own theoretical resources. There is nothing with which the text compares its model of the subject itself as an analyzed whole, nothing equivalent at the level of the text's own presuppositions to the memory whose presentation of an unanalyzed whole allows the occurrence of analysis to be disclosed. What Husserl calls analysis is rather the a priori condition for his own distinction between a memory and another act. *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*, whose objective is to show that the concept of multiplicity is abstracted from a psychical phenomenon called an *Inbegriff,* presupposes that the subject itself is an *Inbegriff* of acts. As a consequence, when the text asserts that the perception of an analyzed whole presupposes separate acts of noticing for whose separation no psychical act is responsible, it asserts at the same time that the model of consciousness guiding its investigation presupposes a separation of acts for which it does not account.

3 "Der Ursprung der Geometrie"

3.1 Describing the a priori Structure of a Scientific Tradition: The Program Presented and Carried Out in the First Ten Pages

This essay has thus far endeavored to show that *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* contains reflections that serve not only to ground arithmetic concepts in psychology but also self-reflexively to reveal the conditions under which a project of this kind can be carried out. And yet the thesis announced at the outset claimed more than this, namely, that the remarks on analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* apply reflexively not only to the framework of that early, psychological work, but also, decades later, to the phenomenology practiced in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie". This remains to be demonstrated. Husserl's phenomenology – often criticized in its early phases for ahistoricity and its focus on the transcendental ego – is marked in its later iterations by an emphasis on history, intersubjectivity, and the lifeworld. "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" belongs to

these later iterations. How can the reflections on analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* be said to illuminate Husserl's phenomenological approach to the historicity of a science like geometry? In the remainder of this paper, I will argue that a specific passage in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" hearkens back to the discussion of analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*. The context for this passage is the overall course of argument in first ten or so pages of "Der Ursprung der Geometrie", which I will reconstruct in this section before closely examining a specific part of that argument in the next one.

Husserl begins "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" by noting that he is conducting an inquiry into geometry's history, adding, however, that he is not asking after this history in the ordinary sense:

> Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie [. . .] sei hier nicht die philologisch-historische Frage [. . .]; wir fragen nach jenem Sinn, in dem sie erstmalig in der Geschichte aufgetreten ist – aufgetreten sein mußte, obschon wir von den ersten Schöpfern nichts wissen und auch gar nicht danach fragen. (*Hua* VI, pp. 365–366)

By thus inquiring into the original sense in which geometry *must* have arisen historically, Husserl emphasizes the transcendental rather than empirical character of his inquiry. Given what has already been said about the distinction Husserl draws between phenomenology and psychology, it comes as no surprise that he distinguishes phenomenology from history in like fashion. Whereas the psychologist and historian ascertain certain kinds of facts and draw conclusions based on them, the phenomenologist describes the epistemological region in which those facts can be ascertained.

Husserl next presents his method for gaining access to this region: Starting from the certitude that geometry is a tradition, he will inquire into the mode of being of a scientific or theoretical tradition in general, asking back to the implicit conditions that make it possible for geometry to exist as such a tradition:

> Beginnen wir also hinsichtlich der Geometrie mit den nächstliegenden Selbstverständlichkeiten [. . .]. Unsere aus Tradition vorliegende Geometrie (wir haben sie gelernt und unsere Lehrer ebenso) verstehen wir als einen Gesamterwerb geistiger Leistungen, der sich durch Fortarbeit in neuen Geistesakten durch neue Erwerbe erweitert. Wir wissen von ihren tradierten früheren Gestalten, als aus welchen sie geworden sind, aber bei jeder wiederholt sich der Verweis auf frühere – offenbar mußte die Geometrie also geworden sein aus einem ersten Erwerben, ersten schöpferischen Aktivitäten. Wir verstehen ihre bleibende Seinsart: nicht nur ein beweglicher Fortgang von Erwerben zu Erwerben, sondern eine kontinuierliche Synthesis, in der alle Erwerbe fortgelten, alle eine Totalität bilden, derart, daß in jeder Gegenwart der Totalerwerb sozusagen Totalprämisse ist für die Erwerbe der neuen Stufe. [. . .] Wissenschaft, im besonderen Geometrie, mit diesem Seinssinn, mußte einen historischen Anfang haben,

> dieser Sinn selbst einen Ursprung in einem Leisten: zunächst als Vorhabe und dann in
> gelingender Ausführung. (*Hua* VI, pp. 366–367)

As also noted in recent scholarship, what Husserl in fact does here is to construct the *a priori historical scheme* to which the actual history of geometry's creation and development, whatever it might have been, would have to conform.[7] Regardless of when and how it began, Husserl reasons, part of what it means for geometry to be a tradition is that *it must have begun sometime, with some accomplishment*. Indeed, this underlying structure is what allows the historian to ask when, how, and with whom geometry originated.

The initial sketch of this scheme soon reveals a problem for Husserl. This sketch necessitates that a tradition like geometry begin with a first accomplishment that is subject-internal or psychical in nature, and yet the manner of being of theoretical accomplishments is not psychical or intrapersonal but objective and intersubjective in an especially strong sense, for the ideal objects of geometry and science in general are meant to be accessible for everyone, regardless, even, of historical distance and cultural difference:

> Dieses Vorhaben und gelingende Verwirklichen spielt sich doch rein im Subjekt des Erfinders ab, und ausschließlich in seinem geistigen Raume sozusagen liegt dann auch der originaliter daseiende Sinn mit seinem ganzen Inhalt. Aber die geometrische Existenz ist nicht psychische, nicht Existenz des Personalen in der personalen Bewußtseinssphäre, sie ist Existenz von objektiv Daseinendem für "jedermann" (für den wirklichen und möglichen Geometer oder Geometrie Verstehenden). Ja, sie hat von ihrer Urstiftung her ein eigenartig überzeitliches, wie wir gewiss sind, für alle Menschen, zunächst für wirkliche und mögliche Mathematiker aller Völker, aller Zeitalter zugängliches Dasein.
> (*Hua* VI, pp. 367–368)

Husserl uses the term "ideal" objectivity to name the mode of existence proper to theoretical accomplishments like those of geometry. Unlike those cultural products which can be realized in numerous identical copies (tools and buildings being Husserl's prime examples), the ideal products of the sciences and, Husserl adds, of literature, remain one and the same for all time. Any ideality

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7 Christian Ferencz-Flatz convincingly argues that Husserl's genetic phenomenology of geometry in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" consists of three steps, the first being the description of the *a priori* historical scheme of any scientific tradition. The second step identifies the prescientific conditions of possibility for geometry's founding accomplishment as contained in the geometer's lifeworld. Husserl claims that it is those invariant structures that I am not free to imagine differing in any other possible lifeworld which provide the basis for an act of idealization. Finally, the third step explains how ideal geometric objects or figures arose from lifeworld practices of measurement (Ferencz-Flatz 2017, pp. 118–21). My own essay pertains to the first of these three steps.

exists only once: there is only one Pythagorean theorem, as Husserl insists (*Hua* VI, p. 368). Idealities exist, therefore, in a radically different sense than tools and buildings. Not only, then, are theoretical accomplishments supposed to objective, they must also be "there" for everyone in a different way than other intersubjectively accessible cultural products. What is missing from the initial sketch of geometry's a priori historical structure, in Husserl's view, is thus an account of how the objective and ideal sense borne by all scientific accomplishments can have arisen from an intrapersonal, psychical origin. "Wie kommt die geometrische Idealität (ebenso wie die aller Wissenschaften) von ihrem originären innerpersonalen Ursprung, in welchem sie Gebilde im Bewußtseinsraum der ersten Erfinderseele ist, zu ihrer idealen Objektivität?" (*Hua* VI, p. 369).

In advance of analyzing this problem more closely, Husserl suggests an explanation: it will turn out, he claims, that language makes it possible for a scientific tradition's original accomplishment to have an abiding, ideal existence which is "there" for everyone to experience. Husserl then proceeds to demonstrate this explanation by returning to the historical scheme already sketched, according to which a scientific tradition must have begun with a first accomplishment in the consciousness of its inventor. Husserl articulates that scheme more fully now, focusing first on what that original accomplishment must have involved, such that it could have produced an ideal object.

Ideal objectivity is achieved, in Husserl's account, through a series of steps. It begins when some subject recognizes that it can carry out a certain project as many times as it wishes by means of a certain intuitive act, *and* that what it thereby produces are not *identical objects* but is exactly *the same object* each time. The recognition of this sameness is the accomplishment of an ideality, which, as we have seen, exists only once. The second step occurs when this accomplishment is communicated verbally and understood, and when both parties reciprocally recognize that each produces one and the same object by means of an intuitive act. The recognition of *this* sameness constitutes an ideality that is intersubjectively shared. Husserl goes into only the briefest outlines of an explanation for language's power to ensure this communication and reciprocal recognition of what the other intends and of what is "there" for the other. Suffice it to say that he attributes it to language's position as the very medium in which the subject experiences itself as inhabiting a shared world in which certain things can be said to be "there" for everyone. The final step in rendering the original, ideal accomplishment fully objective, according to Husserl, occurs when it attains a new mode of objective being that no longer depends on live communication in which one subject conveys to another the intuitive means of producing the ideality in question. This transformation of the ideal scientific

object's mode of being – such that it can persist in intersubjective space in the absence of intuitive acts that render it present – is introduced by committing that object's tradition to writing. The object handed down from inventor to subsequent generations is now persistently available to everyone in a symbolic mode. Husserl sees in this both the great achievement of writing – its indispensability for the very possibility of a theoretical tradition as we know it – as well as its dangers: the potential loss of that tradition's original meaning, which can be regained only by converting the mode of being of its ideal accomplishment back into its original intuitive presence.

All of this belongs, according to Husserl, to the *a priori* structure of a scientific tradition, as the handing-down of an ideality that anyone can access, build upon, and pass down to others. With this in view, I will now show how one part of Husserl's description of this structure reflects certain concerns already articulated in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*. The part in question is his account of geometry's very first accomplishment, the realization of an ideality whose objectivity remains to be established.

3.2 One Aspect of Geometry's *a priori* Historical Structure: The Intra-Subjective Origin of Ideality

The starting point in Husserl's historical scheme is, as we have seen, a first accomplishment consisting of a project [*Vorhabe*] and its realization [*gelingende Ausführung*]. The relationship between project and realization translates an earlier concern of Husserl's, articulated already in *Logische Untersuchungen*, with the relation between an intention [*Meinen*] and its fulfillment [*Erfüllung*]. To be clear, what is at stake in this correlation of intention and fulfillment is *not* the intentional relation between an intentional act and its object. For Husserl, the latter relation ensures merely that something is always *intended* in every such act – but not that the intention is *fulfilled*. Fulfillment occurs (to varying degrees of completeness) when the thing intended is also *given* (or, as Husserl likes to say, is *itself there*) in an act of intuition or perception.[8] This identity of the *thing intended* with the *thing given* is established in an act that Husserl calls *Evidenz*, which he defines in *Logische Untersuchungen* as "der aktuelle Vollzug der adäquaten

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8 For an explication of the relationship between intention and fulfillment, see the "Erster Abschnitt" of the 6th *Logische Untersuchung* (*Hua* XIX/1, pp. 544–656).

Identifizierung" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 652). We find Husserl using the term again in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" to characterize geometry's founding accomplishment:

> Jede aus erster Vorhabe zur Ausführung kommende geistige Leistung ist erstmalig da in der Evidenz aktuellen Gelingens. [. . .] Evidenz besagt gar nichts anderes als Erfassen eines Seienden im Bewußtsein seines originalen Selbst-da. Gelingende Verwirklichung einer Vorhabe ist für das tätige Subjekt Evidenz, in ihr ist das Erwirkte originaliter als es selbst da.   (*Hua* VI, p. 367)

Together with the discussion of *Evidenz* in *Logische Untersuchungen,* this passage makes clear that geometry's founding accomplishment must consist, for Husserl, in an act *identifying* the intentional content of a project with an entity that is *itself-there*, namely, in intuitive presence. To realize a project is to carry out this identification.

The status of *Evidenz* as an act of identification has important consequences in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie". In the first place, it makes up the character of accomplishment as the realization of a project. And this in turn guides Husserl's construction of the scheme according to which a scientific tradition's history must unfold – that is, up until the introduction of writing, which makes it possible to hand down such a tradition without preserving its *Evidenz,* the identification of something present in an intuitive act as the fulfillment of its original intention. In other words, I contend that Husserl's scheme of scientific historicity follows a certain development of such identification, until the act of identification is itself suspended. Thus, we can assign an act of identification to each step in Husserl's historical scheme prior to the substitution of writing for *Evidenz*, and we can articulate the better part of that scheme, as I will now do, in terms of a series of interrelated identifications.

As we know, Husserl characterizes geometry's founding accomplishment as one necessarily achieved by an individual consciousness. In order to have realized its project, this consciousness must have succeeded in making present to itself the very thing it had intended. Since, as we have seen, Husserl takes the things intended by geometry and by all theoretical or scientific traditions to be *idealities*, which exist only once, the first geometer must have both intended and succeeded in realizing just such an object within the sphere of her own consciousness. The subsequent steps which establish this ideality as something objective, i.e., available to all, build on its initial realization for and by an individual subject. This is because the very possibility of realizing an ideality – that is, the possibility of identifying something given in an act of intuition as an object of this kind – requires first identifying that which is given in *multiple* acts of intuition as *the same*, as *one object*. An intended ideality is fulfilled when it is identified with an object's *sameness*, when this sameness is itself given in

intuition, for sameness is the mode of being of an entity that exists only once. But this sameness is *itself-there* in intuition on the basis of a prior identification: when the entities present in separate acts of intuition are in fact one and the same thing; when they constitute a single fulfillment of some intention. The separate intuitive acts of a single subject provide the basis for this identification of an object that is *the same*. And the further identification of this self-same object (given in multiple acts of intuition) with the (ideal) object intended is the accomplishment or realization of an ideality.

Yet another identification becomes possible when we consider intuitive acts that are separate in that they belong to multiple subjects. As with multiple intuitive acts belonging to one subject, the intuitive acts of multiple subjects make it possible to identify the objects present in them as one and the same.[9] If the intuitive acts of separate subjects present the same object, then that object is *objective*; it is there for everyone. *Whereas ideality is the sameness of an object present in the separate intuitive acts of one subject, objectivity is the sameness of an object present in the intuitive acts of multiple subjects.* As a consequence, an ideality can itself be objective to the extent that separate subjects carry out the same double identification already described: first, the identification of the objects present in one's own manifold intuitive acts as one and the same; second, the identification of this same object as the realization of a certain intention. Objectivity in this case (i.e., the objectivity of an ideality as opposed to that of a tool or a building) constitutes a third identification, namely, that of the ideality realized by one subject with the ideality realized by another.

Such, I contend, is the complex of identifying acts that Husserl takes to establish ideal objectivity – if not yet the existence in perpetuity afforded by writing. There is a hierarchy among these acts: one identification provides the foundation for a second, and the second in turn serves as the basis for a third. Because these identifications determine the *a priori* structure of a scientific tradition's history, the phenomenological order of their dependence translates into the necessary order of historical events: a certain identification must precede another in the course of a science's history. Hence, geometry's first accomplishment must have been the realization of a certain ideality as carried out by one subject; the next accomplishment must have been the realization of that ideality's (impermanent) objectivity as carried out by multiple subjects. And internal to the first accomplishment must have been a pair of identifying acts performed in a specific order, such that one must have occurred before the other.

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9 Derrida emphasizes this same point: "Before being the ideality of an identical object for other subjects, sense is this ideality for other moments of the same subject" (Derrida 1989, p. 86).

My focus will now be on how Husserl *describes* this internal history of the identifying acts through which geometric *ideality* must have first been accomplished. As already announced, I hold that this description reflects those claims about analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* which can be considered self-reflexive or indicative of the manner in which that text's theory itself is constructed. I intend to show that those claims indicate something about the way the historical scheme in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" is constructed as well.

The description in question is found in a lengthy passage detailing Husserl's solution to the problem faced by his inquiry into geometry's origin: how could an ideality first realized by an individual subject have become objective? Husserl's description of geometry's first accomplishment, the realization of a certain ideality, therefore belongs to a larger description of how geometric idealities must have attained their objectivity. From this larger picture, I excise only the details concerning the intra-subjective, psychical constitution of an ideality:

> Aber wie kommt das innerpsychisch konstituierte Gebilde zu einem eigenen intersubjektiven Sein als eine ideale Gegenständlichkeit, die eben als "geometrische" weniger als nichts etwas psychisch Reales ist, obschon doch psychisch entsprungen? Überlegen wir. Das originale Selbstdasein in der Aktualität der ersten Erzeugung, also in der ursprünglichen "Evidenz", ergibt überhaupt keinen verharrenden Erwerb, der objektives Dasein haben könnte. Die lebendige Evidenz geht vorüber, freilich so, daß die Aktivität alsbald in die Passivität des strömend verblassenden Bewußtseins vom Soeben-Gewesensein übergeht. Schließlich verschwindet diese "Retention", aber das "verschwundene" Vergehen und Vergangensein ist für das betreffende Subjekt nicht zu nichts geworden, es kann wieder erweckt werden. Zur Passivität des zunächst dunkel Geweckten und des ev. in immer größerer Klarheit Auftauchenden gehört die mögliche Aktivität einer Wiedererinnerung, in der das vergangene Erleben quasi neu und aktiv durchlebt wird. Wo nun die ursprünglich evidente Erzeugung als reine Erfüllung ihrer Intention das Erneute (Wiedererinnerte) ist, tritt notwendig mit der aktiven Wiedererinnerung des Vergangenen eine Aktivität mitgehender wirklicher Erzeugung ein, und dabei entspringt in ursprünglicher "Deckung" die Evidenz der Identität: das jetzt originär Verwirklichte ist dasselbe wie das vordem evident Gewesene. Mitgestiftet ist auch die Vermöglichkeit beliebiger Wiederholung unter Evidenz der Identität (Identitätsdeckung) des Gebildes in der Wiederholungskette. Doch auch damit haben wir das Subjekt und seine subjektiven Vermöglichkeiten nicht überschritten, also noch keine "Objektivität" gegeben. (*Hua* VI, p. 370)

What must be going on in the subject when it realizes or produces something that, though not yet objective, is no mere psychical entity? Husserl's answer in this passage, as I take it, conforms to the double identification I outlined above: first, the identification of the objects present in multiple intuitive acts as one and the same; second, the identification of this self-same object as an ideality. Ultimately, what is essential in this passage is for the subject to attain "die Evidenz der Identität", which is the identification of "das jetzt originär

Verwirklichte" and "das vordem evident Gewesene" as "dasselbe". Here we have the identification of that which is present in separate intuitive acts as one and the same object. On the one hand, "das vordem evident Gewesene" refers to the thing that was *itself-there* in a certain intuitive act, now past – although, and this will become essential, this act is not for that reason annihilated; rather, Husserl speaks as though it had merely been put out of commission for a time. The object present in that act had fulfilled a certain intention, if only so long as the act itself remained in effect.[10] On the other hand, "das jetzt originär Verwirklichte" refers to the thing realized in another intuitive act, experienced now. This act is one of active remembrance and reawakening, namely, of the very intuitive act that first fulfilled the intention in question. Indeed, this act of "Wiedererinnerung" can be said to put the "past" act back in commission, to reactivate it, returning to it its original force. What this active remembrance realizes through "eine Aktivität mit-gehender wirklicher Erzeugung" is thus none other than the earlier fulfillment of an intention. "Das jetzt originär Verwirklichte" is therefore one and the same as "das vordem evident Gewesene". "Die Evidenz der Identität" refers to the identi-fication of these two fulfillments; they are merely *one* fulfillment activated at sep-arate times. Furthermore, with the sameness of these fulfillments, we have the basis for a second identification: a fulfillment that is the same at separate mo-ments itself fulfills an intention directed towards something that exists only once. It is the realization of an ideality.

The pattern of identifications described in this passage requires a slight modi-fication to my own description of how Husserl understands the production of an ideality. I have characterized the first identification requisite to the intra-subjective constitution of an ideality as an identification of the *objects* realized in one sub-ject's *separate intuitive acts*. It is now clear that we should speak, instead, of an identification of the *intuitive acts* in effect at *separate moments* of that subject.

With this modification in place, we can proceed to the crucial point for our purposes: *the identification through which ideality is realized for Husserl presupposes a model of a certain (intuitive) act as a multiplicity of iterations*. The act identifying the sameness of a past and present fulfillment of a certain intention requires enough separation between the moments of this fulfillment to compare them, enough space between them that they may "cover" each other "in ursprünglicher Deckung". Multiplicity is the basis of Husserl's account of ideality

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10 We see here that, for Husserl, identification in fact begins even sooner than I indicated above, since "das vordem evident Gewesene" is already identified on its own as the fulfillment of an intention. My point, however, is that this fulfillment does not constitute the realization of an *ideality* until it is identified with another fulfillment, that is, until the two are recognized as one and the same.

and its intuitive fulfillment, even though this account in fact describes a single fulfillment operative at separate times and not a series of separate yet identical fulfillments. A present fulfillment that is *the same* as a previous one is just that: the two are actually *one* fulfillment, but the very separation between this and that iteration of a fulfillment indicates that fulfillment's divisibility into many repetitions. It is this separation which makes it possible to identify the sameness or oneness of that fulfillment. Hence the significance of memory in Husserl's description. On the one hand, this "Wiedererinnerung" is separate from the original iteration of the act that it brings back to life. On the other, this separation allows it to be compared with the original act and identified as its re-iteration, recurrence, or reactivation. And as far as Husserl's scheme is concerned, without this identification, no ideality would be realized.

We can now see the extent to which the discussion of analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* serves – ahead of time, as it were – as a commentary on the *a priori* scheme of geometry's history in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie". For the latter construes a single intuitive act as a multiplicity of repetitions, and the comments on analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* belong to that text's account of multiplicity. The whole discussion of analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* pertains to its function as the precondition for all comparison, all judgment of identity and non-identity. This very point about analysis describes what we have just seen in the above passage from "Der Ursprung der Geometrie". Identification is indeed preceded in this passage by what *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* calls analysis. The comparison through which identification is carried out rests on a multiplicity of things separately posited by Husserl's scheme. As was also the case in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik,* analysis is indicated already where the text posits such a thing as memory – in this case, where it posits an act composed of separate iterations. And, like the event of analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik,* analysis does not occur in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" within the same framework as the memory that presupposes it. Specifically, the analysis of an intuitive act into separate moments or iterations is not itself part of the scheme of geometry's *a priori* history. Instead, it precedes the latter and make it possible to construct this scheme, as a scheme of identifications, in the first place.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

This essay began by questioning whether Husserl is relevant to literary studies only as a phenomenologist – to the extent that the method of the *epoché* resonates with the fictional, non-thetic status of literary discourse and with the capacity of literature to thematize the very form in which the factual or the knowable is expressed. At the outset, I proposed that Husserl's *psychological* work is also of interest in the context of the relationship between literature and

knowledge. This is so, I claimed, because it contains a self-reflexive statement that applies not only to the genetic psychology practiced in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* but also to the genetic phenomenology carried out in "Der Ursprung der Geometrie". The subsequent sections of this essay have attempted to show how the passage in question from the *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* does indeed function in the manner suggested – to reflect something about the very conditions under which both texts are able to construct their respective theories.

If this attempt has been successful, it entails that we can answer my initial question in the negative: the affinity between literature and Husserl's thinking is not restricted to his phenomenological work. I observed at the outset that literature, in its capacity as fiction, is thought to reveal the general rules and norms governing the formation of the various particular discourses and texts it cites, alludes to, transforms, or otherwise summons. But does the self-reflexive status of the analysis discussion in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* not incline us to conclude that this discussion itself pertains to the rules and norms governing the formation of Husserl's own epistemological discourse? And without reducing the method of "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" to that of *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik,* and hence the method of his late phenomenology to that of his early psychology, does the parallel for which I have argued not testify to a certain affinity between these projects? Does this affinity not consist in their attempt to secure the epistemological basis of a given field of knowledge (in both cases mathematical) by tracing its genesis, however differently they may conceive of and seek out its origin? And do these attempts to reconstruct an origin not proceed, as this essay has endeavored to show, according to the very rule described by the discussion of analysis in *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik*? Do they not reconstruct an origin as a multiplicity whose condition of possibility is an analysis, a separation, about whose own genesis they remain silent? If these questions are rhetorical, if they urge an affirmation, what they affirm is the poetological status of Husserl's reflections on analysis – the way *Die Philosophie der Arithmetik* points back at itself and forward towards "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" when it identifies "irgendetwas und irgendetwas" as the language of multiplicity.

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Fort. The Germangled Words of Edmund Husserl and Walter Benjamin

Abstract: Against the backdrop of the works of Jacques Derrida, the paper puts into dialogue Husserl's late writings, particularly *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie* and its "Beilage III" ("Der Ursprung der Geometrie"), with Walter Benjamin's 1923 text "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers." The (twofold) goal of this comparative reading is to (a) suggest that Benjamin's essay, far from merely "using" or "appropriating" phenomenological vocabulary (such as "Intention" or "Meinen"), anticipates a series of key developments within Husserl's late oeuvre; and (b), vice versa, to formulate and defend the claim that Husserlian phenomenology, despite what might be the first impression, is deeply invested in the question of (literary) translation. Read side by side, the paper argues, Husserl's interest in the (trans-historic) "Stiftung" of sense and Benjamin's (messianic) reconceptualization of the relationship between an original and its translation(s) emerge as two sides of the same coin (if not two pieces of the same vessel); (non-)coincidence that, taking their respective "Wort-Leib" and the specific translational impossibilities inherent to it seriously, the "Beilage III" and "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" are, *in retrospect from the very beginning*, well aware of.

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1 Foreword

> Mais la traduction poétique n'*applique* pas, ne *vérifie* pas, ne suit pas, elle appartient au déchiffrement analytique dans sa phase la plus active et la plus inaugurale.
>
> (Derrida, *Fors. Les mots anglés de Nicolas Abraham et Maria Torok*)

In the introduction to his monumental 1967 study, *La voix et le phénomène: Introduction au problème du signe dans la phénoménologie de Husserl*, Jacques Derrida – setting the stage for the chapters to come and, in many ways, already foreshadowing their very conclusion – provides his readers with a preliminary yet crucial distinction as to what *kind* of "voice" is (going to be) at stake in his book:

> [C]e n'est pas à la substance sonore ou à la voix physique, au corps de la voix dans le monde qu'il [Husserl, PPH] reconnaîtra une affinité d'origine avec le logos en général, mais à la voix phénoménologique, à la voix dans sa chair transcendantale, au souffle, à

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> l'animation intentionnelle qui transforme le corps du mot en chair, qui fait du *Körper* un *Leib*, une *geistige Leiblichkeit*.
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> (Derrida 2003, p. 15)

There is a lot to unpack in this remark, and we shall return to its manifold and far-reaching philosophical implications several times during the course of the paper. However, for the time being – and at least for this once – let us content ourselves with what Derrida is *not* saying here. In his German translation of Derrida's book, *Die Stimme und das Phänomen: Ein Essay über das Problem des Zeichens in der Philosophie Husserls*, published in 1979, Jochen Hörisch renders the passage cited above as follows:

> Denn nicht der sonoren Substanz oder der physischen Stimme, dem Körper der innerwelt-lichen Stimme, mißt er eine ursprüngliche Affinität mit dem Logos überhaupt bei, son-dern der phänomenologischen Stimme, der Stimme auf ihrer transzendentalen Kanzel, dem Atem, der intentionalen Beseelung, die den Leichnam des Wortes Fleisch werden lässt, die aus dem "Körper" einen "Leib," eine "geistige" "Leiblichkeit" macht.
>
> (Derrida 1979, p. 66)

By the turn of the new millennium, Hörisch's translation had come under con-siderable – and prominent – scrutiny: Bernhard Waldenfels, in his *Deutsch-französische Gedankengänge*, is very clear as to what one ought to make of the "revisionsbedürftige" translation's quality (Waldenfels 1995, p. 90), and Hans-Dieter Gondek goes as far as to call it not only the "mit Abstand unsolideste Derrida-Übersetzung im Deutschen" (Gondek 1996, p. 269), but also says, in an essay published three years later, that it is "von vorn bis hinten verderbt" (Gondek 1999, p. 105). Yet it is one expression in particular that sparked the commentators' critical interest and which guides my choice of quotation above: namely, the "voix dans sa chair transcendantale" that, in Hörisch's version, turns into the "Stimme auf ihrer transzendentalen Kanzel." What is problematic about Hörisch's translation here is not a possible lack of (philosophical) preci-sion that might be traced, say, to the accentuation of an aspect of the original's lexical material that does not fit the rhetorical or argumentative architecture. In all likelihood – and it is, very hard to disagree with Waldenfels and Gondek on this point (see Gondek 1999, p. 105; Waldenfels 1995, p. 92) – Hörisch's use of the German word "Kanzel" is, rather, simply the consequence of a linguistic blunder: mistaking the French "chair" for "chaire."

Gondek will, in fact, put his critical words into concrete action and retrans-late *La voix et le phénomène* in its entirety in 2003; thus, the insufficiencies of Hörisch's translation have not only been pointed out and denounced, but also adequately corrected in published form. That said, we must not let the dead rest just quite yet – or, rather, we must wake them up after forty-odd years at least once more. For, while Hörisch's translation of "chair" as "Kanzel" is, by

most translational parameters, erroneous, it is, one could argue, not without certain *merits*. In fact, looking back, it draws attention to an amalgam of crucial nuances in Derrida's book that no "good" or "correct" translation would have been able to bring to light; there is, as one might say in the words of Paul de Man, immense "insight" in (translational) "blindness" here (see de Man 1983).

First and foremost, "Kanzel," precisely *because* it is anything but precise, forces us to go back to the original – and to take notice of the fact that Derrida's choice of vocabulary, while clear-cut to the reading eye, is irreducibly ambiguous to the ear (see Gondek 1999, p. 105). This, in the context of a passage dealing with the philosophical implications of the vocal, is anything but trivial, for it underlines, albeit by accident, the important stratum of (intermedial) self-referentiality that accompanies Derrida's study from start to finish. The expression "start to finish," moreover, is no exaggeration by any means; take the eponymous "voix" itself, whose phonetic ambiguity (i.e., it sounds the same as the etymologically unrelated French word "voie") turns, on the very last page of the book, into a striking allegory for the supposed momentous "fall" of Husserlean phenomenology as a whole: "Tel est le *cas* de la *phonè*. S'élevant vers le soleil de la présence, elle est la voie d'Icare" (Derrida 2003, p. 117). A similar play on and of words, one could argue, is at work with regard to the "chair"/"chaire." The word that is absent in *La voix et le phénomène* – more precisely, the very *fact* that the word, on the level of the written text, is absent – (performatively) underscores Derrida's claim that phenomenology allows the (phenomenological) voice to take over the philosophical "podium," i.e., to set the tone and oversee the whole of Husserl's philosophical enterprise. And, as in the "cas(e)" of Icarus, the very conditions of the (acoustic) semblance of philosophical primacy in (written) reality ultimately spells its demise: what presents itself as "voice" turns out to be a "downward path"; and what sounds like the "pulpit" of the preacher for those who attend, as Hörisch does, to the religious undertones of the passages, is made but of bones and "flesh." "Kanzel" does not actually *capture* this intricate double entendre – however, this is, in many ways, the crucial point: it exposes an intricate ruse inherent to Derrida's text precisely by falling victim to it. In a twist on Walter Benjamin's famous distinction, it problematizes the specific (cross-medial) "Art des Meinens" of Derrida's text by outright missing its "Gemeintes" (see Benjamin 1972a, p. 14; de Man 2000, p. 28). Thus, while Hörisch's version in this instance may not fulfill the criteria of a "good" translation, it is, if nothing else, *relevant*.

Let me use the occasion offered by this word, "relevant," to pause the discussion of Hörisch's translation and, for just a moment – "[w]ie die Tangente den Kreis flüchtig [. . .] berührt" (Benjamin 1972a, pp. 19–20) –, go off on a tangent. First presented as a translation (yet to come) of the verb "to season" in

William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* ("'*When mercy seasons justice . . .*'
que je proposerai plus tard de traduire par '*Quand le pardon relève la justice . . .* "
[Derrida 2005, p. 7]), the word "relever," over the course of Derrida's influential
1998 lecture, *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?*, turns into the center piece of
large-scale reconceptualization of translation as such. I will quote three stations of
this process:

(a) Going so far as to insinuate – albeit in the mode of a "[c]omme si" – that
     the real "sujet" of *The Merchant of Venice* is "en somme la tâche du tra-
     ducteur" (Derrida 2005, p. 32), Derrida confronts his readers with a dense
     account of the various "translational" aspects of Shakespeare's play.
     Among them is Shylock's involuntary conversion from Judaism ("souvent
     et conventionnellement [. . .] située du côté du corps et de la lettre"
     [Derrida 2005, p. 34]) to Christianity (situated on the "côté de l'esprit ou
     du sens" [Derrida 2005, p. 34]) – which Derrida links to translation in gen-
     eral in the following way:

> Ce rapport de la lettre à l'esprit, du corps de la littéralité à l'intériorité idéale du sens est
> aussi le lieu du passage de la traduction, de cette conversion qu'on appelle traduction.
> Comme si l'affaire de la traduction était d'abord une affaire abrahamique, entre le Juif, le
> Chrétien et le Musulman. Et la relève, comme la relevance dont je m'apprête à vous par-
> ler, ce sera ce qui justement arrive à la chair du texte, au corps, au corps parlé et au corps
> traduit – quand on s'endeuille de la lettre pour sauver le sens.   (Derrida 2005, p. 34)

(b) In the second part, Derrida's text turns to "relever" as *a* translation (i.e., as
     the French substitute for a specific English word), providing us with a
     threefold "justification" (Derrida 2005, p. 62) for its use. Over the course of
     the third of said arguments, Derrida – appealing to himself as translational
     auctoritas, as it were – looks back to his essay "Le puits et la pyramide:
     Introduction à la sémiologie de Hegel," first presented in a seminar con-
     ducted by Jean Hyppolite in 1968 (see Derrida 2005, pp. 76–77):

> En 1967,[1] pour traduire de l'allemand un mot capital et à double sens de Hegel [*Aufheben*,
> *Aufhebung*], qui signifie à la fois supprimer et élever, un mot dont Hegel dit qu'il
> représente une chance spéculative de la langue allemande, un mot que tout le monde
> s'accordait jusque-là pour trouver intraduisible – ou, si vous préférez, un mot que per-
> sonne au monde s'accordait avec personne pour traduire de façon stable et satisfaisante
> dans aucune langue, j'avais proposé le nom "relève" ou le verbe "relever." Cela perme-
> ttrait de garder, les conjoignant en un seul mot, le double motif de l'élévation et du re-
> mplacement qui conserve ce qu'il nie ou détruit, gardant ce qu'il fait disparaître [. . .].

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1 As far as I can tell, "1967" is either a (recurring) typographical error or – which is far more
likely – Derrida is referring to some specific point in the time period leading up to the 1968
presentation mentioned above.

> Sans nous engager dans les profondeurs des enjeux, je dois au moins rappeler que ce mouvement d'*Aufhebung*, ce processus relevant est toujours chez Hegel un mouvement dialectique d'intériorisation, de mémoire intériorisante [*Erinnerung*] et de spiritualisation sublimante. C'est aussi une traduction. (Derrida 2005, pp. 64–66)

(c) After having hinted at Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" several times already during the course of the text, Derrida, in the third to last page of *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?* finally puts his notion of "relevance" – now supercharged with Hegelian significance – in direct dialogue with Benjamin's seminal essay:

> [T]oute traduction devrait être par vocation relevante. Elle assurerait ainsi la *survie* du corps de l'original. Entendons ici la survivance de cette *survie* au double sens que lui donne Benjamin dans *La Tâche du traducteur*: *fortleben* et *überleben*: vie prolongée, vie continuée, *living on*, mais aussi vie par-delà la mort. / N'est-ce pas ce que fait une traduction? Est-ce qu'elle n'assure pas ces *deux* survies en perdant la chair au cours d'une opération de change? En élevant le signifiant vers son sens ou sa valeur, mais tout en gardant la mémoire endeuillée et endettée du corps singulier, du corps premier, du corps unique qu'elle élève et sauve et relève ainsi? (Derrida 2005, pp. 71–72)

Reading these three passages from *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?* side by side with the one from *La voix et le phénomène* cited at the beginning, one cannot help but notice that Hörisch's translation of the latter almost reads like a playful allegory of the former. The "relève" that targets the "chair du texte" (and that, consequently, leads to a point "quand on s'endeuille de la lettre") consists in a threefold motion of, on the one hand, "nie[r]," "détrui[re]," "fai[re] disparaître," or "perd[re] la chair" (the Hegelian "Aufhebung" in the sense of "annulling") and, on the other hand, "élev[er] le signifiant" ("Aufhebung" in the sense of "lifting up") – in an attempt to "sauv[er]" or "gard[er]" the meaning of the original (the Hegelian "Aufhebung" in the sense of "saving"). Is this not what the specific translation "Kanzel" does – *literally*, negating the "chair" of the original, i.e., "chair," and lifting it up, i.e., to a "podium" or a "pulpit"? Granted, with regards to the "meaning," Hörisch's translation in this case fails completely – but this "completely" is, one might argue, simply the most radical form of the "failure" inherent to translation as such. For, as readers of Derrida, we know all too well that translation "est à chaque instant aussi nécessaire qu'impossible" (Derrida 2005, p. 32) – the "bad" translation, *falsely righteous*, is simply the one that is being honest about its status.

What I am calling "honesty" here – admittedly, by a considerable stretch of the uses of the expression – can, in principle, be attributed to every kind of translational mistake. To put it in phenomenological terminology: what the error, in outright ignoring the original, is "open about" is the fact that every process of translating, by definition, leaves behind the "Wort-Leib" of the original

(*Hua* XX/2, p. 113). This goes without saying and, taken in isolation, is nothing to write home about (or write about in a scholarly essay for that matter). That said, what distinguishes the particular case of the passage(s) in *La voix et le phénomène*/*Die Stimme und das Phänomen* from its (erroneous) peers – and what leads me to put this kind of weight on the issue in the first place – is the fact that the "chair(e)," once again, serves as both an example as well as the concept in question. For, let us not forget what the passage pertains to: "à la voix dans sa chair transcendantale, au souffle, à l'animation intentionnelle qui transforme le corps du mot en chair, qui fait du *Körper* un *Leib*, une *geistige Leiblichkeit*." This reminder brings me to a third and final kind of "relevance" of *Die Stimme und das Phänomen*. Not unlike the "wundervolle Wesen" in the last lines of Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Der Tor und der Tod*, the translation, here, reads "[w]as nie geschrieben wurde" (Hofmannsthal 1982, p. 80)[2] – and, as a consequence, it commits the translational "sin" par excellence: *creating meaning out of thin air*. However, in a quasi-dialectical movement, this also makes it the perfect fit, considering that the "transformation" – of "corps" into "chair"/"Körper" into "Leib" – described in the passage is, of course, (also) a "creation" (if not exactly "out of air," then by the "souffle"), namely, of "Sinn." In other words, borrowing the theological rhetoric of Derrida's (and, even more so, Hörisch's) passage one last time: the *peccatum*, in this particular case, is *originale*. Let us keep this "sinful"/"sinnvolle" coincidence in mind (for it will become relevant again).

2 The "Gegenständlichkeit" That Is a "Gefäß"

The goal of the following reading is to put into dialogue three texts that, to my knowledge, have never been read side-by-side in a detailed manner: on the one hand, Benjamin's 1923 essay "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" and on the other hand, Husserl's 1936 treatise *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, along with its "Beilage III," better known as "Der Ursprung der Geometrie" (which – albeit in a decisively different version – was first published under the guidance of Husserl's last assistant Eugen Fink as "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem" in the 1939 issue of the *Revue internationale de philosophie* to then be "republished" in the sixth volume of the *Husserliana* in 1954).

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2 Coincidentally, this phrase will be of great importance in Hörisch's own oeuvre, most notably in the influential study from 1998, *Die Wut des Verstehens*: *Zur Kritik der Hermeneutik* (see Hörisch 2008, pp. 78–88; Hiebler 2003,105 p. 61).

With regard to Benjamin, I will build upon the important work of scholars such as Peter Fenves on the relationship between the two thinkers (see Fenves 2001, pp. 174–226; 2011) and try to show that the (messianic) reconceptualization of the relationship between an original and its translation(s) developed in the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," far from merely "using" or "appropriating" phenomenological vocabulary (such as "Intention" or "Meinen" [see Derrida 1985, p. 244]), anticipates a series of key developments within the Husserl's late oeuvre; with regards to Husserl, I will, following the works of Derrida, (re-)formulate and defend the claim that the "genetische" turn of Husserlean phenomenology, more specifically, Husserl's concept of the (trans-historic) "Stiftung" of sense, despite what might be the first impression, is deeply invested in the question of literary translation.

The first two (introductory) subsections, (2.1) and (2.2), provide concise overviews over Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" and Husserl's notion of "Stiftung" as sketched out in the *Cartesianische Meditationen* und the *Krisis*. The third (comparative) subsection, (2.3), will start by highlighting the immense *structural* affinities between Benjamin's use of the word "Übersetzung" and the Husserlian term "Nachstiftung"; in a second step – or, rather, by way of a kind of Hegelian detour – I will then focus on a specific kind of "Nachstiftung," that of those (ideal) objects which Husserl calls "geistige Erzeugnisse der Kulturwelt."

2.1 Benjamin's "Aufgabe"

Originally, Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" served as the introduction to his own translation of the "Tableaux Parisiens" (i.e., the second part of the Charles Baudelaire's volume of poetry, *Les fleurs du mal*), first published in 1923. Benjamin began translating Baudelaire as early as 1914; the plan to supplement his translational work with theoretical reflections can be traced back to 1920 (see Hirsch 2011, p. 609). Of course, Benjamin's theoretical engagement with the problem of translation is far from limited to his introduction to Baudelaire; in fact, one would be hard pressed to find a text written by Benjamin during that timeframe that does *not* feature various affinities, reciprocities, and, in many a case, (implicit) references to the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers." I will not attempt so much as to scratch the surface of this dense intertextual network here and will, instead, content myself with a single reference. Already in 1916, in his essay "Über Sprache überhaupt und über die Sprache des Menschen," Benjamin writes: "Es ist notwendig, den Begriff der Übersetzung in der tiefsten Schicht der Sprachtheorie zu begründen, denn er ist viel zu weittragend und gewaltig, um in irgendeiner

Hinsicht nachträglich [. . .] abgehandelt werden zu können" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 151). Against this backdrop, the title of "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" takes on a far-reaching, self-referential significance: it, itself, *responds to a task*, which is not the task of translation, but of "Sprachtheorie" as such.

Considering the limited scope and specific (comparative) focus of this paper, we have no choice but to hope that the famous sentence near the end of Benjamin's *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, "aus den Trümmern großer Bauten [spricht] die Idee von ihrem Bauplan eindrucksvoller [. . .] als aus geringen noch so wohl erhaltenen" (Benjamin 1974, p. 409), also holds true with regard to the following reading of the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," which will proceed by breaking down the delicate architecture of the text and exclusively focusing on three of its building blocks.

(a) Benjamin develops a distinctly non-anthropological notion of art ("kein Gedicht gilt dem Leser, kein Bild dem Beschauer, keine Symphonie der Hörerschaft" [Benjamin 1972a, p. 9]), which leads him to situate translation on the formal axis of those vectors that determine the status of a text: "Übersetzung ist eine Form. Sie als solche zu erfassen, gilt es zurückzugehen auf das Original. Denn in ihm liegt deren Gesetz als in dessen Übersetzbarkeit beschlossen" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 9). Far from being a kind of "secondary" mode of literary production, the translation of a given original – even the mere *possibility* that a given text be (at some point in the future) translated – is an inherent part of the original itself.

(b) Benjamin (re-)conceptualizes the relation between original and translation as analogues to "life" and its concrete "manifestations" ("[s]o wie die Äusserungen des Lebens innigst mit dem Lebendigen zusammenhängen, ohne ihm etwas zu bedeuten, geht die Übersetzung aus dem Original hervor" [Benjamin 1972a, p. 10]). In the case of the translation, however, this peculiar (non-)connection has a very specific modality: the translation stems from the original, yet it does not do so "aus seinem Leben so sehr denn aus seinem 'Überleben.' Ist doch die Übersetzung später als das Original und bezeichnet sie doch bei den bedeutenden Werken, die da ihre erwählten Übersetzer niemals im Zeitalter ihrer Entstehung finden, das Stadium ihres Fortlebens" (Benjamin 1972a, pp. 10–11). Furthermore, Benjamin insists that the we must not take these sentences figuratively ("[i]n völlig unmetaphorischer Sachlichkeit ist der Gedanke vom Leben und Fortleben der Kunstwerke zu erfassen" [Benjamin 1972a, p. 11]), and this – at first glance very perplexing – claim is supported by a concise, yet extremely far-reaching sketch of a theory non-organic life: "Nur wenn allem demjenigen, wovon es Geschichte gibt und was nicht allein ihr

Schauplatz ist, Leben zuerkannt wird, kommt dessen Begriff zu seinem Recht" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 11).

(c) According to the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," all languages are *related* to each other – by virtue of *meaning*, on some level, *the same thing* ("die Sprachen [sind] einander nicht fremd, sondern a priori und von allen historischen Beziehungen abgesehen einander in dem verwandt [. . .], was sie sagen wollen" [Benjamin 1972a, p. 12). It is in this context that we encounter Benjamin's most famous and, in many respects, most difficult conceptual coinage, i.e., the claim that in every single language "als ganzer jeweils eines und zwar dasselbe gemeint ist, das dennoch keiner einzelnen von ihnen, sondern nur der Allheit ihrer einander ergänzenden Intentionen erreichbar ist: die reine Sprache" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 13). The expression "Allheit" is used here in a very strict – i.e., *infinitely open* – sense: the moment of the "reine Sprache" that emerges from the "Harmonie all jener Arten des Meinens" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 14) is – and, by its very definition, *has to be* – the "messianische Ende ihrer Geschichte" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 14). That is to say, not only has its time not come yet, but, as Derrida would put it, it is *inherently* "à venir": *it is what it is* in the mode of the "not yet" (see Benjamin 1972a, p. 14; Derrida 1985, pp. 190–205). Against this (theo-teleological) backdrop, the illustrative function of Benjamin's often quoted vessel-analogy, which he draws near the end of the essay, is at least twofold. With regard to the original, the translation "muss [. . .] dessen Art des Meinens in der eigenen Sprache sich anbilden, um so beide wie Scherben als Bruchstück eines Gefäßes, als Bruchstück einer größeren Sprache erkennbar zu machen" (Benjamin 1972a, p. 18). On the one hand, this comparison allows us to (better) understand the relationship between original and translation as one that is *not* regulated by some idea of similarity (but rather one of complementarity: being "alike" clearly is not a necessary condition for two pieces of a broken vessel to "fit together"). On the other hand, and upon closer examination, it also serves as an important pointer to the peculiar nature of the teleology laid out in the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers": the original *is* part of vessel only *after* it is met by another part (in this regard, Benjamin's "Ergänzung" is structurally very similar to Derrida's notion of the "supplément d'origine," where the supposedly primary entity is "primary" only by virtue of its "secondary" supplementation [see Derrida 1985, p. 232; 246; Haensler 2019a, pp. 203–208]). Thus, the teleological movement that is at stake in the essay has, if such a turn of phrase be permitted, not always been itself: rather, it *becomes* teleological only once it has *started* (or ended, really: the form of the vessel only reveals itself, as does the "reine Sprache," after *all* the pieces are assembled). And as we have already foreshadowed, Benjamin's image of

the vessel goes even one step further: what prohibits said movement from actually reaching its telos is, in an intriguing twist, *the movement itself*. Every translation brings us closer to said "Harmonie" – and this is precisely the problem, insofar as *every* translation would have to include the infinite number yet to come. (There is, one might be tempted to argue, a certain twofold debt to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in Benjamin's use of the word "Harmonie": on the one hand, it marks a kind of "retro-pre-established harmony" that, on the other hand, keeps its achievement at bay through infinitesimal approximation). Rephrasing this complex dynamic in Benjamin's own tropology: the more pieces of the broken vessel we "retrieve," the more complex the "initial" fracture becomes.

2.2 Husserl's "Stiftung"

"Mit gutem Grunde," Husserl writes in the §38 of the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, "heißt es, daß wir in früher Kinderzeit das Sehen von Dingen überhaupt erst lernen mußten, wie auch, daß dergleichen allen anderen Bewußtseinsweisen von Dingen genetisch vorangehen mußte" (*Hua* I, p. 112), going on to explain how every single one of the (classes of) entities composing our lifewordly "Umgebung von *Gegenständen*" (implicitly) refers back to the first time that it in consciousness was given *as* that entitiy; in one word – one of the most famous words in the (late) oeuvre of Husserl – : every object implies "eine *Urstiftung* dieser Form" (*Hua* I, p. 113; see Cioflec 2010, p. 269). In §50, Husserl will pick up this important ("genetische") thread of his *Meditationen* again, this time around supplementing it with a concrete example:

> Auch die uns unbekannten Dinge dieser Welt sind, allgemein zu reden, ihrem Typus nach bekannte. Wir haben dergleichen, obschon gerade nicht dieses Ding hier, früher schon gesehen. So birgt jede Alltagserfahrung eine analogisierende Übertragung eines ursprünglich gestifteten gegenständlichen Sinnes auf den neuen Fall, in seiner antizipierenden Auffassung des Gegenstandes als den ähnlichen Sinnes. Soweit Vorgegebenheit, soweit solche Übertragung, wobei dann wieder das sich in weiterer Erfahrung als wirklich neu Herausstellende des Sinnes wieder stiftend fungieren und eine Vorgegebenheit reicheren Sinnes fundieren mag. Das Kind, das schon Dinge sieht, versteht etwa erstmalig den Zwecksinn einer Schere und von nun ab sieht es ohne weiteres im ersten Blick Scheren als solche aber natürlich nicht in expliziter Reproduktion, Vergleichung und im Vollziehen eines Schlusses. (*Hua* I, p. 141)

The life-worldly *Sinn* of scissors is given to us not by virtue of some *idea innata*, but because, presumably as a "Kind," we learned it at some point – to then, "nicht in expliziter Reproduktion," but, rather, in acts of *passive* synthesis, be

actualized in all following instances of perceiving-using it (see Meacham 2013, p. 8). As the passage indicates ("*wieder* stiftend," "*reicheren* Sinnes"), this actualization is not necessarily a process of *identical repetition*; in fact – Husserl's rhetoric is somewhat misleading –, it *necessarily is not* for the term "analogische Übertragung" to have any explanatory function at all with regard to the objects surrounding us and our ways of interacting with them (the knowledge acquired as a child using, say, red scissors, also applies the blue ones on my desk today). In other words: what the "erstmalige" constitution of "Sinn" brings into existence is by no means something "Einmaliges," but, rather, a kind of *trans-historic area* perpetually changing and adjusting itself.

On the level of "Zwecksinn" – Husserl's "pragmatist" version of his "Eidos," if you will – this all makes perfect sense; as with "Scheren" we have no problem understanding the term "Urstiftung" and the necessity of its introduction. However, let us, in the vein of Derrida, not forget to acknowledge the *other side*, the *price* of such "sense," "understanding," and "necessity": *the "Urstiftung," by its very definition, never "actually" takes place*. For, what is to "appear" in the original constitution of a "Sinn" when "having a sense" is intrinsically interwoven with or, to put it more bluntly, is the very condition of appearance as such? (After all, the "Beziehung des Bewusstseins auf eine Gegenständlichkeit hat vor allem seine noematische Seite. Das Noema *in sich selbst* hat gegenständliche Beziehung, und zwar durch den ihm eigenen 'Sinn'" [Hua III, p. 296].) If perception by virtue of its (intentional) structure always means "perception of and as," its occurrence "for the first time" necessarily lies beyond the frame (see Derrida 2003, pp. 67–77; against this backdrop, the tripartite expression "von nun ab" in the passage cited above is surprisingly accurate: when it comes to the birth of sense, there is no "now" – unless it is *framed* [by its future and / or past].) With regard to "Urstiftung," perception is thus always either too early (as in the case of experiencing something "new" or "extraordinary" [see Waldenfels 1987], i.e., situations where "something does not quite make sense"), or it is too late (as is the case with the example given in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*). These difficulties in Husserl's late writings, here we have to be very clear, are not the consequence of a sacrifice of phenomenological rigor in favor of a speculative philosophy of history – in fact, what leads to certain paradoxa is, rather, precisely the attempt to approach the problem of genesis by phenomenological means *exclusively*. For Husserl, the birth of "Sinn" and is relevant only insofar as it is implied in *present* synthetic acts (in this regard, to put it somewhat cheekily, the "Urstiftung" is an ingenious textual ruse deployed by Husserl to allow phenomenology to tackle problems that, under its self-given rules, it otherwise would not be permitted to talk about, i.e., to tackle what *stricto sensu* – or, rather, *phenomenologico sensu*: "in anschaulicher Weise" – is not "given"). As Rudolf Bernet in his lucid introduction to (the German

translation of) Derrida's translation of the "Beilage III" to the *Krisis* has convincingly suggested, phenomenology exhibits a surprising and surprisingly deep affinity to psychoanalysis in this regard; namely: Husserl's "Urstiftung" is very much akin to a Freudian "Urszene" (see Bernet 1987, p. 15; Haensler 2017, p. 275/2019b, p. 153). Both terms refer to incidents that, rather than simply *having* passed, in a very precise sense *are* in the past: they are, in phenomenological terms, "given" to consciousness solely in the strange mode of the "already gone" or, in psychoanalytical terms, are established *nachträglich*. For the "Kind, das schon Dinge sieht," what is perceived (or, rather, ~~perceived~~) in the "Urstiftung"/ "Urszene" simply *is not* (yet) *a thing* – which is to say, paying tribute to the specific rhetoric of the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, that the "ursprünglich gestiftete gegenständliche Sinn" is, in a difficult (Derridean) inflection, *younger than* or a *consequence of* its actualizations: the only thing truly "ursprünglich" (i.e., the one thing "ursprünglicher" than what is "ursprünglich," the one "thing" prior to any kind of "Ding") is the "analogische Übertragung." When describing the method corresponding to this strange fact, Husserl and Freud use the exact same phrase [see Gasché 2000, pp. 85–101; Günzel 2004, pp. 98–117]: performing the Husserlian "Rückfrage" we must "im 'Zickzack' vor- und zurückgehen" [*Hua* VI, p. 59] while the Freudian "Analyse" proceeds "wie das Zickzack der Lösung einer Rösselsprungaufgabe über die Felderzeichnung hinweggeht" [Breuer and Freud 1991, p. 84]. In both cases the direct link is cut – as if by a "Schere."

The (necessary) "übertragende" actualization of "Urstiftungen" described in the *Cartesianische Meditationen* through the example of the child and its (repeated) use of scissors will, in the 1936 work *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, be given its own name, "Nachstiftung" (Hua VI, p. 72) – and it will be complemented by a third and final kind of "Stiftung": the "Endstiftung" (Hua VI, p. 74). Husserl introduces this (latter) term as follows – while reminding us that the "Gegenständlichkeit" that interests him in the *Krisis* and the accompanying materials is not, as in the example of the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, an object in the narrow, "thingly" sense, but rather the "Gegenständlichkeit" that is *philosophy itself*:

> Wesensmäßig aber gehört zu jeder Urstiftung eine dem historischen Prozeß aufgegebene Endstiftung. Sie ist vollzogen, wenn die Aufgabe zur vollendeten Klarheit gekommen ist [. . .]. Die Philosophie als unendliche Aufgabe wäre damit zu ihrem apodiktischen Anfang gekommen, zu ihrem Horizont apodiktischer Fortführung. (*Hua* VI, p. 74)

The momentous implications of these sentences can hardly be overestimated. Husserl is well aware of their novelty and philosophical radicality – he is even anxious that, despite his strong rhetoric, his readers may not fully grasp his

remarks. In fact, this anxiety is so great, that, already in the very next paragraph, he sees the need to add further clarifications:

> Vor einem Mißverständnis aber ist zu warnen. Jeder historische Philosoph vollzieht seine Selbstbesinnungen, führt seine Verhandlungen mit den Philosophen seiner Gegenwart und Vergangenheit. [. . .] Aber wenn wir durch historische Forschung noch so genau über solche "Selbstinterpretationen" [. . .] unterrichtet werden, so erfahren wir daraus noch nichts über das, worauf "es" letzlich in der verborgenen Einheit intentionaler Innerlichkeit, welche allein Einheit der Geschichte ausmacht, in all diesen Philosophen "hinauswollte." Nur in der Endstiftung offenbart sich das [. . .].   (*Hua* VI, p. 74)

When it comes to the history of philosophy, the "griechische Urstiftung" acts as a "t e l e o l o g i s c h e [r]   A n f a n g" (*Hua* VI, p. 72) that gives rise to a series of "Nachstiftungen." The vanishing point of this chain is the very last actualization of the – time and time again adjusted and supplemented – original "Sinn." Where exactly is this line of tradition going then? "Worauf will sie hinaus" (the philosophers among us surely would not mind knowing)? On this point, Husserl is brutally clear: "Nur in der Endstiftung offenbart sich das." There is, of course, a very "prosaic" reading of these passages, according to which one might interpret the "Endstiftung" of philosophy as merely a fancy word for the *actual end* of philosophy. In this case, the last actualization of the philosophical tradition, the last philosophical work written is, simply, the last philosophical work written – so, we will just have to wait and see. However, the philological price for this kind of translation of Husserl (into pseudo-tautologies) is simply too high – for it misses what may very well be the actual purpose of the introduction of the term. Upon a closer look, the passage is perhaps not so much about the *content* of the "Endstiftung" of philosophy as it is about strategic *function* of the term with regard to the modes of the "Stiftungen" that precede it. In this respect, "Endstiftung" provides the last building block to a grand philosophical architecture encompassing the whole of synthetics acts and linking every single one of them to both its birth as well as to its very last occurrence. The specific inner structure of this "linkage" deserves our fullest attention: the "Endstiftung" reveals "das, worauf es [. . .] hinauswollte" in a chain instituted by a "t e l e o l o g i s c h e [n]   A n f a n g." One could be tempted to describe what Husserl is proposing as a kind of "blind teleology": from the very debut there *is a direction*, but one that is simply *unknown* to human agents (whereas, at least in principle, a kind of Leibnizean deity, an "alpha monade," if you will, would know). However, this is not quite what Husserl's text is unfolding here. Considering how semantically close the expressions "telos" and "das, worauf es hinauswollte" actually are (in fact, the latter would serve as a fine – albeit somewhat crude – translation of the former), one could argue that the "teleologische Anfang" is, taken in isolation, anything but teleological (for there is not yet a

telos). Or, following Husserl more closely, it would appear that we are presented with a movement that *turns* teleological precisely the moment it is finished.

2.3 Translating Things

Reading Husserl's theory of "Stiftung" in the *Krisis* – coincidentally exemplified by philosophy's "unendliche Aufgabe" and the "Offenbarung" of its completion – and Benjamin's translational messianism developed in "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" side by side, the (structural) similarities are nothing less than striking; especially when we consider "when" or "at what point" the "Endstiftung" is to take place – which can be (and, in fact, from the phenomenologist's point of view, can only be) characterized as: *always never.* For, let us not overlook what (for Husserl) goes without saying (but is a necessary implication of his method): the "Endstiftung" "wesensmäßig" implied in every kind of actualization of "Sinn" is, in fact, not *elsewhere*, i.e., it is what is *as* implied. Analogously to the "Urstiftung" (which, as we have seen, comparing Husserl's "Rückfrage" to the "Analyse" of Freud, is by its very definition a kind of *Unding*: a thing never actually present, i.e., present exclusively *ex post* or *nachträglich*), the "Endstiftung" (which is the final "Nachstiftung" of a given "Sinn" – and thus, as "Nachstiftung," by its very definition cannot be *final*) is "given" to us exclusively in the mode of the "not yet": its impossible presence – just as the "Einheit" of history the *Krisis* speaks of is beyond all things historical, is but another name of history's "Ende" – coincides with the very ruin of "giveness" as such. In other words, speaking strictly with regards to "was sich uns in der 'Intuition' originär [. . .] darbietet" (*Hua* III, p. 51), every actualization of "Sinn" acts as a kind of – unfulfillable, if not to say: *messianic* – promise that there *is* a last one of its kind *and* that this last one will never take place: just as, in our reading of Benjamin, every "Übersetzung" brings us closer to the "Harmonie" while at the same time postponing it, the "Nachstiftung" reduces a distance that grows in the very moment of its decrease.

 "Knüpfen wir" – following in the footsteps of the *Cartesianische Meditationen* and playing our own devil's advocate – "unsere neuen [or, rather, comparative] Meditationen an einen, wie es scheinen möchte, schwerwiegenden Einwand" (*Hua* I, p. 121): up until this point, the affinities between Husserl's "Stiftung" and Benjamin's "Aufgabe," as remarkable as they may be, are of purely *structural* nature. In other words, recalling the specific vocabulary of the passage we started with: Husserl's "analogische Übertragung" is nothing more than an "Analogie" so far, i.e., it is an "Übertragung" "im übertragenen Sinne" at best – whereas Benjamin's use of the term "Übersetzung," whatever its ambitious philosophical

goal may be, pertains, of course, to a very concrete *linguistic* operation, an "operation de change" (Derrida) of *words*. Let us, against this backdrop, start from the top and "[ü]berlegen wir näher" (*Hua* I, p. 121).

In our discussion of the example of the scissors, we remarked that the actualization of "(Zweck-)Sinn" must not be understood as a mirror image of a particular (i.e., "original") perception. Rather, what is instituted by the "Urstiftung" is a kind of "field" that grows and adjusts itself over the course of infinite "Nachstiftungen" (and "growth" and "adjustment," as we have seen, strive towards a final "Nachstiftung," the "Endstiftung," but they do so, in a peculiar inflection, only *after* this last actualization of "Sinn" has taken place). Already in a manuscript dating from 1909 (and, thus, predating Husserl's first use of the term "Urstiftung" by more than ten years [see Springstübe 2013, p. 80]) and reworked in 1916, Husserl anticipates the far-reaching – and in this particular case, at least at first glance, nothing less than paradoxical – implications of such (intrinsic) "adaptability" of sense, writing, not about the "Schere," but about a very particular "Ding" nonetheless:

> Ich habe öfter den Federhalter mit Feder erfahren; sehe ich einen neuen Federhalter, so stelle ich eine Feder mit vor, und diese ist erfahrungsmässig als zugehörig gefordert. Aber diese Forderung ist unerfüllt und ist aufgehoben durch die neue Erfahrung: "es fehlt" die Feder, ein Federhalter kann also auch ohne Feder sein. (*Hua* XIII, p. 22)

Reading this early manuscript through the lens of the passage in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, the "Federhalter [. . .] ohne Feder" presents us with the corner case of a "Gegenständlichkeit" whose original "Zwecksinn" (Husserl's pragmatist revision of his "Eidos," if you will) is gone; a "Zeug," as Husserl's pupil, Martin Heidegger, will put it, whose "Um-zu" is "gestört" (Heidegger 1967, p. 74). Before we pursue this kind of (pragmatist) reading of Husserl any further, however, we must point out that it does come with a considerable price-tag. In a nutshell, (or, rather, tongue-in-cheek): it presupposes that the "Zweck" of Husserl's manuscript is to make "Sinn," is to *refer to something* (namely, things). "Natürlich," Husserl writes at some point in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, "kommt alles darauf an, die absolute Vorurteilslosigkeit [der] Deskription streng zu wahren" (*Hua* I, p. 74) – which credo must be taken seriously not only by the ones seeking their way into phenomenology as a way of philosophizing but, perhaps, also by those who concern themselves with phenomenology's specific literary concretization(s). Against this backdrop, practicing, a kind of *philological epoché*, if you will, one cannot but notice that the *prima vista* innocuous claim of the manuscript is, in fact, highly strange: for, how can a "Federhalter," taken at face value or, rather, linguistic value, possibly be "ohne Feder"? Following this thread, one might be tempted to argue that, in a figure that is closer to the

phenomenology of Hegel than his own, Husserl here presents us with a kind of "Gegenständlichkeit" whose true "Sinn" is that of an "Identität der Identität und der Nichtidentität" (Hegel 1986, p. 96) – and might be tempted even more when, once again, taking into account not only the "meaning" of the passage but also its particular "Wort-Leib," most notably, Husserl's use of the "mot capital et à double sens de Hegel" (Derrida 2005, pp. 64–66), "aufheben." "Doch genug der verkehrten Theorien," as Husserl would say (*Hua* III, p. 51) – at least *almost* "genug": for, if we are willing to go one (last) step deeper down the philologico-Hegelian rabbit hole, i.e., *synthezise*, as Derrida's reading of Benjamin's "Aufgabe des Übersetzers" does, the philological and the Hegelian, our "verkehrte" reading, in a peculiar or – or, dare we say it, "dialectical" – "Verkehrung" of itself, leads us to a point where Husserl's manuscript, once again – though completely differently – in line with the "Prinzip aller Prinzipien" of the *Ideen* I, emerges as purely *descriptive*, as an "Aussage, die nichts weiter tut, als [. . .] Gegebenheiten durch bloße Explikation und genau sich anmessende Bedeutungen Ausdruck zu verleihen" (*Hua* III, p. 51): "ein Federhalter kann [. . .] auch ohne Feder sein," observes the phenomenologist – and also observes the translator who compares the "Federhalter" to, say, the English "dip pen," taking notice of an "Übetragung" "élevant le signifiant ["Federhalter"] vers son sens ou sa valeur ["a thing to write with"]" while sacrificing the "corps singulier [which, in German, contains the word "Feder"]" of the original.

We started our discussion of the 1909/1916 manuscript by calling it a "corner case" of Husserl's (later) theory of "Stiftung." This characterization, however, while perfectly serviceable with regards to the kind of (lebensweltlich-pragmatic) actualization of "Sinn" exemplified by the "Schere(n)" of the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, is not entirely accurate when it comes to the *other* kind of "Gegenständlichkeit" the late stage of Husserlian phenomenology is interested in: the so called "ideal" objects (such as, to borrow an example given in Husserl's [posthumously published] treatise, *Erfahrung und Urteil*, "Goethes Faust" [Husserl 1939b, p. 319] or – we have already touched upon this kind of [non-]example when complementing the "Urstiftung" of the *Cartesianische Meditationen* with its other two parts, the "Nach-" und "Endstiftung" of the *Krisis* – the specific texts constituting *phenomenology itself*). This crucial difference becomes evident when we – as Husserl does in the aforementioned "Beilage III" to the *Krisis* by way of the example of the "Stiftung" of geometry – have a closer look at why we call certain objects "ideal" to begin with:

> [Die Geometrie] hat von ihrer Urstiftung her ein eigenartig überzeitliches, wie wir gewiß sind, für alle Menschen zunächst für wirkliche und mögliche Mathematiker aller Völker, aller Zeitalter zugängliches Dasein, und zwar in allen ihren Sondergestalten. Und alle von irgendjemand aufgrund der vorgegebenen Gestalten neu erzeugten Gestalten nehmen alsbald dieselbe Objektivität an. Es ist eine, wie wir bemerken "ideale" Objektivität. Sie

eignet einer ganzen Klasse von geistigen Erzeugnissen der Kulturwelt, zu welcher alle wissenschaftlichen Gebilde und die Wissenschaften selbst gehören, aber auch z. B. die Gebilde der schönen Literatur.

The last sentence of this passage is supplemented with the following footnote:

> Aber der weiteste Begriff der Literatur umfaßt sie alle, d.h. zu ihrem objektiven Sein gehört es, sprachlich ausgedrückt und immer wieder ausdrückbar zu sein, deutlicher, nur als Bedeutung, Sinn von Reden die Objektivität, das Für-jedermann-Dasein zu haben, hinsichtlich der objektiven Wissenschaften sogar in besonderer Weise, daß für sie der Unterschied zwischen der Originalsprache des Werkes und der Übersetzung in fremde Sprachen die identische Zugänglichkeit nicht aufhebt bzw. nur zu einer uneigentlichen, indirekten macht. (*Hua* VI, p. 368)

Let us, in the footsteps of Derrida's 1962 translation and analysis of the "Beilage III," take note of two crucial aspects of what Husserl is confronting us with here.

(a) The twofold, i.e., supra-temporal ("für alle Menschen [. . .] aller Zeiten") as well as supra-regional ("für alle Menschen [. . .] aller Völker"), accessibility of the ideal object leads Husserl to touch upon the question of translation/translatability – and does so via a kind of twofold *Umweg*: the term "Übersetzung" enters the scene as part of a footnote to the "main" text and, within this footnote, as part of the description of a special case (in perfect accordance with the latter fact, the first time the main text of the "Beilage III" turns to the subject of translation, it does so in the following way: "[d]er Pythagoräische Satz, die ganze Geometrie," Husserl writes shortly after the passage/footnote quoted above, "existiert nur einmal, wie oft sie *und sogar in welcher Sprache* immer sie ausgedrückt sein mögen [my emphasis, PPH]" [*Hua* VI, p. 368]). This choice of textual architecture may create the impression that the original constitution of ideal objects and the possibility of them being translated (without loss) "in fremde Sprachen" are, at least in principle, separable – when in reality, as Derrida in his "Introduction" has shown in meticulous detail, the latter is *implied in*, is one of the very *conditions of* the former: the relationship between the (timeless) ideal object and the (historical) events of its translation(s) is not one between, say, an eons-old diamond and the modern gemological test proving its authenticity. Or, rather, it is *exactly* like the diamond/test-relationship – if a "diamond," from the very moment of inorganic birth, by its very (logical) essence, is but the *promise to pass all future tests* (the actual occurrence/absence of the latter being completely irrelevant [the true meaning of Husserl's "Bedeutung" is, perhaps, precisely this: "insignificance"]: it is *possible* but not *necessary* to verify "Zugänglichkeit" – *the only thing necessary is the possibility itself* [see Derrida 1962, p. 57; Kohlross 2009, p. 106]). As for Benjamin (in his

"Über Sprache überhaupt und über die Sprache des Menschen"), the "Begriff der Übersetzung" in Husserlean phenomenology is located "in der tiefsten Schicht der Sprachtheorie" and as for Benjamin (in his "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers") "Übersetzung" for Husserl is "eine Form. Sie als solche zu erfassen, gilt es zurückzugehen auf das Original" – or, in Husserl's case, the original constitution of the ideal object – : "Denn in ihm liegt deren Gesetz als in dessen Übersetzbarkeit beschlossen." (Interested in the relationship between Husserl's theory of "Stiftung"/Benjamin's "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," this subsection of the paper focuses on the "translational" condition of the ideal object – while we are saving the discussion of its other [and, after Derrida's analysis, undoubtedly most famous] condition, the "schriftlich[e], de[r] dokumentierend[e] sprachlich[e] Ausdrucks" [*Hua* VI, p. 371], for the last part of the paper. Already at this point, however, we must underscore the latter's immense importance – especially considering that this other, "writerly" dimension of Husserl's term "Stiftung," in many regards, "liegt beschlossen" in the latter's "[Un-]Übersetzbarkeit": in a "Nachstiftung," not, in this case, of the "philosopher" Hegel [to whom we shall return momentarily], but of Hegel's "poetic" roommate in Tübingen, Friedrich Hölderlin – "[w]as bleibet aber, stiften die Dichter" [Hölderlin 1951, p. 189] –, Husserl's writing "knows" very well that, in translation, there is always *something*, i.e., the "chair" or "[Wort-]Leib," *remaining* or *left* [to translate] – how to render Hölderlin's "b*leibe*t?" in a different language? – and "knows" very well that this "something," in the case of the word "stiften," refers, as if by a pointed object, to the very thing at the root of its *own* "Stiftung". In a word, while there may be a "Federhalter [. . .] ohne Feder," there is surely, for Husserl as for Hölderlin, no [textual] "Stiftung" without a "[Schreib-]Stift.")

(b) In the case of ideal objects that are *not* that of the "objektive Wissenschaften" – and let us stress (once again) that this class of non-"objektiv-wissenschaftliche" idealities is also the home of phenomenology itself[3]– the "Unterschied

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[3] While Husserl, as if sensing certain difficulties, is careful not to name phenomenology either in the main text or the footnote, it is clear that it has to fit *somewhere*. Now, what we do know – and this is, in many regards, the very point of the *Krisis* – is that it is not part of the "objektiven Wissenschaften." That is to say, while Husserl is not willing – nor should he be willing – to dismiss the terms "Objektivität" and especially "Wissenschaftlichkeit" entirely, when it comes to positioning his own philosophical project, the combination of the two seems to be reserved for a specific kind of science, i.e., the *natural* sciences. The domain that a "phenomenology" (of the life-world) is interested in is that of pure subjectivity and its constitutive acts: "Keine objektive Wissenschaft, keine Psychologie, die doch universale Wissenschaft vom Subjektiven sein wollte, keine Philosophie hat dieses Reich des Subjektiven je thematisch

zwischen der Originalsprache des Werkes und der Übersetzung" implies *something other* than turning "Zugänglichkeit" into a sort of "uneigentliche" or "indirekte" accessibility. Characterizing this "other," the "Beilage III" is as much theory as it is performance: enacting, at the level of its own "Wort-Leib," the problem of "Zugänglichkeit" by selecting – once again: echoing Husserl's 1909/1916 manuscript on the "Feder [. . .] ohne Feder" – a word that is not "just" "difficult" to translate but that – after its "Neustiftung" by Hegel – has the reputation of being the untranslatable German word *par excellence*: "aufheben." And – once again – this particular (Hegelian) choice of word is, at a closer look, anything but interchangeable. For, whatever happens to the "identische Zugänglichkeit" of non-"objektiv-wissenschaftlichen" ideal objects in the event of their translation: it is and cannot be tantamount to a kind of "Außerkraftsetzung," "Beseitigung," etc. – simply because (depending on one's reading of the passage preceding the footnote, that is) their "identische Zugänglichkeit" is, in many regards, precisely what makes these objects "ideal" to begin with. Or, which, at the end of the day (or the end of history, for that matter), is the same thing: the event of translation, here, *is* tantamount to a kind of "Außerkraftsetzung" or "Beseitigung" – but only because it *also* is *not*, i.e., only because that which is left behind, "aufgehoben," is preserved, "aufgehoben," while it is brought to the next level, "aufgehoben" (i.e., what "identische Zugänglichkeit" really means in this case is, for lack of better terminology, "Identität der Zugänglichkeit und der Nichtzugänglichkeit").

Let us, like the potter confronted with a pile of "Scherben," try to put the different pieces together. If the genesis of the "other" "geistigen Erzeugnisse der Kulturwelt" necessarily coincides – like in the case of the "Urstiftung" of geometry – with the promise of "Zugänglichkeit" while – unlike in the case of the "Urstiftung" of geometry – necessarily implying its "Aufhebung", then the *fulfillment* of such "promise" is no longer, as it was in the case(s) discussed above (i.e., in the case of the "objektive Wissenschaften"), a mere (necessary) *possibility*: in contrast to that which (in repetition) stays the same, the only proof of existence of that which (in translation) diverges is, by its very definition, the (historical) moment of its formation. In other words: if the (non-scientific) ideal object were a "Federhalter," this "Federhalter" *muss* "ohne Feder sein" – and if we take into account that this loss/enrichment of "Zugänglichkeit" or, using

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gemacht und somit wirklich entdeckt" (*Hua* VI, p. 114). And later in the *Krisis*, Husserl reiterates: "[Wir halten] unsere Behauptung aufrecht und fordern, daß man sich hier nicht [. . .] den überlieferten Begriff objektiver Wissenschaft dem der Wissenschaft überhaupt unterschieben läßt" (*Hua* VI, pp. 126–127).

Benjamin's terminology, of the "Art des Meinens" is, as "Nach-" of an "Ur-" anticipating its "Endstiftung," retroactively oriented towards a final state (towards that "worauf es hinauswollte" or, recalling Benjamin's "Verwandschaft" of all languages, towards that "was sie sagen wollen"), we might even, "sogar," dare calling a "Federhalter" a kind of "Behälter" or "Gefäß."

3 Conclusion: Derrida's Crypt

In the "Beilage III," shortly after identifying the possibility of orally communicating idealities as an important step from their "innerpersonalen Ursprung" towards their "objectivity," Husserl writes the following:

> Nun ist noch zu berücksichtigen, daß die Objektivität des idealen Gebildes durch solche aktuellen Übermittlungen des im Einen originär Erzeugten auf originär nacherzeugende Andere noch nicht vollkommen konstituiert ist. Es f e h l t d a s v e r h a r r e n d e D a s e i n der "idealen Gegenstände" auch während der Zeiten, in denen der Erfinder und seine Genossen nicht in solchem Konnex wach oder überhaupt nicht mehr am Leben sind. Es fehlt ihr Immerfort-Sein, obschon niemand sie in Evidenz verwirklicht hat. / Es ist die wichtige Funktion des schriftlichen, des dokumentierenden sprachlichen Ausdrucks, daß er Mitteilungen ohne unmittelbare oder mittelbare Ansprache ermöglicht, sozusagen virtuell gewordene Mitteilung ist.   (*Hua* VI, p. 371)

Derrida, in his 1962 translation of the "Beilage III," renders the last two sentences of the passage as follows:

> Il lui manqué la *présence perdurante* des "objets idéaux", qui persistent aussi dans les temps où l'inventeur et ses associés ne sont plus éveillés à un tel échange ou en général quand ils ne sont plus en vie. Il lui manque l'être-à-perpétuité, demeurant même si personne ne l'a effectué dans l'évidence.   (Husserl 1962, pp. 185–186)

As Emmanuel Alloa in his lucid commentary on the passage points out, this translation brings with it certain problems – and one problem in particular:

> The ideal object [. . .] has nothing abstract or transcendent about it; even more than the sensible object, the ideal object remains beholden to a medium [. . .]. This is why Derrida misses the meaning of the word *Immerfort-Sein* when he translates it as *être-à-perpétuité* ["being eternally"]: only what is not eternal can take place, again and again, and only what is not continuous can be repeated. [. . .] *Immerfort*: forever, infinitely delayed, and constantly initiated anew because it can never be fully present. *Immerfort-Sein* is therefore opposed to *Da-Sein* not only because it exceeds its finitude, but also because it lacks corporeal presence. *Immerfort-Sein* is indeed a *Fort-Sein*, a "being-far," distanced from the origin, never integrally in presence.   (Alloa 2014, p. 233)

While Alloa is certainly right to underscore the decisively different philosophical implications of the words "Immerfort-Sein" and "être-à-perpétuité," one cannot but wonder if his assessment of Derrida's choice, which supposedly "misses the meaning of the word" outright, is the last word to be spoken on the matter. In our foreword, we have tried to show how Hörisch's translation of Derrida's *La voix et le phénomène*, while erroneous, is not without certain merits, not without a certain "relevance" – and it is only fair, it seems, to apply the same treatment to (the translator) Derrida himself. There are two – closely intertwined – reasons in particular, I believe, that should make us reluctant to discard Derrida's translation prematurely.

First reason. It seems that Alloa's commentary chooses to exclude an important playful nuance of Derrida's translation: one use of "à perpétuité" occurring in the juridical context (besides "être-à-perpétuité" itself, one might recall, for example, expressions such as "prison à perpétuité"). Following this thread, one might be tempted to argue that Derrida's choice of words, while highly problematic, is, *in its own right*, very precise: emerging as a puzzle piece of a (not so) subtle subplot of Derrida's translation/commentary dedicated to the eternal and necessary "textual imprisonment" of ideal objects. Take, for example, the following passage in the "Beilage III," where Husserl draws the crucial distinction between linguistic idealities and the "higher order" idealities of geometry (which are expressed by the former, but are not identical to them):

> [D]ie Sprache selbst in allen ihren Besonderungen nach Worten, Sätzen, Reden ist [. . .] durchaus aus idealen Gegenständlichkeiten aufgebaut, z. B. das Wort "Löwe" kommt in der deutschen Sprache nur einmal vor, es ist Identisches seiner unzähligen Äußerungen beliebiger Personen. Aber die Idealitäten der geometrischen Worte und Sätze, Theorien – rein als sprachliche Gebilde betrachtet – sind nicht die Idealitäten, die in der Geometrie das Ausgesprochene und als Wahrheit zur Geltung Gebrachte sind – die idealen geometrischen Gegenstände. (*Hua* VI, p. 368)

Derrida comments on this passage as follows:

> C'est que l'idéalité du sens, comme celle du langage, considérée en elle-même, est ici une idéalité "enchaînée" et non une idéalité "libre". Cette dissociation entre idéalités "libres" et idéalités "enchaînée" est seulement implicite dans *L'Origine* [. . .] mais elle est indispensable à son intelligence. (Derrida 1962, pp. 63–64)

As a footnote specifies, the distinction that Derrida has in mind here (and that he coincidentally translates somewhat "liberally") is to be found in §65 of Husserl's text *Erfahrung und Urteil*. After discussing the kind of "Gegenständlichkeit" that is a "Staatsverfassung," Husserl draws the following conclusion:

> So zeigt sich, dass auch Kulturgebilde nicht immer ganz freie Idealitäten sind, und es ergibt sich der Unterschied zwischen freien Idealitäten (wie den logisch-mathematischen

Gebilden und den reinen Wesensstrukturen jeder Art) und den gebundenen Idealitäten, die in ihrem Seinssinn Realität mit sich führen und damit der realen Welt zugehören. [. . .] Wenn wir von Wahrheiten, wahren Sachverhalten im Sinne theoretischer Wissenschaft sprechen und davon, daß zu ihrem Sinne das Gelten "ein für allemal" und "für jedermann" gehört als das Telos urteilender Feststellung, so sind dies freie Idealitäten. Sie sind an kein Territorium gebunden [. . .]. Sie sind allräumlich und allzeitlich, was ihre mögliche Reaktivierung betrifft. Gebundene Idealitäten sind erdgebunden, marsgebunden, an besondere Territorien gebunden etc. Aber auch die freien sind faktisch weltlich in einem historisch territorialen Auftreten, einem "Entdecktwerden" usw.

(Husserl 1939b, p. 321)

The real problem of this passage according to Derrida – and the reason for his calling to mind and incorporating the distinction of "freie" versus "gebundene" ideality into his commentary on the "Beilage III" in the first place – is its very last sentence, particularly the expression "faktisch": "Il énonce ainsi la difficulté cruciale de toute sa philosophie de l'histoire: quel est le sens de cette dernière facticité?" (Derrida 1962, p. 64). Intertwining, as Derrida does, the "Beilage III" with *Erfahrung und Urteil*, the geometrical object confronts us with an entity that is *both* free *and* not free, a "Gegenständlichkeit" whose sense is precisely *not* to be bound, while, with regard to its "Urstiftung," only being conceivable *as* bound to its inscription in a written archive. Derrida, in a long footnote that appears roughly in the middle of his "Introduction," first unfolds this tension with regard to the ("less free") linguistic idealities, closing with a quasi-dialectical formulation that, in many respects, summarizes the argument of the "Introduction" as a whole: "Par le langage, l'idéalité du sens se libère donc dans le labeur même de son 'enchaînement'" (Derrida 1962, p. 86–87).[4] In light of passages such as these, the use of "être-à-perpétuité" – and "enchaîné" for the much more innocent "gebunden" – turns out to be a well calculated decision: carefully modifying the "Arten des Meinens" of the original, the translation renders the "Immerfort-Sein" of the "Beilage III" and the question of "Freiheit" and "Gebundenheit" in *Erfahrung und Urteil* in a way that exposes a kind of prison narrative in Husserl (that is not Husserl's own) where both present themselves a two facets of one and the same philosophical problem (that is not explicitly Husserl's). In this regard, Derrida's (double) translational decision may be said to anticipate – and adhere to – what he, in his foreword to Nicolas Abraham's and Maria Torok's *Cryptonymie: Le verbier de l'homme aux loups*, will later say of poetic translation in general – whereby "philosophical"

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4 In *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?* Derrida will confront his readers with very similar kind of rhetoric, characterizing the "sens" of the original/translation as "ce qui, se libérant du corps, s'élève au-dessus de lui" (Derrida 2005, p. 72).

translation too, is of course a kind "ποίησις" – : "la traduction poétique n'*applique* pas, ne *vérifie* pas, ne suit pas, elle appartient au déchiffrement analytique dans sa phase la plus active et la plus inaugurale" (Derrida 1976, p. 47). In other words: by weaving into his writing threads that, on the monolingual surface, are *not* there, the terms "être-à-perpétuité" and "enchaînement" bring to light the unconscious phantasies of Husserl's texts.

Second reason. Reading it side by side with the "Introduction" that follows it, our discussion of Derrida's translation, up to this point, has been concentrating on its *philosophical* relevance. However – once again it is, in good Husserlian fashion, our duty to play our own devil's advocate –, we have yet to take it seriously as that which it is before anything else: a *translation*; translation that, taken as such, emerges – *nachträglich*, by way of the very *Nachträglichkeit* enabled by its own written "Immerfort-Sein" – as part of a whole other intertextual network. Let us, thus, take one step back, i.e., forward – and start by pointing out that Derrida's (erroneous) translation of the "Beilage III"'s "Immerfort-Sein" will, in fact, not have been the only situation in which we encounter this very constellation, where Derrida *switches roles*, i.e., does not speak as the "philosopher," but rather from the viewpoint of the translator – and where a particular morpheme, "fort," *resists translation*. In 1979, Derrida was invited to a roundtable discussion at the University of Montreal, which was published in 1982 under the title *L'oreille de l'autre*. During the course of this meeting, the discussion, at one point, shifts to Benjamin's "Aufgabe des Übersetzers." Derrida comments:

> [Benjamin] dit quelques fois "*überleben*", il dit quelques fois "*fortleben*" et bien que cela ne veuille pas dire la même chose ("*überleben*" veut dire au-dessus de la vie, survivre comme quelque chose qui s'élève au-dessus de la vie, "*fortleben*" c'est survivre comme quelque chose qui prolonge la vie) ces deux mots sont traduits en français par un seul, survivre, ce qui pose déjà un problème. (Derrida 1982, p. 161)

Six years later, in his detailed commentary on Benjamin's text in "Des Tours de Babel," this "problème" remains unsolved. Near the beginning of his essay, Derrida – referring to the translation by Maurice de Gandillac and adding comments in brackets – quotes the passage in "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" where we first encounter the two terms in question:

> De même que les manifestations de la vie, sans rien signifier pour le vivant, sont avec lui dans la plus intime corrélation, ainsi la traduction procède de l'original. Certes moins de sa vie que de sa "survie" (Überleben). Car la traduction vient après l'original et, pour les œuvres importantes qui ne trouvent jamais leur traducteur prédestiné au temps de leur naissance, elle caractérise le stade de leur survie (*Fortleben*, cette fois, la survie comme continuation de la vie plutôt que comme vie post mortem). (Derrida 1985, p. 222)

Last but not least, let us recall the passage from *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?* that we had already quoted in the foreword:

> [T]oute traduction devrait être par vocation relevante. Elle assurerait ainsi la *survie* du corps de l'original. Entendons ici la survivance de cette *survie* au double sens que lui donne Benjamin dans *La Tâche du traducteur*: *fortleben* et *überleben*: vie prolongée, vie continuée, *living on*, mais aussi vie par-delà la mort.   (Derrida 2005, pp. 71–72)

That said, however careful Derrida's translational look and however important its findings may be, there is (at least) one more major "problème" inherent to Benjamin's term still waiting for its (impossible) resolution. For, just as Husserl's "Immerfort-Sein" (which – as Alloa points out, underscoring the ambigious nature of its [German] linguistic material – "is indeed a *Fort-Sein*, a 'being-far'") the specific "Wort-Leib" of Benjamin's "Fortleben" has not only a temporal but also a *spatial* dimension.

In both cases, with regards to the "Beilage III" as well as to the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," Derrida in his role as translator/commentator fails to salvage this other nuance – and does so by necessity: paying tribute to their respective *content*, to their overall *meaning*, both the "Beilage III"'s as well as the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers"'s use of the morpheme simply leaves no other choice in French. ("Tel est le *cas*," Derrida writes in *La voix et le phénomène*, "de la *phonè*. S'élevant vers le soleil de la présence, elle est la voie d'Icare." And, borrowing from *Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction "relevante"?*, we might, now, add: "N'est-ce pas ce que fait une traduction [. . .] [e]n élevant le signifiant vers son sens, mais tout en gardant la mémoire endeuillée et endettée du corps singulier" which, like a body with waxen wings, in the moment of contact with "son," i.e., a singular, *Sinn*/*Sonne*, must disintegrate with all its "wort-leiblichen" plurality?)

And in both cases, with regards to the "Beilage III" as well as to the "Aufgabe des Übersetzers," the question is, perhaps, not so much as to how the (shared non-)translation *compensates* for its losses but, rather, whether the most striking argument *in favor* of it may, indeed, be *the fact of loss itself*. Here, we must not shy away from the ob(li)vious and point out that there is, of course, a certain "performative" or – for, here, the term does not designate the feature of *a* text, but is rather located precisely *in between two* (times two) texts, the original and its translation – "trans-performative" (see Heine/Zanetti 2017) dimension to that which Derrida's (twofold) translation is (not) confronting us with. The very moment it, like an object (a wooden reel, for example), is left behind, the very moment it is substituted, "fort" is, literally, "fort," *gone and away* – and, as a consequence, it is not: precisely *because* it is missing in the translation, "fort" (the translator Derrida's personal "cryptonyme"?), like an undead specter that must

not rest, returns to fulfill its original (semantic) destiny, i.e., "fort" is, in a way (that is, the way of translation), still "da."

That both Husserl's "Immerfort-Sein" and well as Benjamin's "Fortleben," via their respective translation into French, confront us with this kind of "(trans-)performativity" is, of course, but a coincidence "tressé par les accidents de l'histoire" (Lacan 1987, p. 26), as the psychoanalysts might put it – which is to say that it is anything but. For, *nachträglich ursprünglich*, in (messianic) retrospect from the very get-go, the loss (in translation) of "fort" figures for a shared meditation on the infinite series of necessary "accidents" constituting a written word's "histoire" – running, like a crack, through a greater word, foreign to both Husserl and Benjamin: *"Immerfortleben."*

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Is this the deeper "Sinn" of Husserl's phenomenology, of a certain (Benjaminian) stage in phenomenology: to conceive of a kind of "Sinn" that *needs* to be "fort" (as one might also "translate" the observation – or formulation of an "Aufgabe"? – of the "Beilage III," "es fehlt ihr Immerfortsein") from the original "Wort-Leib"; a kind of "Sinn," in other words, *in* other words, a kind of "Sinn" that, by (infinite) extension, is (not yet) what it is in the mode of the *new*? In a letter to his former pupil Roman Ingarden, written in August 1932, Husserl asks of his reader(s): "Versuchen Sie zu verstehen, warum ich immerfort sagen kann, daß sie den tieferen Sinn der const[itutiven] Ph[änomenologie] nicht verstanden haben u[nd] warum das kein Vorwurf ist, wie denn Niemand meiner alten Schule verstand" (Husserl 2012, pp. 80–81).

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II Phenomenology and Incommensurability: Beyond Experience

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Beyond Experience: Blanchot's Challenge to Husserl's Phenomenology of Time

Abstract: Like Husserl himself, most commentators direct their attention to the functions and problems pertaining to retention within the phenomenology of internal time consciousness, without addressing at length the dynamics of protention. This is all the more surprising given Husserl's puzzling claim in the 1905 lectures that a "prophetic consciousness is conceivable." In that regard, Maurice Blanchot's conception of the "disaster," which he defines as "that which does not answer to any expectation," helps problematize the presuppositions of the phenomenology of anticipation. In Blanchot's work, the event is not to be thought of as deception, surprise, rupture or excess, all notions that are still negatively bound to an underlying and unquestioned stance of expectation. This not only seems to distinguish Blanchot's position from the negative eschatologies of Emmanuel Levinas, Gershom Scholem, Jacques Derrida, and others. It also implies that the disaster would be beyond experience and even beyond conceivability, since the "delay of the event" would turn out to define the inherited structure of our experience of time. By linking *The Writing of the Disaster* with *Awaiting Oblivion* and "A Change of Epoch," the paper will argue that Husserl's conception of expectation bears traces of an implicit prophetic paradigm and that the affectivity of protention might be a product of an institution that is both originary and historical. According to Blanchot, losing all desire for the end of things through writing – and maybe through writing alone – is the only way to bring about a transformation of presence.

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1 Introduction

> For yet a very little while, He that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry. (*Hebrews* 10:37)

In *Neue Phänomenologie in Frankreich* (2011), Hans-Dieter Gondek and László Tengelyi argued that by considering givenness as an event [*événement*], post-Heideggerian French phenomenologists charted a path beyond classical phenomenology, which remained captive to a transcendentalism inherited from its more or less assumed Kantian roots. However, not only is the concept of the

event more equivocal than what Gondek and Tengelyi's analyses of Emmanuel Levinas, Michel Henry, Marc Richir, and Jean-Luc Marion would indicate, but it also circulates in many other schools of thought (Gilles Deleuze and Alain Badiou among others). Furthermore, one should not be blind to the fact that the idea of "eventfulness" [*événementialité*] has all the while become a common – if not paradigmatic – way of understanding various lived experiences of time in a global age.

Indeed, a generalized yet indeterminate feeling of anticipation or imminence seems to permeate our shared temporality, as if we stood on the verge of a life-changing event, whether natural, political, or metaphysical. In some respects, and unlike the waiting for the Other characteristic of various forms of religious messianism, the undefined virtuality of a worldly "event" seems to have been deeply integrated into our experience of time itself. Such a recent secularization of eschatology would indicate that the affectivity of time – i.e., the way time is given in its originariness – has a certain historical character. No matter how primitive the orientation towards the future is, it assumes diverse meanings and expressions in the apocalyptic tradition of late Judaism, the eschatological hopes of early Christianity, the socio-economical redemption of orthodox Marxism, and the anguished dissolution of futurity during the Cold War.

A systematic investigation of the concept of the event should therefore not only take into account the numerous philosophical *corpora* that thrived off it, but also explore the social and literary texts and practices through which eventfulness is enacted and transformed. After all, the mere possibility of new *epochal* feelings of time – the idea of shifts in presence itself – could pose a real challenge to phenomenology, albeit not as a lethal threat, but instead a fertile opportunity.

Needless to say, Husserl's 1905 lectures on the phenomenology of internal time-consciousness represent one of the earliest examples of the conceptual rigor of his thinking. It, nonetheless, contains grey areas that are not completely clarified in Husserl's later work, the Bernau manuscripts (1917–1918) in particular.[1] As I will show, one of those blind spots is the genetic origin of the act of protention: if the retention of what has just occurred appears as a passive act driven and informed by the constant flow of what Husserl called primal impressions, the expectation of what is about to come seems to be of a different nature.

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1 Dan Zahavi does not hide his relative disappointment with the Bernau manuscripts' analyses (see Zahavi 2004, pp. 99–101). On what one can hope to find in this volume, see Bernet 2010.

In the chapter "Le signe et le clin d'œil" in *La voix et le phénomène*, Derrida showed how primary memory contains a necessary moment of difference, or rather différ*a*nce, that punctures presence (see Derrida 1967, pp. 67–77). Could a similar gesture be found in "primary expectation," the "originary" [*ursprünglicher*] anticipation of what is just about to come, and what consequences would it have for the edifice of Husserl's phenomenology?

Blanchot, who was introduced to Heidegger and, to a lesser extent, Husserl by Levinas in the 1930s, has written extensively on time, or, rather, his writing is an experiment or experience [*épreuve*] of how time can be given, captured, reworked, and taken away through figures such as waiting, death, disaster, return, etc. In an attempt to test the radicality of Husserl's conception of expectation and to expose it to another *structure* of temporality, we will seek to render Blanchot's conception of the "disaster," deployed mainly in *L'écriture du désastre*, in the framework of Husserl's phenomenology.[2] This translation is to some extent bound to fail since the disaster is that which does not answer to any expectation.[3] Furthermore, the event of disaster can never be a lived experience [*Erlebnis*] as such for Blanchot: it stands outside the limit set by Husserl's "principle of all principles." Disaster is "*hors expérience, hors phénomène*" (Blanchot 1980, p. 92).

Even though no Procrustean bed can help us stretch and truncate Blanchot's conception of the disaster to fit it into an orthodox phenomenological framework, the impossibility of this venture can still reveal a *transcendental monstrosity*, that is, a possibility that can only be thought or imagined as an aberrant modification (or *modalization*) of the *a priori* phenomenological structures of the experience of time. What does it mean for phenomenology that a non-livable temporality can still be conceived (and experienced as a quasi-time) through writing?

First, we will unearth some of the presuppositions of Husserl's phenomenology of time by examining his peculiar claims regarding protention formulated in his later works (see the lectures on passive synthesis and the "C-Manuscripts," which refer to Husserl's research manuscripts on the subject of time from the late 1920s to the early 1930s) as well as in the appendices to the 1905 lectures. Then, we will focus on the non-experience of disaster that Blanchot describes and develops in various texts, particularly in "Sur un changement d'époque" (1969) and *L'écriture du désastre* (1980). Blanchot's conception of the event will turn out to be distinct from that of many of his contemporaries. The final aim of this paper

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2 See *Hua* X, p. 4: "Darin liegt, wie bei jeder solchen Analyse, der völlige Ausschluß jedweder Annahmen, Festsetzungen, Überzeugungen in betreff der objektiven Zeit (aller transzendierenden Voraussetzungen von Existierendem)."

3 See Blanchot 1980, p. 81: "Le *désappointement* du désastre: ne répondant pas à l'attente."

will be to determine how Blanchot's refusal of the messianism inscribed and enshrined in our deepest pre-conception of time could affect the architectonic position of the phenomenology of internal time consciousness in Husserl's thought. Is the dynamic structure of the auto-constitution of time (retention-impression-protention) really as pure as Husserl wants it to be, or is a radically different temporalization livable?

2 Husserl on Prophetic Consciousness or Adequate Expectation

Even in light of the recently published manuscripts on the unconscious, the guiding project of the 1905 lectures remains, without a doubt, of the utmost radicalism (see *Hua* XLII). Husserl's main problem could be summarized as: "*How does time come to be?*" This question does not mean, "*How come there is time?*" but rather – no matter how ungrammatical the formulation may sound – : "*How comes time; how does time come to us?*"

Two general yet crucial remarks should be made beforehand. First, the question concerning the "origin of time" (*Hua* X, p. 9) has nothing to do with objective or chronological time. As Jean-François Lavigne shows in *Husserl et la naissance de la phénoménologie*, the lectures from February 1905 clearly anticipate the "phenomenological reduction" introduced in the first volume of *Ideen* (1913), even though they still employ an immanentist or phenomenalist tone in some passages (Lavigne 2005, p. 547). But those lectures not only open the way for the discovery of the phenomenological method, they also announce the transcendental program that was to be later defined in *Ideen I*. Phenomenology of time does not start or end in a first-person description of the way time reveals itself to us through various feelings and experiences. Phenomenology's *logos* is far from being a *récit intérieur*, a subjective novel or personal diary of one's private inner life. On the contrary, Husserl wants to uncover how time is (a) constituted through primary and pre-objective acts and (b) constitutive of the higher layers of experience of *any* conceivable subjectivity.[4] The constitutive dimension of the lectures is sometimes downplayed

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4 In order for Husserl's analyses to have any meaning beyond an orthodox approach to the letter of the text, we have to respect, or at least recognize, the few but crucial boundaries drawn by the phenomenological reduction and the levels of constitution concerned. On that account, §34 of the 1905 lectures alone differentiates three or four admissible regimes of temporality within phenomenological discourse: the time of empirical beings (for example the

by commentators (for chronological reasons),[5] but, in Husserl's words, internal time is indeed the result of an operation [*Leistung*] or creation [*Schöpfung*]. The unity of inner time is of course the product of the most passive of passive syntheses. However, even though these syntheses are the most "archaic" ones, since they are grounded in radical affectivity and are *ichlos*, they are nonetheless *Aktprozesse* and still imply some sort of activity, be it merely the "activity" of a purely affective and instinctual subject-in-becoming.

Hence, the guiding question, "*How does time come to be?*" must be paraphrased as, "*How is the unity of absolute internal temporality constituted?*" At the moment, we can only note that it seems to be implied in the inner time-consciousness lectures that the operations or acts that constitute the unity of inner temporality are not themselves constituted. We will come back to this point in the conclusion.

What emerges broadly from the numerous paragraphs on the differentiation between primary and secondary memory, on the relation between protention and retention, and so forth is that presence, or what Husserl calls primary impression, is not by itself sufficient to account for the unity of inner time. In some respects, we could say that the present is not in and of itself present but needs two additional yet essential processes. These two processes of sinking back and moving forward, this "retentional and protentional interweaving" are encompassed in a single phase of presence.[6] That is to say, the present is not instantaneous in nature. It is *extended*: the present lasts before and beyond itself. Since retention and protention belong to presence, they are therefore said to be primary, unlike the secondary and tertiary reminiscences of a distant past or the imagination of a distant future. In this interplay between the *hyle* that has just passed and the *hyle* that is about to appear (which will either confirm or deny the expectation), the "now" is nothing more than a *limit*.

However familiar and convincing Husserl's theorization and exemplification may seem, his model has some peculiar consequences or implications that deserve to be spelled out. First, if every retained impression contains a vague

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perceived movement of a person walking), the pre-empirical time of the inner perception of this movement, and the "absolut zeitkonstituierende Bewußtseinsfluß" (*Hua* X, p. 73).

5 As we know, the published lectures were heavily redacted and edited by Edith Stein and Husserl himself, and even in part by Heidegger, from manuscripts dating mainly from 1909 to 1911, but some as late as 1928. Torn between the language of a descriptive psychology and that of a transcendental and even genetic phenomenology, the text bears many marks of Husserl's journey and struggles with the methods and aims of his phenomenological philosophy.

6 See *Hua* X, p. 83: "Demnach sind in dem einen, einzigen Bewußtseinsfluß zwei untrennbar einheitliche, wie zwei Seiten einer und derselben Sache einander fordernde *Intentionalitäten* miteinander verflochten."

orientation or leaning towards the near future, this implies – *formaliter* – that the life of transcendental subjectivity never comes to an end. Many of Husserl's manuscripts address and develop this counter-intuitive thesis, but an addendum to the lectures on passive synthesis is particularly telling:

> Jedes Jetzt [hat] seinen Zukunftshorizont [. . .]. Die Erwartung ist nie apodiktisch – und ist doch der Form nach apodiktisch. Das Ich lebt fort, es hat immer und notwendig seine transzendentale Zukunft vor sich. [. . .] Etwas passiert immer. (*Hua* XI, p. 380)

Since no present can be conceived without the "comet's tail" of the just-past, consciousness is immortal. It is worth considering why this is the case. The *last breath* – or the "instant of my death" to take the meaningful title of the very short prose piece published by Blanchot in 1994 – is still retained *beyond* itself, at least in a last sigh that survives the extinction of life: There always is a retention of the protention.[7] In other words, death is a non-rational idea[8]; it stands in contradiction to the *a priori* of temporality. Therefore, even though my death may "occur," it does not happen within and to any *lived* time: the end does not happen *qua* phenomenon. In Françoise Dastur's words, Husserl's phenomenology of time is a "phenomenology of the advent" [*phénoménologie de l'avènement*], not of the event (Dastur 2004, pp. 164–165).

But Husserl goes further in his refusal of the possibility of a pure event, i.e., of a phenomenon that would radically *break or "deceive"* [*ent-täuschen*] *the constant anticipatory movement of time*. That is made clear in *Erfahrung und Urteil* published in 1939. Every discordant experience is either absorbed as a modification of a prior normal experience, categorized as a new form or *type* of experience, or rejected altogether – remaining therefore invisible as such.[9] The stream of

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7 The clarification of the relations between retention and protention is one of the most significant development of the *Bernauer Manuskripte*. See, among many other paragraphs, *Hua XXXIII*, txt. 1, § 4.

8 On the "melancholic possibilities" [*traurigen Möglichkeiten*] of a death happening without any consciousness of it, see *Hua* X, p. 154.

9 See *Hua* XI, p. 136: "Diese Ursprünglichkeit besagt freilich niemals schlechthin erstmaliges Erfassen und Explizieren eines gänzlich unbekannten Gegenstandes; der in ursprünglicher Anschaulichkeit sich vollziehende Prozeß ist schon immer durchsetzt mit Antizipation, immer ist schon mehr apperzeptiv mitgemeint als wirklich anschaulich zur Gegebenheit kommt – eben deshalb, weil jeder Gegenstand nichts Isoliertes für sich ist, sondern immer schon Gegenstand in seinem Horizont einer typischen Vertrautheit und Vorbekanntheit."

consciousness has a "conservative" tendency. The new [*das Neue*] is always caught up in a passive and non-thematic pre-interpretation or apperception.[10]

However, §26 of the 1905 lectures reveals the most striking consequence of Husserl's theory of internal time:

> Auch die Erinnerung kann anschaulich, aber doch nicht sehr bestimmt sein [. . .]. Bei "vollkommener" Erinnerung allerdings würde alles bis ins einzelne klar und als Erinnerung charakterisiert sein. Aber *idealiter* ist das auch bei der Erwartung möglich. Im allgemeinen läßt sie viel offen, und das Offenbleiben ist wieder ein Charakter der betreffenden Komponenten. *Aber prinzipiell ist ein prophetisches Bewußtsein (ein Bewußtsein, das sich selbst als prophetisch ausgibt) denkbar, dem jeder Charakter der Erwartung des Seinwerdenden, vor Augen steht*: etwa wie wenn wir einen genau bestimmten Plan haben und, anschaulich das Geplante vorstellend, es sozusagen mit Haut und Haar als künftige Wirklichkeit hinnehmen.   (*Hua* X, p. 56; emphasis added)[11]

According to this stunning passage that has gone largely unaddressed in the secondary literature, an intuitive consciousness of the near future is conceivable. More precisely, nothing excludes that "pre-presentifications" [*Vorvergegenwärtigungen*] can be thoroughly and adequately fulfilled. Nothing prohibits, *de jure*, the intuition of "what-becomes-perceived" [*Wahrgenommensein-werdendes*].

This idea is not a *hapax* in Husserl's thought. The idea of an intuitive [*anschauliche*] presence of the protention's *intentum*, of a *Quasi-in-die-Zukunft-Leben* (*Hua* VIII, p. 267), is a theme of various manuscripts. For example, Husserl asks himself in the C-Manuscripts:

> Nicht nur habe ich meine erstrebte, bestenfalls (im Einzelnen, eben in der Vorzeichnung) erhoffte und doch unbekannte, unbestimmte, "ungewisse" Zukunft. Vielmehr: Die Zukunft ist ja schon geworden, ist schon ganz bestimmte, ist eben schon geschehene Vergangenheit, als das "Spätere" gegenüber dem "Früheren." Aber das gibt zu denken.   (*HuaM* VIII, p. 267)

In another short note, Husserl questions the pseudo-evidence according to which a prophetic intuition is impossible: "Holla! Es sollte keine adäquate Erwartung geben?" (*Hua* X, p. 154). The same line of thought appears in a note following this one:

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10 See Cairns 1976, p. 76: "Perception is essentially apperception, i.e. is not completely perception at all. Apperception is anticipation, and the anticipated, when realized, contains ever more apperception, so that in this way *the progress of experience gives only corroboration or discrediting of doxa*, and never episteme" (emphasis added).

11 See also *Hua* X, txt. 45, p. 306: "Ist denn nicht prinzipiell ein prophetisches Bewußtsein (ein Bewußtsein, das sich selbst für prophetisch ausgibt) denkbar?"

> Die Reflexion auf erfüllte Erwartungen zeigt uns das Erwartete als später seiend, den Erwartungszustand und die gleichzeitigen Wahrnehmungen als früher. Aber ist das bloß empirisch? (*Hua* X, p. 155)

Natural introspection teaches us that the impressional content of a perfectly fulfilled expectation appears *as* following the moment of anticipation. However, insofar as Husserl departs from the descriptive psychology he inherited from Franz Brentano, he cannot help but ask if that introspective truth indeed indicates an *a priori* law of temporality, or if it simply rests on a subjective observation of mental acts. Afterall, *if* a prophetic consciousness is still possible *idealiter* [*denkbar*], on what grounds should it be excluded from the temporal structure of the transcendental subject?

The question whether all evidence pertaining to expectation are indeed apodictic and transcendental, or if they betray an "empirico-transcendental doublet" (see Foucault 1966, pp. 329–332.),[12] will only become compelling and critical when compared to Blanchot's conception of the disaster.

3 Blanchot's Writing of the Disaster as a Deconstruction of Expectation

In many ways, Blanchot's oeuvre challenges the *transcendental faith in the possibility of a prophetic consciousness*. Blanchot does so not by reverting to a defense of the so-called extraordinary nature of everyday life, nor by claiming the latency of a radically unforeseeable event to come, but on the contrary by conceiving a temporality exempt of any anticipation of an event.

The first page of *L'écriture du désastre* presents, in a dense manner, all of Blanchot's key theses on this matter:

> Nous sommes au bord du désastre sans que nous puissions le situer dans l'avenir: il est plutôt toujours déjà passé, et pourtant nous sommes au bord ou sous la menace, toutes formulations qui impliqueraient l'avenir si le désastre n'était ce qui ne vient pas, ce qui a arrêté toute venue. Penser le désastre (si c'est possible, et ce n'est pas possible dans la mesure où nous pressentons que le désastre est la pensée), c'est n'avoir plus d'avenir pour le penser. / Le désastre est séparé, ce qu'il y a de plus séparé. / Quand le désastre

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12 According to Foucault in *Les mots et les choses*, phenomenology stems from a modern epistemological model, in that it tries to find the universal conditions of knowledge from within experience itself. Since man is then understood as both constituted and constituting, the phenomenological analysis of finitude ends up being a mixture, or confusion, of transcendental and empirical (historical, economical, libidinal, theological, etc.) considerations.

survient, il ne vient pas. Le désastre est son imminence, mais puisque le futur, tel que nous le concevons dans l'ordre du temps vécu, appartient au désastre, le désastre l'a toujours déjà retiré ou dissuadé, il n'y a pas d'avenir pour le désastre, comme il n'y a pas de temps ni d'espace où il s'accomplisse.   (Blanchot 1980, pp. 7–8)

Unlike a catastrophe, the disaster is withdrawn from actual time and from worldliness [*Weltlichkeit*]. The event of the disaster cannot happen in time nor can it be situated in the future, since it exceeds all foresight. It cannot hold any position in a chronology as a historical or natural event for example, but it also cannot stand in any *stream* of internal time, since its happening would shatter the unity of time-consciousness, whether subjectively or intersubjectively conceived. The disaster, its idea alone, impedes the coming or "flowing" [*Strömen*] of time.

Nonetheless, for the Blanchot of 1980, we all live "on the edge" and "under the threat" of the disaster. This pure imminence, freed from all retention and devoid of any thematic anticipation, is thus always present *in a certain way* that needs to be described or, at least, delineated. However, how can we even understand, broadly and formally speaking, such an imminence, if it does not belong to the form of time and the categories we attach to it (causality, quantity, relation, and so forth)?

3.1 The Uneventfulness of the Disaster

Blanchot's disaster seems to be thought of as a "pure event."[13] For Husserl, this expression would be a *contradictio in terminis*. For an event to happen, even – or precisely – as a "surprise," it has to happen *within* the flow of time-consciousness and *on* or *against* a horizon of expectations. Therefore no phenomenon can happen as a "pure event," because to emerge in experience is to obey and bear the primitive condition shared by all phenomena, i.e., a *Zeitlichkeit* brought and held together through retentions and protentions. Hence, a *radical* and *intransitive event* cannot happen within experience. At best, events are "impure" or minor.

In one respect, Blanchot wholly endorses these ideas, but only to radicalize them later. The *uneventfulness* of the disaster sets Blanchot's conception apart from the understanding, common in French phenomenology, of the event as a "surprise." This view can be found in Levinas, Marion, Romano, and others in that they imply that some kind of horizon precedes the singular upsurge of the event, even if this exceptional event is to break or reconfigure the horizontality

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13 Many commentators use this expression. See for example Bruns 1997, p. 295.

of experience.[14] However, for Blanchot, the disaster does not "happen," and certainly not as transcendence within immanence:

> Qu'il n'y ait pas attente du désastre, c'est dans la mesure où l'on pense que l'attente est toujours attente d'un attendu *ou d'un inattendu*. Mais l'attente, de même qu'elle ne se rapporte pas plus à l'avenir qu'à un passé accessible, est aussi bien attente de l'attente, ce qui ne nous fixe pas dans un présent, car "j'"ai toujours déjà attendu ce que j'attendrai toujours, [. . .] l'avenir étant ma relation avec ce qui, dans ce qui arrive, n'arrive pas et donc ne se présente, ne se re-présente pas. (Blanchot 1980, pp. 179–180, emphasis added)

The undisclosed condition of heterodox phenomenologies of the event is a fundamental attitude of waiting, i.e., the waiting for the "unawaited" and "unawaitable." In this context, Blanchot always stays more faithful to Derrida – whom he often quotes without explicit references – than to Levinas: In the disaster, the ego completely loses touch with itself, such that *the presence of the event cannot be simultaneous with the presence of consciousness*, be that of an ethical ex-position to the other. In a Derridean tone, Blanchot writes that "[n]ous ne sommes pas contemporains du désastre: c'est là sa différence, et cette différence est sa menace fraternelle" (Blanchot 1980, p. 12).

That being said, Blanchot's writing of, from, and for the disaster is in no way a stylistic pastiche or literary transposition of the deconstruction of presence. Without a doubt, it could be read both as a critique of the Kantian and neo-Kantian *reine Ich* and of Heidegger's *Dasein*. If it is true that *Dasein always is* his temporality (see Heidegger 1993, § 66; 1991, § 34), then the dismantling of temporality is first and foremost a dismantling of all modern conceptions of subjectivity, be it an "I," a "*Da*," or an "*adonné*" (Marion):

> "[J]e" disparaissais dans le désastre sans apparence. Le fait de disparaître n'est précisément pas un fait, un événement, cela n'arrive pas, non seulement parce que – il y va de la supposition même – il n'y a pas de "je" pour en subir l'expérience, mais parce qu'il ne saurait y en avoir une expérience, si le désastre a toujours lieu après avoir eu lieu.
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> (Blanchot 1980, p. 50)

The possible impossibility of disaster therefore deconstructs Kant's principle of the unity of apperception according to which "[e]ach of my representations is such that I can attribute it to myself, a subject which is the same for all of my self-attributions."[15] (Kant 1987, A116, B131–2, B134–5) Yet this possible impossibility

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14 In this sense, we disagree with Derrida who, in "D'une certaine possibilité impossible de dire l'événement," sees Levinas and Blanchot as sponsoring a similar conception of the event (see Derrida 2001).

15 Disaster is "impossible" only if we conceive it from within an already constituted subjectivity, which sets its conditions of reproduction as postulates of all thinkability.

also goes beyond Levinas' and Marion's "counter-intentionality," which attempts a genesis of the "I" through eventfulness.[16]

In short, there is no possible *witness* to the disaster, not even an inchoate *Ich*:

> Elle – l'expérience du désastre – n'a pas lieu, incapable de se poser et reposer dans l'instant (fût-il mobile) ou de se donner dans quelque point d'incandescence dont elle ne marque que l'exclusion. Nous sentons qu'il ne saurait y avoir expérience du désastre, l'entendrions-nous comme expérience-limite. C'est là l'un de ses traits: *il destitue toute expérience, il lui retire l'autorité* . . .   (Blanchot 1980, p. 85, emphasis added)

In this passage, willingly or not, Blanchot targets the *legislative* power that Husserl finds in originary experience.[17] Disaster is a "non-experience" (Blanchot 1980, pp. 85; 159) and in this capacity it strips experience of its authority.

It is worth considering that in Husserl's phenomenology of time the transcendental impossibility of a pure event – which translates into the ideal possibility of a prophetic consciousness – has a constitutive role as a *negative regulatory idea: Time flows in an ever-confirming unity because it represses the virtual possibility of what would rupture this unity*. To accept the possibility of the disaster from within the system of this constitutive temporality would be to refute the primary condition of the stream of consciousness. In sum, the continuous exclusion (or delay) of the event is the secret condition of the continuity of time. The event is not so much repressed as constantly and infinitely delayed, which is the mark, as we shall see, of a certain paradigm in modern and contemporary conceptions of eschatology. In the end, Blanchot's writing of the disaster might reveal that Levinas and Marion's conception of an excessive or transgressive event and Husserl's refusal of a radical eventfulness actually go hand in hand in that they share the same philosophical and historical presuppositions.

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16 Even though a patient and refined exegesis of the various concepts of "event" we can find in post-Husserlian phenomenology and contemporary philosophy seems necessary, Marion's conception of the *événement* is exemplary in many ways. For Marion, the event is both what exceeds the horizon of experience and the categories of *entendement*, and what institutes a new structure of experience (see Marion 1997 § 17, pp. 242–244 in particular). The event is "*impensable*," but only before its happening [*arrivage*] which redefines the very conditions of thought itself.

17 See *Hua* III, § 24, p. 51: "Doch genug der verkehrten Theorien. Am Prinzip aller Prinzipien: daß jede originär gebende Anschauung eine Rechtsquelle der Erkenntnis sei [. . .], kann uns keine erdenkliche Theorie irre machen."

3.2 The Refusal of Prophecy

Admittedly, an "asubjective phenomenology" is possible not only *after* Husserl – for example in Jan Patočka's and Renaud Barbaras' works – but already within Husserl's thought, notably if we take into consideration his late manuscripts on instincts which indicate a passive *universale Teleologie* (see *Hua* XV, txt. 34). Blanchot's challenge could be addressed to asubjective trends of phenomenology as well, since, as stated on the first page of *L'écriture du désastre*, the pure and "impotent" imminence of the disaster is beyond or apart from [*hors*] conceivability itself.

In Husserl's philosophy (or meta-phenomenology, phenomenology of phenomenology), "livability" is subordinated to "conceivability." There are certain *a priori* rules or legalities [*Gesetzlichkeiten*], both formal and material, which condition thinking and logic, as well as our very sensitive experience of things. For example, the fact that we cannot represent to ourselves a color without extension is *both an eidetic and hyletic constraint*: No subject (even God) will ever imagine or see a color without imagining or seeing it as having a certain spatialization. The structures of thought thus outline the structures of life. The *universum* of possible *Urperzeptionen* is bound by the *formalia* of transcendental logic (see *Hua* XXXIV, txt. 17).

However, as we have seen, the disaster's imminence is beyond thought itself. In saying so Blanchot has in mind some key figures of what he calls "Jewish messianic thought": "Le messianisme juif (chez certains commentateurs) nous laisse pressentir le rapport de l'événement et de l'inavènement" (Blanchot 1980, p. 214). Indeed, Levinas and Scholem – but we could also think of Franz Rosenzweig, Walter Benjamin, and even Jürgen Moltmann and Derrida – see the essence of messianism in the relation between the event and its nonoccurrence (see Blanchot 1980, p. 215).[18] Such (post)modern versions of the messianism that "some theologians" have spoken about consist of a seemingly deconstructive interpretation of classical eschatology.[19] However, for Blanchot, no matter the degree of phenomenological reduction we bring to bear on these recent negative eschatologies, they all still stem from a modern and even phenomenological conception of time: the silence and "death of God," the postponing of the second coming of the Messiah,

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18 For a more positive note regarding Levinas' peculiar non-Greek, "Jewish prophetism", see Blanchot 1980, p. 45, note 1.

19 See Blanchot 1969, p. 330: "[L]es théologiens ont quelquefois parlé de 'l'odeur de fin de temps', d'une sorte d'expérience sui generis qui, dans les phénomènes historiques réels, permettrait de discerner la percée, l'être en vue de la fin. – L'odeur de l'explosion atomique, sans doute."

and so forth were already constitutive of late Judaic and early Christian thought, in such a way that there is nothing novel about their recent critical hypostasis.

On the contrary, the unthinkable disaster would not call for any disillusioned or secularized waiting – or even of justice or hospitality – ; it would require a suspension of all expectation. In this light, *L'écriture du désastre* and *L'attente l'oubli*, the essay and the novel, are closely linked, since both are trying to shape *another disposition towards time,* or *another affect of time*:

> Depuis quand attendait-il ? L'attente est toujours l'attente de l'attente, reprenant en elle le commencement, suspendant la fin [. . .]. Depuis quand avait-il commence d'attendre ? Depuis qu'il s'était rendu libre pour l'attente *en perdant le désir des choses particulières et jusqu'au désir de la fin des choses*. (1962, pp. 38–39, emphasis added)

Disclosing this time in which our deepest apocalyptical fascinations are abandoned implies losing faith in the deepest grammar of our relation to time, which always turns out to be theological in one respect or another. If we take Blanchot's claim seriously, Husserl's phenomenology of time also began *from* this grammar, without being able to put it in question or into brackets. The structurally adjourned coming of the event and the purely ideal possibility of an intuition of what is about to come are witness to the fact that Husserl's phenomenology of time has its roots in a messianic paradigm. The very presence of the present is therefore conditioned by what is bound to be absent empirically, even though it is always present ideally. In this sense, Blanchot's unspoken philosophy of temporality suggests that time's unity has always been nothing more than a shared illusion or a rational hypothesis, if not a self-fulfilling prophecy. Neither an end nor a new beginning, disaster alone can conjure and refute the prophetic paradigm of time-consciousness – not by an immanent or transcendent critique, but by a calling into another temporality: "Le désastre, [. . .] [est] prophétie qui n'annonce rien que le refus du prophétique" (Blanchot 1980, p. 121). The disaster is – or "*would be*," since this proposition of a different logic of time points to an unacknowledged experience – an *epoché* of all our inner tendencies towards future.

3.3 Could Writing Think Beyond Eschatology?

How, then, can the disaster be told, if *pro-phrasis* in all its modes (prophecy, apocalypse, millenarianism, oracle, fortune telling, etc.) always reverts to the most traditional ek-static scheme of temporality? For Blanchot, the writing of disaster "en [lui]-même n'annonce rien, ne représente rien; [il n'est] ni prophétique, ni eschatologique" (Blanchot 1969, p. 203). Consequently, it may seem unclear if it can serve

Thinking and experiencing are governed by a common yet unaccounted eschatological logos.

Instead, Blanchot's fragmentary speech seeks to deliver an account of what another time could be or feel like, a time haunted by disaster but never waiting expressly for it.[21] Indeed, even though the disaster constitutes suspense without catharsis, it still opens up and maintains a certain temporality. This dense affective enduring [*soutenir* or *durée*] specific to the time of the disaster is perhaps best felt in *L'instant de ma mort*, in which the French prisoner, just about to be executed, and thus on the verge of death, is all of a sudden freed from the firing squad. Violently brought back to worldliness or life-as-it-was, he remains nonetheless hanging or halted in the instant of his death, that is, a "sentiment inanalysable" (Blanchot 2002, p. 8) of sovereign beatitude above both joy and woe.

4 In the End: Constitutions and Institutions of Time

In Husserl's 1905 lectures, the time-constituting flow of absolute subjectivity is that "for which we lack names" (*Hua* X, p. 75). Nonetheless, this "stratum" [*Schicht*] is at the root of every other constituted form of temporality, and hence is shared intersubjectively by every human consciousness.

How, then, could another temporality be given or thought? Following Blanchot, our relation to time in general lies in the way we relate and remain attached to the future. In *L'attente, l'oubli*, a radical transformation of temporality is achieved through the suspension of waiting: the act of waiting no longer waits *for* something, to the point that waiting is stripped of all expectation. To convert Blanchot's literary attempt into a philosophical register, we could show that there is a "différence dans l'auto-affection" (Derrida 1967, p. 77) of the primary expectation. In other words, could there be an unadmitted moment of non-identity, and even representation, in the expectation of what is yet to come? If so, in keeping with Derrida, and in contrast to Husserl, we may hold indeed that the expectation is not a formal, immediate, and universal act, but first an *effect*: the illusion of a ghost, if not the hope of a redemption.

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21 See Blanchot 1973, p. 8: "Temps, temps: le pas au-delà qui ne s'accomplit pas dans le temps conduirait hors du temps, sans que ce dehors fût intemporel, mais là où le temps tomberait, chute fragile, selon ce 'hors temps dans le temps' vers lequel écrire nous attirerait, s'il nous était permis, disparus de nous, d'écrire sous le secret de la peur ancienne."

It might not even be that difficult to turn Husserl against himself here, since in some later manuscripts he recognizes that there is no strict parallel between the originariness of retention and that of protention. In the retention of a note just heard, a phenomenal content remains within presence (in the modus of something retained), and it is impossible to doubt its immanent happening *per se*. But that is not the case concerning the expectation of what is about to come. In expectation, there is no hyletic content as such, but only the orientation towards an undetermined *Etwas*. Retention and protention do not have the same mode of fulfillment:

> Prinzipielle Unterschiede aber liegen in der Weise der Erfüllung. [. . .] Aber alles in allem ist Erwartungsanschauung genau etwas so Ursprüngliches und Eigenartiges wie Vergangenheitsanschauung. (*Hua* X, pp. 306–307)

Hence, protentions are not primary in the same sense as retentions are, since they imply a representation of what is to come or, more exactly, a fundamental projection according to which *something is still to come*.

The symmetry of presence is unbalanced, and the future remains out of the hinges of presence. The C-Manuscripts go as far as to say that:

> Vielleicht ist es korrekt zu sagen, dass die hyletische Gegenwart ursprünglichst affiziert, dass sie das Erst-Affizierende ist und dass der affektive Zug in Richtung auf Erfüllung geht. Das an sich Zweite ist dann die Affektion aus den Horizonten. *Auch der Zukunftshorizont hat dann affektiven Vorzug vor dem Erinnerungshorizont.* Dann hätten wir also im Tendenziösen die Unterscheidung von protentionalem Strömen in urphänomenaler Erfüllung und stetig protentionaler Intention, den stetig protentionalen Horizont vorzeichnend. Andererseits, das retentionale Verströmen als abklingende und damit stetig modifizierende Abwandlung des jeweilig erfüllenden Jetztpunktes.
>
> (*HuaM* VIII, p. 94, emphasis added; see also *HuaM* VIII, p. 266)

In other words, protention does not have the same givenness as retention. However, in contrast to Husserl, it seems we can indeed conceive an experience that lacks any determinate horizon, just like Ludwig Binswanger has shown in his phenomenological psychopathology of melancholia.

Now, what does the possibility of a variation or alteration of the forms of time indicate? If we follow Blanchot, our inner and "immediate" sense of time is not so much constituted as it is instituted, when it comes to the anticipation of what is about to come. "Futurity" as we know it might always already [*immer schon*] have been the product of a determinate *Urstiftung*, a relative historical foundation that wears the disguise of ahistoricity once instituted. If the structure of immanent temporality is permeable to history, Blanchot's thinking challenges the very apodicticity of Husserl's conception of temporalization.

In this regard, in a remarkable fragment of "Sur un changement d'époque," written a decade before *L'écriture du désastre*, Blanchot states: "La toute-puissance de la science historique pénètre jusqu'aux couches les plus profondes, celles qui ne furent jamais historiques" (Blanchot 1969, p. 329). In other words, according to Blanchot's philosophy of time, articulated in an epoch where the contraction of time and the bankruptcy of future were perhaps the most felt,[22] our most internal experiences of temporality are shaped by our views of history, in our case, by a certain messianism that is shared both by the religious life of proto-Christianity and the modern emancipatory philosophy of history.

Blanchot's works on the temporal affects of waiting, disaster, epoch, and suspense of death, all ring out like a calling to find, within ourselves, yet beyond experience, the source of a disengagement from our common historical and internal institution of time. On that note, Blanchot seemed captivated by the following Nietzschean injunction contained in a posthumous fragment to the *Fröhliche Wissenschaft*: "J'aime [le futur] plus que vous: j'aime l'ignorance de l'avenir" (Blanchot 1969, p. 335; see also p. 346).[23] The "exigency" of Blanchot's writing consists not of forgetting the past, but of being able to *forget the future* or, as he wrote, to lose all desire for an end.

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22 This passage refers to Ernst Jünger's *An der Zeitmauer. Zum Weltgeist des Atomzeitalters* (1959).

23 Blanchot found in the eternal return the only philosophical discourse able to proclaim and assume the ruin of our attachment to teleological and dialectical expectations. The affirmation of the eternal return is to be "understood (first) as a failure of this going-beyond [*comme échec du dépassement*]" (Blanchot 1969, p. 203).

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Absehen – Disregarding Literature
(Husserl / Hofmannsthal / Benjamin)

Abstract: In this paper, the similarities between the aesthetic and phenomenological attitude are examined with regard to Husserl's elaborations of the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" in his *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie.* Taking as a point of departure Husserl's now-famous letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal from 1907, in which Husserl emphasizes the indifference to positionality that his thinking and writing shares with Hofmannsthal's poetry, the paper goes on demonstrate that it is through a certain disregard and disengagement from the teleology of conscious acts that the phenomenological gaze gains access to a multiplicity of possible directions that exceeds the scope of thetic actuality. In order to bring into view the furthest consequences of the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" for a phenomenology of literature, however, the paper turns to Walter Benjamin's early essay, "Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin," where it shows Benjamin's engagement with phenomenological thought to exceed Benjamin's more obvious references to Husserl's vocabulary. Rather, it is when Benjamin introduces his much debated notion of the "Gedichtete" that he discloses a novel dimension of the poetic text that shows certain affinities to Husserl's thought. For the "Gedichtete," Benjamin asserts, can be glimpsed only through a certain disregard towards "gewissen Bestimmungen" within the poem. This disregard, in turn, opens poetic writing to the infinite "Bestimmbarkeit" that both conditions each realized version of a given poetic text, and forges the relation of the poem to life. Finally, the paper argues that this particular modification of the reader's gaze towards the poeticized of the poem displays potentialities opened by the "Neutralisierungsmodifikation" that reach beyond Husserl's explicit commentaries on this attitude.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

1

Husserl's letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal on January 12, 1907 provides a direct image of the place of literature with regards to phenomenology. Husserl wrote the letter (the only one in the correspondence) after having attended Hofmannsthal's lecture, "Der Dichter und diese Zeit," in Göttingen

the previous month. The literature in question for Husserl is Hofmannsthal's *Kleine Dramen*, a copy of which had been gifted to Husserl on the occasion of the lecture.[1] The letter begins as a delayed thank-you note, a delay for which philosophy bears the responsibility:

> Daß ich übrigens nicht sofort dankte, bitte ich gütigst zu entschuldigen. Lang gesuchte Gedankensynthesen boten sich mir plötzlich, wie vom Himmel gefallen, dar. Ich hatte zu thun, sie schnell zu fixiren. Ihre "kleinen Dramen" die immerfort neben mir lagen, wirkten als große Anregungen, obschon ich nur wenig zusammenhängend lesen durfte.
>
> (Husserl 1994, p. 133)

While the "small dramatic works" have provided Husserl with great stimulation – despite the fact that he has only been able to read intermittently or (to force the issue somewhat) *incoherently* [*wenig zusammenhängend*] – the more interesting feature is perhaps the emphasis on the *place* this piece of literature occupies for Husserl: while fixating and setting down long sought after thoughts, Hofmannsthal's plays are constantly next to him, "*immerfort neben mir.*" From this position of proximity, but perhaps also as a merely intermittently stimulating *Nebensache*, Husserl in the next paragraph lines up a more impressive parallel. Here, the "phenomenological" method is related [*verwandt*] to the "purely aesthetic" attitude in Hofmannsthal's work in the manner in which it deviates [*abweicht*] from the "natural" attitude:

> Sie [die phänomenologische Methode] fordert eine von der "natürlichen" wesentlich abweichende Stellungnahme zu aller Objectivität, die nahe verwandt ist derjenigen Stellung u. Haltung, in die uns Ihre Kunst als eine rein ästhetische hinsichtlich der dargestellten Objecte und der ganze Umwelt versetzt. (Husserl 1994, p. 133)

In the further development of the letter, it is this affinity in terms of attitude or taking-position [*Stellungnahme*] (vis-à-vis objectivity and presented objects, respectively) that guides Husserl's discussion of aesthetics. The affinity is one of strict elimination: like the phenomenological method, the encounter [*Anschauung*] with the artwork demands a strict and total elimination or turning-off [*Ausschaltung*] of what Husserl calls "existential taking-position" by intellect, feeling, or the will. The artwork, in fact, produces or even forces this encounter that excludes such a *Stellungnahme*. Husserl elevates this affinity to a criterion of pure aesthetics: the more a work of art allows "the Existential World" to reverberate [*anklingen*], the

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1 The *Dramen* collected under that title are *Das Bergwerk zu Falun, Der Kaiser und die Hexe*, and *Das kleine Welttheater* (cf. Hofmannsthal 1906). The *Husserliana* editors note, however, that the book was not found in Husserl's library.

less aesthetically pure it is. The "natürliche Geisteshaltung" is what needs to be overcome by both poet and philosopher.

Towards the end of the letter, after having laid out his conquest of the phenomenological method, Husserl extends this affinity between poet and phenomenologist from their methods to the subject-positions themselves. Observing the world, the artist behaves similarly to the phenomenologist:

> *Der Künstler*, der die Welt "beobachtet," um aus ihr für seine Zwecke Natur- und Menschen"kenntnis" zu gewinnen, verhält sich zu ihr ähnlich wie der *Phänomenologe*. [. . .] Ihm wird die Welt, indem er sie betrachtet, zum Phänomen, ihre Existenz ist ihm gleichgiltig, genauso wie dem Philosophen (in der Vernunftkritik). (Husserl 1994, p. 135)

In the course of the passage, the relation intensifies. The *similarity* in behavior towards the world gives way to a result which is exactly [*genauso*] the same: the world as phenomenon, the existence of which is indifferent [*gleichgiltig*], and as such removed from any participation.

Owing to these affinities in terms of *Stellungnahme*, Husserl has a lot to say to and about the poet. So much, in fact, that he apologizes for the occupational hazard of being unable to open his mouth without giving a seminar – absolving the poet of any duties to listen to the philosopher, Husserl's version of academic freedom, the freedom not to listen to academics. The loquaciousness with regard to the poet, however, is coupled here with a principled silence concerning the literary work itself. Only in a postscript does Husserl address the actual works – Hofmannsthal's gift of literature – that prompted the letter in the first place. And when he does, it is to reserve the right to guard his silence: "Über Ihre Werke etwas zu sagen, werde ich mich sehr hüten" (Husserl 1994, p. 135). Careless when slipping into a professorial mode, when it comes to addressing literature, Husserl is on guard: "Ich denke, Lob wie Tadel und weises Gerede jeder Art sind Ihnen schon hinreichend gleichgiltig" (Husserl 1994, p. 135). Much like Hofmannsthal's plays stay to his side, any philosophical move towards critique beyond the stated affinity to the poet, an aesthetic *Stellungnahme*, would necessarily be subjected to the same *gleichgiltigen* indifference towards existence that (according to Husserl) characterizes them both.

2

There is a decisive moment in the first volume of the *Ideen* where Husserl returns to the question of the artwork in the context of an analysis of taking-position as *Stellungnahme*. The moment arrives in the section on noetic-noematic structures,

where Husserl attempts to give an account of affirmation and negation as noematic modifications, raising for the first time such modifications as a "taking-position" of the pure "I":

> Ebenso wie die Negation, bildlich gesprochen, durchstreicht, so "unterstreicht" die Affirmation, sie "bestätigt" "zustimmend" eine Position, statt sie wie die Negation "aufzuheben." [. . .] Wir sahen bisher von dem Eigentümlichen der "Stellungnahme" des reinen Ich ab, das sich in der Ablehnung, speziell hier der negierenden gegen das Abgelehnte, das zu durchstreichende Sein "richtet," so wie es sich in der Bejahung dem Bejahten "zuneigt," sich auf es zu richtet. (*Hua* III, p. 244)

The imagery Husserl employs is one where affirmation is an act that "underscores" a position, whereas negation serves to cancel [*aufzuheben*] it by "striking it through." In negation, the taking-position of the "I" is an *Ablehnung,* a de-cline or turning-away, all the while maintaining a direction against what it aims to strike through; it directs, it judges – *richtet.* Affirmation, meanwhile, is the "I"'s *in*cline towards the affirmed, as a direction-towards. In this account, the noematic modification as positioning of the "I" is identical to its de- or incline. This account of affirmation and negation as the directedness towards or against of an "I" forms the necessary background for Husserl's next development in this section of the *Ideen*, namely the phenomenological isolation of a noematic modification that is *not directed at all*, one that consists in arresting the de- and in-cline of the affirmative and negative modifications without, nonetheless, ceasing to be a modification, in a peculiar kind of act.

Husserl calls this act *Neutralitätsmodifikation*, and insists that it operates on an isolated plane compared to the modifications of affirmation and negation discussed in the preceding paragraphs:

> Es handelt sich uns jetzt um eine Modifikation, die jede doxische Modalität, auf die sie bezogen wird, in gewisser Weise völlig aufhebt, völlig entkräftet – aber in total anderem Sinne wie die Negation, die zudem, wie wir sahen, im Negat ihre positive Leistung hat, ein Nichtsein, das selbst wieder ein Sein ist. Sie durchstreicht nicht, die "leistet" nichts, sie ist das bewußtseinsmäßige Gegenstück alles Leistens: dessen N e u t r a l i s i e r u n g . Sie liegt beschlossen in jedem sich-des-Leistens-erhalten, es-außer-Aktion-setzen, es-"einklammern," "dahingestellt"-haben, sich-in-das-Leisten-"hineindenken," bzw. das Geleistete "bloß denken," ohne "mitzutun." (*Hua* III, pp. 247–248)

On the one hand, we are dealing with something that *aufhebt*, indeed completely cancels out what it modifies, but in a fundamentally different sense than negation. The parallel term Husserl opts for is "völlig entkräften," paralyzing, as it were, the "force" [*Kraft*] of affirmation and/or negation. Here, there is no striking-through: the neutralizing modification is to be understood not as an undoing, but as a non-act, or, Husserl adds, as an act that is not a *leisten*: it is a

modification that is accomplished only in its non-accomplishment; in terms of consciousness, it presents itself as the absolute counterpart to the accomplished act. Husserl follows this description with a barrage of terms in scare quotes, all emphasizing the central aspect of suspension: it is the mere thought of the act that remains unexecuted, without any partaking whatsoever in the Being thus modified. Husserl here – in a move that serves to underline the importance of this passage – resorts even to the term "bracketing," the term associated with and usually reserved for the phenomenological modification of the natural attitude. While the *epoché*, however, is in essence a *re*-directing, the neutralization crucially knows *no* direction, that is, remains essentially un-directed. It is still, however, a neutralization of a particular being, and thus we remain in the noetic-noematic structure, but, as it were, in a state of exception.

Husserl then gives concrete accounts of these exceptional states of the modification of neutrality. This mode of suspension of both affirmation and negation gives rise to Husserl's discussion of *Phantasie*, best rendered as fantasy or fancy, to separate if from the connotations of *Vorstellung*, or imagination. For Husserl, fancy is one kind of modification of neutrality in the form of "mere-thinking," which takes place without positing presence. We must, Husserl writes, consider it a "presentification" or *Vergegenwärtigung*, without any taking-position whatever, with any directedness fully neutralized. While Husserl goes on to claim that this fully neutralized presence is not limited to fancy, but also describes the structure of memory [*Erinnerung*] in the widest possible sense, the experience that Husserl elaborates in detail is *aesthetic* experience.

In §111, Husserl pauses to contemplate Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Knight, Death and the Devil*. In order to view the engraving as art, Husserl claims, we neutralize both the depiction and the depicting object as such – they are, he writes, "weder als seiend, noch als nichtseiend" (*Hua* III, p. 252). The same, Husserl continues, goes for the depicted itself:

> wenn wir uns rein ästhetisch verhalten und dasselbe wieder als "bloßes Bild" nehmen, ohne ihm den Stempel des Seins oder Nichtseins, des Möglich- oder Vermutlichseins u. dgl. zu erteilen. Das besagt aber, wie ersichtlich, keine Privation, sondern eine Modifikation, eben die der Neutralisierung. (*Hua* III, p. 252)

The pure aesthetic experience is not discussed any further, but it leads Husserl to a discussion that directly reprises the question of directionality in the modification of neutrality. The image [*Bild*], or, more precisely, what Husserl terms "perzeptives Bildbewußtsein," is the paradigm for the modification of neutralization. "Perzeptiv" here does not signify *Wahrnehmung* in a direct sense:

> "Wahrnehmung" im normalen Wortsinne besagt nicht nur überhaupt, daß irgendein Ding dem Ich in leibhafter Gegenwart erscheine, sondern daß das Ich des erscheinenden Dinges gewahr werde, es als wirklich daseiend erfasse, setze. Diese Aktualität der Daseinssetzung ist [. . .] neutralisiert im perzeptiven Bildbewußtsein.   (*Hua* III, p. 256)

In an important descriptive shift, what is neutralized is the *actuality* of the "I"'s positing. When facing or turned toward [*zugewendet*] an "image" (as opposed to that which is "depicted"), we do not seize any real thing [*ein Wirkliches*], but something else, "ein Fiktum" (*Hua* III, p. 256). Now this seizure of the *Fiktum*, the non-real, possesses an actuality of its own, namely the "Aktualität" of the facing, or "Zuwendung," itself (*Hua* III, p. 256). But this feature, in turn, pertains only as it were, "gleichsam" (*Hua* III, p. 256): the positing here is not an actual positing, but modified and neutralized in the modus of "as-it-were." Here, even in the neutralized perceptive image-consciousness, we can still note a foundational directionality in the *Zuwendung*, though far from the leanings of affirmation and negation [*Zuneigung* and *Ablehnung*]. The *Zuwendung*, the attentive turning-toward the neutralized, acts as a remnant of the (originally) positional *Zuneigung*.

However, the most extraordinary part of the passage occurs when Husserl describes yet another dimension of the modification opened up by the arrest of this minimal movement in the "as-it-were." Within the modification of neutrality, to the facing or turning-toward the image there is also a corresponding turning-away:

> Durch Abwendung des geistigen Blickes vom Fiktum geht die attentionale Aktualität der neutralisierten Setzung in Potentialität über: das Bild erscheint noch, ist aber nicht "beachtet," es ist nicht – im Modus des "gleichsam" – erfaßt. Im Wesen dieser Sachlage und ihrer Potentialitäten liegen Möglichkeiten für aktuelle Blickwendungen, die hier aber niemals Aktualitäten der Setzung hervorgehen lassen.   (*Hua* III, p. 256)

For Husserl, in the suspension of positing that is taken "as it were" towards the *Fiktum*, there is now the possibility of turning away. In this "Abwendung," the "attentionale Aktualität" of the *Zuwendung* passes into potentiality. It is itself, in fact, the production of a potentiality following the prior suspension of posited actuality. Importantly, in the turning-away, the image still appears but is not attended to – it is not seized. In the passage cited above, Husserl has even parenthetically suspended the "as it were" by placing it between two dashes: "nicht – im Modus des 'gleichsam' – erfaßt." In Husserl's "Abwendung," the relation to the image that is not seized seems to escape – in the moment of inattention – even the confines of the "gleichsam," or as-it-were. In this moment, the potential for further attentive "Blickwendungen" is born. Rather than being a simple reversal of the attentive direction, Husserl's notion suggests a different

phenomenological horizon: a multiplicity of potential turns that is only accessible by way of the founding in-attention of *Abwendung*.[2]

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In the earliest work of Walter Benjamin, a noteworthy similar constellation of literature and phenomenology can be found, specifically in the critical essay, "Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin." Benjamin first refers to Husserl in a letter to Franz Sachs on July 11, 1913, reporting on his summer reading: "Ich lese: die Nachtwachen des Bonaventura [. . .] – und den vorzüglichen Hyperion-Almanach von 1910. Dazu jetzt einen Aufsatz von Husserl" (Benjamin 1995, p. 144). The "Aufsatz" is "Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft," an exposé of the phenomenological method published the first issue of *Logos*, three years before the *Ideen* (see *Hua* XXV, pp. 3–62).[3] In Benjamin's readings, it is phenomenology that finds itself in the adjunct position for the reader – Husserl comes *dazu*. Husserl is added to a reading list including the Jena Romantic novel, *Die Nachtwachen des Bonaventura* (which was still attributed by many to Schelling around 1913), and a digest from the periodical *Hyperion*. Benjamin identifies the year of the "vorzüglichen" *Almanach* as 1910. This volume includes Hugo von Hofmannsthal's short lyric drama, *Das Bergwerk zu Falun*, a work that also appears in the *Kleine Dramen* Hofmannsthal presented to Husserl (cf. Blei/ Sternheim 1909, pp. 106–113) Consequently, when the young Benjamin first enters into the orbit of phenomenology, he does so accompanied by the same

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2 It should be noted, that, according to Husserl, the entirety of this structure involving potentiality and actuality, *Zuwendung* and *Abwendung*, takes place in what Husserl calls the "die Sprache der Neutralität" (*Hua* III, p. 258). The modifications of neutrality themselves, in the multiple noetic-noematic layers of arrest (from the *Fiktum* to memory and *Phantasie*) occur as what Husserl twice refers to as a translation: "so übersetzt sich alles in die Modifikation des Gleichsam" (*Hua* III, pp. 257–258). This translation runs across both "real" and "as-it-were" positions of the "I," establishing a fundamental scission in consciousness between the "real" acts of the former and its parallel inauthentic double: "Das Verhältnis der parallelen 'Akte' besteht darin, daß der eine von beiden ein 'wirklicher Akt' ist, das cogito ein 'wirkliches,' 'wirklich setzendes' cogito, während der andere 'Schatten' von einem Akte, ein uneigentliches, ein nicht 'wirklich' setzendes cogito ist. Der eine leistet wirklich, der andere ist bloße Spiegelung einer Leistung" (*Hua* III, p. 259).
3 This reading is referred to again in a letter from 1917 to Gershom Scholem: "Den Logos-Aufsatz von Husserl habe auch ich vor mehreren Jahre gelesen [. . .]" (Benjamin 1995, p. 410).

figure who – and the same text that – occasioned Husserl's reflections on the relation between literature and philosophy.[4]

In the summer of 1913, Benjamin's engagement with Husserl and phenomenology seems to be contained in this supplemental "dazu." Benjamin's documented engagement with phenomenology seems only to have begun in earnest by 1915, with his courses in Munich taught by one of Husserl's students, Moritz Geiger. This engagement culminates in the desire of Benjamin's to "enter into his [Husserl's] school," expressed in a letter to Fritz Radt that December (Benjamin 1995, p. 302). Here, Benjamin also mentions reading, alongside ("ich lese *auch*") Geiger's work in phenomenological aesthetics, "Husserl's difficult, principal groundwork [*Grundlegung*]" (Benjamin 1995, p. 302),[5] which, although Benjamin does not name the title, likely refers to the first volume of the *Ideen*.[6]

Between these two documented encounters with phenomenology, one in a supplemental fashion and the second as an object of serious study, Walter Benjamin wrote the essay, "Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin." Completed in the winter months of 1914–1915, the essay presents itself as a contribution to "reine Ästhetik" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 105). While such emphasis on the pure [*rein*] in relation to method cuts across both the Neo-Kantian and the phenomenological lexicon, it should be recalled that Husserl specifically, in his letter to Hofmannsthal, had sought to describe the purely aesthetic in its affinity to the phenomenological method.[7] This affinity resided in the strict elimination [*Ausschaltung*] of existential taking-position [*Stellungnahme*]. Indeed, it follows that the more a work of art demands such an existential taking-position, the less aesthetically pure it is (cf. Husserl 1994, p. 134). In "Philosophie als strenge

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4 To further reinforce the connection, Benjamin had cited and discussed Hofmannsthal's poem, "Über die Vergänglichkeit," in a letter to Carla Seligson three days before (see Benjamin 1995, p. 138).

5 The authoritative study on Benjamin's (failed) entrance into the phenomenological school is Fenves 2011, pp. 44–78.

6 This is the opinion of the editors of Benjamin's collected letters, following the determination made by Gershom Scholem. Peter Fenves maintains that Benjamin could be referring to the *Logical Investigations*, with reference to a manuscript from 1916 listing the two works by Husserl side by side (see Fenves 2011, pp. 47–48). Geiger's text, however, is *Beiträge zur Phänomenologie des ästhetischen Genusses*, which was published in the second part of the first *Jahrbuch für phänomenologische Forschung*, the first part of which contained the original publication of Husserl's *Ideen I*.

7 Hermann Cohen's *System der Philosophie*, by contrast, does not speak of purity in this way. "Purity" is instead displaced towards a term in the genitive: his is not a pure aesthetics, but an aesthetic of "pure feeling." The same systematic displacement takes place in his logic and ethics, evidenced by the titles of those main works: *Logik der reinen Erkenntnis, Ethik des reinen Willens,* and *Ästhetik des reinen Gefühls.*

Wissenschaft," the one text by Husserl that we know Benjamin had studied at the time of writing "Zwei Gedichte," we find a significant development of the notion of *Stellungnehmen* in the following formula: "Alles Leben ist Stellungnehmen [. . .]" (*Hua* XXV, S. 336). In light of the Hofmannsthal letter, this remark echoes the aforementioned inverse relation between aesthetics and life: a relation Husserl finds realized in *Das Bergwerk zu Falun* and the other *Kleine Dramen*. When Benjamin offers what he calls an "ästhetische[n] Kommentar" on Hölderlin (Benjamin 1985a, p. 105), it should be read as staking a claim for a wholly different kind of taking-position: while taking up a Husserlian anti-psychologism, its purpose is to detect [*ermitteln*] a structure that offers a response to, and a different determination of, the relation of a work of art – in this case the poem – to *life*.

For this determination, Benjamin employs a technical term, "das Gedichtete," which has been rendered in English as "the poetized."[8] The poetized is first defined as the concept of a "dichterische Aufgabe," a task that is to be derived from the poem itself: "diese Aufgabe wird aus dem Gedicht selbst abgeleitet" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 105). This task and presupposition [*Voraussetzung*] of the poem resides, Benjamin continues, in a separate [*besonderen*] and singular [*einzigartigen*] sphere:

> Diese Sphäre ist Erzeugnis und Gegenstand der Untersuchung zugleich. Sie selbst kann nicht mehr mit dem Gedicht verglichen werden, sondern ist vielmehr das einzig Feststellbare der Untersuchung. Diese Sphäre, welche für jede Dichtung eine besondere Gestalt hat, wird als das Gedichtete bezeichnet.   (Benjamin 1985a, p. 105)

In the development that immediately follows, the "Gedichtete" is posited as a twofold limit-concept, or "Grenzbegriff" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 106). In relation to the poem, this means that the poetized, in principle, is not distinguished from the poem by any characteristic property. Rather, the poetized is distinct from the poem by virtue of its "größere[n] Bestimmbarkeit" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 106): this is not because it is any *less* determined than the poem from the outset, as if through some "quantitativen Mangel" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 106). Its determinability [*Bestimmbarkeit*] is greater because the determinations that are *actual* in the poem have a *potential* existence in the poetized (Benjamin here speaks of *Dasein*,

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8 Both the scope and provenance of this term have been much discussed by readers of Benjamin, precisely because Benjamin generally tends to shy away from technical terms (see Fenves 2011, pp. 19–26). In the conclusion of this essay, I will offer an answer of my own to the provenance-question (the term comes, I will demonstrate, from Hofmannsthal, making it perhaps less "technical" than Benjamin scholars have hitherto assumed). There is, in addition, also the question of the *afterlife* of the term following Benjamin. The term "das Gedichtete" makes a noteworthy appearance in Heidegger's later Hölderlin interpretation (see Heidegger 1971, pp. 15–16).

and for a text from 1915 such a translation is still, perhaps, permissible). We are not, however, confronted with a straightforward opposition between the potentiality and actuality of determinations. Crucially, Benjamin adds the following gloss: "das potentielle Dasein derjenigen, die im Gedicht aktuell vorhanden sind *und andrer*" (my emphasis). And *others*. Here is the passage in full:

> Vom Gedicht unterschieden ist es als Grenzbegriff nicht durch einen quantitativen Mangel an Bestimmungen, sondern durch das potentielle Dasein derjenigen, die im Gedicht aktuell vorhanden sind und andrer. Das Gedichtete ist eine Auflockerung der festen funktionellen Verbundenheit, die im Gedichte selbst waltet, und sie kann nicht anders entstehen als durch ein Absehen von gewissen Bestimmungen; indem hierdurch das Ineinandergreifen, die Funktionseinheit der übrigen Elemente sichtbar gemacht wird. Denn es ist durch das aktuelle Dasein aller Bestimmungen das Gedicht derart determiniert, daß es nur noch als solches einheitlich auffaßbar ist. Die Einsicht in die Funktion setzt aber die Mannigfaltigkeit der Verbindungsmöglichkeiten voraus. So besteht die Einsicht in die Fügung des Gedichts in dem Erfassen seiner immer strengeren Bestimmtheit. Auf diese höchste Bestimmtheit im Gedicht hinzuführen, muß das Gedichtete von gewissen Bestimmungen absehen. (Benjamin 1985a, p. 106)

The "und andrer" involved here, the surplus potentiality of the poetized over the poem, is also a function of the singular determinability that can be traced in the poem. Although the poetized is indeed to be understood as an *a priori* of the poem, it is only approached through the poem. The poetized first appears on the horizon as an "Auflockerung," a loosening of "der festen funktionellen Verbundenheit" that holds sway in the poem itself. There is, according to Benjamin, a critical act that initiates this loosening; in the text it is called "ein Absehen von gewissen Bestimmungen" – a *looking away* with respect to certain determinations (Benjamin 1985a, p. 106). The poetized, it seems, comes into view when the reader's regard [*Sehen*] looks *away*, which does not consist in turning a blind eye to the poem – as in the non-seeing that is a precondition of abstraction – but in the moment when this *Sehen* is simultaneously an *Absehen*, when the regard in the assumption of potential determinations becomes a *disregard*. On its own, of course, *Absehen* can mean both attention and disregard: *auf etwas absehen*, as opposed to *von etwas absehen*. As a phenomenology of literature, it appears that its first order is to modify the regard to preserve the *Sehen* in *Absehen*; the disregard determines the aesthetic object, approaches the greater determinability of the poetized, precisely by looking away. In Husserl's language of neutrality, we encountered this movement as the "Abwendung des geistigen Blickes," the founding inattention towards a "Fiktum" when actuality passed over into potential. It is between *Abwendung* and *Absehen* – between the *Ideen I* (1913)

and the "Zwei Gedichte" (1914–1915) – that a possible phenomenology of literature could emerge.[9]

There is, however, a second sense in which the poetized serves in "Zwei Gedichte" as a limit-concept. If the *poem* is found on one side, *life* is on the other:

> Zugleich ist es aber Grenzbegriff gegen eine andere Funktionseinheit [. . .]. Diese andere Funktionseinheit ist nun die Idee der Aufgabe, entsprechend der Idee der Lösung, als welche das Gedicht ist. [. . .] Diese Idee der Aufgabe ist für den Schöpfer immer das Leben. In ihm liegt die andere Funktionseinheit. Das Gedichtete erweist sich also als Übergang von der Funktionseinheit des Lebens zu der des Gedichts. In ihm bestimmt sich das Leben durch das Gedicht, die Aufgabe durch die Lösung. [. . .] Das Leben ist allgemein das Gedichtete der Gedichte. [. . .] Das Leben liegt als letzte Einheit dem Gedichteten zum Grunde. (Benjamin 1985a, p. 107)

In this sense, the poetized has two *teloi*: in life and the poem, and as such – as the "Gedichtete" – it is a transition [*Übergang*] from the functional unity of life to that of the poem. In what is recognizably a Neo-Kantian turn, Benjamin adds that the pure poetized would no longer be a limit-concept, it would be *either* poem *or* life: "es wäre Leben oder Gedicht" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 108). The poetized is consequently understood as a methodological "absolute Aufgabe" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 108). While, as a "künstlerische Aufgabe," the poetized is a "Voraussetzung" for the poem, the categories of this "Übergangssphäre" between the two functional units of life and poem are not, according to Benjamin, "vorgebildet" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 107). In an extraordinary phrase, Benjamin asserts that while these categories are not formed in advance, we have – perhaps – an *inclination*: "Die Kategorien, in denen diese Sphäre, die Übergangssphäre der beiden Funktionseinheiten, erfaßbar ist, sind noch nicht vorgebildet und haben am nächsten vielleicht eine Anlehnung an die Begriffe des Mythos" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 107). The closest thing we have to a categorial structure of this sphere is in the "Begriffe des Mythos" – *vielleicht*. Appearing in the essay without warning, *Mythos* partakes here of the same sphere of transition between poem and life. For Benjamin, only once the affinity between the mythical and the poetized has been put in place can there be a ground for the poems'

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9 With regard to the fundamental concepts of phenomenology, *Absehen* is, according to Grimm, the original translation of *intentio*, *Absicht* being given as the more recent variation of the term. If intentionality, via Benjamin, can be given another critical dimension, the same goes for its phenomenological correlate, *Erfüllung* or fulfillment: The fulfillment of the task is, for Benjamin, the "truth" of the poem, a task that can only be comprehended by way of a systematic disregard of the very same poem.

analysis and critical judgment. Again reminiscent of the Husserlian assertion of an inverse relation between aesthetic value and existential *Stellungnahme*, Benjamin writes: "Grade die schwächsten Leistungen der Kunst beziehen sich auf das unmittelbare Gefühl des Lebens, die stärksten aber, ihrer Wahrheit nach, auf eine dem Mythischen verwandte Sphäre: das Gedichtete" (Benjamin 1985a, p. 107). It follows, Benjamin continues, asserting that, in the critical analysis of the poem, the sooner life appears as the poetized of the poem – "sein Gedichtetes" – the lesser the poem is judged to be. Life, however, is not for that reason irrelevant to the analysis of greater poems; on the contrary: "[D]ie Analysis der großen Dichtungen [wird] nicht zwar auf den Mythos, aber auf eine durch die Gewalt der gegeneinanderstrebenden mythischen Elemente gezeugte Einheit als eigentlichen Ausdruck des Lebens stoßen" (Benjamin 1985a, S. 108). The analysis – now having gained another dimension by the introduction of *Mythos* – approaches life the way it is intended by the poem, "intended" that is, in the sense that *Absehen* suggests. What critical analysis discovers in its disregard of the poem is not a *Lebenswelt* (to borrow a phrase from the later Husserl), but *Mythos* as another world, where life comes to authentic expression – "eigentlichen Ausdruck" – as a world of counter-striving mythical elements. When Benjamin begins his commentary on Hölderlin's poems "Dichtermut" and "Blödigkeit" (what we have covered here are only the first few pages of the essay) he discovers that it is in the displacement of these mythical elements that the two odes can be established as poems with the "same" poetized, *and* that a critical commentary can be constructed asserting that one poem is greater, that is, more fully realizes its *Gedichtete*, than the other.

4

With Benjamin's relation of poem and life in mind, let us conclude by revisiting the constellation of literature and phenomenology with which we began, yet by shifting our emphasis back to Hugo von Hofmannsthal. The lecture Hofmannsthal gave in Göttingen in December 1906 that was the occasion for his meeting with Husserl, "Der Dichter und diese Zeit," was given on a lecture tour of Germany at the end of that year and published in 1907. It is no coincidence that this text, too, has at its center a renegotiation between poet, poem, and life. At an important juncture in this renegotiation, rejecting the antithesis of poetic activity and living, Hofmannsthal uses the term "das Gedichtete":

> [E]s ist eine sinnlose Antithese, diesen, die leben, das Gedichtete gegenüberzustellen als ein Fremdes, da doch das Gedichtete nichts ist als eine Funktion der Lebendigen. Denn es

lebt nicht: es wird gelebt. Für die aber, die jemals hundert Seiten von Dostojewski gelebt haben oder gelebt die Gestalt der Ottilie in den "Wahlverwandtschaften" oder gelebt ein Gedicht von Goethe oder ein Gedicht von Stefan George, für die sage ich nichts Befremdliches, wenn ich ihnen von diesem Erlebnis spreche als von dem religiösen Erlebnis, dem einzigen religiösen Erlebnis vielleicht, das ihnen je bewußt geworden ist. Aber dies Erlebnis ist unzerlegbar und unbeschreiblich. Man kann daran erinnern, aber nicht es dem Unberührten nahebringen. Wer zu lesen versteht, liest gläubig.

<div align="right">(Hofmannsthal 1979a, p. 79)</div>

While the use of "das Gedichtete" in a poetological sense can be traced back to Goethe (incidentally, in a letter concerning the reception of his novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*)[10] there is a strong case to be made that Benjamin adopted his use of the term from this passage in Hofmannsthal's "Der Dichter und die Zeit." First, for Hofmannsthal, the *Gedichtete* dissolves the antithesis towards life because it is nothing but a "Funktion der Lebendigen" (Hofmannsthal 1979a, p. 79). In Benjamin's text, the poetized is the transition from the functional unit of life – the "Funktionseinheit des Lebens" to that of the poem (Benjamin 1985a, pp. 106–107). Second, it will not escape Benjamin readers that the names Hofmannsthal mentions as examples of literature that knows of no such opposition to life – Dostoyevsky, Ottilie from Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, and Stefan George – represent precisely the private canon around which Benjamin will construct his great early essays (one of which – the essay on *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* – would be published by Hofmannsthal's *Neue Deutsche Beiträge* about a decade after "Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin").[11]

From this passage emerges a theory of reading, or rather, a theory of a reading experience [*Erlebnis*] that is associated with this canon, an experience that is irreducible or unanalyzable ("*unzerlegbar*," in the sense that it cannot be taken apart) and indescribable [*unbeschreiblich*]: "Wer zu lesen versteht, liest gläubig" (Hofmannsthal 1979a, p. 79) Yet earlier in the essay, Hofmannsthal

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10 Goethe's exact phrase, which appears in a letter to Carl Friedrich von Reinhard from 1809, is as follows: "Das Gedichtete behauptet sein Recht, wie das Geschehene" (Goethe 1912, p. 152).

11 The further development of the relation between Benjamin and Hofmannsthal from the Goethe-essay to their quasi in tandem reinterpretation of the German Baroque *Trauerspiel* will be pursued elsewhere. As an intimation of the importance, consider Hofmannthal's enthusiastic reaction upon reading *Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften:* "Ich kann nur sagen, daß er in meinem inneren Leben Epoche gemacht hat und daß sich mein Denken, soweit nicht die eigene Arbeit alle Aufmerksamkeit erzwingt, kaum von ihm hat lösen können. [. . .] Sollte dieser Mann ein jüngerer etwa weit unter meinen Jahren sein, so wäre ich von dieser Reife aufs Äußerste betroffen" (Hofmannsthal/Rang 1959, p. 440).

uses another word than "gläubig" to describe this kind of reading. For those who know how to read, that is, those for whom the poetized exists – "Ich kann nur für die reden, für die Gedichtetes da ist" – reading is "unabsehbar" (Hofmannsthal 1979a, p. 74). "Unabsehbar" appears as a telos of reading. Usually translated as incalculable or unforeseeable, we should stress its form as a negation of *absehbar*. Thus, it would align with what, in Benjamin's essay on Hölderlin, follows from disregard or *Absehen* as the greater determinability of the poetized. The redirected gaze of the reader becomes an *Absehen – ins Unabsehbare*.

Thus it could, we would suggest, bridge the gap to the other – incomparably more famous – kind of reading that Benjamin was to glean from Hofmannsthal, and identified most memorably in *The Dialectical Image* with that of the true Historian, namely, to read what was never written: "Was nie geschrieben wurde, lesen . . . " (Benjamin 1985b, p. 1238).[12]

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12 The citation is from Death's final lines in Hofmannsthal early lyric drama, *Der Tor und der Tod* (cf. Hofmannsthal 1979b, p. 298).

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Kristina Mendicino

Drawing a Blank – Passive Voices in Beckett, Husserl, and the Stoics

Abstract: If the sense of what we say of subjective experience is to be understood independently of the words that express it, as Edmund Husserl insists, and as the Stoics had emphasized before him, then the question arises as to the sense of the subjective experience of words. Like color and other distinguishable qualities, visual or auditory impressions of words would likewise be taken up as objects of perception, such that their sensible character may not only convey, but also may replace and efface, the sense they should signify. Following the premises that are put forth in the Stoic doctrine of the *lékton* – which Husserl explicitly describes as one of the most important, albeit forgotten, advances in logic since Aristotle, and implicitly furthers in his redefinition of the "Satz" – thus leads to the consequence that any given instance of speech may come to appear as an ambivalent phenomenon, which can refer to words themselves rather than to the perceptual experience that supposedly constitutes the underlying foundation for linguistic description. Although neither Husserl nor the Stoics traced this implication of Stoic logic and phenomenology to its extreme consequences, Samuel Beckett does precisely this, perhaps most pronouncedly in *L'Innommable*. The literary analysis of Beckett's prose may thus be seen to further the logical investigations of meaning and sense that once formed the first concern of phenomenology, and offers the complement to philosophical discourse in the stricter sense.

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The Aristotelian categories designated the many ways in which the essential and accidental features of a being could be predicated – quality, quantity, relation, action, and passion, among others. Whatever is said to be in such terms, however, is not identical to those terms. Just as it may be said, with Aristotle, that "being is said in many ways," it could therefore also be said – as in Plato's *Sophist* – that everything that is subject to sentencing *is* not what it is *said to be*. These formulations, among others, draw distinctions between "being" and "saying" that testify not only to the onto-logical problem of coupling the same and the different, but also to the ways in which both are first and foremost functions of that which may be said – which may also speak beyond, against, and beside every logic of being. In his *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie*, Edmund Husserl remarks that the assumption of a reality that *is* "immer da," and that *is* "höchstens hier oder dort 'anders' als ich vermeinte," implies an

inexplicit judgment and a life sentence on the world – a prejudice or presupposition that translates to an "Existenzurteil" – which may be subject, like every other logical or linguistic proposition, to doubt: "Ein solches allzeit mögliches Verfahren ist z.B. d e r a l l g e m e i n e Z w e i f e l s v e r s u c h, den Descartes [. . .] unternahm" (*Hua* III, pp. 61–62). It may even be said that the ontic is, strictly speaking, no real subject of speech, and that whatever "is," "was," and "will be," is neither here nor there. As Samuel Beckett writes in *L'Innommable*: "Ces choses que je dis, que je vais dire, si je peux, ne sont plus, ou pas encore, ou ne furent jamais, ou ne seront jamais, ou si elles furent, ou si elles sont, ou si elles seront, ne furent pas ici, ne sont pas ici, ne seront pas ici, mais ailleurs" (Beckett 1953, p. 24). In other words, the things that language speaks of may always be elsewhere – *in aliore loco* – ; speeches may seduce with their movements [*leurs allures*]; and words can take wing [*prendre ses ailes*] so as to fly from the strictures of comprehensive grasp. And at the same time, every "or if" [*ou si*] may also be said to parse the time of being [*ou-sia*] and to tend away from "here" [*i-ci*] towards a barely accented else-"where" [*où*]. Because there is no alternative for saying any of these things that would not itself be subject to alteration or doubt, and that could not itself stand as an alibi for other words and other matters, nowhere can the claims of propositions *be* maintained with unmovable certainty: "Où maintenant?" (Beckett 1953, p. 7).

Now, the Stoics introduced one of the earliest modifications of the ontological determination of predication developed by Aristotle with their elaboration of the "sayable," or the *lektón*. This nominalized adjective derives from the verb *légein*, whose range of senses include "to say" and "to select." Like other substantivized verbal adjectives ending in – *tós*, the *lektón* may, "either (1) have the meaning of a perfect passive participle, as κρυπτός, *hidden* [. . .] or (2) express *possibility,* as νοητός *thinkable*, ὁρατός *visible*" (Smyth 1984, § 472). It was used in both senses in Attic literature before the Stoics adopted it in the latter sense, and while it may remain questionable to what extent the confusion of both senses continues to speak in Stoic logic, their usage indicates clearly that the *lektón* would not express a claim about what any body *is* – such as, "the tree is green" – but would designate that which punctually appears or takes place – such as, "the tree greens" – thereby shifting the emphasis of predication from determinations of embodied, substantial beings to designations of singular "facts" or "events," as Émile Bréhier and later, Gilles Deleuze, would emphasize in their commentaries on Stoic logic.[1] What is said of bodies are

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1 As Émile Bréhier writes: "Lorsqu'on néglige la copule est et que l'on exprime le sujet par un verbe où l'épithète attribut n'est pas mise en évidence, l'attribut, considéré comme le verbe

those incorporeal actions and passions that affect them and appear on the surface – without affecting what might otherwise be called their singular essence.[2] The sayable is also, however, not the same as any words that may be said or written, which the Stoics considered to be corporeal entities as well. Of the three factors involved in signification according to the Stoics, Sextus Empiricus writes in *Adversus mathematicos* that they "say that two are bodies [*sṓmata*]; that is, the vocalization [*phōnḗ*] and that which occurs [*tugchánon*]; and one is something without-body, that is, the signified fact [*tò sēmainómenon prãgma*], and the sayable [*lektón*]" (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8.12).[3] It is because the legibility of these signified "facts" would precede any possible utterance that Deleuze insists that the Stoics discovered the dimension of "sens." This dimension, according to Deleuze, would condition every proposition before any possible

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tout entier, apparaît alors non plus comme exprimant un concept (objet ou classe d'objets), mais seulement un fait ou un événement. Dès lors la proposition n'exige plus la pénétration réciproque de deux objets, impénétrables par nature, elle ne fait qu'exprimer un certain aspect d'un objet, en tant qu'il accomplit ou subit une action; cet aspect n'est pas une nature réelle, un être qui pénètre l'objet, mais l'acte qui est le résultat même de son activité ou de l'activité d'un autre objet sur lui." (Bréhier 1928, p. 20).

2 Taking the example of the *lektón* "to be cut" that Clement of Alexandria elaborates in his *Stromata*, Bréhier stresses this point, writing that the action of cutting does not produce "une propriété nouvelle, mais un attribut nouveau, celui d'être coupé. L'attribut ne désigne aucune qualité réelle [. . .] elle est purement et simplement un résultat, un effet qui n'est pas à classer parmi les êtres" (Bréhier 1928, pp. 11–13). Writers such as Gilles Deleuze and, more recently, Claude Romano have therefore emphasized that the *lektón* was conceived by the Stoics as non-ontic, in distinction to the corporeal entities that enact and suffer events and facts. Romano writes, "Pour dire ce paradoxal non-être de l'événement, les stoïciens ont recours à un vocabulaire spécifique: ils ne diront pas que l'événement incorporel signifié (le λεκτόν) 'est' (ἔστι), mais qu'il survient, se produit ou, plus rigoureusement, 'se rencontre' (ὑπάρχει). Car l'événement, en lui-même, n'est précisément *rien* d'étant, insaisissable dans la trame de l'étant, et par conséquent aussi irréductible à *l'être* de l'étant, inassimilable à son étance" (Romano 1998, p. 14). Deleuze's entire monograph *Logique du sens* sets forth an elaboration and extension of his interpretation of the Stoic *lektón*.

3 References to this work will appear by book and section number for ease of reference. All translations, unless otherwise noted, are mine (KM). This tripartite distinction has led to the adoption of the *lektón* not only in the more recent philosophies of the event, but also in the development of semiotics in the mid-twentieth century. Roland Barthes defines the "signifié" along the lines of the Stoics when he writes, "ceux-ci distinguaient soigneusement la φαντασία λογική (la représentation psychique), le τυχγανόν (la chose réelle) et le λεκτόν (le 'dicible')," which he further specifies: "ni acte de conscience ni réalité, le signifié ne peut être défini qu'à l'intérieur du procès de signification, d'une manière quasi tautologique: c'est ce 'quelque chose' que celui qui emploie le signe entend par lui. On en revient ainsi justement à une définition purement fonctionnelle: le signifié est l'un des deux *relata* du signe; la seule différence qui l'oppose au signifiant est que celui-ci est un médiateur" (Barthes 1985, p. 42).

naming or deictic indication of a state of affairs; before any speaker whose desires and beliefs manifest themselves in speech; and before the syntactic and conceptual conjunctions that allow propositions to refer to one another or to be inferred from one another (see Deleuze 1969, pp. 22–24). "Sense" or "the sayable" would allow, in other words, all possible utterances and subjects of speech, in advance of any orientation that verbalization may assume. But since it functions in this way, the *lektón* would also have to remain unspoken and unspeakable itself; and, since it is contingent upon "facts" and "events," it could never be guaranteed to arrive or to remain, nor would it ever need to remain the same, even when verbalized expressions appear to reiterate it.

If each designation presupposes sense, however, the question arises as to how this incorporeal and unspeakable sense could be sensed in the first place. Strictly speaking, there would appear to be no way to characterize the singular actuality of this element that is supposed to underlie each apprehension and utterance, for it would not be perceptibly distinct from what is apprehended or understood to be expressed. Deleuze says as much, when he writes: "on ne peut même pas dire qu'il [le sens] existe: ni dans les choses ni dans l'esprit, ni d'existence physique ni d'existence mentale. [. . .] C'est pourquoi nous disions qu'en fait on ne peut l'inférer qu'indirectement" (Deleuze 1969, p. 31). And the skeptic Sextus Empiricus, whose *Adversus mathematicos* contains one of the most extensive accounts of Stoic logic, says nearly the same thing when he seeks to demonstrate that the *lektón* cannot be presumed to exist with certainty, because it will either rest upon an assertion that can be countered by an opposing claim, or it will be established by demonstration, which would have to take place in a speech set together from utterances – that is, from verbalizations of *lektá* – which would themselves require demonstration, and thus lead to an infinite regress (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8.74–78). This difficulty already emerges in one of the canonical formulations of the *lektón* from his *Adversus mathematicos*:

> [T]he three are yoked together with each other, the signified, the signifying, and that which occurs; the signifying is the vocalization, such as the vocalization, "Dion"; the signified is itself the matter which makes itself clear by [the vocalization], and it [the signified] is what we take hold of by our thought of that which subsists beside it [*paruphistaménou*], and non-Greek speakers do not perceive it, although they hear the vocalization; and that which occurs is the underlying external thing, such as Dion himself. Of these, they [the Stoics] say that two are bodies; that is, the voice and that which occurs; and one is something without-body, that is, the signified fact, and the sayable [*tò sēmainómenon prãgma, kaì lektón*], which also comes to be true or false. And this [becoming true or false] is not common to all [*letká*], but there is, on the one hand, the elliptical kind, and on the other hand, the kind that is complete in itself. And as for the kind that is complete in itself, it is that which is called the axiom, which they [the Stoics] describe, saying: "An axiom is that which is true or false."
> (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8.11–12)

The *lektón* thus appears to be an incorporeal "fact" or *prâgma* – in the etymological sense of "that which has been done" – which remains the *para*-cognitive bystander – the *paruphistámenon* – for the thought that grasps it. As a rule, it would be this same thought-object that it is expressed and evoked in particular words, which may themselves vary from language to language. Since words would be as corporeal as their supposed transcendent referents, however, they would have to be transcendent referents themselves, and would therefore need to be grasped as *lektá* as well, rendering the *lektón* ambivalent, divided between what may be perceived as an object and what may be perceived as an utterance. This is why those who do not speak Greek may hear "Dion" and see someone approaching, without grasping any relation between the two occurrences. For those who *do* speak Greek, however, the simultaneous occurrence of the word "Dion" and someone approaching may lead to a recognition of reference, but the doubling of "Dion" and Dion would also have to allow for the word to be apprehended in lieu of Dion himself. In other words, the condition for linguistic comprehension and for comprehension *tout court* – the condition for yoking together words and occurrences – would also be what lets them come apart. Sextus Empiricus does not say so explicitly, but he indicates as much when he uses the same word twice to denote Dion's – nominal – arrival.[4]

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4 Other accounts of Stoic logic similarly suggest that "sayables" are not only distinct both from specific linguistic expressions, but also from meanings that might be classified as abstract types – for sayables are ever-singular, as is every corporeal element of the cosmos. Sayables therefore not only differ when the "same" expression is said on different occasions by different speakers; they also can perish when the possibility of indicating their ever-singular subjects perish. So too can their truth-value change when circumstances change. Michael Frede writes: "Denn Ausdrücke als Typen sind entweder unvergänglich oder jedenfalls doch nicht in dem Sinn vergänglich, in dem [. . .] stoische Aussagen vergehen können. Genausowenig kann es sich um die allgemeine Verwendung oder Bedeutung eines Aussagesatzes handeln. Denn die allgemeine Bedeutung eines Satzes wie 'dieser ist gestorben' ist dieselbe, ganz gleich, mit Hinsicht auf wen wir diesen Satz verwenden. Wir werden aber sehen, daß Chrysipp davon ausgeht, daß die Ausssage jeweils eine andere ist, wenn wir uns mit 'dieser' auf verschiedene Personen beziehen. Folglich kann es sich bei der Aussage im stoischen Sinn auch nicht um die allgemeine Bedeutung eines Aussagesatzes handeln. [. . .] Aber auch um die Behauptung selbst kann es sich nicht handeln, wenn denn die Behauptung auf die angegebene Weise durch die Wahrheitsbedingungen bestimmt wird. Denn die so bestimmte Behauptung kann ihren Wahrheitswert nicht ändern, wohingegen stoische Aussagen ihren Wahrheitswert wechseln können" (Frede 1974, p. 35). Situations in which the truth-value of a statement can alter include not only those which are bound by deictic indicators of time, place, and person – such as the favorite Stoic example, "it is day," which is no longer true when it is said again at nighttime (Frede 1974, p. 46) – but also when the conditions of that which the statement addresses become absent, as when Dio has died and one would say "dieser ist gestorben." In this case, "die demonstrative Aussage" is destroyed, "weil man nicht mehr of Dio zeigen kann" (Frede 1974, pp. 48–49). The statement is possible, however, during Dio's lifetime in

He also performs a similar gesture in exemplifying the Stoic axiom – which word for "proposition" places the accent, not upon a "positing," but upon a "claim"[5]– with an axiom about the axiom: "An axiom is that which is true or false." This sentence redoubles the initial description of a *lektón* as that which "comes to be true or false" and renders the alternative of true or false potentially false, if it is true that each statement of this kind should be true *or* false. The parroting or parody of veridical, demonstrative propositions that occurs here in all earnest thus culminates in an irresolvable paradox.

Now it may be that Sextus Empiricus deliberately chooses examples that expose an undecidable ambivalence between word and occurrence, *lektón* and *lektón*, axiom and axiom, anticipating his later arguments that one cannot attempt to prove the theory of the *lektón* without entering into an infinite regress. However, the indifference between the *lektón* that is evoked and provoked by an utterance and the *lektón* that is grasped in apprehending a fact is indicated in another Stoic definition of the *lektón* as well, as "that which subsists according to a logical impression [*katà logikèn phantasían*]," which appears both in Sextus Empiricus's *Adversus mathematicos* and in Diogenes Laertes's *Vitae philosophorum* (see Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8.70 and Hülser 1987–1988, fr. 696).[6] This definition implies that the impressions or *phantasíai* of appearances are themselves structured linguistically – which is why they may translate to linguistic expression in the first place. This assumption is indicated, too, when the Stoics define the criterion of true impressions in terms of evidence that compels assent. On this compulsion, Sextus Empiricus perceptively remarks: "An assent cannot come to be towards an impression [*pròs phantasían*], but towards a speech [*allà pròs lógon*] (for assents are claims)" (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 7.154).

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the form of a hypothetical proposition, such as: "Wenn Dio gestorben ist, dann ist dieser gestorben," because it is a definite statement that entails the deictic indication of its subject (Frede 1974, p. 56).

5 The noun "axiom" derives from *axioŭn*, "to deem worthy," "to consent." Diogenes Laertes points to this etymology in his *Vitae philosophorum* when he introduces Chrysippus's definition of an "axiom," which Jeffrey Barnouw takes up and comments upon as well (Barnouw 2002, p. 297).

6 All citations from Hülser's comprehensive edition of the fragments of the Stoics will be rendered by fragment number for ease of reference. In translating *phantasía* with "impression," I follow the choice and explanation provided by Anthony Long and David Sedley: "Our translation of *phantasia* by 'impression' seeks to capture the Stoics' own elucidation of the term [as compared to the impression of a signet ring in wax], while it places this within the modern empirical tradition that they have influenced. The notion of an *imprint* in their usage gets its particular point from the assumption that any such 'affection' requires a corresponding 'impressor' as its cause" (Long and Sedley 1987, p. 239). Other possible translations include "presentation," as Mates renders it (Mates 1953, p. 15).

But whereas Sextus Empiricus and Diogenes Laertes provide definitions for the *lektón*, it was the doxographer Aetius who depicted the process of logical – or "lectical" – apprehension in a phenomenological description *avant la lettre*:

> The impression [*phantasía*] is, then, the pathos that comes to be in the soul, and that shows both itself and that which has made it, such that then, through the sight that is seen, we theoretically intuit the white, that it is the pathos that has come to be through the sense of sight in the soul. And according to this, the pathos, we have the ability to say that white is an underlying thing moving us. (Hülser 1987–1988, fr. 268)

We are, in other words, passively moved by an impression or appearance – a *phantasía* – whose momentum provokes a shift towards the active vision of theoretical intuition. It is according to this pro-vocative pathos [*katà pathos*] and not according to a predetermined category [*katēgoría*] that we come to have the ability to say something of the quality of our experience: namely, "that the white is an underlying thing moving us." What we "have" in grasping a perceptual phenomenon is therefore nothing other than something to say; and at the same time, our having something to say is never an instance of "having language" [*lógon échon*] insofar as each expression would be the citation and translation of a logical impression that remains foreign to all languages that are spoken. Speaking thereby becomes an endless task, which replaces, displaces, differs, and defers the "word" [*logos*] with a having "to say" [*epeĩn*], and which thereby testifies to a fundamental dispossession, when it comes to language.

Reading or hearing the expression "that 'white' is the underlying thing moving us," however, would also give "us the ability to say that 'white' is the underlying thing moving us." The evocation may, in other words, itself occur as a provocation, with or without any visual data that corresponds to this so-called color. For words are also, as the Stoics say, perceptible bodies, and as such, they may move us just as much as any other corporeal body may do. The logical structure of the physical world that grounds the systematic coherence of Stoic logic, physics, and ethics, thus also lays the ground for movements of and through language that redouble and thereby exceed any tenable order of things and causes. It is for this reason that the Stoics prioritized deictics over names, when it came to the subject of truth claims (see Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8. 96–98), where truth would be predicated upon the immediate perception of an unnamable "this-here," or *tóde tí*. Yet even "these"-statements demonstrate the excess of words over the bodies they indicate, as soon as it becomes a question of drawing the limits of what can be pointed out in "this" way. If, say, "Dion" has died, the Stoics would argue that "the axiom 'this-one has died' perishes, there no longer being something to receive the deixis" (Hülser 1987–1988, fr. 994). But this claim about claims is contradicted with and by its very utterance,

while the *lektón* it translates would have to correspond, if not to the non-existent body that may have existed before, then to the word for those words, "this-one has died." The fact therefore remains: the *lektón* cannot but be fundamentally ambivalent, and in the final analysis, it ceaselessly blurs the boundaries that the Stoics sought to maintain between perception and language, presence and absence, existence and decease.

If there were an expression of the extreme consequences that the Stoic theory of the *lektón* entails, it could therefore be said to resemble the language that Samuel Beckett speaks in *L'Innommable,* which opens by calling into question every place, time, and person that could be indicated *hic et nunc* – "Où maintenant? Quand maintenant? Qui maintenant?" – before proceeding to render these questions questionable – "Sans me le demander. Dire je" – ; and going on to assert tentatively the fact of assenting to spoken facts of unknown age and provenance – "Peut-être n'ai-je fait qu'entériner un vieil état de fait" (Beckett 1953, p. 7). This reference to facticity just as soon gives way to the disclaimer – "Mais je n'ai rien fait" – and to a remark that retracts the claim to speak – "J'ai l'air de parler ce n'est pas moi, de moi, ce n'est pas de moi" (Beckett 1953, p. 7). Here, "having to say" thus becomes a matter of "airs" that gives vent to the dispossession of the *lógos* or the *lektón* that Aetius indicates without explicitly saying it. The graphic similarity between the "j'ai" and "l'air," moreover, may be read as yet another sign for the confusion of signs that "I" am addressing, which renders all that "I" may "have" said altered, disintegrated, and vaporized. And because "my" speaking is neither of nor about me: "ce n'est pas de moi" – and because, consequently, there is no "me" to speak of: "pas de moi" – this passage also suggests that "I" may be airing something other than logical impressions proper to my current experience, something along the lines of older, expired statements, or: "un vieil état de fait" (Beckett 1953, p. 7).[7] In terms of Stoic logic, there would be no sure way to note the difference: as Chrysippus had said, logical *impressions* are "alterations" [*heteroiṓseis*] of the soul, analogous to the way

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7 Shortly thereafter, the problem of facts, assent, and the words that may be given for them, is exposed once more, with the words: "Le fait semble être, si dans la situation où je suis on peut parler de faits, non seulement que je vais avoir à parler de choses dont je ne peux parler, mais encore, ce qui est encore plus intéressant, que je, ce qui est encore plus intéressant, que je, je ne sais plus, ça ne fait rien" (Beckett 1953, p. 8). This "having to speak of things" – "avoir à parler de choses" – can logically coincide with an inability to speak of them – "dont je ne peux parler" – if having to say and saying were considered to be separate actions along the lines that Aetius describes in his illustration of the sayable, and if every sayable "fact" cannot, as such, be said. Furthermore, if each instance of saying or writing may appear to be a "fact" in its own right, its status would remain an ambivalent semblance of whatever the facts may be – "Le fait semble être" – for these may also ultimately be nothing at all – "ça ne fait rien."

in which "air, when many utterances are voiced simultaneously, receives at once unspeakably many differing strikes and straightaway holds many alterations" (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 7.231). And insofar as these impressions are *logical* to begin with, there would be no criterion to tell apart sensory or verbal data, physical or linguistic terminology, and Chrysippus's analogy would be rendered no mere figure of speech for the soul, but a description of the soul *as* a figure of diverse speeches. The claims and disclaimers of Beckett's *L'Innommable* are therefore not only possible, but also logically rigorous, for reasons that are named more explicitly later: "Les hommes aussi, qu'est-ce qu'ils ont pu me chapitrer sur les hommes, avant même de vouloir m'y assimiler. Tout ce dont je parle, avec quoi je parle, c'est d'eux que je le tiens" (Beckett 1953, pp. 61–62). This derivative quality of language, moreover, would also have to extend to the "me" who speaks, which occurs to the speaker as well: "il n'est pas été donné encore d'établir avec le moindre degré de précision ce que je suis, où je suis, si je suis des mots parmi des mots, ou si je suis le silence dans le silence, pour ne rappeler que deux des hypothèses lancées à ce sujet" (Beckett 1953, p. 168). Even as "ce sujet" is deictically pointed out, then, it indicates no direction, but suffers a thoroughly unsettling diremption: the reference "ce sujet" is riven between the speaking subject and those words that are given for it; and far from providing underlying support, hypotheses are jettisoned: "lancées."

As in the case of "Dion" – who is, so to speak, dead on arrival – each personal expression may also amount to the suppression of the person with the words of which he may be said to consist, "des mots parmi des mots." And as in the moment of having the ability to say, "This is white," speech becomes a solicitous task [*tâche*] – or a soliciting stain [*tache*] – that has a say of its own before and without any other thinkable subject to speak of: "Curieuse tâche, que d'avoir à parler de soi" (Beckett 1953, p. 40). All the while, moreover, the speaker who occasionally claims to be writing his life testifies frequently to his uncertainty over whether he ever may have lived or died, and whether death gives any sure indication of a life that had gone before it: "je me suis lourdement trompé en supposant que la mort en elle-même constituait un indice, ou même une forte présomption, en faveur d'une vie préalable" (Beckett 1953, p. 92). For no matter how many times death might be pronounced, what comes to pass – what passes away and what goes on nonetheless – are words: "Ce qui se passe, ce sont des mots" (Beckett 1953, p. 97).[8]

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8 As Maurice Blanchot wrote, the speaker of *L'Innommable* is "un être sans être qui ne peut ni vivre ni mourir, ni cesser ni commencer, le lieu vide où parle le désœuvrement d'une parole vide et que recouvre tant bien que mal un Je poreux et agonisant" (Blanchot 1959, p. 290).

This is not to say that Beckett was "influenced" by Stoic logic in writing his trilogy from the 1950s, although he would have encountered it in the histories of philosophy that he had read, such as John Burnet's *Greek Philosophy*, James Tuft's English translation of Wilhelm Windelband's *History of Philosophy*, and Friedrich Ueberweg's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*[9] – as well as Jean-Paul Sartre's chapter on Edmund Husserl in *L'Imagination*, in which Sartre summarizes Husserl's distinction between *noesis* and *noema* and aligns the latter with "une existence idéale, un type d'existence qui se rapproche de celui du λεκτὸν stoïcien" (Sartre 1981, p. 154).[10] And according to the testimony of Beckett's biographer and friend, James Knowlson, Beckett also would have known the work of Bréhier, one of the foremost scholars of Stoicism from the first half of the twentieth century, as well as one of the first philosophers to review Husserl's *Méditations cartésiennes*, which appeared in French translation before they were published in German.[11] What is said in *L'Innommable* is more and other than anything that could be reduced to one theoretical term or school of thought, and it is anything but an illustrative "example" – unless one were to say that it relentlessly displays and displaces the exemplarity of every lexical item and every verbal paradigm with logical – "lectical" – rigor. But whether or not Stoic thought is cited directly in *L'Innommable* is immaterial, when it comes to saying: Beckett's language exposes the furthest consequences of Stoic logic.

Now, it is far more common to draw connections between the Stoic theory of the *lektón* and the developments in logic around the beginning of the twentieth century, than it is to draw the paradoxical and paralogical consequences of the *lektón* through a reading of Beckett's prose. What one might call the "intentional inexistence" of the *lektón* has frequently been cited by commentators of Stoicism and modern logic alike to present the *lektón* as the ancient precedent

9 Wilhelm Windelband, for example, refers to the λεκτόν but glosses it as "*the content of consciousness* as such" (Windelband 1905, p. 199). For a discussion of Beckett's extensive use of these overviews of philosophy, see van Hulle and Nixon 2013, p. 129, as well as Feldman 2006, pp. 32–77.
10 For a brief account of Beckett's readings in Sartre's *L'Imagination*, see Feldman 2009, pp. 30–31.
11 Anthony Uhlmann's study on Beckett and the Stoics is one of the few devoted to the resonance of Stoic thought in Beckett's writing. In it, Uhlmann cites the testimony of Beckett's biographer, James Knowlson, that "Beckett knew of Bréhier's work" (Uhlmann 2001, p. 352). Uhlmann's article gives prominence to the *lektón*, but because he focuses upon Beckett's drama *What Where* and the problem of violence, he places different accents upon the way Beckett's writing may be read to expose the paradoxes incorporated in the Stoics' articulations of the *lektón*.

for Gottlob Frege's descriptions of the concept,[12] for Bernard Bolzano's discussions of the "Satz an sich,"[13] for Alexius Meinong's "Gegenstandstheorie,"[14] and Husserl's *noema*[15]– which is, in fact, one of the words that is used to gloss

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12 In his monograph, *Propositional Perception*, Jeffrey Barnouw writes, "Frege developed a similar idea of the elements of the predicative synthesis in a proposition, the 'unsaturated' expression corresponding to the uncompleted *lektón*" (Barnouw 2002, p. 294). This comment most likely refers to essays such as "Funktion und Begriff" (1891), "Begriff und Gegenstand" (1892), and "Was ist eine Funktion" (1904), in which Frege compares the concept – understood as that which can operate as a predicate in a proposition (see Frege 1962, p. 70) – to the mathematical function, insofar as both are "ungesättigt, führ[en] eine leere Stelle mit sich, und erst dadurch, daß diese Stelle von einem Eigennamen [d.i. bestimmtem Gegenstand, Subjekt, Zahl] ausgefüllt wird oder von einem Ausdruck, der einen Eigennamen vertritt, kommt ein abgeschlossener Sinn zum Vorschein" (Frege 1962, p. 27). Benson Mates, on the other hand, finds strong similarities between the Stoic λεκτόν and Frege's notion of "Sinn" (see Mates 1953, pp. 19–26), which Frege describes early in "Sinn und Bedeutung" (1892) as the "Art des Gegebenseins" through which an object can be meant (Frege 1962, p. 39), whether or not the "Sinn" has an object [*Gegenstand*] or a meaning [*Bedeutung*] – which are mutually implicated by one another in this essay. Such is the case, for example, when it comes to all sentences about Odysseus: these have a sense and express thoughts, "ob der Name 'Odysseus' eine Bedeutung hat oder nicht" (Frege 1962, p. 45). It is also likely that Frege would have become introduced to Stoic thought through his tenant in Jena, the philologist Rudolf Hirzel, whose second volume of *Untersuchungen zu Cicero's philosophischen Schriften* begins with a lengthy discussion of the development of Stoic thought. This connection is elaborated at length in Gabriel, Hülser, and Schlotter 2009.

13 Hourya Sinaceur draws a connection between Bolzano's notion of sense [*Sinn*] as a "réalité idéale" and the Stoic λεκτόν in Sinaceur 1999, p. 463. In his *Wissenschaftslehre*, Bolzano expressly distinguishes the "Satz an sich" from spoken, written, or even thought propositions, albeit via an example that appeals to the omniscience of God: "unter einem Satz an sich verstehe ich nur irgend eine Aussage, daß etwas ist oder nicht ist, gleichviel, ob diese Aussage wahr oder falsch ist; ob sie von irgend Jemand in Worte gefaßt oder nicht gefaßt, ja auch im Geiste nur gedacht oder nicht gedacht worden ist. Verlangt man ein Beispiel, wo das Wort Satz in der hier festgesetzten Bedeutung erscheint: so gebe ich gleich folgendes, dem viele ähnliche zur Seite gestellt werden können: 'Gott, als der Allwissende, kennt nicht nur alle wahren, sondern auch alle falschen Sätze, nicht nur diejenigen, die irgend ein geschaffenes Wesen für wahr hält, oder von denen es sich nur eine Vorstellung macht, sondern auch jene, die Niemand für wahr hält, oder sich auch nur vorstellt, oder je vorstellen wird'" (Bolzano 1985, p. 104). In his chapters devoted to the "Satz an sich," Bolzano refers frequently to passages from Sextus Empiricus whose immediate surrounding context includes a discussion of the λεκτόν (see, for example, Bolzano 1985, p. 136).

14 Deleuze draws this connection in his *Logique du sens*, in the context of a discussion that also aligns the *lektón* with Husserl's notion of the *noema* (Deleuze 1969, pp. 32–34).

15 Commenting on the passage from *Ideen I* regarding the noematic object – "Sein esse besteht ausschließlich in seinem 'percipi' – nur daß dieser Satz nichts weniger als im Berkleyschen Sinne gilt, da das percipi das esse hier nicht als reelles Bestandstück enthält"

the *lektón* in Eduard Zeller's *Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Zeller 1963, p. 81). However, recurring to the traces of the Stoic *lektón* in modern philosophy – especially in the phenomenology of Husserl – opens another way to approach the implications of Stoic thought and modern logic that Beckett's writing may be read to explicate to their extremes. And whereas Frege, Bolzano, and Meinong do not explicitly emphasize the importance of the Stoic *lektón* for their thinking, Husserl does precisely this, besides the fact that many of his formulations may be read to further the Stoics' surviving "logical investigations."[16]

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Husserl refers explicitly to the *lektón* at least twice, and in both contexts, he introduces it as an advanced development in the history of logic that had hitherto been neglected. These references testify to more intensive engagements with the details and problems of Stoic thought, which become evident not only in Husserl's explicit evocations of Stoicism, but also in his descriptions of perception and its noematic correlates. In his *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, Husserl speaks of the "schon sehr fortgeschrittene[n] Einsicht der stoischen Lehre vom λεκτόν," and describes this insight as one that did not penetrate the subsequent development of logic, for the same reason that "die ideale Objektivität der Urteilsgebilde nicht zur Anerkennung durchdringen konnte": namely, out of "altererbte[n] Ängste[n] vor dem Platonismus," which persisted despite the otherwise widely accepted "Irrealität der mathematischen Gestalten" (*Hua* XVII, pp. 85–87). Earlier, in his lecture course entitled *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl had written:

> Die den großen Wurf der Aristotelischen Analytik fortgestaltende Stoische Logik hat das große Verdienst, zuerst die notwendige Idee einer wirklich strengen formalen Logik in einiger Reinheit herausgearbeitet zu haben. Sie legte den Grund dazu durch ihre bedeutsame – allerdings beiseitegeschobene, ja völlig in Vergessenheit geratene – Lehre vom λεκτόν. In ihr wird zuerst die Idee des Satzes, als des im Urteilen geurteilten Urteils (Urteil im noematischen Sinn), präzis herausgefaßt, und auf seine reinen Formen werden die syllogistischen Gesetzmäßigkeiten bezogen. (*Hua* VII, pp. 18–19)

Whereas the first reference to the *lektón* suggests a relatively vague analogy between its incorporeality and the notion of ideality that figures so crucially in his

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(*Hua* III, p. 230) – Sartre notes: "Ainsi le noême est un néant qui n'a qu'une existence idéale, un type d'existence qui se rapproche de celui du λεκτὸν stoïcien" (Sartre 1981, p. 154).

16 The phrase may be read in reference to the Stoics as well as to Husserl, for it designates the title of one of Chrysippus's books, the *ΛΟΓΙΚΑ ΖΗΤΗΜΑΤΑ*, which has been partially preserved on papyrus, and which was edited and published in the same year that the second part of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* appeared. See Crönert's edition of Chrysippus (1901), pp. 548–579.

thought, the latter reference shows that Husserl interprets the *lektón* more specifically to mean what he had described as a "Satz" in his *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie* a decade earlier, which would remain crucial to his thought through to his latest writings, such as *Erfahrung und Urteil*.[17]

In *Ideen I*, Husserl had defined the "Satz" as the "Einheit von Sinn und thetischem Charakter" (*Hua* III, p. 305); where "Sinn" should designate the "'Gegenstand im Wie' – im Wie seiner Gegebenheitsweisen," while "thetische[r] Charakter" refers to the belief or modification of belief that accompanies it (*Hua* III, p. 303). Not only this pair of components, but also the various formulations that Husserl offers for this pair throughout his career evoke a terminology that recalls the language of the Stoics. The "thetic" character for every proposition speaks to the way in which each impression or *phantasía* for the Stoics – and, in Husserl's case, each intentional object – would have been accompanied by a mode of "assent" or more literally, a "setting-down-with" that constitutes a thetic act: *sugkatáthesis*. And although the suspension of assent could be achieved through, as Sextus Empiricus also says, *epochḗ*,[18] the foundational modus of perception, for the Stoics and for Husserl, would also be an involuntarily thetic one, grounded in evidence – and thus one that is not so much a positing, as it is a matter of ceding to positivity.[19] Regarding

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17 In *Erfahrung und Urteil*, Husserl refers back to *Ideen I* in the passage where he writes, "Ursprünglich ist der Begriff des Sinnes, wie es in seiner Kontrastierung mit dem 'Satz' zum Ausdruck kommt, gewonnen durch die Verallgemeinerung der Unterscheidung von Qualität und Materie des Urteils in den *Logischen Untersuchungen*. Aus ihr ergab sich, speziell auf das Urteil angewendet, der Begriff des Sinnes als 'Urteilsmaterie' oder 'Urteilsinhalt' und davon unterschieden der volle Urteilssatz, das ist der Sinn mit seinem thetischen Charakter. Diese Einheit von Urteilsinhalt und thetischem Charakter macht einen weiteren Begriff von 'Sinn' des Urteils aus: das Urteilsvermeinte als solches, zu dem auch der thetische Charakter gehört als eine Struktur des Urteilsnoemas. Da die Rede vom 'Satz' zweideutig ist, weil darunter sowohl der bloß vermeinte als solcher als auch der wahre, erfüllte Satz, der Sachverhalt selbst verstanden werden kann, werden wir immer, wo wir den bloßen Satz meinen, hinzufügen, 'Satz, als bloßer Sinn genommen,' um damit seine Zugehörigkeit zur Region der Vermeintheiten als solcher, der Sinne im weiteren Sinne, anzudeuten. Was im normal fortschreitenden Urteilsverlauf substantiviert wird, ist dann nicht der Satz in Anführungszeichen, das Urteilsvermeinte als solches, sondern der in Geltung belassene Satz, eben der vermeinte Sachverhalt selbst" (Husserl 1964, p. 345).

18 After arguing against the possibility of an apprehension of external things at all – because each true impression could, for example, just as well be a false one – Sextus Empiricus writes "all things being inapprehensible, it will follow, also according to the Stoics, that the wise one hold back/practice *epochḗ* [*epéchein*]" (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 7.155–156).

19 This is a point that Husserl touches upon, when he defines the primary modus of perception in terms of certainty – "Der Urmodus ist Gewißheit, aber in Form schlichtester Gewißheit" – which comes before the alternatives of doubt or explicit affirmation and therefore before any

"sense," Husserl presents the identical meaning of two mental representations expressly as a "sayable," already in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, describing its condition thus: "wenn sich [. . .] über die vorgestellte Sache genau dasselbe und nichts anderes aussagen ließe" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 433). Shortly before the publication of *Ideen I*, Husserl will come even closer to the Stoic term for the sayable when he writes in his essay, "Philosophe als strenge Wissenschaft": "Denn das Individuum ist zwar nicht Wesen, aber es 'hat' ein Wesen, das von ihm evidentgültig aussagbar ist" (*Hua* XXV, p. 36).[20] And later, in his posthumously published text on the "Ursprung der Geometrie," Husserl speaks of language as incorporation – perhaps even as a Stoic corporeal of sorts – when he writes of the way in which each ideal object, "mittels der Sprache [. . .] sozusagen ihren Sprachleib erhält" (*Hua* VI, p. 369). More importantly, however, it is Husserl's elaboration of the "Sinn" of the "Satz" in *Ideen I* that draws his writing in closest proximity to the Stoics' descriptions of the *lektón* – despite its more obvious affinities to the thought of contemporaries such as Frege.

Now it may be objected that the phrase, "Wie seiner Gegebenheitsweise," resonates more closely with Frege's definition of "Sinn" as "Art des Gegebenseins" than with the formulations that may be found among the extant fragments of the Stoics (Frege 1962, p. 39). But Husserl does not suggest, as Frege does, that the decisive factor, when it comes to meaning, would be a transcendent object. In "Sinn und Bedeutung," Frege associates "Bedeutung" with the referent of various senses, a referent that would no longer function as a "Begriff" or a "Beziehung." He calls such a referent an "Eigennamen," which is distinguished by the property that it cannot be converted into a function or predicate, and which has "meaning" when the matter that it names truly exists, or when its "Bedeutung ein bestimmter Gegenstand ist" (Frege 1962, p. 39). (Such "Eigennamen," Frege adds, can "auch aus mehreren Worten oder sonstigen Zeichen bestehen" [Frege 1962, p. 39].) For

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possible judgment or decision. It is only the "Durchgang durch Zweifel zur Entscheidung" that gives "dem Bewußtsein eben den Charakter des entscheidenden, und seinem noematischen Sinn den enstprechenden Charakter, der sich im 'ja,' 'in der Tat,' 'wirklich so' und in dergleichen Redewendungen ausdrückt" (*Hua* XI, pp. 37–38). Initial certainty therefore cannot properly be called an affirmation, decision, or judgment, any more than being dragged by the hair can be called a voluntary motion; the knowledge that "Ge*wiß*heit" implies and bespeaks thus remains unknown to the knower. Already in *Ideen I*, however, Husserl affirms the position of a general thetic approach to the world, writing that "eine Umwandlung in Vermutung, Anmutung, in Unentschiedenheit, in einen Zweifel (in welchem Sinne des Wortes immer) [. . .] nicht in das Reich unserer freien Willkür [gehört]" (*Hua* III, p. 63).

20 See also the – nearly identical – formulations that Husserl offers in his lectures on the *Bedeutungslehre* (*Hua* XXVI, pp. 210–11).

Husserl, however, the factor of a transcendent object does not enter into his definitions of meaning and naming in the same way. Every expression or name would designate another sort of "sense" for an intentional object that is conceived as transcendent and that remains ever subject to further determination, whether or not it could ever be affirmed to transcend the subject who intends it. In his lectures from 1908 on the *Bedeutungslehre*, for example, Husserl places the proper name "Napoleon" on a par with "de[m] Sieger von Jena" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 28), and thus indicates that every name and every noun would express another determination of the intentional object that is evoked, and none would be privileged to stand for a unique referent. No sense or meaning is the same as the "Einheitspunkt, das pure bestimmbare X" that each determination addresses in its specific way (*Hua* III, p. 302)[21]– nor can that determinable "X" be referred to except by means of some such way – "mittels dessen es sich auf den Gegenstand bezieht" (*Hua* III, p. 299). Each concrete singularity would, as such, be a "dies da!" in the "dahinfließende[n] Wahrnehmung, Erinnerung u. dgl.," which is therefore not susceptible to "Subsumption" of any kind, and remains "ewig das ἄπειρον" (*Hua* XXV, p. 36). By contrast, the "Sinn" ascribed to any such singularity is already an iterable ideal – by which the supposed singularity becomes understood as "ein mit lauter identischen objektiven Ausdrücken Beschreibbares, weil in den parallel artverschiedenen Erlebnissen ein Identisches sein konnte" (*Hua* III, p. 210–11). "Sinn" thus means nearly the same thing as "Bedeutung" in Husserl's vocabulary – he calls it "ein Wort, das doch im allgemeinen gleichwertig mit 'Bedeutung' gebraucht wird" (*Hua* III, p. 285) – not least of all because, as Husserl repeatedly insists, neither "Sinn" nor "Bedeutung" would be an act, but the object of intentionality that subsists as "ein Identisches gegenüber der Mannigfaltigkeit von Akten des Sprechens und Bedeutens" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 31). "Sinn" differs from "Bedeutung" solely in that it need not come to expression[22]: "Wir vollziehen, wie

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21 The "bestimmbare X" not only has a tradition deriving from the Kantian notation for the *Ding an sich*, but also appears in Frege's discussions of concept and function as the argument of the function, whose determination through a proper name (or number) allows the value of the function to be determined, in turn. See Frege 1962, pp. 27–28.

22 In his lectures from 1908 on the *Bedeutungslehre*, Husserl similarly distinguishes "zwischen der Gegenständlichkeit, die da bedeutet ist, und der Gegenständlichkeit in der Weise, wie sie bedeutet ist. [. . .] Der Gegenstand ist derselbe, ob ich sage 'Napoleon' oder 'der Sieger von Jena.' Die beiden Ausdrücke besagen aber Verschiedenes. [. . .] Nun, was wir hier unter dem Titel 'verschiedenen Besagens' oder verschiedener Weise der Aussage uns deutlich machen, das gibt den neuen Sinn von Bedeutung" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 28). Nor is this specificity of meaning a feature that could be abstracted from any reference to an object; later in the lectures, he writes: "Es heißt auch, jeder Gegenstand-worüber sei Gegenstand nur vermöge der Bestimmung, vermöge der jeweiligen Weise der Bedeutung, durch das Medium der Bedeutung

sich dergleichen normalerweise an die erste, schlichte Wahrnehmungserfassung ohne weiteres anzuschließen pflegt, ein Explizieren des Gegebenen und ein beziehendes In-eins-setzen der herausgehobenen Teile oder Momente: etwa nach dem Schema 'Dies ist weiß.' Dieser Prozeß erfordert nicht das mindeste von 'Ausdruck', weder von Ausdruck im Sinne von Wortlaut, noch von dergleichen wie Wortbedeuten" (*Hua* III, p. 285).

Husserl's distinction between "Sinn" and "Bedeutung" thus allows him to draw a distinction that is partially analogous to the one that the Stoics had drawn between the incorporeal *lektón* and its vocalization. It also allows him to provide a most extensive – an "außerordentlich und vielleicht befremdlich erweitert[en]" – concept of the "Satz" (*Hua* III, p. 305), which encompasses not only expressed propositions, but also perceived, thetically characterized construals of quality, such as: "This is white." The linguistic or logical character of perception appears to be so thorough-going in Husserl's writing, that even the affections of passive synthesis are repeatedly described according to the motifs of address and appeal – as when, in a case of doubt, "[v]erschiedene Zeugen sprechen und bringen ihre Zeugnisse bei, solche von verschiedenem Gewicht" (*Hua* XI, p. 45), or when Husserl elucidates the awakening of the subject to consciousness in terms of what is called a "modus excit<andi>" (*Hua* XI, p. 416).[23] As Paul Ricoeur also notes in "Méthode et tâche d'une phénoménologie de la volonté," the "Satz" can be said to take place in – *and* before – "allen Aktsphären," which Husserl elaborates thus: "Auch in den schlichten Anschauungen haben die Begriffe Sinn und Satz, die untrennbar zum Begriffe Gegenstand gehören, ihre notwendige Anwendung, notwendig müssen die besonderen Begriffe Anschauungssinn und Anschauungssatz geprägt werden" (*Hua* III, pp. 305–306; see Ricoeur 1993, p. 63). This definition of the sentence or proposition not only expands what

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beziehe sich die Vorstellung auf den Gegenstand, bewußt sei die Bedeutung, und wieder, bewußt sei der Gegenstand mittels der Bedeutung" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 71).

23 What is most important, however, is that these appeals incite the subject who attends them and whose life, in a sense, could be said to depend upon them. As Husserl also writes in 1926, "Der 'Vordergrund' bestimmt sich damit, daß der affektive Strahl das Ich erreicht hat, exzitiert, bei ihm schon weckend anklopft, aber ehe noch das Ja vom Ich her erfolgt oder erfolgen mußte. 'Lebendigkeit' in 'Bewußtseinsgraden' – 'Bewußtsein' in besonderem Sinn; Unlebendigkeit (nicht: geringere Lebendigkeit) – das 'Unbewußte.' Also keine Gradualität? Aber doch Limes" (*Hua* XI, p. 411). To a certain extent, Jean-Luc Marion describes an analogous movement, when he characterizes the phenomenological structure of giving as an "appel" that arrives as an incommensurable affection before and without the "I," who is first constituted in receiving it. Here, too, the subject awakens as a function of language at the beck and call of an innumerable and unnamable other: "le *Je* s'éprouve comme constitué par lui [. . .] le témoin constitué" (Marion 1997, p. 302).

can be called a sentence or proposition, however; as Husserl says, it also radically estranges it, not least of all because the sentence regarding an object of intentionality would have to precede the notion of an object as such, which is grasped only through a secondary act of abstraction:

> So ist <z.B> im Gebiete der äußeren Wahrnehmung aus dem "wahrgenommenen Gegenstand als solchem" unter Abstraktion vom Charakter der Wahrgenommenheit, als etwas vor allem explizierenden und begreifenden Denken in diesem Noema Liegendes, der Gegenstandssinn herauszuschauen, der Dingsinn dieser Wahrnehmung, der von Wahrnehmung zu Wahrnehmung (auch hinsichtlich "desselben" Dinges) ein anderer ist.
>
> (*Hua* III, p. 306)

According to this formulation, perception may be what sentences thought to the notion of an object as such, but this would also mean that the sentence is initially structured differently than propositions where a subject and a predicate appear according to the form *S is p*. What renders such formulae sayable would be the pre-expressive "sentence" that Husserl calls an "eingliedrige[n] Satz," and that he can therefore exemplify only with a false approximation: "Dies ist weiß" (*Hua* III, pp. 305; 285).

Since, however, such sentences derive, first of all, from an act of perception – and since perception constitutes the most elementary operation upon which all higher-order cognitive acts are based[24] – the "eingliedrige Satz" would have to be provoked by a *páthos* or affect – and still more primarily, a self-affection that opens consciousness to otherness (see de Warren 2009, pp. 128–130) – that precedes the active grasp of explicit awareness and predicative formulation. Hence, Husserl distinguishes the broader operations of consciousness and intentionality from the more specific work of the cogito in *Ideen I*:

> Das cogito überhaupt ist die explizite Intentionalität. Der Begriff des intentionalen Erlebnisses überhaupt setzt insofern schon den Gegensatz von Potentialität und Aktualität und zwar in der allgemeinen Bedeutung voraus, als wir nur im Übergang zum expliziten cogito und in der Reflexion auf das nicht explizierte Erlebnis und seine noetisch-noematischen Bestände zu erkennen vermögen, daß es Intentionalitäten in sich berge, bzw. Noemen, die ihm zu eigen sind.
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> (*Hua* III, p. 262)

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24 Husserl insists later, in *Erfahrung und Urteil*: "Diese Aufwickelung führt letztlich auf einfache Urteile, [. . .] deren Glieder nichts mehr von attributiven und sonstigen Annexen enthalten. [. . .] Bei ihnen ist zwischen Sachverhalt und Urteilssatz selbst nicht unterschieden. Der Sachverhalt ist hier die Bedeutungseinheit selbst. [. . .] [D]er Nullsatz ist der zu solch einer Gruppe gehörige reine Satz, Korrelat der reinen bestimmenden Aktualität" (Husserl 1964, p. 291).

Even when it comes to the intentional consciousness of an intuition or perception, however, Husserl's discussions in *Ideen I* indicate that an "Anschauungssatz" or "Wahrnehmungssatz" can only be improperly rendered in speech. The perceived would not entail the lexical and syntactic distinctions of a sentence, for the intentional object of the cogito would not yet be categorially formed as the subject of a proposition (see *Hua* XX/II, pp. 225–226; 230–231). This is another way of saying that the "Satz" shows a resemblance to the Stoic *lektón*, which similarly presupposes an intuition or impression that cannot as such be rendered without providing formalized, approximate citations and translations, beside of the fact that it would be distinct from the two that "are bodies; that is, the voice and that which occurs" (Sextus Empiricus 1984, 8.11–12). Hence, although one would have radically to distinguish the movement from impression to incorporeal intuition that the Stoics propose from the consciousness of intentional objects that Husserl elaborates – and although, for this same reason, there is nothing unsayable for Husserl, insofar as every intentional object of cognition is always already articulated as an identifiable, and therefore principally nameable unity[25]– it is telling that the example Husserl cites to illustrate a "Wahrnehmungssatz" happens to coincide with what is said in several Stoic explications of logically formed perceptions. Not only does Aetius offer a version of "this is white" in his description of the perceptual process; in the *Academica*, Cicero's Stoic protagonist Lucullus

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25 In *Ideen I*, Husserl explicitly writes: "Die Schicht des Ausdruckes ist – das macht ihre Eigentümlichkeit aus – abgesehen davon, daß sie allen anderen Intentionalien eben Ausdruck verleiht, nicht produktiv. Oder wenn man will: Ihre Produktivität, ihre noematische Leistung, erschöpft sich im Ausdrücken und der mit diesem neu hereinkommenden Form des Begrifflichen" (*Hua* III, p. 287). The intentional components or "Intentionalien" that come to expression may very well have a singular "materialen Untergrund," as Husserl writes in a manuscript from 1914 devoted to the revision of the sixth of his *Logische Untersuchungen* (*Hua* XX/II, p. 17), but each intentional object is first constituted *as* an object in that it is grasped as a self-identical unity or noema from out of the "Mannigfaltigkeit hyletischer Daten" and through the manifold noetic acts that constitute it (*Hua* III, pp. 230–231). Since such noematic unities are cognized as self-identical and, as such, identifiable – while "das Bewußtsein von ihm [. . .] in den verschiedenen Abschnitten seiner immanenten Dauer ein nichtidentisches, ein nur verbundenes, kontinuierlich einiges [ist]" (*Hua* III, p. 231) – there is no such unit of cognition that could not undergo categorial formation and come be expressed, be it through a singular proper name, or a common name. "Jedes 'Gemeinte als solches,'" he writes, "jede Meinung im noematischen Sinn (und zwar als noematischer Kern) eines beliebigen Aktes ist ausdrückbar durch 'Bedeutungen'" (*Hua* III, p. 286). The correlation between noematic units of sense and nominal unities is further underscored by the connections that Husserl explicitly draws in *Ideen I* between the synthetic or polythetic acts of consciousness with the logical law of nominalization, where "jedem Satz und jeder im Satz unterscheidbaren Partialform ein Nominale entspricht [. . .]" (*Hua* III, p. 276; cf. *Hua* III, p. 304).

also presents perception as a linguistically structured experience that becomes grasped by thought and that thereby renders a deictic utterance "sayable":

> [T]hose things which we say to be perceived by the senses are qualified, and they are qualified in just such a way as those things follow, which are said to be perceived not by the senses themselves, but by senses of some other mode, as for example, 'This is white [*illud est album*] [. . .].' These we tend to grasp as things that are comprehended by the mind, not by the senses.　　　　(Cicero 1933, p. 495, translation modified [KM])

What we call senses, in other words, derives, like the "sentence" of which Husserl speaks, from an apprehension that translates to a "sense of some other mode," whose comprehension may then come to expression in the more usual sense.[26] The perceptual apprehension of sensual qualities is already the result of intentional acts, whose hyletic components are as distinct from perception as they are integral to it; this is why "derselbe stoffliche Komplex [kann] mehrfache [. . .] Auffassungen erfahren [. . .], denen gemäß verschiedene Gegenständlichkeiten bewußt werden" (*Hua* III, p. 230). But between sense and expression comes a moment of making sense that resists translation into categorial forms of predication and whose logical character – although one may nonetheless seek to give word of it obliquely – cannot be rendered with a predicative syntax. The foreign and estranging linguistic character of sense-sentences emerges more clearly in Aetius's remarks, where the grammatical forms reflect the absence of a "fact" or *prãgma* before the *páthos* that provokes its supposition, and thus indicate the fundamental difference between propositions and that which founds them: "And according to this, the pathos, we have the ability to say *that white is an underlying thing moving us* [*hóti hupókeitai leukòn kinoũn hemãs*]." The verb of the sentence that Aetius cites to illustrate the perceived color reads: "is underlying [*hupókeitai*]," which recalls Aristotle's term for the determinable substrate of predication, *tò hupokeímenon*. But rather than substantivizing this substrate and setting it in the position of the grammatical subject, it is the quality "white" [*leukón*] that fulfills this function in Aetius's sentence. Aetius's description could therefore be said to correspond more closely to a situation of perception where the perceived initially has no delineation or determination as an object, and emerges as an otherwise indefinite, qualified

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26 In one of the texts documenting the revisions that Husserl had prepared for his *Logische Untersuchungen*, labeled "Beilage XXII," Husserl describes this process in the following way: "Wir haben die kategoriale Gegenständlichkeit unterster Stufe, die sich vor allem Erkennen, Unter-Begriffe-Bringen konstituieren lässt. Dann können die Explikationen in Erkenntnis verwandelt werden, wir haben Erkenntnisgegenständlichkeiten. Und endlich haben wir Aussagen" (*Hua* XX/II, p. 308).

surface – hence the absence of an article such as "the" [*tò*] or "some" [*tìs*] before "white" [*leukón*] in his formulation. To be sure, Aetius's presentation of the Stoic view could be translated with the utterance: "this is white," but such a translation would be as misleading as Husserl's sentence, "Dies ist weiß," if either were taken to mean a proposition with a distinct subject and predicate, since the "white" in both cases precedes the conceptual distinction of an underlying, discrete "this." The *lektón* "white" appears first and foremost as a sheer tinction without delineated limits. The words for this *prãgma* – and even the notion of a *prãgma* – can only be an instance of para-praxis that speaks besides and against what is said to have affected us and entered our purview.[27] It may therefore even be the case that Stoic formulations for the *lektón* color Husserl's later writings on the constitution of perceptual phenomena through the apprehension of sensual data, when he writes of the superficial basis of perception in his lectures on passive synthesis: "als Grundgerüst des Wahrnehmungsgegenstandes fungiert das Phantom als sinnlich qualifizierte körperliche Oberfläche" (*Hua* XI, p. 23). But it is most certainly the case that such a fluctuating foundation for apprehension underlies the way in which for Husserl, as for Aetius, the most basic cognition of an intentional object of perception is qualitative, quasi-adjectival. Thus, in one passage from the documents that he compiled during the process of revising the *Logische Untersuchungen*, Husserl writes: "Das Erkennen vor dem Prädizieren ist ein kontinuierliches Erfassen einer Einheit oder ein diskretes zwar, aber ohne dass gerade Formung statthätte in der Art eines Identitätsurteils" (*Hua* XX/2, p. 305). Several lines later, he explicitly qualifies this unifying grasp as a pre-predicative, "adj<ektivisch[es]>" mode of cognizing (*Hua* XX/2, p. 305).

At the same time, Husserl's formulations on perception and sentences give expression to the ambivalences of the *lektón* that were implicit in Sextus Empiricus's introduction of the term and that go beyond what Husserl may have meant to say. For if the same sentence occurs to illustrate a logical impression – a *phantasía* or a *Phantom* – and if it recurs from Aetius's Greek to Cicero's Latin to Husserl's German, then these words may be read to translate

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27 Hence, perhaps, Jean-Luc Marion's prioritization of the accident – or incident – when he writes of the giving that renders phenomena and phenomenological consciousness possible. On its inaccessibility to knowledge within the Aristotelian framework of ontological determinations and categories, Marion writes, "l'accident échappe en principe à la science, [. . .] [et] soulève donc un dilemme patent: noétiquement, l'incident reste impraticable, degré presque nul (juste avant la ὕλη) de la connaissance, mais il offre pourtant une figure privilégiée (la seule réelle) de phénoménalité, puisqu'il *se* donne sans préalable, présupposé, ni prévision" (Marion 1997, p. 215).

each other as much as they may be understood to translate the singular perception or *prãgma* that was supposed to provoke them. The "sayable" or *lektón* would thus hover indefinitely between that which was previously "perceived" *or* "said," and it may in fact testify to a "vieil état de fait," as Beckett had put it (Beckett 1953, p. 7). And it would therefore also have to be said that the impression or *phantasía* of sensory evidence that Husserl speaks of may itself be a phantom and a fiction that haunts these texts and that becomes legible first and foremost as a word for other words – such as *weiß*, *album*, *leukón*. Whether one actually perceives or ever perceived the color that is called for through these words should not, on the one hand, affect their "Bedeutung." On the other hand, the underlying perception of which they give voice cannot ever, strictly speaking, be guaranteed if words may also associatively call forth other words, with or without evidential experience. And if one should object that Husserl also insists that meaning is "nicht der Inhalt, sondern alle Inhalte, die ein solches Identitäts- oder Einheitsband annehmen und annehmen können" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 202), then it could only be a nominal identity that he means, whose structure may turn out to be unbinding. Who knows? – *Wer weiß*? – The motivation for selecting the example of "white," time and again, may lie, not in a para-cognitive matter that subsists for a thinking or speaking subject, but in the paronomasia that insists between *leukón* and *lektón*, "know" [*weiß*] and "white" [*weiß*]. As he worked to revise the *Logische Untersuchungen* shortly after the publication of *Ideen I*, Husserl himself ascribes a certain tendency, and even intentionality, to words that pertains to them independently of conscious acts, writing:

> Wir werden dabei sagen müssen, eine gewisse Tendenz strahle vom Wort zur Sache hin und terminiere in der Sache. Und vielleicht werden wir auch sagen, dem Wort hafte eine *intentio* an gegen die Sache hin, in ihr terminierend. Bei genauerem Überlegen werden wir finden, dass hier von einem doppelten Terminieren und einer doppelten Intention die Rede ist. Die eine, vom reinen Subjekt des *cogito* ausgehende, und die andere, vom erscheinenden Wortlaut ausgehende, sind keineswegs gleichartig. [. . .] Das "Durch-das-Wort-auf-die-Sache"-Gehen hat einen besonderen Charakter; eine "Tendenz" haftet ihm an, die in sich nichts mit dem Charakter des *cogito* und mit seinem Subjekt zu tun hat, die als solche in der Sache "terminiert" – ein Terminieren, das wieder nichts zu tun hat mit dem Terminieren des *cogito*. Anders ausgedrückt. Unter dem Titel "Tendenz" ist etwas da im Wortlaut als solchem (im Wortlaut, der hier der *terminus a quo* ist), ob das sprachliche Bewusstsein den Modus des *cogito* annimmt oder nicht. (*Hua* XX/II, p. 154)

Husserl's analogy between his notion of a "Satz" and the Stoic *lektón* may therefore also be seen to extend to the point where the boundaries blur between perception and speech, along with the boundaries between Husserl's texts and the Stoics' writings: the intentions of the words that they share – such as, "This

is white" – cannot but speak along with that which Husserl appears to say of a singular, occasional perception. The analogy is all the more effective because, and not in spite of, the fact that it cannot be said whether Husserl had these correlative passages from Cicero or Aetius in mind when he wrote, "This is white"; or whether he was thinking of a passage from another text within (or without) the logical canon; or whether, turning to the page in front of him, he was simply returning to the so-called things themselves and drawing a blank.[28] For this ambivalence *is* the ambivalence that the *lektón* entails, whether we are talking about Dion's arrival or departure, or whether we are writing "Dion" on a blank surface. Since each utterance of a *lektón* could not be anything but a translation of an occurrence *ex post facto*, it is immaterial and undecidable whether *this* "sayable" comes from a fictive or perceived scene of writing, or whether it is drawn from Husserl's readings in Aristotle, Greco-Roman Stoicism – or elsewhere: "Ces choses que je dis [. . .] ne furent pas ici, ne sont pas ici, ne seront pas ici, mais ailleurs" (Beckett 1953, p. 24). The indistinction of speech and perception at the levels of both comprehending and uttering the *lektón* render the source of any utterance an indeterminable elsewhere that lies beyond all measure and that allows any number of precedents to be evoked. At the same time, however, the uncertain provenance of "This is white" would not be a result of abstraction, as Ricoeur suggests in order to draw a connection between Husserl's "*préjugé logiciste*" and the Stoics along the following lines: "il est possible de dégager de tous les modes une sorte de mode neutre, disons l'infinitif [. . .] qui est le quid commun de tous les noèmes," which he calls "ce 'noyau de sens,' ce λεκτόν (pour employer un terme de la logique stoïcienne)" (Ricoeur 1993, p. 71). For although expressions may appear to repeat, and although the motives for uttering a *lektón* would always have to precede thought and speech alike, they would also have to be contingent upon the occurrence of a singular *páthos* or motivation that differs every time and is utterly unpredictable.[29] Husserl's assumption of a "discursivité primordiale de tout vécu" does not, therefore, reduce to a "vouloir dire" (Ricoeur

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28 After all, *a* scene of writing, if not Husserl's *hic et nunc*, implicitly underlies a subsequent exemplification of the perceptual "Satz" – or "d[em] in schlichter Wahrnehmungsthesis Wahrgenommene[n] als solche[n]" – when he writes: "Dies ist schwarz," before going on to explicate: "ein Tintenfaß, dieses schwarze Tintenfaß ist nicht weiß, ist wenn weiß so nicht schwarz" (*Hua* III, pp. 307–308).

29 The Stoic analogue for something like a "*quid* commun" in Ricoeur's sense may not be the *lektón*, but what the Stoics call the *énnoiai*, or the general notions that have no reality, but arise through the remembrance of perceptions and the recognition of their resemblance, on which see Cicero 1933, pp. 506–507.

1993, p. 63), but gives testimony – *nolens volens* – to a logic of language that operates before, besides, and beyond all thinkable ontological or phenomenological formulae, and that speaks for an aphenomenal *páthos* of language that precedes, ex-cites, and thereby exceeds every appearance of an ego and its correlates. Hence, although Husserl elaborates the correlation between transcendental subjectivity and the world it constitutes, he touches upon the unspeakable ground of both with his explicit and inexplicit allusions to the Stoic *lektón*, and thereby exposes – if only in passing and by implication – several of the many ways in which language may undermine subject and world alike.

Beckett, for his part, does nothing less. *L'Innommable* speaks again and again to what is "called" in and through language – and few verbs repeat with greater insistence than "appeler,"[30] which each time indicates a name and calls said name into question, rendering the sense of each word explicitly contingent and tentative, and calling for an *epoché* of and in language.[31] Throughout the novel, speaking is said to take place in the middle-passive voice, in ways that testify to movements of language, whose motivations cannot be attributed to any other cause or subject than the occurrences of words – which provoke others, in turn, and which themselves undergo alterations from that which had hitherto been recognizable "language." These testimonies do not occur as instances of linguistic skepticism or extreme nominalism that could be associated with a single movement of thought, such as the one Beckett had also encountered in Fritz Mauthner's *Beiträge zur Kritik der Sprache*[32]; nor do they reflect a reduction of language to an "aesthetics of the negative" (van Hulle/Weller 2014, p. 21), if this phrase were meant to indicate a poetic license and artistic choice among other, equally available creative possibilities. And still less do they reflect the existential crisis of a subject who confronts a doubtful world[33]– though these testimonies may be symptomatic of a pathological duplicity on

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30 The opening paragraph sets the tone, with the remarks, "Appeler ça des questions, des hypothèses. Aller de l'avant, appeler ça aller, appeler ça de l'avant" (Beckett 1953, p. 7). The word returns in passages such as, "Appeler ça des voix, pourquoi pas après tout, du moment qu'on sait qu'il n'en est rien"; and in variants, such as "rappeler," as well as negations, such as: "mais voilà, je ne sens rien, je ne sais rien et pour ce qui est de penser, je le fais juste assez pour ne pas me taire, on ne peut pas appeler ça penser" (Beckett 1953, pp. 81; see also p. 33).

31 I borrow this formulation from Werner Hamacher, who elaborates the notion of an *epoché* of language in his commentary on Michèle Cohen-Halimi's response to his *95 Thesen zur Philologie* (Hamacher 2019, pp. 286–290).

32 For Beckett's readings in Mauthner, see especially Ben-Zvi 1980 and, more recently, van Hulle 2011.

33 Two of the strongest critiques of the existentialist trend in interpreting Beckett can be found in Adorno 1981 and Blanchot 1959, pp. 286–295.

the part of the speaker, the "schizoid voice" that ever again affects the logic of his discourse through disruption and divergence.[34] First and foremost, however, they are testimonies to the extreme logical consequences of the theory of the *lektón* that neither the Stoics nor Husserl went so far as to draw, but that are drawn in *L'Innommable* with or without these nominal figures who had touched upon what could be called the patho-logy of language. They are testimonies, in other words, to language, whose arrivals and occurrences are experienced in the middle-passive voice, before and beyond the formulae for predication, subjects, and objects; and whose transmission emerges through citations and ex-citations that draw upon what may have been said before – and that cross it out in the same stroke, subjecting it to alterations and alternatives. On this experience, Beckett had already written in his essay on Proust of the latter's "substitution of affectivity for intelligence," as well as his emphasis upon an "affective evidential state" – which Beckett characterizes further, not in terms of intuitive acts on the part of a *cogito*, nor in terms of perceptual impressions, but in terms of Proust's "purely *logical* – as opposed to his intuitive – explanations of a certain effect," which "invariably bristle with alternatives" (Beckett 2010, pp. 547–548, my emphasis [KM]).

This experience of language affects the tenability of the *cogito* as well, when the thinking and being of the "I" who speaks – his *penser* or *cogitare*, and his *exister* or *esse* – contract in what is tentatively called a "pensum":

> J'ai parlé, j'ai dû parler, de leçon, c'est pensum qu'il fallait dire, j'ai confondu pensum et leçon. Oui, j'ai un pensum à faire, avant d'être libre, libre de ma bave, libre de me taire, de ne plus écouter, et je ne sais plus lequel. Voilà enfin qui donne une idée de ma situation. On m'a donné un pensum, à ma naissance peut-être, pour me punir d'être né peut-être, ou sans raison spéciale, parce qu'on ne m'aime pas, et j'ai oublié en quoi il consiste.
> (Beckett 1953, pp. 38–39)

With these words, the text recalls a lesson that was mentioned before – "Mais maintenant, je m'en vais la dire, ma leçon, si je peux me la rappeler" (Beckett 1953, p. 32) – and thus evokes a previous instance of instruction, dictation, or reading that should now be recalled in speaking: "je cherche ma leçon, ma vie que je savais autrefois et n'ai pas voulu avouer, d'où peut-être par moments un léger manque de limpidité" (Beckett 1953, p. 32). Insofar as this lesson is characterized as the speaker's life – "ma leçon, ma vie" – it is identified not only with his intellect and thought, but also with his existence, which is conceived, presumably, as the sum of his cogitations. But since this life is characterized as

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34 The phrase is derived from Beckett's earlier novel, *Murphy*, and discussed at length in elucidating and philologically rigorous and precise analyses in Weller 2008.

a lesson – a *lektón* par excellence, with all its implications of linguistic apprehension and potential – then nothing could be said that would not further its survival, and nothing that may have been said by any number of foreign sources could be excluded *a priori* from belonging to it. At the same time, however, the lesson could not be apprehended so long as speaking goes on, and thus speaks past the facts of former speech. Hence, these facts or *prágmata* cannot yet be "avowed," advocated, or spoken for knowingly; and while speaking may be said to defer silence and to perpetuate a minimum of thought, the very fact that it proceeds without halt precludes its getting a hold of sense and thus defers thinking, properly speaking: "mais voilà, je ne sens rien, je ne sais rien et pour ce qui est de penser, je le fais juste assez pour ne pas me taire, on ne peut pas appeler ça penser" (Beckett 1953, p. 33). So long as the text continues to speak in search of its *leçon* – as Beckett had written in a manuscript draft, "pendant qu'il cherche, les mots continuent" (van Hulle/Weller 2014, p. 161) – the *leçon* can only go on being forgotten – "j'ai [. . .] oublié ma leçon" (Beckett 1953, p. 32) – and what had to be said of the lesson dissolves into the sheer static of forgone words. This process proceeds to the point where the *leçon* could not be told apart from *le son*; and to the point where the words that are spoken blend with indefinite others, beyond attribution:

> Si je pouvais faire un effort, un effort d'attention, pour essayer de savoir ce qui se passe, ce qui m'arrive, quoi alors, je ne sais pas, j'ai oublié l'apodose, mais je ne peux pas, je n'entends même plus, je dors, ils appellent ça dormir, les revoilà, [. . .] j'entend ce bruit horrible.
> (Beckett 1953, p. 191)

All that could be said would therefore exceed and fail the lesson that was due; and going on to speak would amount to letting go of life while getting on with it, since every dose would demand an antidote or apodosis, in order to grasp what subsists and thereby to maintain it. This is why pronouncing "I" and declaring "thoughts" would not logically give testimony to subjective existence and constitute the guarantee for survival, as René Descartes suggested with his famous formula: "Je suis, j'existe, est nécessairement vraie, toutes les fois que je la prononce, ou que je la conçois en mon esprit" (Descartes 1967, pp. 415–416). Pronunciation would instead have to be called a "pensum," also in the general, lexical sense – : "le surcroît de travail que l'on exigeait d'un écolier comme punition" (Rey et al. 2006, s.v. *pensum*). Moreover, this surfeit of labor could not but be confused with the lesson – "c'est pensum qu'il fallait dire, j'ai confondu pensum et leçon" (Beckett 1953, pp. 38–39) – insofar as it would recall words that had been said before and concomitantly add to what was said and done by talking over it. It is due to this confusion that no apparent occurrence of a reprisal could constitute an instance of recollection, properly speaking: "j'ai oublié en

quoi il consiste" (Beckett 1953, p. 39). In other words: speaking becomes once more an endless task, which replaces, displaces, differs, and defers the "word" [*lógos*], with a having "to say" [*epeĩn*], and which testifies to a fundamental dispossession of language.

To be sure, the association of this "pensum" with birth and punition also may recall what Beckett had called "Anaximander's individual existence as atonement" in his *Whoroscope* notebook from the 1930s (see Feldman 2006, p. 64), and it may recall what Beckett reiterates via Calderón de la Barca (and Arthur Schopenhauer) in his early essay on Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* – "Pues el delito mayor/Del hombre es haber nacido" – first in reference to "the sin of having been born,"[35] and later in reference to "the life of the body

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35 This quotation appears at the conclusion of a passage that reads: "Tragedy is not concerned with human justice. Tragedy is the statement of an expiation, but not the miserable expiation of a codified breach of a local arrangement, organised by the knaves for the fools. The tragic figure represents the expiation of original sin, of the original and eternal sin of him and all his 'socii malorum,' the sin of having been born" (Beckett 2010, p. 540). With these remarks, Beckett implicitly evokes the context in which Arthur Schopenhauer introduces the same lines from Calderón in *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, which presents tragedy thus: "So sehn wir im Trauerspiel zuletzt die Edelsten, nach langem Kampf und Leiden den Zwecken, die sie bis dahin so heftig verfolgten, und allen den Genüssen des Lebens auf immer entsagen, oder es selbst willig und freudig aufgeben [. . .]. Der wahre Sinn des Trauerspiels ist die tiefere Einsicht, daß, was der Held abbüßt, nicht seine Partikularsünden sind, sondern die Erbsünde, d.h. die Schuld des Daseyns selbst" (Schopenhauer 1991, p. 354). These remarks occur, in turn, among those chapters devoted to the aesthetic idea, which is said to exceed the discursive, representative, and generalizing character of concepts and thus also to exceed the empirical individual subject of cognitions, whose perceptions and judgments are conceived in such terms – "vom Individuo als solchem wird [die Idee] nie erkannt, sondern nur von dem, der sich über alles Wollen und über alle Individualität zum reinen Subjekt des Erkennens, erhoben hat" (Schopenhauer 1991, p. 329). At the same time, it is the apprehension of an aesthetic idea that also "die Zeit selbst zum Stillstand zu bringen scheint" (Schopenhauer 1991, p. 325). Although Beckett explicitly refers to Schopenhauer on only a few occasions in his text (see Beckett 2010, pp. 515; 551; 553), he continues to echo Schopenhauer in his presentations of Proust as one who "does not deal in concepts," but "pursues the Idea"; and as one who "is conscious of humanity as flora, never as fauna" – because "[f]lower and plant have no conscious will" and "are shameless, exposing their genitals" (cf. Schopenhauer 1991, pp. 230–231) – ; as well as in his insistence upon the "extratemporal" character of the idea in Proust (Beckett 2010, pp. 547; 552; 544). The difference between Proust and Schopenhauer, however, lies in the way that the idea is arrived upon through involuntary memory in Proust, and thus is utterly contingent upon sensations that exceed will and consciousness alike, in order to awaken the fullness of a "subconscious and disinterested act of perception" that had once been forgotten (Beckett 2010, p. 543). If this perception is still called a "pure act of cognition," it is no longer the cognition of "an act of intellection, [. . .] conditioned by the prejudices of the intelligence which abstracts from any given sensation, as being illogical and insignificant, a discordant and frivolous

on earth as a pensum" (Beckett 2010, pp. 540; 554).[36] Moreover, the association with these other texts is not only lexical, but also thematic: as it was before with "Proust," it is now again a question of lost time with *L'Innommable*: "j'ai perdu mon temps, renié mes droits, raté ma peine, oublié ma leçon" (Beckett 1953, p. 32). But differently than in these earlier contexts, neither the cause nor the subject of penitence can be assumed with certainty here and now, since the question of having been born – and more precisely, the question of having been "*né* peut-être" (Beckett 1953, p. 39) – is left in suspense, and is thus introduced as a *naissance* that may be read, at the same time, as its negation – *n'essence* – as well as the negation of sense – *n'est sens* – that is borne out in and beyond these words.[37] The "pensum" would therefore have to be read as a word for other words, and not only the words from Anaximander's fragment and from Schopenhauer's – explicitly Stoic – ontology and ethics,[38] but also the words for the Cartesian or Husserlian *cogito*, which has now become alienated from the intellect and the subject, posed as a task, and imposed as a weight: a *pensum*. Since, however, this weighty task is itself a figure of speech, its import and purport remain a pending matter and a suspended issue that may likewise be talked away, forgotten, and obliterated.

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intruder, whatever word or gesture, sound or perfume, cannot be fitted into the puzzle of a concept" (Beckett 2010, p. 543). An "act of cognition" that is not an "act of intellection," but is defined as a "sensation" – and thus as a moment of medial-passive receptivity – would be closer to the structure of passive synthesis that Husserl describes than the work of the genial artist according to Schopenhauer. And since the first "intruder" that Beckett exemplifies is a "word or gesture," Beckett also implies that receptivity takes place first of all at the level of language. This notion of a sense of language, in turn, brings Beckett's presentation of Proust's idea – the "successful evocative experiment" – near to the register of evocations, vocalizations, and appeals that characterize both Husserl's passive synthesis and the Stoic *lektón*.

36 Beckett 2010, p. 554. Paul Stewart also speaks of fiction as that which is suffered in *L'Innommable* and ascribes the structure of suffering to Schopenhauer, with reference to Beckett's essay on Proust (See Stewart 2014, pp. 167–169).

37 I borrow this coinage from Werner Hamacher, who writes in another context – involving Jacques Derrida and Charles Baudelaire, among others – "dans la proximité peut-être non intentionnelle mais irrésistible de ces deux mots, [. . .] dans la proximité entre 'essence' et 'naissance,' qui n'auront été conjoints ni par un 'aléa essentiel,' ni – au sein d'une analyse de l'aléa – par une nécessité inconditionnelle, on peut lire, *nolens volens*, une *n'essance* qui pourrait être la formule, certes sans forme, du 'contretemps accidental'" (Hamacher 2014, p. 70).

38 Although he does not refer to the *lektón* of Stoic logic in *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, references to Zeno and Chrysippus, as well as Cicero and Seneca, abound throughout Schopenhauer's book, as in the final section of the first book, which concludes with an elaboration of Stoic ethics (see Schopenhauer 1991, pp. 137–147).

Hence, when *L'Innommable* evokes the quality of color that is called upon to illustrate perception in Aetius, Cicero, and Husserl, the surface of perceptions and sentences is no *tabula rasa*, nor does it appear to be the uppermost layer of a sedimented history that could be examined with the proper archeological or paleographical techniques. Rather, it is the superficial correlate to the overwriting and obliteration that Beckett's text otherwise speaks of,[39] which appears in more or less pronounced shades of gray: "Ce gris, pour être d'abord ténébreux, puis franchement opaque, n'en est pas moins d'une assez forte luminosité" (Beckett 1953, p. 22). And in keeping with the paradoxical strain that comes to light with its luminosity and opacity, this gray is ambivalently seen to screen sight, rather than constituting its object, with an air of transparency that is indistinguishable from the density of lead – : "Mais au fait cet écran où mon regard se bute, tout en persistant à y voir de l'air, ne serait-ce pas plutôt l'enceinte, d'une densité de plombagine?" (Beckett 1953, p. 22). These qualities, in turn, imply that nothing may be seen for certain, to the point where the texture of the screen cannot be told apart from the net of the retina, where the subject and object of vision could be said to face, confront, and efface one another through their entanglement: "Je me demande quelquefois si les deux rétines ne se font pas face" (Beckett 1953, p. 23).[40] A sheer gray area is thereby described, where the horizon of subjective perception at once condenses in an eye and extends to a boundless atmosphere, where the *lógos* of proportions and dimensions is reduced and surpassed by an inconceivable immensity, and where the narrowest limits of visibility coincide with the farthest outlook.

First and foremost, however, the rhetoric of vision and tactile density are characterized as matters of outspoken speculation, which therefore can provoke other registers of reflection that temporarily loosen the nets and lighten the atmosphere: "Du reste, à bien réfléchir, ce gris est légèrement rosé, comme le plumage de certains oiseaux, dont le cacatois je crois" (Beckett 1953, p. 23). In other words, if "ce gris" would seem to constitute a response to those logical

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39 As Beckett had written in a draft for the novel: "Salir-nettoyer: gris d'abord, pour pouvoir foncer" (van Hulle/Weller 2014, p. 110).

40 In a later passage, Beckett similarly speaks of interiority and exteriority as forming an intrinsically heterogeneous surface-tissue: "c'est peut-être ça que je sens, qu'il y a un dehors et un dedans et moi au milieu, c'est peut-être ça que je suis, la chose qui divise le monde en deux, d'une part le dehors de l'autre le dedans, ça peut être mince comme une lame, je ne suis ni d'un côté ni de l'autre, je suis au milieu, je suis la cloison, j'ai deux faces et pas d'épaisseur, c'est peut-être ça que je sens, je me sens qui vibre, je suis le tympan, d'un côté le crâne, de l'autre le monde" (Beckett 1953, p. 158).

investigations that began with the question: "où maintenant?" (Beckett 1953, p. 7) – and if this gray would also appear to mark the place where the theoretical visions of ontology and phenomenology confront a limit, beyond which language could only speak in excess of any being or appearance, the text would also have to efface the superficial phantom of a limit as well. Thus, the language of this sheer and obscure textual medium also goes on to transgress its recognizable terms, as the two "*ré*tines" become literally reflected in the letters that repeat and dissolve the elements of this net – "*re*ste," "*ré*fléchir," "légè*re*ment," and "*r*osé" – and as the leaden "*pl*ombag*i*ne" loses its onus – its *oni*s and *o*-ness – to become light as a feather: "*pl*umage." In the same stroke, the alterations of language that take place in this passage extend to an obvious instance of parapraxis, as the speaker gives the air of naming a bird – a "cacatoès" – while continuing to talk of tissues, veils or sails – *voiles* – of, namely, the "cacatois" that would appear above the topgallant, or "perroquet," in a square-rigged vessel.[41] The registers of optical screens and nets are therefore only barely veiled in words that otherwise appear to depart and take off from them, just as the veil of gray is only lightly lifted by talk of other things, in a passage that appear rigged to hover between sails and birds, before everything sinks back into obscurity: "Que tout devienne noir, que tout devienne clair, que tout reste gris, c'est le gris qui s'impose" (Beckett 1953, p. 23).

This claim, however, delivers no ultimate sentence on the world of the text, but utters another one of the many alternatives with which this writing logically – or 'lectically' – bristles and *re*-brushes against the *gray*n. The preponderant gray, along with the other pronounced features of *L'Innommable*, goes on letting up and imposing itself in ways that depend, not upon the cogitations of a pensive subject, nor upon the existence and excitations of perceptible phenomena, but upon the contingencies of the words that surround it, that alter its sense, and that move elsewhere. *D'ailleurs*: each color is a figment that is never identical to what it was said to be; and each proposition is an imposter that nonetheless testifies to what the language of the *lektón* might look like, where its more restrictive definitions are crossed; where the subject and object of sense are expressions themselves; and where expression is therefore, as Beckett would write elsewhere, "an impossible act" (Beckett 2010, p. 561). Among words – *parmi des mots* – each term becomes receptive and porous to

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41 Chris Ackerley traces the chain of signifiers that are condensed in this word, writing: "the speaker recalls the cockatoo: the French 'cacatois' accentuates the assonance of *oiseaux* and *crois*; but the word is more correctly 'cacatoès.' The jest is complex: a *cacatois* (a royal) is a sail on square-riggers, placed above the *perroquet* (the topgallant)" (Ackerley 2014, p. 159). He does not offer a further interpretation of these shifts, however.

lexical alternatives and alterations, to pseudonyms and *noms de plume* that speak beside what may appear graspable in thought, that veil other words, and that let them all fly and fall. The lesson: language renders the sayable in many ways; it blanks out or overwrites its own registers, paradigms, definitions, and categories – and it parrots the squaring of subject and object, or being and sense.

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III Phenomenology of the Image and the Text Corpus

Stefanie Heine

Charles Olson: Phenomenologist, Objectivist, Particularist

Abstract: The American poet Charles Olson repeatedly referred to phenomenology in his poetological essays and notes. This article traces Olson's idiosyncratic conception of a phenomenological method and practice, focusing especially on the influence of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, and then attempts to elucidate Olson's poetics more distinctly against the background of Edmund Husserl's reflections on the nature of words in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Echoing Merleau-Ponty, Olson highlights that in the moment of a poem's composition the objects of attention are words. He is especially interested in how words, understood as physical entities, are posited and interact amongst themselves and with a perceiving subject during the writing process. On the one hand, Olson celebrates what Husserl considers a subordinate aspect of words, their "sinnliche Gegenständlichkeit" as "in die Welt hineingesetzte Realitäten." For Olson, it is precisely the sensory experience of words that accounts for "poeticness." On the other hand, Olson also thinks beyond the material qualities of words. Husserl's notion of "Wort-Leib" (as opposed to *Wortkörper*) is revealing for a negotiation of Olson's attempt to grasp what makes the "Aktualität der Setzung" possible *in the act* of positing.

<center>★★★</center>

"[M]an had better have the natural sharpness of his sense perceptions on actual phenomena (including his own events in particular)," Charles Olson states in 1953, after claiming that "most of us who are poised beyond the old & intent upon a new civilization are phenomenologists" (Olson 1953).[1] Olson's views on

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1 A large part of Olson's unpublished material at the archive in Connecticut is not paginated. Therefore I will not be able to indicate a page number for every quotation from this material. The importance of phenomenology for Olson's work has been investigated by Jeffrey Gardiner. In his article "Olson's Phenomenology," he discusses "conceptual similarities" between phenomenology in the broadest sense and Olson's thought and tracks the "direct influences," e.g., his knowledge of at least one passage of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, as well as the "lack" thereof (Gardiner 2007, p. 79). Gardiner also studies some of Olson's major references to phenomenology in order to figure out "what Olson [means] by calling himself a phenomenologist" (Gardiner 2007, p. 79). Due to the focus on phenomenology, there will be overlaps between my own article and Gardiner's, as the material discussed is in part the same and some central foci (e.g., on the senses, things, and attention) necessarily suggest

society, history, scientific methods, and poetics are inextricably linked: when he calls himself "a particularist and a phenomenologist" (Olson 1978, p. 69), he is not only characterizing his literary practice but also situating it in the context of the "New Sciences" outlined in the series of lectures the introductory quotes are taken from. In an unfinished and unpublished prose piece entitled "Credo" from 1949, Olson starts a list of poetic "necessities" that will later echo in "Projective Verse," the famous manifesto of how "verse now, 1950, if it is to go ahead" (Olson 1966, p. 15) needs to function.
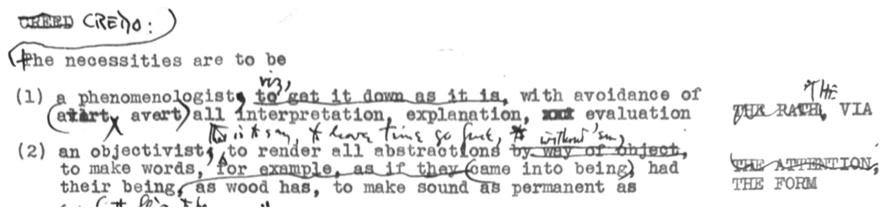
Figure 1: Olson 1949.

Tying the necessity of being a phenomenologist to "THE PATH" or "THE VIA" implies nothing less than declaring phenomenology the method: "*methodos* [. . .] turns out to be meta hodos [. . .] the principle of – PATH," "the way the path is known," Olson explicates in a letter to Robert Creeley in June 1952 (Olson and Creeley 1996, p. 152). Even though it is not explicitly mentioned in "Projective Verse", the idea of a phenomenological method finds expression when Olson outlines the principle of "shap[ing] the energies that the form is accomplished" (Olson 1966, p. 17): "[I]n any given poem always one perception must must must MOVE, INSTANTER, ON ANOTHER" (Olson 1966, S. 17). The "shaping" of the poem "takes place, each moment of the going" as it is "getting made" (Olson 1966, p. 19) according to "the attention" given to what "is right here" (Olson 1966, p. 19). In other words, the "sharpness of [the writer's] sense perceptions on actual phenomena" is what constitutes the new poetry. Valorizing "actual phenomena" as a major focus of attention ties in with the necessity "to be an objectivist" that Olson demands in "Credo." This necessity is tagged with

themselves. I am deeply indebted to Gardiner's groundwork and hope to address some yet unexplored questions in the present article.

the keyword "ATTENTION," which is crossed out and then replaced by "FORM"; "Credo" thus uses language and ideas which are fleshed out in "Projective Verse," where form and attention are extensively discussed. The suggestion that the *objects* of attention are words – words in the moment they come to be as physical entities in the process of a poem's composition – is further elaborated on in "Projective Verse". There, it is claimed that the question of "field composition," attention, and energy "is a matter, finally of OBJECTS, what they are, what they are inside a poem": "[E]very element in an open poem (the syllable, the line, as well as the image, the sound, the sense) must be taken up as participants in the kinetic of the poem just as solidly as we are accustomed to take what we call the objects of reality" (Olson 1966, p. 20). And further:

> The objects which occur at every given moment of composition (of recognition, we can call it) are, can be, must be treated exactly as they do occur therein and not by any ideas or preconceptions from outside the poem, must be handled as a series of objects in field in such a way that a series of tensions (which they also are) are made to *hold*, and to hold exactly inside the content and the context of the poem which has forced itself, through the poet and them, into being. (Olson 1966, p. 20)

These in part very dense reflections shall be taken as a starting point to examine Olson's poetics in light of phenomenology, or, to be more precise, Olson's own conception of a phenomenological practice. In order to shed more light on such a poetics, I will read Olson against the background of Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Olson himself was familiar with some of the latter's work, although probably not at all with the former's. He knew at least some passages from Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, but he likely never read Husserl. I will first outline Olson's reception of Merleau-Ponty as a background for determining the extent to which Husserl might be put to fruitful use in reading Olson's poetics. In a letter in 1963, Richard Sassoon sent Olson several excerpts from the just translated *Phenomenology of Perception*. Olson immediately integrated the material into his work and quoted extensively from it in a talk in New York, the transcript of which was published as "Under the Mushroom" (see Olson 2010, pp. 108–109). Shortly thereafter, Olson incorporated a passage of this translation, along with a reference to Sassoon's letter, in an essay the archive entitles "A man's life is a continual allegory." In contrast to the discussion in New York, where he briefly discussed each excerpt he quoted, he does not comment on the passage he cites in the essay; it interrupts the text and is not smoothly embedded in a coherent, linear argument:

> To add a quote Richard Sassoon sent me from the current French philosopher, Merleau-Ponty:
>
>> "At the same time that the object sets the attention in motion, the object is constantly recaptured and again placed in a state of dependence upon the attention. The object, therefore, gives rise to a 'knowledge-bringing event', which is to transform the object, but only by means of a still ambiguous meaning which the object requires that event to clarify. The object therefore is the motive and not the cause of the event."
>
>> ("It's a screwy sentence," writes Sassoon, "at least in translation, but I do like what it leads to, the jump from attention in motion to the thing out there's being motive, toward one."
>
> <div align="right">(Olson 1963a)</div>

The way Olson introduces the quotation in the essay is exemplary of those literary and essayistic techniques of his which are not unrelated to his understanding of phenomenology: compiling found written material, such as etymologies or passages from dictionaries or books, without making any effort to establish a context or further explain why the material is inserted in his own texts. For Olson, such a manner of uncommented "positing" is part of the poetological and scientific method for which he advocates. In a reply to Sassoon's letter, Olson expresses admiration for Merleau-Ponty's exploration of "ways to *posit an object*" (Olson 2000, p. 316, my emphasis). In the 1965 essay *The Projective, in Poetry and in Thought; and the Paratactic*, he proposes adding "the paratactic to any previous thought on the projective" in order to expand his theoretical reflections on "speech & experience":

> Aristotle called it the way beads are strung on a string [. . .] And there is that sense that it is one foot after the previous foot that nothing doesn't happen except as succession & that order of succession in time, & done so, as much, known only if you do yourself place one next thing after one you have definitely expressed the placing of, like your foot the step before.
> <div align="right">(Olson 1965)</div>

When Olson patches together pieces of texts like the Merleau-Ponty passage that he has come across – when his fingers type whatever has fallen into his hands – he is implementing his own credo that both knowledge and poetry imply "this instant," including "you on this instant, [. . .] you, figuring it out, and acting, so" (Olson 1997, p. 157). Accordingly, inserting the quotation into his essay is Olson's own "acting." Such acting follows the command he formulates for literary writing, "[P]erception must must must MOVE, INSTANTER, ON ANOTHER," and "[T]he objects which occur at every given moment of composition (of recognition, we can call it) [. . .] must be treated exactly as they do occur therein and not by any ideas or preconceptions from outside." Olson treats the Merleau-Ponty excerpt sent to him in Sassoon's letter like a perceptual phenomenon: He puts the words that probably occupied his mind during writing into the essay in progress, exactly as

they occurred in the letter – including Sassoon's comment – without adding a comment of his own. In other words, Olson practices being "a phenomenologist viz, [. . .] get it down as it is, with avoidance of all interpretation, explanation, evaluation." In this respect, it is significant that this sentence itself is an excerpt from a dictionary: *Webster's* defines phenomenology as, "Scientific description of actual phenomena, with avoidance of all interpretation, explanation, and evaluation" (*Webster's* 1945, p. 748).[2] The refusal to add "interpretation, explanation, and evaluation" is a major constituent of Olson's criticism of the "Western logos," in which abstraction and thought dominates over immediate action, experience, and use (Olson 1997, pp. 155–156). That he *uses* the Merleau-Ponty quotation by inserting it in the essay like a found object that we as readers then encounter unexpounded – just as we would perceive a torn page of a worn newspaper on the sidewalk – may be an attempt to "restore our contact with the phenomenal world," as Gardiner puts it (Gardiner 2007, p. 78). Moreover, adding his own interpretation and embedding it into his own argument would imply an interruption to the "INSTANTER" sequence of perceptions during the writing process.

One could thus argue that Olson's use of the Merleau-Ponty passage, the way he posits it within his own words, goes hand in hand with his notion of phenomenology. But what about the contents of the passage? They tie in neatly with the notions of writing and scientific discovery that Olson promotes. The passage occurs within Merleau-Ponty's wider argument against empiricist and intellectualist notions of attention, which presume that attention creates nothing new. In contrast, for Merleau-Ponty, attention effects "the active constitution of a new object" (Merleau-Ponty 2002, p. 35): "To pay attention is not merely further to elucidate pre-existing data, it is to bring about a new articulation of them" (Merleau-Ponty 2002, p. 35). The object of attention and the subject paying attention, the latter's acts of perception, are thus interdependent. At the center of the passage quoted by Olson is the mutual relation of the object and attention: "At the same time that the object sets attention in motion, the object is [. . .] placed in a state of dependence upon the attention." The "knowledge-bringing-event" triggered by the object of attention in turn "transform[s]" the object in this very process. These reflections strongly resonate with Olson's processual poetics and his idea of the scientist (or writer) as an "instrument of

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2 The unpublished *Credo* confirms what Gardiner suspects when he cites precisely this definition, adding that this is what Olson "would have noted" if he consulted *Webster's* dictionary on phenomenology (Gardiner 2007, p. 79).

discovery" (Olson 1997, p. 155) that shapes what is discovered or written in the very instant that the event of knowledge or writing takes place. Even the overlaps of vocabulary between Olson's ideas and the passage of *Phenomenology of Perception* are striking: "attention," "event," and "motion" are all words that are more than just fundamental parts of Olson's terminology; they essentially *shape* his conceptions of poetry and scientific discovery.[3]

The transformative processes Merleau-Ponty addresses in his discussion of attention in retrospect confirm a note Olson sent to Robert Creeley in 1951: "Phenomenology / Metamorphoses" (Olson and Creeley 1985, p. 75). The note appears in the context of Olson's description of the Mayan glyphs he was investigating in Yucatan at that time. As Gardiner convincingly argues, it was this archeological experience – exploring the ancient Mayan ruins in Lerma, digging out the stones on which the glyphs are engraved, holding the words in his hand as solid objects – that more than anything else influenced his self-definition as "phenomenologist and particularist" (Gardiner 2007, p. 78). When Olson describes the glyphs to Creeley in the quoted letter, he not only points to their qualities as phenomena of the physical world but also their transformative characteristics:

> Here, in glyphs, it gets wonderful, the rebuses, by which the sun as four-petaled flower passes over into water-lily and emerges, because water-lilies are where crocodiles hide, as crocodile!
>
>   Phenomenology / Metamorphoses.   (Olson and Creeley 1985, p. 75)

This note could explain an at first sight rather mysterious summary of the Merleau-Ponty passage in *The Projective, in Poetry and in Thought; and the Paratactic*, which led George Butterick, who transcribed a large part of Olson's unpublished handwritten material posthumously, to doubt whether he had deciphered Olson's handwriting correctly:

I hesitate to quote Merleau-Ponty's argument that objects themselves become /enstoned?// by the effect of our perceptions, but for those of you who are interested I can call your attention to his last book in English The Phenomenology of Perception

Figure 2a: Olson 1965 [transcription].

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3 This is not only true for the passage he inserts into his essay, but also for the ones he quotes in "Under the Mushroom," where "projections" and "action" occur prominently in Merleau-Ponty's text and Olson exclaims "This is the first time I've heard those tones in professional philosophy, and it's like a birth!" (Olson 2010, p. 108).

Figure 2b: Olson 1965 [manuscript].

Bearing in mind the comments on the Mayan glyphs, "enstoned" makes sense: objects are subject to metamorphosis, like the lithic rebuses on which the sun turns into a waterlily and then a crocodile. What Olson read from Merleau-Ponty supported his insistence on the physicality of words as well as his idea of a *kinetic* poetry. In his comments on the excerpts he quoted, Olson stresses that "attention as a mobile fact is constantly re-mobilizing the object that sets itself in motion" (Olson 2010, p. 110) and "the objective world [. . .] happens to be motible, mo–, mo–, motible" (Olson 2010, p. 111). In line with Merleau-Ponty, for Olson such a motility emerges in dynamic interrelations: to turn one's "minds to the phenomenon" is to take into account "what happens *between* things" (Olson 2000, p. 141). Olson's version of a phenomenological poetics implies that what is focused on is material objects, especially the way they are posited and interact. In *Credo*, Olson sketches the creative act of the "phenomenologist" and "objectivist" as one of "mak[ing] words," as if they "(came into being) had their being as wood has." Rather than focusing on their capacity to *refer* to objects in the world, Olson is interested in how words "occur" as things in the world, how they are posited, and how they can be "handled": e.g., how, in "the moment of composition," the "objects which occur at every given moment [. . .] must be treated exactly as they do occur therein."

Even though their focal points are very different, what Olson considers a phenomenological poetics touches upon some of the central questions that Husserl negotiates in *Logische Untersuchungen*. Husserl by no means ignores the physical qualities of language. In his discussion of the nature of words in *Logische Untersuchungen II*, he distinguishes between two dimensions: 1) the "physische Seite (das sinnliche Zeichen, den articulierten Lautcomplex, das Schriftzeichen auf dem Papiere u. dgl." and 2) the concept or signified linked to it, which makes it "zum Ausdruck von Etwas" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 38). A more palpable account of the material dimension of the word, of that which in linguistic terms would be called signifier, is given later: "Der Ausdruck an sich, z.B. das geschriebene Wort, ist [. . .] ein physisches Objekt so gut wie irgendein

beliebiger Federzug oder Tintenfleck auf dem Papier; es ist uns also in dem- selben Sinne wie irgendein physisches Objekt sonst 'gegeben'" *(Hua* XIX/1, p. 420).

When it comes to the role attributed to the physical side of words, Husserl's and Olson's attitudes diverge. As is well known, Husserl considers the material dimension of words subordinate: "Der Ausdruck wird etwa wahrgenommen, doch in diesem Wahrnehmen 'lebt nicht unser Interesse'; wir achten, wenn wir nicht abgelenkt werden, statt auf die Zeichen vielmehr auf das Bezeichnete; den sinnverleihenden Akten kommt also die vorherrschende Aktivität zu" *(Hua* XIX/1, p. 420). In one of the drafts of a new version of *Logische Untersuchungen* VI, Husserl expands upon his reflections, arguing that the material dimension, including "das erschallende Wort, das Tinten- und Papierwort," which he de- scribes as "diese ganze reale Sphäre, worin diese Wort-Dinge sind" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113), is irrelevant for the "word as such":

> Selbst wenn mir die Wortlaute als mit meiner Stimme gesprochen vorschweben oder als Drucke einer bekannten Offizin, [. . .] so sind im normalen sprachlichen Bewusstsein [. . .] keine Existenzialsetzungen in dieser Hinsicht vollzogen. Und selbst wo reale Mitsetzungen, wie in der kommunikativen Rede, beständig mitspielen, sind sie doch etwas für das Wort als solches Außerwesentliches. *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113)

According to Husserl, a meaningful word "works" without being as "Reales ge- setzt" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113), posited in the world: I understand the word "tree" without writing it down or saying it. Whether a word essentially functions as "ideality," or whether the actual "Seinssetzung" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 94) of the word is relevant and even necessary for its existence as a word is not up for debate in this article. The important point is that what Husserl deems irrelevant with re- spect to the "wortkonstituierende[] Bewusstsein" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113) is central for *literary* language in Olson's view: Olson's poetics centers precisely on words as "in die Welt hineingesetzte Realitäten" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113), on their positing in a "real sphere wherein words are things."

When it comes to the role of meaning for the word as such, Husserl and Olson share the same starting point. Husserl claims: "Im wortkonstituierenden Bewusstsein ist nicht der bloße Wortlaut bewusst, als eine schlichte sinnliche Gegenständlichkeit, sondern das Wort, das 'etwas bedeutet'" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113). In *Logische Untersuchungen* I, he states that a word ceases to be a word if atten- tion is directed solely to its physical dimension: "Nur da hört das Wort auf Wort zu sein, wo sich unser ausschließliches Interesse auf das Sinnliche richtet, auf das Wort als bloßes Lautgebilde" *(Hua* XIX/1, pp. 41–42). Even though Olson does not comment much on the referential function of words and directs his focus to their sensory contours, he never contends with Husserl's assumption

that a word only *is* word as an expression that conveys meaning, i.e., when sense-giving acts accompany the physical side of speech. Fragmentary as it may be, a sentence Olson noted on a paper placemat seems to confirm Husserl's assertion that a word loses its quality of being a word if it is "bloßes Lautgebild." "You can't use words as ideas any more than they can stay as sounds. They are meanings only and actions of their own sort" (Olson 1964b). As Olson does not explain this sentence in more detail, one can only speculate what precisely he had in mind by writing that words are "meanings *only*"; and one cannot be sure how deliberately the words were chosen in what seems to be a spontaneously scribbled note. However, the general idea seems to be that words are not only ideas or sounds but entities that also have meanings and engage in actions.

Such a characterization of words is in many respects akin or at least comparable to Husserl's remarks in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. In contrast to Husserl, Olson clearly abandons the assumption that words are essentially abstract concepts and ideas and pleads for "[w]ord writing. Instead of 'idea-writing'" (Olson 1974, p. 20). Where Olson most distinctly diverges from Husserl's conception of language is the suggestion that a word can be neither idea nor thing exclusively (for instance, a sound). Without specifically differentiating the status of meaning from the corporeal dimensions of the signifier, he emphasizes the importance of meaning as an integral part in the 'field' words constitute: "words (vocabulary and all that) [. . .] are 'hard' substances with meaning, sound, pitch, tone, and 'color'" (Olson 1955–1976). Even though Olson and Husserl emphasize different aspects of language, especially with respect to meaning, both assume that words are involved in actions. For Olson, poetic language is essentially kinetic: "[E]very element in an open poem (the syllable, the line, as well as the image, the sound, the sense) must be taken up as participants in the kinetic of the poem" (Olson 1966, p. 29). Husserl points out the "Aktcharakter" of expressions in general *(Hua* XIX/1, p. 419): "Was nun aber den Ausdruck zum Ausdruck macht, das sind, wie wir wissen, die ihm angeknüpften Akte" *(Hua* XIX/1, p. 421). Put differently, the various dimensions of words participate in a series of acts. When it comes to the role of the words' material elements and their meaning within the act-complex that words participate in, Olson and Husserl stress different aspects: While Husserl claims "den sinnverleihenden Akten kommt also die vorherrschende Aktivität zu," Olson locates animation and action in the "*kinetics* of the *thing*" (Olson 1966, p. 16, second emphasis SH); Mayan glyphs are considered "live stone[s]" precisely because they are "solid things" (Olson 1951) and material elements like "sound" and "shape" predominate; what makes them so fascinating for Olson is that he could not properly "read" or decipher the glyphs.

However, it is important to stress that the element that, according to Olson, accounts for the solid thingness of words is not their physical dimension (sound, shape etc.) *as such* and *in isolation*, but the space or field created when they interact: "It is an essential act, to align experience, and by words alone to create such space around the words that they become a thing as solid in the mind, or the ear, as stone or cowslip in the hand" (Olson 1947). According to this statement, a specific material quality is generated when words are sensually or cognitively experienced. The perceiving human is an integral part of the interactions between word-things that are so essential for Olson's poetics. This pertains to reception as well as to literary production: "[T]he poem [. . .] has forced itself, through the poet and them [the objects in the field], into being" (Olson 1966, p. 20). On the one hand, the "objects" in a poem interact amongst themselves, but, on the other, they only "become" solid things to a perceiving subject, a "mind" or "ear" or "hand." The perceiving subject in turn may overlap with the one who posits or "makes words," as if they "(came into being) had their being as wood has." Thus it is crucial that the human being who directs the "sharpness of his sense perceptions on actual phenomena" is itself a physical, corporeal entity. When Olson adds "including his own events in particular" to "actual phenomena", he especially implies the human body.[4] In his discussion of phenomenology in 1953, Olson mentions "the phenomena of man – his physiology", adding that the phenomenological body is involved in movement: "any forces, whether innate to the organism or innate to its experience (thus forces from the outside on it) thus dynamics, especially that branch of it which is called kinetics"; "kinetic (fr *kinein* = to move) = energy due to motion" (Olson 1953). In 1963, he reformulates, using the language of Merleau-Ponty, what it might imply for a writer to be a phenomenologist and objectivist: "One wants phenomenology in place, in order that event may re-arise. [. . .] logography is writing as though each word is physical and that objects are originally motivating." (1963b). And in 1964, he explicitly adds "phenomena of man" in a reformulation reminiscent of Merleau-Ponty regarding what had already been outlined in "Projective Verse." Despite claiming that it "isn't [. . .] particularly interesting [. . .] if objects do exist prior to after or without human attention," Olson then emphasizes the importance of human involvement in the creation of a poem: "[W]ord-waves going as much back to constituted objects – objects being granted at this point by human interference motive" (1964a).

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4 Cf. Gardiner: "For Olson, the starting point of our experience of phenomena is the senses" (Gardiner 2007, p. 80). See also his statement, "At every stage of Olson's developing poetics, the body is central" (Gardiner 2007, p. 85).

For Olson, materiality matters because of the motility generated between things (and humans). In "Human Universe", Olson calls such a "kinetic" energy "the motion which we call life" and argues that its production in literature, for example, is "why art is the only twin life has" (Olson 1997, p. 162). The question of liveliness and animation is, in turn, also pivotal for Husserl when he argues for the superior status of meaning and "sinnverleihende[m] Akt" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 46). Meaning is what gives life to linguistic expressions, as the formulation "sinnbelebte[r] Ausdruck" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 43) shows, for example. Husserl repeatedly draws on what he calls a "nicht geklärte Analogie" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 96) of "beseelende Bedeutung" and "Sprachleib" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 96). Derrida famously describes this analogy as follows:

> The word is a body that means something only if an actual intention animates it and makes it pass from the state of inert sonority (*Körper*) to that of an animated body (*Leib*). This body proper to words expresses something only if it is animated (*sinnbelebt*) by an act of meaning (*bedeuten*) which transforms it into a spiritual flesh (*geistige Leiblichkeit*).
>
> (Derrida 1973, p. 81)

Another factor that makes the dimension of meaning superior for Husserl is that "sinngebende Akte" account for the "Akteinheit, die den Charakter des Gesamtaktes wesentlich bestimmt" *(Hua* XIX/1, p. 422). It is essential that an expression ultimately amounts to an "einheitliche[n] Gesamtakt" *(Hua* XIX/1 p. 421). The "sinnliche Unterlage," i.e., the physical appearance of a word, can "mannigfach wechseln": it may occur in print, be spoken, etc. Despite this change in a particular word's appearance, there is "immerfort das Bewusstsein desselben, evident desselben Wortes, da" *(Hua* XX/2, p. 113). "Tree" means tree, no matter whether I write or say "tree" – it remains the same word. While a notion of life is crucial for both Olson and Husserl, even if it leads to a diametrically opposite prioritization – of the word's physical dimension in Olson's case, and of its meaning-dimension in Husserl's – Olson is not interested in a unitary "Gesamtakt," but rather in capturing the irresolvable "tensions" arising when elements are posited against each other. In a poem, "The syllable, the line, as well as the image, the sound, the sense [. . .] must be handled as a series of objects in field in such a way that a series of tensions (which they also are) are made to *hold*" (Olson 1966, p. 20).

The notion of an "Einheit," especially in the sense addressed by Husserl with respect to the "Wort-Leib" *(Hua* XX/2 p. 113), comes into play in what Olson outlines as phenomenological logography. I will explore this by considering one of his unpublished manuscripts. The manuscript in question addresses the poetological issues discussed above by drawing attention to the interactions and tensions between the materiality of words, the writing hand, and the

reading eye. What George Butterick calls "the actual condition of a manuscript, what might be called a phenomenology of text" (Butterick 1983, p. ix) is highly important in this respect. Reproducing a digital image of the manuscript's first page does not do justice to the manuscript's "actual condition" but does allow us to gain some insight into the text's phenomenology.

Figure 3: Olson 1967.

The visual particularities of the remaining three pages of the manuscript cannot be taken into consideration in the scope of this article. I thus simply add the following transcription of the passages relevant for the discussion[5]:

no slow + flow the way
in each instance the consonant
by changing the shape of the vowel
gives it therefore another
effect in the experience
of it – [. . .]
One cld of course intake all sorts
of such shape changes
but I want only
by mentioning it to draw
attention to it: it is,
actually, a momentous

matter of
poeticness
and poetic experience
more possibly than our innate training
to hear speeds of sound
changes that these physically solid
space changes are not possibly often
thought of.
[. . .]
in mentioning vocabulary [. . .] a
vocabularic condition almost
I seem to be taking as true of
The experience of words

 I even some years ago
 went without knowing what I am now saying
 so far as to write a piece
 which seemed to me in itself so self-explanatory
 called Logography but I am honestly of no impression
 that it has been taken or even seems to mean to anyone
 that what it is talking about is this matter of the matter
 of language literally the objectness of it as form &
 as full of those experiences form[6] things have as water and
 leafs falling in it or rocks or wading in it
 [. . .]
 I only mean total & exact
 sensualness of
 those things made of nothing but signs on
 paper [. . .]

I can at least attest that physically in the midst of what we're used to in such familiar things as vowels surrounded by a push or misshapen by consonants, there's much that is what goes to make up what is happening to us when we talk of poem. That words as I

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5 Comparing it to the original manuscript, I slightly changed George Butterick's transcription where necessary.

6 Olson's handwriting is not clearly decipherable here; Butterick transcribes the word as "from."

> there in Logography did say that it is words it is all written of that it is a great deal like
> stepping with your own feet into grapes & at the same time drinking it up.   (Olson 1967)

The starting point of Olson's rough yet strikingly encompassing reconsideration of "Logography" and reformulation of some important notions of his poetics is easily overlooked at first sight. The "matter of poeticness" that he, "by mentioning," wants "to draw attention to" is a visual phenomenon we might only notice after Olson comments on it. On the handwritten page, the letter "o" changes its shape as a result of its positing and depending on the letters surrounding it. At the end of the word "no" it has an oval form, the preceding 'n' attached by a connecting line that touches the 'o' at the bottom left; in "slow," the connecting line is on the upper right-hand side and seems to tighten the oval shape, making it appear pointed towards the top; in "flow," the "o" is so narrow that it is almost reduced to single line, without the aperture in the middle that, strictly speaking, determines the "o" as such.

Olson's own comment on the shape change is actually a slight misreading: it is not the "consonant" that "in each instance" "chang[es] the shape of the vowel" – in "slow" and "flow," the "o" is obviously surrounded by the same consonants. What "gives" the "o" "another / effect in the experience of it" is caused by the dynamic of Olson's hand in the very moment of writing. The shape of the "o" is changed "in each instance"; it is the result of a "reale Setzung" of letters on a page. We thus encounter an instance of particularity meeting phenomenological logography in Olson's sense. The shape change is an instance of the particular. The metamorphosis of the "o" only takes place in handwriting, and only by the writing of this individual hand in the specific moment it was put on paper. The transformed o's are traces of "man" as "force of work as instrument," when "he stamps his HAND on things. as he does in his greatest act, language, even in its coming into existence" (Olson and Creeley 1987, p. 64). In print, the "o" does not change in "no," "slow," and "flow," a different person's handwriting would not necessarily create the same effect, and even in Olson's own hand one cannot observe a strict consistency in how letters change shape through the surrounding ones, as the two different forms of "low" in the example show. In this respect, Olson's example of "poetic experience" is an instance of the materiality of the word resisting the arbitrariness of language. The "matter of poeticness" is the specific change of shape that was produced in a singular act of writing. It is this particular combination of letters in this particular instance that matters poetically; and it can only matter if attention is directed towards the "matter of the matter / of language literally the objectness of it as form."

However, what happens on the visual level of the words can only *become* a "poetic experience" if we simultaneously acknowledge other "acts" at work. What makes the shape change interesting in the first place is that we know we are dealing with the letter "o" in all instances. Even though we see the different shapes, the words remain readable as "no," "slow," and "flow" – we still "hear" an identical sound in all three words, the diphthong "əʊ," and the phoneme remains intact. The "poetic experience" is dependent on these factors and would not work if we read the last word as "flaw," for example. Husserl's distinction of the physical side, or the "Körper" of words, as Derrida calls it, and the "Wort-Leib," provides a useful framework for elaborating on this observation. "Wortkörper" appear in various forms:

> Ich weise darauf hin, wie die sinnliche 'Lautung' (der Wortlaut, das Schriftzeichen etc.), genommen in ihrer jeweiligen individuellen Realität als der im aktuellen Sprechen ertönende, artikulierte Laut etc., mannigfach wechseln und sich vervielfältigen kann.
>
> (*Hua* XX/2, p. 112)

The various appearances, or "Körper," are not identical with the verbal "Leib," which reveals itself in these manifestations. "Dieser Leib ist nicht eine der sinnlichen Formen, sondern eine bei allem vielfältigen Wechsel solcher Formen sich durchhaltende Einheit der Zusammengehörigkeit" (*Hua* XX/2, pp. 113–114). What Husserl argues with respect to the word as a whole can also be claimed for Olson's "o"s. There are multiple *Körper*: *o*, *o*, *o*, and əʊ as well as a "durchhaltende Einheit," or one single *Leib*: the letter "o." Husserl comments with regard to the manifold *Wortkörper*: "[E]ntweder sie sind eins dadurch, dass wechselseitig eins auf das andere hinweist und durch das hindurch auf den Sinn, oder das Optische auf das Akustische hinweist und dadurch auf den Sinn etc." (*Hua* XX/2, p. 114). This also applies to Olson's "o"s: the various manifestations of the "o" refer to each other reciprocally: the visual shapes point to the sound and vice-versa. Even though the question of "Sinn" is not fully transferrable to Olson's example, one could argue that we are dealing with one "Leib" that has one "Sinn" and is readable as "o."

For Husserl, the fact that *Wortkörper* are interchangeable makes them "unwesentlich": "Mag [. . .] der physische Ausdruck [. . .] in dieser Einheit als unwesentlich gelten. Das ist er auch insofern, als anstatt seiner ein beliebiger anderer Wortlaut und in gleicher Funktion hätte stehen können" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 421). Even though Olson's example relies on a "verschmolzene[] Einheit dieses mehrschichtigen Aktes" (*Hua* XX/2, p. 112), the particularity of the *Wortkörper* accounts for its "poeticness." As Olson claims, we perceive the "exact sensualness of / those things made of nothing but signs on paper." Such a sensual experience of the "physically solid" shape of *o* *o* *o* implies turning away from what Husserl

calls "wortkonstiuierende[s] Bewusstsein" (*Hua* XX/2, p. 113). A tension arises between "Wortkörper" and "Wort-Leib": the unity granted by the "Leib" is an underlying precondition for the experience, but in the moment we see ⟨o / /⟩ as lines drawn by a pen, our perception moves beyond the domain of meaningful language. On the manuscript page, the circular shape of the "o" undergoes yet another transformation: it reappears, not as a letter, but as a scribble marking corrections, undoing words and meanings – a trace of writing in process:
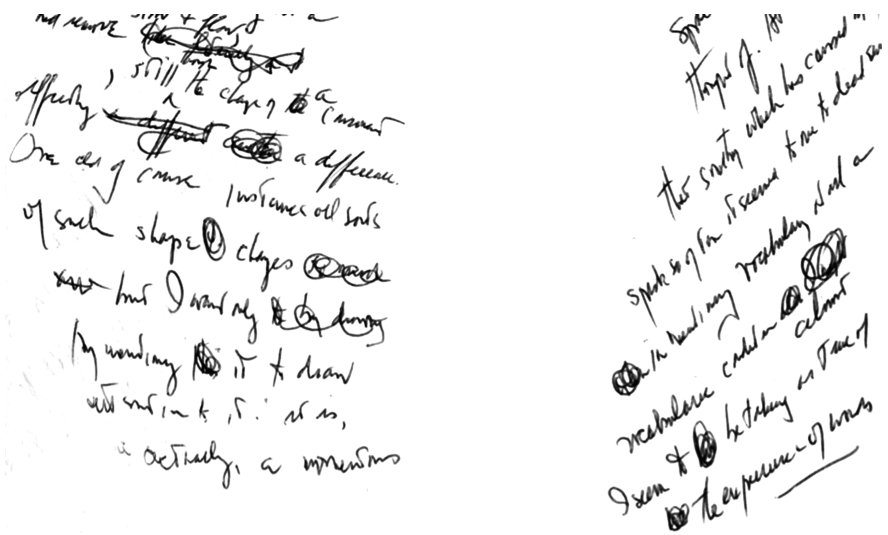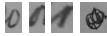
Figure 4: Olson 1967.

The "objectness" of "language [. . .] as form as full of those experiences form things have as water and leafs falling in it or rocks or wading in it," a phenomenon we encounter in ⟨o / / ⊘⟩ etc., implies that language is, momentarily, left behind. We perceive the curls on the page as things that are changing and inducing changes and yet remain at the same time non-exchangeable in themselves: they are in a way "not yet" or "no longer" an "o," but, paradoxically, this only happens because they initially appear as variants of the same letter. In the act of positing, something that makes the "Aktualität der Setzung" possible shines through.

Importantly, the experience Olson reflects on is granted by "space *changes*" (my emphasis): changes in the handwriting on the page, the *transformation* of the letter's shape. In a letter to Creeley, he observes: "Material and motion are one" (Olson and Creeley 1985, p. 164). He continues, "Reality does change – its

position. As do we. And that change of position requires change of attention" (Olson and Creeley 1985, p. 165). When Olson "draw[s] attention" to the transformation of the "o," he demonstrates, "[A]ttention as a mobile fact constantly is re-mobilizing the object that sets itself in motion." Once the metamorphosis, the change of the letter's shape is focused on, the "o" gets caught in a movement. Thus what was produced in the process of writing, the flow of handwriting, is "re-mobilized" in the act of reading (both Olson's and the readers'). Such a phenomenology *of* the letter is an exact realization of what Olson demands in "Projective Verse": "Attention" on "the job in hand, [. . .] the *push* of the line under hand at the moment, under the reader's eye, in his moment." (Olson 1966, p. 18) Through this attention, the object – or rather what happens between the solid letters – becomes the "motive" of an "event."

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Claire Taylor Jones

Icon as *Alter Ego*? Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation and Icons of Mary in Chronicles of the Teutonic Order

Abstract: This essay examines Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation in light of conversion narratives that involve Marian icons in two medieval chronicles of the Teutonic order, Peter of Dusburg's *Chronica terrae Prussiae* (1326) and Nicolaus of Jeroschin's *Kronike von Pruzinlant* (c. 1340). Peter and Nicolaus tell the stories of two pagans who convert to Christianity after recognizing an icon of the Virgin Mary as capable of experiencing suffering and exercising a form of spiritual agency. In the fifth meditation, Husserl gives a rigorous phenomenological description of the *alter ego*, whose intentionality is perceived through its active body [*Leib*]. He also cursorily mentions what he calls cultural objects, which "refer us" to an *alter ego* and its actively constituting intentionality but cannot sufficiently ground recognition of another subject in the way that animate bodies do. I argue that icons, i.e., art objects imbued with saintly presence, put pressure on Husserl's distinction between living bodies and cultural objects in this meditation. Peter's and Nicolaus's accounts confirm the need for a different phenomenological description of intersubjectivity that does not rely on apperception of *alter egos* in animate *Leiber* or, put otherwise, that acknowledges apperception of suffering without the bodily movement required in Husserl's model.

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The Teutonic Order was founded as part of that vast European effort to conquer and hold the Middle East that we now know as Holy Land crusading. Yet only a few decades after their foundation, these medieval knights expanded their mission and in the 1230s turned a portion of their attention from the southeastern border of Christendom to the northeastern border at the Baltic coastline. After the European occupation of the Holy Land fully collapsed in 1291, the Teutonic Knights compensated for the loss of Christ's earthly kingdom by devoting themselves to conquering the kingdom they claimed was Mary's. In 1309 the order relocated their headquarters to Marienburg (now Malbork, Poland), symbolically centering their mission on the Mother of God. From Mary's castle the knights ruled the Baltic coastline from Gdańsk to Tallinn, slaughtered or displaced the local tribes, and settled the region with ethnic Germans. This violence

was justified in their view as service to the Virgin Mary, who signaled her approval and made her presence in the Baltic known through visions and miracles that she worked for her vassal knights in the material images they made to honor her.

In this essay, I aim to transform texts produced in the context of this war into an opportunity to promote intercultural respect by showing the phenomenological justifiability of multiple lifeworlds. I take Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation as a point of departure in order to illuminate the narrative force of Marian icons in two chronicles of the Teutonic order. In this meditation, Husserl gives a rigorous phenomenological description of the *alter ego*, whose intentionality is perceived through its active body [*Leib*]. Along the way, he cursorily mentions what he calls cultural objects, which also "refer us" to an *alter ego* and its actively constituting intentionality but cannot sufficiently ground recognition of another subject in the way that animate bodies do. It is my contention that icons, i.e., art objects imbued with saintly presence, put pressure on Husserl's distinction between living bodies and cultural objects in this meditation. On the one hand, it is clearly part of the medieval Western Christian lifeworld to experience icons and relics as *loci* of subjects with agency and intentionality, which puts Husserl's privileging of living *Leiber* over *Körper* into question. On the other, the fact that some medieval worshippers recognized the icons as bearing *egos*, whereas others did not, suggests that the ability to recognize not only the spiritual predicates of cultural objects but even certain *ego* forms is, in fact, culturally conditioned. By acknowledging the different lifeworlds that different cultures foster and the objects specific to each, Husserl (unwittingly) radically limits the validity of his own description of the *alter ego*, opening up the possibility that his own emphasis on living organic bodies is only one culturally conditioned mode among many.

Finally, if the ability to recognize other egos in certain presentations depends on participation in a particular cultural context, then this ability must be learned and instilled in subjects through enculturation into a particular lifeworld. The two literary works I compare in this essay teach and reinforce a particular cultural lifeworld in which icons of Mary are sites of the Blessed Virgin's spiritual, and occasionally also material, agency. Each text recounts two episodes in which a pagan, almost in spite of himself, demonstrates respect towards an icon of the Virgin. The narratives then retroactively construct this behavior as some sort of precondition for conversion to the Christian faith. Comparing the way in which these texts construct these conversion narratives elucidates not only the way in which the cultural lifeworld of the medieval Teutonic order understood Mary to inhabit her icons, but also how these texts seek to reproduce and reinforce the culture, or ideology, that they represent.

1 Bodies, Animate and Inanimate

In the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, Husserl sets out to establish with unimpeachable rigor the conditions of intersubjectivity, which enable another subject to appear to me as another subject with its own lifeworld and not merely an object in my lifeworld existing exclusively for me. He introduces the argument as a counter to the charge that phenomenology, as an investigation of one's own perceptual experience, is necessarily solipsistic and therefore radically limited in scope and relevance. Husserl's method approaches experience and perception through the *epoché*, or the phenomenological reduction. This thought procedure allows one to focus on phenomena *qua* phenomena by "bracketing," i.e., setting aside or excluding from consideration, any beliefs or assumptions about the reality of the objects perceived. In describing intersubjectivity, Husserl aims to show that his method can analyze an "objective" world (that is, a shared world regardless of its reality) and is not trapped in solipsistic rumination of private hallucinations. In order for his description to be truly rigorous and to dismiss the solipsistic concern satisfactorily, Husserl must provide an explanation for the perception of other subjects *qua* subjects from within a severe phenomenological reduction. In this analysis, his bracketing is so severe, in fact, that it leaves little more than auto-affection and self-perception, from which Husserl nevertheless extrapolates perception of other subjects.

Husserl explains that other subjects pose a particular problem for phenomenology because perception of them is doubled. On the one hand, they appear to me as material perceptual entities or, in his vocabulary, "Weltobjekte" (*Hua* I, p. 123) which exist within my world. On the other hand, I can indeed perceive that they also experience the world within which I exist and that, within this shared world, they also experience me. The (at least potential) existence of such other subjects lends the world its objectivity, its character of "*Für-Jedermann-da*" (*Hua* I, p. 124). The difficulty is explaining how this second level of perception arises through a system predicated on the radical self-reflection that is essential to the phenomenological method.

This idea of reflection marks Husserl's approach to the problem. Before introducing the radical reduction, he meditates on the "natural" experience of others in the world, which is characterized by the notion of the *Gegenüber*. The distinction and opposition of the self to other allows the other to present itself as a "reflection," which Husserl nonetheless makes clear is a figurative expression:

> Es konstituiert sich ein ego nicht als *Ich selbst*, sondern als sich in meinem eigenen Ich, meiner Monade *spiegelndes*. [. . .] Der *Andere* verweist seinem konstituierten Sinne nach auf

mich selbst, der Andere ist Spiegelung meiner selbst, und doch nicht eigentlich Spiegelung, Analogon meiner selbst, und doch wieder nicht Analogon im gewöhnlichen Sinne.

(*Hua* I, p. 125)

The relationship between the perceived other and the perceiving self involves more than a simple similarity that could be established through a comparison; it involves reflection and referral, a metaphoric structure that allows for a pair of unequal value. The ego remains primary and most vivid in this moment, and the *alter ego* is somewhat derivative or devalued in its status as a mirror or analogy. Nevertheless, the *alter ego* is still the same as the ego, albeit as a mediated rather than an immediate phenomenon, a reflection rather than a direct perception.

What Husserl sees reflected in the *alter ego* is the activity of the experiencing subject, i.e., actively constituting intentionality as practiced through the body. Reduced to "my" own purest being in "myself" and for "myself" as a monad, "I" retain immediately my phenomenal body. Husserl calls this *Leib* in contrast to *Körper*, which may designate inanimate beings as well. Everything is *Körper*, insofar as it manifests materially to my senses, even my own body. What sets a *Leib* apart is its mediating capacity as a "fungierendes Organ." Husserl includes both active and passive functions in this description, in a way that makes even passive perceptual functions into a mode of government and agency [*schalten und walten*]: "Ich [*kann*] jeweils *mittelst* der einen Hand die andre, mittelst einer Hand ein Auge usw. wahrnehmen, wobei fungierendes Organ zum Objekt und Objekt zum fungierenden Organ werden muß" (*Hua* I, p. 128). It will remain a question for the ages why Husserl chose to poke himself in the eye rather than look at his hand, but this passage exemplifies three important points: 1) Perception is an activity in which an agent ego engages; 2) Perception is performed through the medium of the *Leib*; and 3) This *Leib*, through which one experiences one's surroundings and in which one governs, nevertheless always also remains a *Körper* and for that reason can be the object, just as much as the organ, of perception.

This final point, the double status of my own body as both *Körper* and *Leib* brings us back to the initial problem, namely, the double status of the *alter ego* as both *Weltobjekt* in my perceptual field and as an ego with its own world and perceptual horizon within which I am an object. Since the other's *Körper* is all that appears in my perceptual field, Husserl must explain how we can perceive the ego that animates it. He argues that we can never perceive it directly but that it can appear through a mode of co-presence or appresentation: "eine Art des *Mit-gegenwärtig-machens*, eine Art *Appräsentation*" (*Hua* I, p. 139). Very concretely, when we see the front side of a block, its back is co-presented and we perceive the back as also being there, even if we never see the block from the other side. Husserl argues that a similar kind of appresentation functions

when we see a body moving through the world as though it were an interested and affected agent. We extrapolate from our own doubled experience of ourselves as both ego and object of our own perception, so that when we perceive a body moving through the world in this way, the animating ego is apperceived, in the same way that we perceive a block as having a back without needing to see it.

The appresentation of an animating ego within an object of perception invites a transfer of the dual sense of *Körper* and *Leib*, which I have from governing my own body. This transfer is the mirroring or analogy mentioned in the previously quoted passage, but Husserl insists on the immediacy of apperception. Just as the back of the block is appresented when we perceive its front, so too the mind of another is appresented with its living body or *Leib*. Once we learn that other egos exist (more on this learning process in a moment), we thereafter perceive such mobile, organic bodies right away as *alter egos* in a *Leib*. Thus Husserl effects his escape from solipsism by analogously transferring one's own experience of and agency within one's own *Leib* to other *Körper* in the world.

Despite the seeming elegance of this solution, several complicating factors arise from passing comments Husserl makes without analyzing them deeply. First, Husserl does not ground recognition of the *alter ego* in a simple mirroring that might require physical similarity. The aspect of the foreign body that invites apperception of an *alter ego* has to do with a quality of its movement in the world and not with its appearance. Husserl emphasizes organs (i.e., *Körperteile* with a mediating perceptive function) as the qualifying aspect of the *Leib*, but this applies to animals as well as to other humans. Husserl hints at this when he notes that the first step in the reduction is to abstract "zunächst von dem, was Menschen und Tieren ihren spezifischen Sinn als sozusagen ichartigen lebenden Wesen gibt" (*Hua* I, p. 126). Animal bodies are evidently animated by a directed and interested orientation toward other objects, making them also *ich-artig*. Because the apperception of an *alter ego* functions for Husserl through recognition of a *Leib*, animals can be perceived as *alter egos* just as much as other humans, even though they look nothing like my body. Within this reduction, there seems to be no way to construct human specificity.[1]

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1 This aspect of Husserl's approach to intersubjectivity has the rather troubling consequence that, in this text, Husserl groups animals together with the blind and the deaf as abnormalities or anomalies, because the worlds they constitute deviate from his able-bodied own. "Nun wissen wir wohl, daß es so etwas wie *Abnormalitäten* gibt, Blinde, Taube und dergl., daß also keineswegs stets die Erscheinungssysteme absolut identische sind. [. . .] Zu der Problematik der Anomalitäten gehört auch das *Problem der Tierheit* und ihrer Stufenfolgen *höherer und niederer* Tiere. In Bezug auf das Tier ist der Mensch, konstitutiv gesprochen, der Normalfall, wie

Second, in order to make the radical reduction to my own body and "natural" objects, Husserl must exclude from the thought experiment anything "foreign" [*fremd*] to me, not just other animate beings but even any object that might point to or presuppose [*verweisen auf* or *voraussetzen*] the presence or activity of a foreign agent – "So alle Kulturprädikate" (*Hua* I, p. 127), as he puts it. The *Verweis* of cultural objects is insufficient for Husserl to ground intersubjectivity and objective reality, because the perception of objects is functionally different from the apperception of an *alter ego* in its *Leib*. One does not perceive an *alter ego* and its *presently* actively constituting intentionality in a cultural object, but merely the trace it has left as it passed through the world. Certainly, cultural objects do not serve and may even obstruct his specific purpose in this text, but bracketing them prevents him from theorizing a strict distinction between their mode of reference to [*Verweis auf*] another ego and that occurring in perception of a *Leib*.

This neglect is problematic, because Husserl uses the term *verweisen* to describe the referential function both of the *Leib* and of the cultural object, albeit before the strict reduction. I have cited the mirror passage above, in which Husserl writes, "der *Andere* verweist seinem konstituierten Sinne nach auf mich selbst" (*Hua* I, p. 125). This instance of *verweisen* in fact follows a passage in which Husserl uses the term to describe the function of cultural objects insofar as they refer to a foreign subject and its actively constituting intentionality.

> Zudem gehören zur Erfahrungswelt Objekte mit *geistigen* Prädikaten, die ihrem Ursprung und Sinn gemäß auf Subjekte und im allgemeinen auf fremde Subjekte und deren aktiv konstitutierende Intentionalität verweisen: so alle Kulturobjekte (Bücher, Werkzeuge und Werke irgendwelcher Art usw.), die dabei aber zugleich den Erfahrungssinn des *Für-Jedermann-da* mit sich führen (scilicet für Jedermann der entsprechenden Kulturgemeinschaft, wie der europäischen, eventuell enger: der französischen etc.). (*Hua* I, p. 124)

It is clear from this passage that Husserl uses the term "cultural" broadly to include both art objects and objects of culture in a more anthropological sense, like tools. Although he does not state this explicitly, we may infer that this category contains anything that is shaped by and for human use. This human activity imbues cultural objects with "spiritual predicates" which in turn point toward foreign subjects and their intentionalities, either past, in the case of art objects, or future, with regard to tools. Evidently the material object in its materiality must be *Für-Jedermann-da*, and it is the spiritual predicates which may be "for" different, restricted communities. Like *Leiber*, cultural objects operate

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ich selbst konstitutiv die Urnorm bin für alle Menschen; Tiere sind wesensmäßig konstituiert für mich als anomale *Abwandlungen* meiner Menschlichkeit" (*Hua* I, p. 154).

on two levels. They are material objects in the world and, as such, are *Für-Jedermann-da*, but their spiritual predicates, which refer to the intentionality of a foreign subject, are potentially more limited in scope, presenting only to subjects that belong to a particular cultural community and possess the capacity to perceive and use them for what they are.

This leads us to the third problematic point, namely, that Husserl does provide an explanation for how one comes to join such a cultural community. His cultural object of choice is not art, but a tool: scissors. Children are not born understanding what scissors are but must learn their use and purpose. Once learned, this knowledge affects the moment of perception itself.

> Das Kind, das schon Dinge sieht, versteht etwa erstmalig den Zwecksinn einer Schere und von nun ab sieht es ohne weiteres im ersten Blick Scheren als solche; aber natürlich nicht in expliziter Reproduktion, Vergleichung und im Vollziehen eines Schlusses.
>
> (*Hua* I, p. 141)

The child only needs to learn once what scissors are for, and afterwards always perceives scissors *qua* scissors. This is to say, the cultural predicate of "being for cutting" is apperceived, in the same way that we perceive a block as having a back without needing to see it. My reader may have noticed the repetition of this phrase, for this passage about scissors does not come from one of the short discussions of cultural objects, but rather from the conclusion of §50, in which Husserl argues for apperception of intentionality in a foreign body by a sort of analogy to my own *Leib*. He adduces the example of the scissors to explain the immediacy of apperception, implying that the apperception of an *alter ego* (i.e., that a *Körper* is actually a *Leib*) is something learned in infancy. Through the illustrative example of the cultural object "scissors," this point connects back to the much earlier comment about cultural communities, leading to the conclusion that recognizing certain objects as *alter egos* is learned differently within different cultures.

Accepting this possibility places Husserl's careful phenomenological argument in a very weak position. Husserl's decision to privilege the *Leib* as the axis of his argument presupposes that both passivity and agency, perceiving and acting, occur in and through material. For Husserl, an *alter ego* also perceives, but this act of intentionality is evident to us through its movement in the material world. From the perspective of certain religious cultures, however, this assumption perpetrates a radical curtailment of the experienced world, since it ignores the realm of the supernatural or the divine. Whether or not a divine realm of agency and experience "really" exists is beside the point in a phenomenological discussion that wishes to remain sympathetic to a multiplicity of life-worlds. If we are discussing how things appear to a variety of subjects, we must

table the question of how they really are. Accepting, then, that in certain life-worlds effects may be experienced as caused by a divine agent, must an *alter ego* of necessity inhabit an organic body like mine? Or is it possible to hold sympathetically in mind a different way of constructing embodied perceptive presence?

Of course, I am arguing that it is, and that we must attempt this mental exercise if we wish to understand the lifeworlds, motivations, and agonies of the medieval European Christians who believed that relics and icons housed the presence and agency of the saints. The icon, in particular, puts pressure on Husserl's cursory account of cultural objects, on his utopic assertion of a potentially universal community of subjects, and most fundamentally, on his grounding of empathy in analogous pairing based on apperceived "governance" of a body. Although the material body of the icon does not move in a way that exhibits an orientation towards objects in the world, medieval Christians still perceived it as animate and as the source of a felt spiritual agency that they equally took as evidence of intentionality. Importantly, medieval Christians also recognized the existence of multiple lifeworlds, which corresponded rather loosely to cultural and religious worlds. In the two chronicles I will consider, the Teutonic Knights are not separated from the pagan Prussians merely by theological disagreements, but by differences in what is perceived to be an *alter ego*.

2 Mary's Knights

Given the propagandistic function of the chronicles, some background on the political situation at the time of their composition would be useful to illuminate the narrative deployment of Marian icons. The *Ordo Fratrum Domus Hospitalis Sanctae Mariae Teutonicorum in Jerusalem*, as it is still officially called, is most commonly known in English as the Teutonic Knights. Abbreviating their Latin title, the order's own German literature calls them the Order of the German House or, importantly for our context, the Knights of St. Mary [*Marienritter*]. It was founded in Acre (Akko in modern Israel) just before 1200 and was named in honor of a hospital that had already been destroyed when Jerusalem fell in 1187.[2] Like the Hospitallers (the Knights of St. John, from whom the modern

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2 The new hospital was founded in 1190 by northern Germans who had no connection with the earlier German pilgrim hospital. See Morton 2009, pp. 9–13. This explanation for the appearance of Jerusalem rather than Acre in the order's name comes from its own histories, but that does not necessarily make it true. Still, this story appears in this form in papal documents already in 1191. See Militzer 1999, pp. 7–23 and especially pp. 13–14.

Johanniter descend), the German order was founded as a hospital and only militarized later, although relatively quickly, and survives today as a charitable organization. For most of its 800-year history, the Teutonic Knights had two types of membership: knight brothers and priest brothers.[3] Both types of membership required religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, but otherwise they fulfilled different functions. The priests were responsible for spiritual life and administrative tasks, whereas the knights were occupied with governance and, of course, war.

Although founded in the Holy Land primarily for defense, in the 1230s the order answered a call for aid from the Holy Roman Empire's northeastern border and sent knights to subjugate and convert the peoples of the Baltic coastline. By 1283, the order had largely subdued the native Prussians, leaving pagan Lithuania as the main opponent. In the meantime, European presence in the Holy Land was collapsing. The order lost its headquarters at Montfort to the Mamluks in 1271 and withdrew to Acre, which fell in 1291, effectively destroying the Latin European Kingdom of Jerusalem (Morton 2009, pp. 131–143). The German order established a new headquarters in Venice, but when the Templars became the target of a concerted political attack, the order withdrew again in 1309, this time outside the reach of European politics – to Marienburg in Prussia. Even if the Holy Land were a lost cause, there were still non-Christian peoples to be subdued and converted in the Baltic, which justified the order's continued military mission and existence.

The security of this northeastern reorientation quickly revealed itself as an illusion, when in 1324 the Lithuanian ruler Gediminas concluded a peace treaty under a false pretense of willing conversion. Although he was subsequently quite open about this having been a lie, Pope John XXII (1316–1334) took the promise seriously in a move that came to threaten the order's legitimacy (Rowell 1994, pp. 189–228). Instead of producing straight-up crusade propaganda, Peter von Dusburg (a priest brother of the German order) set out to legitimize his organization's existence by rewriting its history in a narrative that treats events in the Holy Land as secondary phenomena and from the outset places full weight on the Prussian arena, emphasizing and elevating the Baltic mission. He completed his Latin prose chronicle, *Cronica terrae Prussiae*, in 1326, having brought its narrative up to the time of his writing, including Gediminas's recent treachery (Mentzel-Reuters 2016, p. 312).

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3 The relative proportions of these two types of membership fluctuated so much over the course of the order's history that at various times one form of membership or the other has been more theory than practice. The status of knight brother was eliminated after World War I. See Arnold 1994, pp. 223–235.

Around the time Peter broke off writing his chronicle, the order's difficult relationship with the Polish Piast dynasty to its south (Christian since 966) blossomed into a violent feud. Although the controversy around Gediminas had resolved itself, the Polish king Władisław Łokietek invaded Culm in the winter of 1328–1329 while the bulk of the order's force was entertaining John of Bohemia's military ambitions in Samogitia. John of Bohemia decided that the best way to "help" the order was to register his own claim to the Polish throne. John was married to the princess Elisabeth, sister of the last Přemyslid King of Poland and Bohemia, who had died without an heir. His Bohemian throne went to John and Elisabeth, and the Polish kingdom returned to the ancient dynasty of the Piasts in the person of Władisław Łokietek, who felt that the Přemyslids had been usurpers in the first place and that John's claim was therefore doubly illegitimate. John's intervention thus exponentially worsened the Polish-Teutonic territorial dispute over the Culmerland and thoroughly embroiled the order in a secular conflict between Christian rulers. Peace agreements were only reached fifteen years later under Władisław's son Casimir (Urban 2003, pp. 121–136).

With most of the order's attention devoted to conflict with a kingdom that had been Christian since the tenth century, its legitimacy was even more in question than during the recent conflict with Gediminas. Furthermore, John of Bohemia was only present in Eastern Europe at all because of the order's effort to develop a knightly crusading tourist industry.[4] With the German order's mission and identity radically shaken, the priest brother Nicolaus of Jeroschin undertook to translate Peter's Latin chronicle into German verse, making this historical self-justification available to the mostly Latin-illiterate knight brothers.[5] Nicolaus also updated the chronicle with further events up to 1331, finishing the work sometime before 1340.[6] The two episodes I will discuss are supposed to have taken place prior to 1300 and are contained in both Peter's Latin and Nicolaus's German chronicle.

The historical context of these chronicles is important because both were composed as propaganda. By the time Peter von Dusburg and Nicolaus von

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[4] John of Bohemia's campaign took place on the early side of this development, but the order eventually designed a feast with elaborate pageantry offered in connection with their military campaigns and celebrated for the benefit of the visiting European nobles who participated in their military actions without becoming members of the order. For this so-called *Ehrentisch*, see Paravicini 1989, pp. 316–334.

[5] For literacy within the medieval order, see Mentzel-Reuters 2003, pp. 43–44.

[6] The chronicle was begun under Grand Master Lothar of Brunswick (1330–1335) and completed under Grand Master Dietrich of Altenburg (1335–1341), both of whom are mentioned within the text as patrons. See Jeroschin 2010, p. 5.

Jeroschin were writing, it either looked as if the Teutonic Knights were fighting or they actually were engaged in a fight with other Christian powers and no longer subduing and converting pagans. The chroniclers needed, on the one hand, to rally political and ecclesial powers outside the order to their cause and, on the other, to encourage knights within the order. With these ends in mind, Peter and Nicolaus did not set out to record objectively the course of events as they really happened. The purpose of these texts is to demonstrate that their subject matter plays a productive role in salvation history; that is to say, these chronicles claim that the activity of the Teutonic order on the Baltic both renews and supersedes Old Testament models, foremost, the Maccabees (Fischer 2005, pp. 59–71), and furthers progress towards the end times by protecting and expanding the Christian world.[7]

The language and literary form of the two chronicles played an important role in their didactic purpose. Written in Latin prose, Peter's chronicle may have been an act of externally-oriented self-representation, perhaps meant as an offering to the papal curia, although he could have intended it for fellow priest brothers within the Teutonic order. The possibility that it was internal reform propaganda is supported by the fact that the Grand Master who commissioned Peter's work, Werner von Orseln, was murdered in 1330 by a knight brother whom he had disciplined for breaking the vow of poverty (Dusburg 2012, p. LXXXVI; Mentzel-Reuters 2016, p. 313). A chronicle that celebrates the order's mission in the Baltic while attributing their success to piety, Christian conduct, and well-deserved divine grace fits the character of this Master's governance (Arnold 2014, pp. 60–65).

Nicolaus's intended audience is somewhat clearer, since he composed his chronicle in the East Thuringian dialect that was the Teutonic order's *lingua franca* to target a readership among the knight brothers of his own order and perhaps potential recruits (Mentzel-Reuter 2016, pp. 304–305). The German language brought with it German literary forms, as Nicolaus rendered Peter's Latin prose into the octosyllabic rhymed couplets characteristic of Arthurian romance. This was not a unique innovation on Nicolaus's part but resulted from a widespread generic shift around the year 1300 that blurred the lines between history and romance with regard to narrative content and emplotment, as well as poetic form (Herweg 2010, pp. 54–58). Even as common as it was, Nicolaus's

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7 The hermeneutic enrichment of successive historical narration with a cyclic and figurative notion of salvific history was a common feature of medieval history writing, which Gabrielle Spiegel associates with postmodern historiography in the vein of Koselleck and De Certeau. See Spiegel 2016, pp. 21–33. Regarding the temporal structure in Peter's Latin chronicle in particular, see Vercamer 2011, pp. 517–533.

hybrid literary form of itself exercises a didactic or propagandistic function by occupying the literary landscape of romance with the concerns and didactic purpose of religious historiography.[8] We shall see this purpose operating at a narrative level in the conversion stories.

In order to justify the Teutonic order's continued presence and activity in Prussia, the chroniclers needed to accomplish several feats: first, to demonstrate divine support; second, to differentiate between Christians and non-Christians with a lie-proof litmus test; and third, to bring the knight brothers into line so their behavior would not further damage the order's spiritual legitimacy. Peter and Nicolaus enlist the aid of the saints to achieve these ends. They narrate stories in which the saints express their pleasure or displeasure with the Teutonic Knights either through visions or miracles associated with their relics.[9] Of all the heavenly patrons and patronesses, Mary wields the greatest power.

As mentioned previously, Mary's patronage of the Teutonic order was included both in their full formal name and in their informal designation as *Marienritter*. The military orders did not have their own founding saints, as did the monastic and mendicant orders in the figures of Saint Benedict and Saint Francis, for example (Houben 2005, pp. 217–225). For this reason, Mary's patronage of the order was all the more important and took a multitude of forms. Perhaps most importantly, the knights' relationship to Mary was modelled politically as that between vassals and a liege lady. Prussia was the fief that the knights held from the heavenly queen (Dygo 1989, pp. 63–80). The chronicles include stories that also transpose this political relationship into the realm of courtly romance with knights who serve Mary on the jousting circuit, for example, before joining the order (Fischer 1991, pp. 143–144). Whether motivated by ideology, the weather, or some of both, Marian holidays also governed the timing of their military expeditions. The knights traditionally began their *Sommerreise* on either the Assumption or Nativity of the Virgin (August 15 or September 8) and the *Winterreise* on the Purification of the Virgin (February 2) (Dygo 1989, pp. 67–68). Devotion to Mary and concepts of her sovereignty governed both ideological and practical aspects of life within the Teutonic order. In describing these Marian conversion miracles, the chroniclers are actively attempting to

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8 The poetic form is not the only romance characteristic Nicolaus employs in his chronicle. See Vander Elst 2017, pp. 139–149.

9 Barbara plays a particularly significant role according to Starnawska 2017, pp. 203–212. For more on the place of relics in the culture of the military orders, see Borowski and Gerrard 2017, pp. 1056–1100.

enculturate the reader into a shared Christian lifeworld that includes the spiritual agency of Mary channeled through the icon.

3 Mary's Image

Today, icons are most commonly associated with Eastern and Russian Orthodoxy, in which traditions they are and have been generally two-dimensional images painted on panels. Byzantine Orthodox theology overcame the Old Testament commandment against graven images by arguing that Christ's incarnation was itself a moment of divine image creation in which God superseded his own earlier commandment by creating an image of himself in the world. The understanding of icons was therefore conceptually tied to incarnational theology – worshippers interacted with the divine through the mediation of the icon.[10]

The Western Church understood relics to fulfill a similar mediating function and, although this was never good theology in Latin Christendom, popular piety often transferred this function to images.[11] Little concrete evidence survives from the beginning of the fourteenth century when these events were taking place, but by 1400 Prussia had developed a rich and varied repertoire of Marian devotional objects. The iconographically most complex are the so-called *Schreinmadonnas*, whose bodies open to reveal the Christian faithful protected under Mary's cloak,[12] but the Teutonic order and parish churches alike owned numerous Marian images and objects of simpler design. Fifteenth-century sacristy inventories for houses of the Teutonic order list gold and silver crowns to adorn *bilde* of Mary, as well as *tofel* with Mary depicted on them.[13] The use of decorative accessories such as crowns for the *bilde* suggests that this term designates free-standing sculptures in the round, although the word certainly also

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10 For a study of Byzantine icons especially focused on Mary, see Pentcheva 2006.

11 For explicit attempts to halt this practice, see Jäggi 2004, pp. 63–86 and Lentes, 1996, pp. 177–195. For the function of relics, see Brown 1981, pp. 86–91 and Bynum 2011, pp. 154–160.

12 In several of the surviving examples, both priest brothers and knight brothers are explicitly portrayed. See Gertsman 2015 and Radler 2009, pp. 199–212.

13 Rozynkowski 2009, pp. 57–67. Adorning Marian statuettes with crowns and cloaks has generally been treated in scholarship as a feature of female piety, a gendered assumption that ought to be reassessed in light of the evidence from chapel inventories of the German order. See Bynum 2015, pp. 18–40 and Klack-Eitzen, Haase, and Weißgraf 2013, pp. 66–68.

retained its broader figurative and abstract meanings.[14] Corroborating the earlier existence of such objects in the region, around 1300 an anonymous Cistercian author described St. Hedwig (Duchess of Silesia and Greater Poland) carrying a small ivory figurine of Mary with her everywhere (Hamburger 1998, pp. 435–440). This is how we should envision the icons of Mary in the following episodes: as small to medium-sized statuettes, probably carved out of wood or ivory and vibrantly painted.

The first Marian convert introduced in Peter's and Nicolaus's chronicles is a Sudovian man named Russigen. Russigen packs up his entire household and leaves Sudovia for Balga, a fortress on the shore of the Vistula Lagoon just southwest of modern Kaliningrad. Russigen and all his family members are baptized, but immediately fall ill. As Russigen lies on his deathbed, the priest who had baptized him sits with him to instruct him in the Christian faith. Noting a little wooden cross in Russigen's possession, the priest asks him if he ever did anything good in his life prior to his baptism.

> Respondit, quod multos Christianos interfecisset, de aliquo bono facto nihil sciret praeter hoc solum, quod dum ipse cum magno exercitu intrasset Poloniam, quidam Sudowita imaginem beatae virginis Mariae cum filio in gremio deportavit, et in reditu dum cum lanceis suis ad dictam imaginem sagittarent, ipse de hoc dolens violenter rapuit et cuidam Christiano dedit dicens: "Accipe imaginem istam Dei tui et reporta ad locum, ubi in reverentia debita habeatur"; quo facto apparuit ei beata virgo in specie et habitu pulcherrima in somnis et dixit: "Hoc obsequium, quod mihi fecisti in imagine mea, tibi in regno filii mei refundetur." Quod cum ipse Sudowita sacerdoti retulisset, statim quasi eodem die in domino feliciter obdormivit.   (Dusburg 2012, p. 346)

> He responded that he had killed many Christians and knew nothing of any good deed, except for this alone: when he had invaded Poland with a large army, a certain Sudovian looted an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary with her son in her lap. On the way home, they were shooting at this image with their javelins. Pained by this, he seized it violently and gave it to a Christian, saying: "Take this image of your god and bring it to a place where it will be held in due reverence." After this, the Blessed Virgin, beautiful of face and dress, appeared to him in a dream and said, "This service you rendered to me in my image will be repaid you in my son's kingdom." Once this Sudovian had related this to the priest, he happily passed away [fell asleep in God] almost immediately that same day.
> (My translation)

The incident is notable for the multiple ways in which objects mediate and accompany the convert's path to salvation. The end of this spiritual journey is marked by the possession of and devotion to a cross, an object referring the

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14 For example, Nicolaus's prologue reminds the reader that humans were created in God's *bilde* (Jeroschin 1861, p. 15).

devout to the end of Christ's life and the accomplishment of human redemption. Asked where his personal path began, Russigen identifies an object that refers to the beginning of Christ's life, an icon of the Virgin with the Christ Child. The two devotional objects frame the pagan's path from awakening in the faith to rest in God as they frame the path of Christ on earth.

For the narrator, however, as presumably for Russigen, the objects are not merely symbolic. The icon of Mary, if not the cross, bridges the material world and the transcendent realm where Mary abides. Mary suffers the torture of the pagans in the image and similarly enjoys Russigen's mercy indirectly through the service "quod mihi fecisti in imagine mea" [*which you did for me in my image*]. Russigen is furthermore driven to action by empathy, as he also suffers vicariously from violence enacted upon the icon, "de hoc dolens." Russigen intervenes because he experiences empathetic pain on behalf of the image.

Although she experiences human action in the icon, Mary can only exercise agency spiritually, appearing therefore in a dream vision rather than animating the image. Nevertheless, she exercises real influence in Russigen's life. Russigen can only receive a heavenly reward if he dies a Christian convert. Since Peter locates the event prior to Russigen's conversion, one must interpret Mary's promise of reward as instigation down this spiritual path. At the very least, the promise reminds the reader of Mary's role as intercessor, securing mercy at the judgment of all souls. Russigen's nascent recognition of the icon as a medium for Mary in the world and his material intervention on her behalf secures the promise of her spiritual intervention on his behalf in the afterlife.

In translating this story for his German-language chronicle, Nicolaus retained most of the details, but made a number of alterations that cannot be explained away simply as the exigencies of versification or idiomatic language use. For example, he retains almost verbatim the crucial phrase which implies that the icon serves as the medium of worldly action and experience for Mary: the service rendered "mihi in imagine mea" [*to me in my image*] becomes "an mînem bilde mir." With such details retained, the differences stand out in starker relief as conscious authorial choices to intensify the anecdote.

"Ich habe manchin cristin / bî mînis lebins vristin / irslagin, des ich î mich vleiz. / Gûtir werc ich nicht inweiz / an mir," sus der sîche sprach, / "sundir einiz, daz geschach, / dô wir mit creftigir hant / hertin in Polênerlant, / dâ ouch einre der Sudouwin / nam ein bilde unsir vrouwin, / daz er vûrte mit im dan, / und daz bilde sach man hân / gesnitzit ein kindil ûf der schôz. / Darnâch in des nicht vordrôz / und andre heidin wilde, / sî schuzzin zu dem bilde / in uppelîchir vreidekeit. / Dô ich daz sach, iz was mir leit, / und lîf hin in zorne balt, / nam daz bilde mit gewalt / und iz eime cristnin gab. / 'Nim, trac,' sprach ich, 'balt hin ab / diz bilde des gotis dîn; / brenge iz, dâ im muge sîn / nâch cristinlîchir ê bereit / êre, lob mit wirdekeit.' / Darnâch in slâfe mir irschein / geformit

nâch dem bilde rein / in wunnenclîchir schouwe / dî allirschônste vrouwe, / der glîche nî mê wart gesehen; / dî hôrt ich alsô zu mir jehen: / 'Den dînst, den dû irbotin / kegn der tummin rotin / hâst an mînem bilde mir, / sol gegoldin werdin dir / mit lône ubirrîche / in mînis kindis rîche!'" / Und dô der reine westirbar / dise wort volante gar / vor dem prîstre vorgenant, / dî sprâche legte er zuhant / unde sêlichlîch intslîf / in gote, ê der tac vorlîf.

(Jeroschin 1861, pp. 215)

"In my lifetime I have zealously killed many Christians. I do not know of any good works other than one, which happened when we were campaigning in Poland and one of the Sudovians took an image of Our Lady away with him. The image had a child carved in her lap. Afterwards this man and other wild heathens kept on shooting at the picture in a wild frenzy. When I saw that, it pained me. I ran up to them angrily, took the picture from them by force and gave it to a Christian. 'Take this, carry away,' I said, 'this image of your god; bring it to where it will worthily be given honor and praise according to Christian law.' After this the most beautiful woman, formed like that pure image, appeared to me in a blissful vision in my sleep. I have never seen the like before or after. I heard her say to me, 'The service you did for me in my image in rescuing it from the ignorant hordes will be repaid with rich rewards in my child's kingdom!'" When the pure, newly baptised man had said these words to the priest, he spoke no more and blessedly fell asleep in God before the day was out.

(Jeroschin 2010, p. 198. Translation modified)

Nicolaus makes changes in detail and phrasing which, though subtle, reinforce the ideological thrust of the episode by strengthening the role of the material image and by highlighting Russigen's conversion. First, Nicolaus's Russigen claims that the woman of the dream vision appears in the form of the icon [*geformit nâch dem bilde*]. This shift strengthens the role of the material object in mediating Mary's presence, since she now appears even to his dream-vision "spiritual sight" in the material form in which she had first appeared to his "natural sight." Second, whereas Peter had Russigen urge that the image be held in due reverence [*in reverentia debita*], Nicolaus specifies that reverence is due according to Christian law [*nâch cristinlîchir ê*]. This addition sharpens the sense of cultural difference and places Russigen at the time of the event firmly outside of the Christian cultural community. Since reverence is not due to the icon inherently but only according to the legal custom of Russigen's opponents, Russigen's empathy towards the image proves all the more miraculous. Nicolaus's emphasis on Russigen's initial exclusion from the Christian community is brought into starker relief, when at the end of the episode he highlights Russigen's conversion and introduction to the Christian community by calling him a *westirbar*, one who wears baptismal robes. This term represents a significant shift from Peter, who still calls Russigen *Sudowita* even at his death and in so doing rhetorically bars his path to cultural inclusion despite his baptism.

Finally, Nicolaus converts the entire story into direct speech, as if recorded from the mouth of Russigen himself. Although this rhetorical move lessens the

impact of the reported speech in Peter's Latin version and thereby also reduces the significance of Mary's direct address in the dream, the first-person narration gives an illusion of immediacy, seemingly cutting out the intradiegetic priest of Balga, the chronicler Peter, and now also Nicolaus as mediators. Whereas the authority of Latin discourse is better anchored in the person of a cleric, in German the narrative can draw affective power from personalization. By literary sleight of hand, Nicolaus brings his readers directly into Russigen's lifeworld and invites them to join Russigen by recognizing the icon of Mary as a suffering body that demands an empathetic, protective response.

In Peter's chronicle, Russigen's story already communicates the importance of Christian devotional objects. The icon and the cross are symbols laden with narrative content which invite the viewer (and the reader) to assimilate their own spiritual paths to the arc of (re-)birth and salvific death. More than that, the icon also embodies the Virgin Mary's presence in the material world, and through it she may be honored or harmed by actions that have repercussions in the spiritual realm. Nicolaus seizes upon these aspects of Peter's narrative and rhetorically intensifies them in having the icon manifest Mary's spiritual as well as physical presence, which facilitates Russigen's entry into the Christian community in turn. Shifting into direct speech, Nicolaus also transforms the anecdote so that it no longer simply justifies the order's mission but also propagandistically envelops the reader in the lifeworld it describes.

Both Peter and Nicolaus follow this anecdote fairly closely with a second story that is suspiciously similar to Russigen's, that of a Sudovian warlord by the name of Skumantas. Unlike Russigen, who appears as a spontaneous convert and dies immediately, Skumantas has a long history with the order and a large role to play in the chronicles. He initially gained respect for the Teutonic Knights when a captive knight demonstrated bravery, military prowess, and pride in masculine honor, characteristics evidently valued by both Christian and pagan cultures. Subsequently defeated in battle, Skumantas converts to Christianity, switches sides, and fights on behalf of the order against other pagan tribes (Jeroschin 1861, pp. 216–217; Dusburg 2012, p. 350). Despite this violent history, Skumantas escapes death on the battlefield. He is attended on his deathbed, like Russigen, by a priest from Balga, who serves as witness to the retrospective miracle of Skumantas's conversion.

> Ecce mirabilis conversio et mutatio dexterae excelsi, iste Scumandus, qui ultra modum ante persequebatur ecclesiam Dei, modo zelator fidei factus est, dux gloriosus populi Christiani. Hic dum morti appropinquaret, interrogatus a fratre Conrado sacerdote de Balga, quomodo tantam gratiam in fide Christi a Domino meruisset, ait: "Nunquam aliquod boni feci ante conversionem meam nisi hoc solum, quod, dum infideles imaginem beatae virginis Mariae et filii sui spoliassent in Polonia et secuissent per medium, ego de

terra sustuli et mundavi vestibus meis et ad locum decentem posui"; quo dicto feliciter in Domino obdormivit.   (Dusburg 2012, p. 364)

Here is the miraculous conversion and transformation of the right hand of the most high. This Skumantas, who earlier had excessively persecuted the church of God, had now become a zealot of the faith, a glorious leader of the Christian people. When his death was approaching, Brother Conrad, a priest from Balga, asked him how he had come to deserve so much grace in Christ's faith. He replied, "Before my conversion, I never did anything good except this alone: once infidels in Poland had plundered an image of the Virgin Mary and her son and split it down the middle. I picked it up from the earth and cleaned it with my clothes and put it in a suitable place." Having said this, he happily fell asleep in God.   (My translation)

Although at this point in the chronicle Skumantas is an established character, his death story has even less detail than Russigen's and is suspiciously similar in what detail it does have. This priest has a name, Conrad, but is also from the Balga commandery. The icon suffered a different fate and was not returned to Christians, but the event also occurred while on campaign in Poland. In the absence of a dream vision, the readers are left to make the connection between Skumantas's rescue of the icon and his blessed death on their own.

In adapting this episode, Nicolaus expands it to three times its length in Peter's version. Some of this expansion involves details Nicolaus adds that bring Skumantas's death into even closer narrative proximity to Russigen's. For example, Peter had not mentioned an illness, merely that Skumantas's death was approaching, so Nicolaus's introduction of a *sûche* ties this story yet more closely back to the earlier one. Nevertheless, Nicolaus transforms Skumantas's passing into something much more significant than a pale repetition of Russigen's death:

Nû sêt, wî wundirlîch kan got / nâch sînre tuginde gebot / sîne geschefde handelin / und wî er wil vorwandelin. / Daz sprech ich bî Scomande, / den ich dâ vor ûch nande. / Den sach man ê vorvolgin / in vreise gar irbolgin / mortlîch dî reine cristinheit; / daz was nû alliz hin geleit / von gotis wandelâte, / sô daz der helt mit râte / und mit alle sînre macht / um des geloubin êre vacht, / und als er den ê hirmete, / sus er in nû beschirmete / und was den cristinin getân / ein vil getrûwe leitisman / widir dî gotis vîande. / Des wolde ouch got Scomande, / hî vur diz brôde lebin / ein immirwerndiz gebin / und von hinnin zuckin; / des wart in niddirdruckin / ein sûche, dî sô lange / in hîlt in ir getwange / unz der tôt im nâhete. / Vil sêre er dô gâhete / nâch den sacrementin / cristinlîcher rentin, / daz er dâmitte wurde bedâcht, / und dî intpfîng ouch mit andâcht / in sô grôzir innekeit, / daz sîn der prîstir wart gemeit / zur Balge brûdir Conrât / und im Scomande sagin bat, / ob er vor der toufe pflicht / mit dînste hette lobis icht / gote î dirbotin, / darum er in berotin / het an des geloubin stift / mit so genâdinrîchir gift, / alse er nû an im sach / und ouch sîn lebin vor bejach. / "Nein zwâr," sprach er, "ich inhân / ûf erdin gûtis nicht getân, / ê den ich wart ein cristin; / wen zu einen vristin / wir kegn Polênin reisetin / und dâ sêre vreisetin / an der armin cristinheit; / dô sach ich zwâr, daz mir was

leit, / ligin ûf der erdin / besulwit mit unwerdin / ein vil zartiz bilde, / daz dî heidin wilde / inzwei hattin gehouwin. / Marîen, unsir vrouwin, / was daz bild, als ich nû spehe, / wen iz pflag ein kindil wehe / ûf dem arme haldin. / Daz bild alsô zuspaldin / hûb ich ûz dem pfochte / und, wî ich reinste mochte, / sô wischt ich iz mit mînre wât, / unde satzt iz an ein stat, / dâ sînre werdekeit gezam." / Und dô dî red ein ende nam / Scomant an Marîen rîf / und dâmit er in got intslîf. (Jeroschin 1861, p. 228–229)

See how wonderfully God manages His creation in accordance with his virtuous power and how He transforms His creatures. I am referring to Skumantas, whom I mentioned to you earlier. He had previously been known as someone who furiously persecuted and killed Christians. He had given all that up as a result of the change God brought about in him, and this hero now fought with all his might for the honour of the faith, which he protected as assiduously as he had previously tried to harm it. He became a very loyal leader of the Christians against the enemies of God. In return, God intended to pluck Skumantas from this miserable life and give him life everlasting; to this end Skumantas was struck down by a fever, which kept him in its grip until he was close to death. He was keen to receive the Christian sacrament, which he was given and received with such intense devotion that the priest, Brother Konrad from Balga, was very pleased and asked Skumantas whether he had ever done anything in praise of God before his baptism, for which God had so graciously rewarded him, as he (Konrad) could see and as Skumantas's subsequent life had demonstrated. "No," he said. "I did not do any earthly good before I was a Christian, except once when we were campaigning against Poland and terrorising the poor local Christians; I felt sorry to see a tender image lying dirty on the ground, which the wild heathens had hacked in two. The image was of Our Lady, the Virgin Mary, I realise now, because it was holding a child in its arms. I picked the broken image up out of the filth and wiped it as clean as I could with my clothes and set it somewhere befitting its dignity." When he had finished speaking, Skumantas invoked the Virgin Mary and then went to sleep in God. (Jeroschin 2010, p. 210. Translation modified)

As with his less expansive interventions in Russigen's story, Nicolaus rounds out the Christian lifeworld for the benefit of his reader, enhances the role of the Marian icon in the episode and structures the narrative with greater sensitivity to the process of conversion. Whereas Peter's Conrad merely remarks on Skumantas's earned grace without further comment, Nicolaus explains in what this grace consists, partially by magnifying the significance of Skumantas's service with the order's military arm but also with a significant addition that is wholly his own invention: intense Eucharistic piety. In Nicolaus's version, Skumantas longs to receive the Sacrament at the hour of his death and, granted this, receives the body of Christ with an almost mystical intensity of devotion [*mit andâcht in sô grôzir innekeit*]. Nicolaus does not leave this fervor as a pious aside, but rather binds it closely into Skumantas's conversion arc by making explicit that both this Eucharistic devotion and his military career on behalf of the Teutonic order are signs of God's grace. Even the illness Nicolaus introduces is figured as a reward for Skumantas's zealous service to the Christian faith.

With these expansions, Nicolaus's version of Skumantas's death is instructive in a way that Peter's is not. By explaining how Skumantas earned God's reward, Nicolaus offers a fuller depiction of this lifeworld, including imitable models for Christian military men.

The introduction of Eucharistic piety echoes Russigen's possession of a wooden cross. Skumantas's devotion to the body of Christ in the form of the Eucharist functions like Russigen's cross to frame the arc of Skumantas's life as a Christian with the death and, retrospectively, the birth of Christ.[15] To strengthen this frame, Nicolaus accordingly intensifies the role of the Marian icon in the tale in a way that displays greater biographical sensitivity to Skumantas's respective lifeworlds pre- and post-conversion to the Christian faith. In both versions of Russigen's tale and in Peter's version of Skumantas's death, the narrators introduce the icon immediately and unproblematically as an image of the Virgin Mary. Nicolaus's version of Skumantas's story, however, pursues Skumantas's spiritual journey to the Christian faith by acknowledging that he did not at the time know what the object was. Nicolaus accomplishes this both explicitly in Skumantas's self-reflective speech [*als ich nû spehe*] and narratively by delaying identification of the *zartiz bilde* until Skumantas himself can retrospectively recognize it. Only after conversion and instruction in the Christian faith can Skumantas understand what, or better, who it was he rescued from the muck, and Nicolaus's careful narration of the realization draws the reader with Skumantas down the path towards recognition. Although Mary is not explicitly credited with Skumantas's conversion, as with her promise to Russigen, the reader is reminded of her spiritual agency when Skumantas invokes her aid with his final breath, an addition we know is not a poetic constraint because Nicolaus used a different rhyme pair for *intslîf* at Russigen's death.

Nicolaus's reworkings of both Russigen's and Skumantas's deaths manipulate pagan conversion narratives into an opportunity to draw the reader into a Christian lifeworld in which the images of the Virgin Mary link human action in this world to spiritual agency in the next. He amplifies the gestures of Peter's chronicle and builds both anecdotes up into narrative life-arcs in miniature that emphasize and celebrate the pagan's introduction into the Christian religious and cultural community. The motion of this life-arc towards salvation is symbolized in both episodes by paired objects, one representing Christ's passion and the other his birth. The narrative structure also reinforces the retrospective

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15 Skumantas is fortunate to have escaped the fate of Caupo, a military convert to Christianity figuring in Henry of Livonia's *Chronicon Livoniae*, who is stabbed in the side with a lance in obvious imitation of Christ's death. See Nielsen 2005, p. 227.

nature of the stories by placing the cross and host at the beginning of the episode and the icon of Mary at its culmination. More importantly, however, only the Marian icon suffers in these tales, and only Mary acts, interceding on behalf of the converted Christians to reward their new birth into the faith. The ability to sense an ego in the icon presages and prepares the pagan's entrance to the Christian lifeworld not only by baptism but also by enculturation.

This retrospective gesture is especially important in the case of Skumantas, because it overwrites the narrative that both Peter and Nicolaus have previously given of his life and conversion. Notably, Skumantas's conversion is prepared earlier in the story by his cultural proximity to the Teutonic Knights, but this similarity consists not in his ability to recognize the suffering icon but rather in shared esteem for military masculinity. Towards the beginning of their chronicles, Peter and Nicolaus provide a sort of ethnography of the Prussian tribes and their propensity towards violence.[16] Granted, crusade chroniclers must represent pagan warriors as capable lest they cheapen the victories of Christian knights; indeed, paeans to the military prowess and chivalry of the pagan or Muslim enemy are a common feature of medieval literature (see Frakes 2011, pp. 34–35; Ailes 1997, pp. 1–21; Allaire 1999, pp. 173–185). Still, in their description of the warlike pagan tribes, Peter and Nicolaus single out the Sudovians among all the Baltic peoples for their extraordinary valor (Mazeika 2008, p. 50). Since both Russigen and Skumantas are identified as Sudovians, readers are therefore primed to recognize them as belonging to a shared community of military values, if not religious culture and faith.

Furthermore, both chroniclers reinforce the sense of cultural proximity in the case of Skumantas through the story of the captive knight Brother Ludwig von Liebenzell. Captured in battle, Ludwig is entrusted to Skumantas, who quickly develops respect for the Christian knight who is "similis ei [. . .] in audacia / im an manheit glîch" (Jeroschin 1861, p. 216; "similar to him in manly valor," Dusburg 2012, p. 348). Ludwig responds to an insult at a party by running the offender through with a sword and Skumantas rewards this display of manly pride by releasing Ludwig and sending him back to the brothers. This anecdote immediately precedes the chapter recounting Skumantas's conversion to Christianity after defeat in battle and conveys the impression that he converted

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16 Edith Feistner has convincingly argued that Peter modeled this *Stammeskatalog* and the immediately subsequent downfall of the Galindian tribe on the Book of Exodus. Whereas the Christian knights fulfill and supersede the Old Testament figures of the Maccabees, the pagans represent a dark and twisted inversion of the Old Testament tribes of Israel. Feistner 2008, pp. 529–539.

out of respect for the valor and military superiority of the Teutonic Knights and not because of any saintly encounter.

The deathbed reflection in which Skumantas retroactively credits the Virgin Mary with his salvation into the Christian church overwrites his surrender-conversion as a destiny ushered in under the guidance of the Virgin. More importantly, the episode also works to convert the reader away from a cultural lifeworld that values masculine physical violence towards one that esteems mercy, empathy, and feminine spiritual agency. Skumantas's death, even more than Russigen's, overwrites and redirects what is on the surface a more Husserlian model of recognition on the basis of perceived similarity of behavior in the world. The conversion narratives of Nicolaus's German verse chronicle reorient the knightly audience towards a Christian lifeworld structured by empathy and passion, not violent action in the material world.

4 Textual Worlds, Cultural Worlds, Lived Worlds

Analyzing these chronicles in the way that I have, as windows onto historical lifeworlds and as propaganda (or didactic literature) within their historical context, presupposes a hermeneutic approach that seeks to unfold and interpret what Ricœur calls "the world of the text" (Ricœur 1990, pp. 157–179). As Ricœur argues throughout the course of his lengthy study *Time and Narrative*, both historical and fictional writing encode a worldview that, on being read, influences the horizons of the reader's own lifeworld. This is the mechanism by which propaganda and edifying literature work, but it also justifies comparing the representation of the perception of *alter egos* in these medieval chronicles to Husserl's method, for the Fifth Cartesian Meditation is also a text that seeks to open a particular lifeworld before its reader, even in the absence of narrative per se. In juxtaposition with these narratives, which each internally present multiple lifeworlds, Husserl's phenomenological analysis of *alter egos* as perceived in organic *Leiber* thus appears as one option among many, conditioned by Husserl's secularized culture, his goal of establishing objectivity, and his decision to bracket cultural objects. Indeed, Husserl's own comments about cultural objects and the various lifeworlds of different cultural communities expose his phenomenological model to this kind of relativization. Comparison with the medieval conversion narratives merely brings to the fore a potential already latent within Husserl's meditation.

Although Husserl himself avoids this path, his comments about cultural objects point towards a way of understanding cultural animosity. Just as *alter egos*

have *Körper* which are also *Leiber*, cultural objects have material form which also assumes "spiritual predicates." These cultural predicates do not necessarily disappear before a subject excluded from said community, but can be perceived as positively being "for-them" and "not-for-me." Husserl recognizes this and therefore excludes cultural objects from his investigation of *alter egos*, not because they do not refer us to *alter egos* but because they refer us to *alter egos* in a different way than *Leiber* do. Whereas a *Leib* is the locus of an actively constituting intentionality, which refers us to ourselves and to our own organic life, a cultural object refers us to the actively constituting intentionality of the other without necessarily reflecting back on ourselves and our own interested embodiment. I would argue that this limited reference [*Verweis*] to the foreign subject nevertheless creates a metonymic link that can make the cultural object an attractive recipient of behavior directed towards "them," whether this be aggression (as in the case of destruction or defilement) or reverence (as for sacred objects or, perhaps, museum exhibits). To the pagan warriors of the medieval chronicles, the icon of Mary presents itself as a cultural object of the Christian knights. By defiling or abusing the object, they do not understand themselves to be violating the Virgin Mary, but rather to be enacting symbolic violence upon the Christians metonymically via an object that bears the trace of their intentionality, belongs to their lifeworld, and refers back to their subject-community. The conversion narratives aim to direct attention away from or beyond the artist ego that shaped the icon and towards the suffering ego that inhabits it.

In their chronicles, Peter and Nicolaus construct two proximate cultural lifeworlds, joined in their model of ideal masculinity but separated by their understanding of passion and agency with regard to saintly presence in the material world. By selecting recognition of the suffering icon as the narrative turning point in Skumantas's and Russigen's spiritual lives, the chroniclers draw the threshold between the pagan and Christian lifeworlds, a gesture which serves to separate them while simultaneously showing the path across. What differentiates Skumantas and Russigen from the other pagans and marks them for conversion is their phenomenological experience and response to the image of Mary. Importantly, this experience takes place in the absence of the Teutonic Knights. The Sudovians' response to the Marian icon results not from a cultural sympathy with the Christian warriors, but from a recognition that the material object is a suffering body deserving of respect independent of its existence within the Christian cultural world. After converting, they retroactively attribute agency to the ego "animating" the object and thank Mary for her intervention. For the chroniclers recounting these conversion narratives, the pagans' ability to recognize the icon as a suffering ego functions as external confirmation of the

Christian lifeworld but also simultaneously inducts the pagans into the Christian cultural community.

Peter's and Nicolaus's accounts confirm the need for a different phenomenological description of intersubjectivity that does not rely on apperception of *alter egos* in animate *Leiber* or, put otherwise, that acknowledges apperception of suffering without the bodily movement required in Husserl's model. Seeing the ego in the icon was, for the medieval chroniclers, an issue of truth and reality, as well as one of lifeworld and belonging. Concerns over "reality" continue to inflect discussions of religious experience, but these investments are not germane to phenomenological investigations, which bracket this question from the outset.[17] The question whether the Virgin Mary "really" suffers in the material image must be put aside in order to describe how some perceive an *alter ego* to suffer in immobile bodies. Such a description would not replace that of the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, but supplement it as another possible lifeworld that we can see in the world of the text even if we do not inhabit it ourselves.

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17 As Anthony Steinbock notes, the phenomenological method can analyze religious experience but not adjudicate it. "On the one hand, this means that we cannot appeal to standards outside of the lived religious sphere to measure the authenticity of a religious experience. On the other hand, as lived, as experienced, it thereby opens itself for us to phenomenological description and investigation according to its philosophical significance" (Steinbock 2007, p. 115).

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Thomas Pfau

Absolute Gegebenheit: Image as Aesthetic *Urphänomen* in Husserl and Rilke

Abstract: My essay opens with a brief review of Husserl's 1905 lectures on "Phantasie und Bildbewusstsein." It then moves on to consider how, in his short monograph on Rodin and the letters on Cézanne, Rilke develops a phenomenology of image experience that complements Husserl's *noematic* focus with concentration on the *noetic* dimension of aesthetic experience in Rilke's writings on art and his *Neue Gedichte*. What is definitive of the latter is a confrontation with the absolute givenness of images and their material presuppositions: color and light. In their mute yet insistent materiality, Rodin's sculptures and Cézanne's canvases raise the possibility that the noematic may be anterior to the noetic. For in their alien, silent, and unfathomable "thingness," these aesthetic phenomena compel consciousness to suspend its quest for a lexical or referential decoding of the image object. Instead, Rilke sees the beholder of Rodin's sculptures becoming the unsuspecting witness and virtual collaborator in the thing's primordial creation: "[Rodin] hatte ihn gemacht, wie Gott den ersten Menschen gemacht hat [. . .] namenloses Leben. [. . .] Da übersetzt sich [. . .] während der Arbeit das Stoffliche immer mehr in Sachliches und Namenloses." In its encounter with the aesthetic phenomenon, the noetic function approaches a condition of mystic silence: "Es entsteht eine Stille; die Stille, die um Dinge ist. Der zu nichts gedrängten Dinge." Anticipating Husserl's idea of a "transcendental reduction" (*epoché*), Rilke finds in Cézanne's paintings *prima facie* evidence of what he calls "die Dingwerdung, die durch sein eigenes Erlebnis an dem Gegenstand bis ins Unzerstörbare hinein gesteigerte Wirklichkeit."

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> Immer sonderbarer mutet mich diese Ungeduld des Geistes an, die alles überspringt, um so fragen zu können. Dieses an-den-Rand-Laufen, wie naiv es ist, gerade als dächte man, vom nächsten Bergrand aus in den Weltraum zu schauen. [. . .] Unten, an der allgemein-verständlichen Pappel, der Pappel für Anfänger, blüht etwas [. . .] und drüber im Raum wiederholt ein Vogel einen doppelseitigen Flötenton, [. . .] die Nähe ist grau, die Weite liegt in einem ausgebreiteten Licht, entfernte Steinbrüche haben eine gesichthaftige Helligkeit – das beschäftige uns, das müßte man auf solche Fragen antworten, aufschauen und sagen, was man sieht: ist nicht alles darin, – mehr als in unseren Auslegungen und Erdenkungen?
>
> <div align="right">(Rilke, Briefe)</div>

1 Introduction

It is common to think of modernism as a distinctive *aesthetic* movement, and therefore as a subsidiary story within some overarching narrative of modernity. In their preferred genre, the manifesto, major representatives of high modernism offer countless variations on their principal theme: the repudiation of pictorial realism, poetic symbolism, and hierarchies organizing tonal music, all of which had allowed the bourgeoisie of the later nineteenth century to conceive of aesthetics as a highly adaptive system of formal discriminations, whose inventory of symbolic forms and styles furnishes the politically and economically dominant bourgeois strata with durably legitimating self-descriptions. While this general outlook has much to recommend it, a one-sided focus on modernism as a movement of *emancipation from* inherited cultural and aesthetic norms and practices does not tell us much about its actual objectives. In fact, modernism's iconoclastic response to the formal inventory of nineteenth-century culture is fueled by a desire to retrieve and redeem phenomena either culpably obscured by or altogether invisible to the bourgeois aesthetic that after 1900 was being disavowed in increasingly strident language. Hence, the key question confronted by modernism is whether the phenomena that nineteenth-century bourgeois art had manifestly failed to capture can be reached by *other* aesthetic means, or whether modernism's quest for capturing the elemental constitution of things ultimately compels a definitive break with the idea of a philosophical aesthetics altogether.

To an unusual degree, modernism's quest for capturing the elemental force of sheer appearance seems to pervade all the arts. We find it in the disorienting and haunting cascade of pitches opening Schoenberg's *Drei Klavierstücke* (1909) whose jagged soundscapes tantalize the listener with intimations of a musical form that never quite comes into focus. Schoenberg's "emancipation of . . . dissonance" from a musical grammar that had previously demanded the eventual, successful "resolution" [*Auflösung*] of all dissonance into a supervening hierarchy of tonal values drives a sharp wedge between event and meaning, between sound as sheer appearance and the complex melodic and harmonic symmetries that, so Schoenberg contends, had for centuries supervened on the event of "sonority" [*Klang*] itself (see Rosen 1996, p. 24). After all, "harmony is not a natural attribute of sound but a way of giving significance to sound" (Rosen 1996, p. 25).[1]

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1 Yet Rosen also acknowledges the dialectical tension in which atonal music must abide vis-à-vis inherited forms: "The powerful emotional force of Schoenberg's music would [. . .] become intelligible only against an inherited background of traditional harmony, and would itself be an incoherent system, dependent on a musical culture it was intent on destroying" (Rosen 1996, p. 27).

Paradoxically, Schoenberg's attempted repristination of *Klang* against the accretions of historically grown listening expectations and formal laws would issue in a serialism that accords an unprecedented determinative role to abstraction. Still, what matters for now is the guiding intent of his early (atonal) modernism, namely, to disentangle the raw phenomena of sound and pitch from any abstract formal schemata and to allow their materiality to achieve full presence as such.

An analogous preoccupation with the primal drama of appearance and sensation also informs pictorial modernism. One may think of the scandalous nude females of Manet's "Déjeuner sur l'herbe" (1863) and "Olympia" (1865), or the maid in "The Bar at Folies Bergère" (1882). Hovering between the dissociated and the defiant, the gaze these figures rivet onto the painting's beholder decisively ruptures the long-standing bourgeois conception of representational art. In ground-breaking ways, Manet destabilizes the relation between the depicted object and its reality and valence in the ambient, "real" world.[2] The growing disalignment between the two grows more pronounced in the peculiar "flatness" of Cézanne's depopulated landscapes and still-lifes, "undistracted by an interest in virtuoso illusionism,"[3] such that now color alone, not line, "is called upon to do the work of linear perspective" (Danchev 2012, p. 305). At the start of high modernist painting, the exfoliation of an object's discrete aspects in Picasso's early Cubist work aligns rather accurately with Husserl's concept of aspectual seeing [*Abschattung*; also *Gestaltabschattungen* or *Farbenabschattungen*]. Not coincidentally, it is in elaborating the experiential (not spatial) operation of *Abschattung* that Husserl draws a categorical distinction (though not an antinomy) between being as a noematic correlate of experience and as thing, respectively: "Ein grundwesentlicher Unterschied tritt also hervor zwischen Sein als Erlebnis und Sein als Ding" (*Hua* III, p. 87, see also *Hua* III, pp. 83–91). There is also the lurid intensity of primary colors that rendered the Fauvist paintings so shocking to viewers and critics when first displayed at the Salon d'Automne in 1905. Here, too, the disruptive effect is such that "whereas one tends to see what is in an Old Master before one sees the picture itself, one sees a Modernist picture as a picture first" (Greenberg 1995, p. 87). Emphatically anti-sculptural, modernist painting after 1905 appears to pursue a "purely optical experience" undiluted by extrinsic, "tactile associations" and no longer dependent on the simulation of three-dimensionality by linear perspective (Greenberg 1995, p. 89). Still, for Clement Greenberg, it is fundamentally misleading to construe pictorial modernism as aiming at a categorical break with inherited techniques. For its main

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2 On Manet and a Hegelian approach to pictorial modernism, see Pippin 2014, pp. 27–62.

3 This quotation of David Sylvester appears in Danchev 2012, p. 293.

struggle is not with this or that precursor aesthetic but with the far more elemental fact that "the essential norms or conventions of painting are at the same time the limiting conditions with which a picture must comply in order to be experienced as a picture" (Greenberg 1995, p. 89).

In some important respects, then, modernist art and the emergent discipline of phenomenology appear to be pursuing the same goal. What fuels both projects is less a self-conscious, iconoclastic response to inherited aesthetic and philosophical practice than an attempt to open access to a level of experience that had categorically eluded their precursors. Put differently, what is being sought is not a crisper articulation of already identified meanings by different formal means, but a new language capable of accessing a level of experience unwittingly obscured by received philosophical and aesthetic traditions. In seeking to shift focus away from the *what* and toward the *how* of experience, the languages of modernist art and phenomenology confront once again what the Romantics had already diagnosed as a fundamental predicament of the human condition: viz., the myriad ways in which discursive and aesthetic protocols constrain our ability to articulate the event-character of phenomena as such, thereby making it all but impossible to capture the quality of an experience without reifying its putative contents.

It is no accident, then, that Husserl and Rilke find their respective voices by scrutinizing the *image* [*Bild*] as the medium that, by silently yet insistently holding our gaze, unveils things in their unconditional and incontestable presence *qua* appearance [*Erscheinung*] and, as Husserl would put it in 1907, in their absolute givenness [*absolute Gegebenheit*]. Reflecting a pervasive linguistic skepticism [*Sprachkrise*] explored in the writings of Mauthner, Hoffmannsthal, Schnitzler, Mach, Kraus, and others, the poetic and phenomenological explorations of Rilke and Husserl after 1903 aim to access the reality of things [*Dinge/Sachen*] as they are dynamically phenomenalized in a pre-discursive space [*Raum*]. As Rilke writes in 1903, "Die meisten Ereignisse sind unsagbar, vollziehen sich in einem Raume, den nie ein Wort betreten hat" (*KA* 4, p. 514).[4] Paradoxically, it is the precipitous action of language, of naming, that threatens to eclipse any awareness of experience as a distinctive and dynamic unveiling of things in their space. Particularly between 1902 and 1914, Rilke is principally concerned with recovering, both *in* and *by means of* the (poetic) image, being as an epiphanic event. Sight as insight [*Einsehen*] into a level of reality accessible precisely through the

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4 See also Antje Büssgen's insightful discussion of Rilke in relation to the visual arts: "Rilke's orientation toward the visible and his project of learning-to-see is indeed grounded in a pronounced skepticism about language" (Büssgen 2013, p. 136).

medium of the image thus anticipates Husserl's distinction between the truth of correctness and the truth of disclosure.[5] We will return to the strong metaphysical, or numinous, implications of Husserl's "reduction" and the *Wesensschau* on which it opens. For his part, Rilke in his 1902 monograph on Rodin (pointedly alluding to Dante) speaks of the sculptor's unrivaled capacity for achieving "des Dingseins leise Erlösung" (*KA* 4, p. 424). To attain this transcendental attitude requires, for the poet no less than the phenomenologist, a quasi-mystical cultivation of humility, patience, and silence:

> Jeden Eindruck und jeden Keim eines Gefühls ganz in sich, im Dunkel, im Unsagbaren, Unbewussten, dem eigenen Verstande Unerreichbaren sich vollenden lassen und mit tiefer Demut und Geduld die Stunde der Niederkunft einer neuen Klarheit abwarten: das allein heißt künstlerisch leben: im Verstehen wie im Schaffen. (*KA* 4, p. 521)

What Rilke here describes quite accurately comports with the ways to reduction that Husserl maps in his 1907 *Die Idee der Phänomenologie* and in his 1907 lectures on *Ding und Raum*. At issue is a process of *metanoia* or (philosophical) conversion, whereby "we look *at* what we normally look *through*," namely, by learning to suspend "doxic modalities" and to neutralize "the intentionalities we now contemplate" (Sokolowski 2000, pp. 49–50). Yet a closer reading of Husserl also reveals his deep-seated resistance to the distinct prospect that fantasy and its "medium," the image, must be assigned an integral role in phenomenology's attempt at overcoming the Cartesian rift in the mind-world relationship.[6]

2 Husserl on Phantasy & Image Consciousness: The 1905 Lectures

Throughout his 1905 lectures on *Phantasie und Bildbewußtsein*, Husserl distinguishes between reproductive fantasy and image, and between imagination and perception, in fundamentally new ways. Rather than proffering formal

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5 See *Hua* XVII, pp. 125–132. The privileged role of sight in Husserl has often been remarked but will, for present purposes, simply taken as a given in the way formulated, for example, in *Ideas I*: "Das unmittelbare 'Sehen', nicht bloß das sinnliche, erfahrende Sehen, sondern das Sehen überhaupt als originär gebendes Bewußtsein welcher Art immer, ist die letzte Rechtsquelle aller vernünftigen Behauptungen" (*Hua* III, p. 43).

6 On the key question – "is a disclosure of reality possible where mind and world would no longer appear in opposition to one another, but as two sides of a single whole" (Fischer 2015, p. 21) – see Fischer 2015, pp. 15–68.

discriminations between different *kinds* of images, Husserl focuses on the specific intentionalities and noetic work solicited by visual phenomena. For the image belongs not to the order of things but to that of acts, albeit a type of act that is not so much deliberately performed as it is stimulated (*erregt*) (Alloa 2011, p. 196). Hence, when we encounter an image, it is not a set of formal-aesthetic criteria that tells us so, nor some formal resemblance of image and object, but a distinctive modality of consciousness that Husserl calls "primitive Bildlichkeitsbewusstsein" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 17):

> Hier kommt es darauf an [. . .], daß die Bildlichkeit erst Sinn hat durch ein eigenes Bewusstsein, daß einen ähnlichen Inhalt haben nicht soviel heisst, wie ein Bild auffassen, sondern dass Ähnliches für Ähnliches zum Bild erst wird durch das eigenartige und schlechthin primitive Bildbewußtsein. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 17)

What qualifies a presentation as an image thus is not its formal resemblance (or reference) to some other entity, but the particular intentionality whereby it is apprehended. At issue is not an image apprehended as X, but X apprehended *as an image*. From a certain, common-sense perspective, Husserl's clarion call for philosophy to "return to things themselves" may well be taken to reflect his discomfort not only with the dualist turn of modern philosophy, but also with forms of mediation or intercession devised to compensate for that development. Indeed, a quasi-iconoclastic strain pervades Husserl's writings, often manifesting itself in viscerally uneasy formulations wherever fantasy and images threaten to insinuate themselves into his argument. From another perspective, however, the image and the specific intentionality of image-consciousness [*Bildbewußtsein*] corresponding to it may be said to encapsulate the transcendental attitude that Husserl's early writings seek to delineate. Thus, fantasy and image-consciousness by definition resist any conflating of the "sinnlichen Inhalt, der in der Phantasievorstellung erlebt ist" with the "Gegenstand der Phantasie," which Husserl so often demurs in his precursors (*Hua* XXIII, p. 7). Precisely because fantasy and image-consciousness by their very nature are not bound up with some externally verifiable object, they invite a phenomenological understanding of pictorialization [*Verbildlichung*] and representation [*Vorstellung*] as distinctive experiential modalities "unabhängig vom Glauben oder Nichtglauben, vom Zweifeln oder Wünschen" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 10).[7] The act of pictorialization [*Verbildlichung*] opens access to a form of intentionality anterior to the realm of propositions, interpretation, verification, or critique. Though grounded in a physical [*leibhaft*] object perception, what is present in image consciousness

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7 As Husserl elaborates, "Der Auffassungsinhalt für sich ist ja noch keine wahrnehmende Deutung, die kommt erst dazu" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 11).

[*Bildbewußtsein*] falls ontologically outside the domain over which modern epistemology claims jurisdiction, to say nothing of the realm governed by the natural attitude [*natürliche Einstellung*] of everyday conscious life.

Considered strictly as experience, visual apprehension furnishes consciousness with data that *per definitionem* cannot be doubted or discredited as mere illusion or deception. For error and the operation of doubt that would seek to preempt it can enter the scene only once a given appearance [*Erscheinung*] has been taken *as* X or Y, when it has been interpreted, identified, named, or subjected to some kind of propositional determination.[8] Yet phenomenology is not concerned with apprehension contents [*Auffassungsinhalte*)] but with apprehension characteristics [*Auffassungscharaktere*]: "In der Phantasie erscheint der Gegenstand zwar insofern selbst, als eben er es ist, der da erscheint, aber er erscheint nicht als gegenwärtig, er ist nur vergegenwärtigt [. . .]" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 16). As is often the case, Husserl's searching formulations at once mask and reveal a "tension between the image as a purely reproductive mode and as an original way of accessing the essence [*Wesenheit*] that remains inaccessible to perception" (Alloa 2011, p. 205, my translation). In venturing the analogy that "Wahrnehmungserscheinung" and "Phantasieerscheinung" differ from one another in the same way as original and image (*Hua* XXIII, p. 10), Husserl's own account raises some tantalizing questions. Which of the two constituent terms corresponds to the original and image, respectively? After all, as Husserl had already pointed out, all perception is bound up with a determinate content [*Inhalt*]. We can only speak of a perception [*Wahrnehmung*] insofar as we have taken an appearance as X (rather than Y or Z). So conceived, perception involves conferring nominal fixity on a given appearance [*Erscheinung*] of which, however, only one aspect is presently rendered sensible [*versinnlicht*] and evident, whereas all its other aspects [*Abschattungen*] are kept in play only virtuallly, namely, through the diaphanous medium of the image [*Bild*].[9] Yet that being the case, is the image not ontologically prior to the specifiable and determinate contents [*Inhalt*] of perception, which philosophers habitually take to be the "original" of the image?[10]

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8 As Husserl puts it elsewhere, "Das Wesen der reduzierten Erlebniswahrnehmung ist evident unverträglich mit Unglauben und Zweifel" (*Hua* XVI, p. 22).

9 Husserl's repeated attempts to exclude symbol and fantasy from preserving those aspects of a perception not presently experienced seem forced and ultimately unconvincing; see esp. *Hua* XVI, pp. 54–56.

10 These questions continue to engage Husserl in later works, esp. his *Ideas* (1913). For a lucid exposition of the tangled relationship between perception and fantasy, see Alloa 2011, pp. 179–216.

At issue here is a flaw in reasoning that, Husserl claims, is bound to afflict any philosophy too quick to commit to positings [*Setzungen*] rather than first offering a precise description of the various intentional acts whereby consciousness synthesizes aspects discretely apprehended into a *bona fide* perception. Extending the critique first advanced in *Logical Investigations* (1901/02), Husserl thus rejects all psychologizing approaches to epistemology, including that of his one-time teacher Franz Brentano, for failing to distinguish between the phenomenalization of specific contents and those contents themselves: "Wer, mit sehr vielen Psychologen, nur die Inhalte sieht und vor der Objektivierung, vor dem Unterschied zwischen dem Inhalt, der 'erlebt' wird, und dem Gegenstand, der erscheint, die Augen verschliesst, kommt natürlich in die ärgsten Verlegenheiten" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 12). The overarching concern of the 1905 lectures thus rests with mapping this pre-discursive, indeed pre-linguistic realm of sheer "apprehension" wherein a distinct form of consciousness known as *Bildbewußtsein* is mediated by the image: "In der Phantasie erscheint der Gegenstand zwar insofern selbst, als eben er es ist, der da erscheint, aber er erscheint nicht als gegenwärtig, er ist nur vergegenwärtigt, es ist gleichsam so, als wäre er da, aber nur gleichsam, er erscheint uns im Bilde" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 16).

Even before Husserl formulates the concept of the *epoché* (in his 1907 *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*), his analyses of image and image-consciousness effectively point toward that concept as the centerpiece of transcendental phenomenology. For the experiential domain of fantasy and image, when quarantined from claims about perceptual contents, turns out to be a crucial component of phenomenology's account of perception. Bound up with the sheer event of visual apprehension – undiluted, undesigning, and irresistibly generative – image-consciousness shows the apprehension [*Auffassung*] of an appearance to be an *active* synthesis. Receptivity is not to be confused with passivity but, on the contrary, responds to the phenomenon's sheer givenness by synthesizing its temporally discrete aspects. In *Ideas* (1913), Husserl speaks of this kind of complex apprehension of a self-giving phenomenon as an "originär gebende Anschauung," which "einfach hinzunehmen sei, als was es sich gibt, aber auch nur in den Schranken, in denen es sich gibt" (*Hua* III, p. 51). Yet such intuition involves a complex temporal sequence of aspects awaiting their synthesis into a coherent whole; it presupposes a teleological ordering of consciousness and phenomenon toward one another. For sheer visibility will engage consciousness only insofar as a phenomenon is imbued with an as yet invisible significance. Since all object perception correlates the specific aspect it presents right now with other aspects [*Abschattungen*] either apprehended previously or yet to come, every phenomenon oscillates between present and latent aspects, all of which must be synthesized as aspects *of the same phenomenon* (see Sokolowski

2000, pp. 17–21 and Alloa 2011, pp. 183–188). Hence, intentionality (*consciousness-of-X*) never simply names a present *punctum* but, instead, negotiates both manifest and latent views, with the latter being "im Kerngehalt der Wahrnehmung verbildlicht" (*Hua* XIX/2, p. 589).[11] Emerging from the shadows of a merely derivative, quasi-parasitical function to which Husserl's early writings often seek to confine it, the image here positively sustains the cascade of "appresentations" that comprises any object perception.

If, as Emanuel Alloa puts it, "the iconic already corrodes the original perception," then the image is bound to play a decisive role in Husserl's development of the *epoché* and the "reduction" that, in his rather dry nomenclature, constitutes the Archimedian point of transcendental phenomenology (Alloa 2011, p. 187, my translation).[12] In the diaphanous image and its corresponding image-consciousness, a thing is initially apprehended as a distinctive *Gestalt* or "inscape" (as Gerard Manley Hopkins calls it) seemingly shorn of all contingency and background noise. The individual thing is thereby indeed quietly redeemed in the medium of the image, very much in the sense of what Rilke so poignantly calls "des Dingseins leise Erlösung" (*KA* 4, p. 424). To elucidate and bring home the meaning of *epoché* – albeit in a sense that ultimately exceeds Husserl's brief – constitutes the distinctive role of fantasy and image in mediating mind and world. For it is through the image that the reality of the thing as a temporally extended and richly layered sequence of aspects [*Abschattungen*] is properly realized.

To put it thus is to invest image and image-consciousness with numinous, metaphysical or epiphanic implications that Husserl, unlike Rilke, is notably reluctant to draw, particularly in his later elaboration of what he calls *Wesensschau*. Still, Husserl admits that what the *epoché* asks of philosophy – "möglichst wenig Verstand, aber möglichst reine Intuition" – bears more than a passing resemblance

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11 As he attempts to disentangle "signitive" and "intuitive" intentions, the former correlating with perceptions and the latter with images, Husserl inadvertently recognizes that images preserve "aspects" [*Abschattungen*] that are not currently focused on by perception: "die Bestandstücke der unsichtigen Rückseite, des Innern usw. sind zwar in mehr oder minder bestimmter Weise mitgemeint, sie sind durch das primär Erscheinende symbolisch angedeutet, aber selbst fallen sie gar nicht in den anschaulichen [. . .] Gehalt der Wahrnehmung" (*Hua* XIX/2, p. 589). Absent such mediation by symbolic means or images, "so gäbe es [. . .] für jeden Gegenstand nur eine einzige Wahrnehmung" (*Hua* XIX/2, p. 589).

12 As Sokolowski points out, the term "reduction" is often misconstrued as taking us "'back' to what seems to be a more restricted viewpoint, one that simply targets the intentionalities themselves." Yet reduction for Husserl involves not a diminution of scope or contents but, rather, a "leading back" (consistent with the Latin root *re-ducere*) to a domain logically anterior to that of perceptions, propositions, doubt, and detachment (Sokolowski 2000, p. 49).

to the mystics' notion of a *visio intellectualis*: "wir werden in der Tat an die Rede der Mystiker erinnert, wenn sie das intellektuelle Schauen [. . .] beschreiben" (*Hua* II, p. 62). Indeed, "die ganze Kunst" of transcendental phenomenology "besteht darin, rein dem schauenden Auge das Wort zu lassen" (*Hua* II, p. 62). The question remains, however, whether such pure vision [*reine Schau*], however quarantined from any positing of transcendent (external) being, is fundamentally responsive to or properly constitutive of the phenomenon's givenness. Yet inasmuch as this question is metaphysical, not procedural, in kind, Husserl remains anxious to circumnavigate it at this early point in outlining the phenomenological method: "Sehen wir von den metaphysischen Abzweckungen der Erkenntniskritik ab, halten wir uns rein an ihre Aufgabe [. . .]" (*Hua* II, p. 23). Thus, in his lectures on *Ding und Raum* (1907), Husserl once again equivocates on the decisive question of whether in experience things "constitute themselves" [*sich konstituieren*] or, alternatively, "come to give themselves" [*zur Gegebenheit kommen*].[13] Considering that Husserl's entire phenomenological project rests on the postulate that all concrete reality finds its "Urgrund und Träger" in consciousness, the question of whether the originary presentive intuition of the world in consciousness is creative or merely reproductive will be of some consequence (*Hua* XVI, p. 40, see also *Hua* pp. xviii–xx, 20, 154). The numinous dimension of the image, which inherited aesthetic or epistemic frameworks had variously failed to address or positively obscured, remains of signal importance to Husserl's account. To say that "[d]as Bild [. . .] die Sache vorstellig macht, ist aber nicht sie selbst" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 18), hints at the image's capacity to *unveil* rather than refer to meanings.[14] By way of clarifying that point, Husserl introduces a tripartite distinction between 1) the material scaffolding [*Bildträger*] – the canvas, frame, siccative oil colors, etc. – required for realizing an image as a visible entity in space; 2) the image-object [*Bildobjekt*], that is, the entity visibly depicted in the image; and 3) the image subject [*Bildsujet*] that, while not materially apparent as such, is the meaning realized through pictorial presentation [*Darstellung*]. This meaning, then, neither coincides with the depicted image-object, nor can it be grasped independently of it. Rather, the image in its double sense – as object recognized and as meaning achieved – constitutes itself through the hermeneutic activity of the apprehending consciousness:

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13 The phrase "originär gebende Anschauung" occurs in Husserl's formulation of the "principle of principles" in § 24 of *Ideas*. Elsewhere, his diction expressly vacillates: "das Sich-Konstituieren – das Sich-Beurkunden könnte ich auch sagen [. . .]" (*Hua* XVI, p. 8).
14 On "pictorial difference" as evidence of the unique mode of being [*Seinsweise*] of images, see Gadamer 1975, pp. 128–152, as well as Freedberg 1989, pp. 54–81, and Alloa, 2013.

> Was da wirklich existiert, abgesehen vom physischen Ding "Gemälde," von dem Stück Leinwand mit seiner bestimmten Verteilung von Farbenpigmenten, ist eine gewisse Komplexion von Empfindungen, die der Beschauer, das Gemälde *betrachtend*, in sich erlebt, und die Auffassung und Meinung, die er *darauf baut*, so dass sich für ihn das Bewusstsein von Bild einstellt. [. . .] [Durch] das objektivierende Bewusstsein [. . .] kommt hinzu die Auffassung, die den Inhalt *deutet*, ihm gegenständliche *Beziehung verleiht* [. . .].   (*Hua* XXIII, p. 22, italics mine)

Ever reluctant to take even minor speculative leaps, Husserl's discussion in §§9-10 instead settles for a painstaking description of the process of "apprehension," whereby discrete material elements are being "apprehended," "experienced," "interpreted," and, ultimately, invested with a representative function – that is, *taken as* an *image*. The scandal of visual apprehension as a genuinely creative act [*Schöpfung der Natur*] is thus attenuated into a sequence of minute, metonymic steps that seemingly match phenomenology's descriptive nomenclature (*Hua* XVI, p. 175). Still, Husserl all but concedes that fantasy constitutes an integral feature of all apprehension. For fantasy alone enables consciousness to apprehend [*auffassen*] within a given appearance more than is immediately apparent. Fantasy lays bare an ontological difference between appearance and significance, between sheer visual apprehension and a focused conspectus or synthesis of aspects that Husserl sometimes also calls "vision" [*Schau*]. Hence Husserl acknowledges "eine gewisse Mittelbarkeit des Vorstellens" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 24) within image- or fantasy presentation, one that ordinary perceptual presentation [*Wahrnehmungsvorstellung*] notably lacks. This capacity of the image to *unveil* essentially invisible meanings – namely, by staging [*darstellen*] and lingering over the sheer event-character of "appearance" [*Erscheinung*] – pivots on the distinctive intentionality that apprehends something *as* an image:

> Die Erscheinung, so wie sie wirklich gegeben ist, meint man dabei nicht; man sieht sie sich nicht etwa an, wie sie ist und erscheint, und sagt sich: das ist ein Bild. Vielmehr lebt man ganz und gar in dem auf die Erscheinung sich gründenden neuen Auffassen: im Bilde schaut man die Sache an. Das Bildbewußtsein hat eine Tinktion, die ihm über seinen primären Gegenstand hinausweisende Bedeutung verleiht. [. . .] [D]as Resultat der Auffassung ist doch nicht eine Wahrnehmung. Die Raffaelsche Madonna, die ich in einer Photographie anschaue, ist natürlich nicht das photographisch erscheinende Bildchen. Ich vollziehe also nicht eine blosse Wahrnehmung.   (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26)

Crucially, image-consciousness does not involve an "Unterscheiden und Beziehen" between the image and the perceptual object [*Wahrnehmungsgegenstand*] *of* which it is an image (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26). Rather, an image is immediately felt to be such: "das Bild fühlt sich unmittelbar als Bild [an]" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 26). Any distinguishing between image and object is not the fruit of skeptical analysis. Rather, it is a

constitutive feature of image-consciousness, which by its very nature neither conflates nor disaggregates image and object. As Husserl puts it:

> Wäre das erscheinende Bild phänomenal absolut identisch mit dem gemeinten Objekt, oder besser, unterschiede sich die Bilderscheinung in nichts von der Wahrnehmungserscheinung des Gegenstandes selbst, so könnte es kaum noch zu einem Bildlichkeitsbewusstsein kommen. Sicher: Ein Bewusstsein von Differenz muss vorhanden sein, obschon das Sujet im eigentlichen Sinn nicht erscheint. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 22)

Paradoxically, then, my awareness that what I apprehend is an image, and hence distinct from the thing depicted in the image, does not weaken the power of the latter; on the contrary, it accounts for the very charisma of an image, its sacred and original being. Uniquely, the image induces in its beholder a state of heightened "focal awareness" (to borrow Michael Polanyi's term) capable of recognizing a given appearance to hold significance beyond what it renders manifestly apparent. Contrary to the specious neutrality of all talk about "objects," Husserl's notion of *Bildsujet* tells us that the noema corresponding to "image consciousness" matters, not because it is procedurally verifiable and identifiable, but because it speaks to us, engages us. Corresponding to the image is not a neutral observer, but, positively, the beholder as addressee; the intentionality that corresponds to an image is not one of preemptive or gratuitous doubt, but of assent to an indubitable and significant presence.[15] As Husserl so poignantly formulates it, "in das Bild schauen wir den gemeinten Gegenstand hinein, oder aus ihm schaut er <zu> uns her" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 30). Likewise, Gerard Manley Hopkins, whose proto-modernist, visual poetics bears some significant resemblance to Rilke's and Husserl's projects, remarks that "what you look hard at seems to look hard at you" (Hopkins 2015, p. 504, see also Pfau 2013), just as Cézanne is reported to have said that "the landscape [. . .] becomes conscious in me. [. . .] I'll be the subjective conscience of this landscape" (Doran 2001, p. 111). Indeed, it is key trait of images that they do not analytically separate what appears *in* and *as* image from the *sujet* disclosed *through* such an appearance: "Das erscheinende Bildding weckt nicht eine neue Vorstellung, die sonst mit ihm nichts zu tun hätte" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 30). It does not belong to the order of "reference" [*Verweis*], nor does it relate to its *sujet* in merely allegorical fashion [*analogisches Symbol*]. Still, to see the image is to apprehend both the "sujet" [*Sache*] depicted and to apprehend it specifically *as an image*. For, as Husserl insists, "wenn mit dem Bild nicht die bewusste Beziehung auf ein Abgebildetes gegeben ist haben wir ja

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15 It is only in his 1907 lectures on *Ding und Raum* that Husserl develops the "reduction," whereby one distinguishes between the "absolute givenness" of "perception" [*Wahrnehmung*] and its being reflectively taken *as* something (*Hua* XVI, pp. 19–30).

kein Bild. Diese bewusste Beziehung aber ist gegeben durch jenes eigentümliche Bewusstsein der Vergegenwärtigung eines Nicht-Erscheinenden im Erscheinenden" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 31).[16]

Rather than relying on the deceptive primacy of the natural attitude [*natürliche Einstellung*] that prompts a great deal of aesthetic theory to treat the image as a derivative of an antecedent object-perception [*Dingwahrnehmung*], Husserl (and Rilke even more so) holds that the image uniquely opens access to the reality of things in their numinous, radiant, and timeless being. As Aquinas (whose affinity to transcendental phenomenology was to be of enduring interest to Edith Stein, one of Husserl's preeminent students) stresses, the being of a thing is its *actus*, its sheer fecundity, the way it opens itself up to participation, thereby tacitly transforming the consciousness drawn into its orbit. Gadamer will later remark that, when mediated by the image, the world of things undergoes "einen Zuwachs an Sein" (Gadamer 1975, p. 133).[17] Arising not from a propositional and "natural" stance, but from a reflective one analogous to what Husserl will soon develop as the phenomenological reduction, the apparent image-object unveils its true *sujet* precisely *as* image. Sight and insight merge in the apprehension [*Auffassung* and interpretation [*Deutung*] of a *Bildsujet* – something not referenced, but serendipitously disclosed; not owned, but gifted; not determined by conceptual and propositional means, but experientially inhabited *qua* appearance. In Husserl's formulation: "Um uns den Gegenstand vorstellig zu machen, sollen wir uns in das Bild hineinschauen [. . .]" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 34). The "thing" [*Gegenstand*] in question has nothing to do with the stereotypical, inert and medium-sized dry goods stipulated by the British Empiricists. Rather, through its luminous visibility it unveils a significant meaning that, though not visible *per se*, can only be accessed through the medium of the image.[18]

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16 This last insight, for Heidegger, ultimately extends beyond the image to anything that can be properly classified as a "phenomenon" (cf. Heidegger 1979, pp. 27–39).

17 As Gadamer, whose discussion of the image [*Bild*] remains admirably incisive, points out: "Wohl aber hat das Bild im ästhetischen Sinne des Wortes ein eigenes Sein. Dies sein Sein als Darstellung, also gerade das, worin es mit dem Abgebildeten nicht dasselbe ist, gibt ihm gegenüber dem bloßen Abbild die positive Auszeichnung, ein Bild zu sein. [. . .] Ein solches Bild ist kein Abbild, denn es stellt etwas dar, was ohne es sich nicht so darstellte. Es sagt über das Urbild etwas aus" (Gadamer 1975, p. 133).

18 To put it thus is to stress phenomenology's perennially contested affinity with metaphysics and theology, such as has been elaborated by Michel Henry, Jean-Louis Chrétien, and Jean-Luc Marion. Yet even in Heidegger (e.g., in §7 of *Sein und Zeit*) and in the late writings of Merleau-Ponty, the essential nexus between the visible image and the invisible to which it summons the beholder remains an integral feature of understanding the nature of the image, and indeed of the phenomenon as such.

As Husserl puts it, an image gives rise to a "second object" of altogether unique intentionality:

> Ihm entspricht keine Erscheinung. Er steht nicht gesondert da, in einer eigenen Anschauung da, er erscheint nicht als ein zweites neben dem Bild. Er erscheint in und mit dem Bild eben dadurch, dass die Bildrepräsentation erwächst. Sagen wir, das Bild repräsentiert die Sache, so ist also nicht die Sache in einer neuen Vorstellung intuitiv, sondern nur intuitiv in dem Charakter, der die Erscheinung des als Bild fungierenden Gegenstandes eben für unser Bewusstsein, für unser Zumutesein als Bildrepräsentation fühlbar macht.   (*Hua* XXIII, p. 28)

At this point, a summary of Husserl's understanding of image-consciousness may be in order:

– Unlike everday perception, an image achieves complete presence; it does not constitute itself through a temporal sequence of aspects [*Abschattungen*] in the same way that object-perception [*Gegenstandswahrnehmung*] inevitably must pass through a variety of aspects. To be sure, the material scaffolding [*Bildträger*] on which any depiction depends remains subject, like every other perceptual object, to qualitative shifts in apprehension, however minute those may be. Yet the image that constitutes itself through the interplay between the *Bildgegenstand* and *Bildsujet* falls categorically outside the rules governing a phenomenological account of a spatio-temporal thing: "Das physische Bild weckt das geistige Bild, und dieses wieder stellt ein anderes: das Sujet vor" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 29).

– The apprehension of the image is not governed by inner-time consciousness in the way that the latter structures object perception. Inasmuch as "das Phantasiefeld [. . .] völlig getrennt vom Wahrnehmungsfeld [ist]" (*PB* § 24, p. 49), the *nunc stans* of the image is situated on a different ontological plane than the temporal "present" of a particular perceptual phase about to be displaced by new aspects [*Abschattungen*]. Rather, the presence of the image is integral to its mode of being, or *Seinsweise* (to recall Gadamer's term), because an image manifests a *sujet* that, not belonging to the spatiotemporal order of perceptible things, has its being outside the flow of inner time: "[Es] ist im aktuellen Jetzt nicht, sein 'gegenwärtig' ist ein anderes, andere Zeitbestimmtheit [. . .]" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 175).

– Insofar as fantasy is constitutively involved in how consciousness first apprehends [*auffassen*] phenomena, the image wrought by fantasy is an integral component of the syntheses that may issue in a fully developed object perception. To be sure, unlike hallucination, every image also presupposes a "fundierende Erscheinung" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 39). Yet rather than being ordered to a grid of pre-existing purposes, the image allows appearance to disclose its being, such that

das Bildobjekt nicht bloss erscheint, sondern einen neuen Auffassungscharakter trägt, der sich mit dem ursprünglichen in gewisser Weise durchdringt und verschmilzt, der sozusagen nicht vom Inhalt des Erscheinenden einfach weg, sondern in ihn hinweist [. . .]. Was im Inhalt des Bildobjektes repräsentativ fungiert, das ist in eigentümlicher Weise ausgezeichnet: Es stellt dar, es vergegenwärtigt, verbildlicht, veranschaulicht. Das Sujet blickt uns gleichsam durch diese Züge an. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 30)

– An instance of what the later Heidegger develops under the heading of *Gelassenheit*, the image suspends all instrumental and appropriative commerce between consciousness and object. By enabling image-consciousness to tarry with the apprehension characteristics of a self-giving phenomenon, the image unveils fantasy as an integral feature of being, as grounding the reality of both consciousness and things: "[D]as Bild muss sich klar von der Wirklichkeit scheiden, d.h. rein intuitiv, ohne alle Beihilfe von indirekten Gedanken. Wir sollen aus der empirischen Wirklichkeit herausgehoben und in die ebenfalls intuitive Welt der Bildlichkeit emporgehoben werden" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 41). As Emmanuel Alloa notes, "a path suggests itself, between pure givenness and active representation," one letting "what appears present itself in its being" (Alloa 2011, pp. 204–205, my translation). In *Ideas*, Husserl speaks of a "neutral modification" that does not aspire to or effect anything – "sie leistet nichts" – that does not posit, negate, believe, suspect, or doubt, but that instead abides as a "bloßes 'Dahingestellt'-haben" whose sole correlate is "das Seiend schlechthin, das Möglich-, Wahrscheinlich–, Fraglich-seiend [. . .] als bloßer Gedanke. [. . .] Der 'bloße Gedanke' von Wirklichkeiten, Möglichkeiten, usw" (*Hua* III, pp. 248–249).

– It follows that formal-aesthetic categories (e.g., illusion, simulation, deception) and the conceptual tools of critique (e.g., hermeneutic suspicion, skepticism, historical explanation, etc.), which only apply to *bona fide* perception, cannot determine (or deconstruct) the image. For by its very nature, the image does not belong to, feed off, nor compete with ordinary object perception. It is not a case of sheer projection or hallucination, but mediates a real existent. Husserl thus draws a sharp distinction between illusion, *trompe de l'oeil*, or similarly "cheap illusions": "Ästhetische Effekte sind nicht Jahrmarktseffekte" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 41).

– Image-consciousness instantiates what, starting in 1907, Husserl will elaborate under the heading of *epoché*. Because the image is not a derivative of perception, but a constitutive feature of the process of apprehension that issues in perception, Husserl considers the image incommensurable with allegory or any other type of signification that depends on a preexisting code. Whereas symbolic, emblematic, and allegorical depictions achieve uptake only in relation to preexisting discursive and conceptual frameworks

and thus presuppose an established code, the image cannot be situated in any matrix of representation, substitution, or illusion: "Wer sich rein in ein Bild hineinschaut, der lebt in der Bildlichkeit, er hat im Bild selbst die Vergegenwärtigung eines Objekts" (*Hua* XXIII, p. 35).[19] Husserl may be overstating the intuitive nature of our response to images, and being insufficiently mindful of the beholder's hermeneutic entanglement in antecedent visual experiences and cultural associations. Whether his phenomenology amounts to an intuitionism run amok, as famously Heinrich Rickert had charged, or whether the phenomenology's bracketing [*Ausklammern*] of such extraneous factors constitutes a viable and legitimate procedure will continue to occupy us in the remainder of this essay.

3 From *Evidenz* to Epiphany: Rilke on Vision and the Metaphysics of *Dingwerdung*

In a letter to Hugo von Hoffmannsthal, dated 12 January 1907, Husserl hazards a sweeping analogy between phenomenology's transcendental attitude [*Einstellung*] and a strictly aesthetic perspective. The phenomenological method, he notes,

> fordert eine von der "natürlichen" wesentlich abweichende Stellungnahme zu aller Objectivität, die nahe verwandt ist derjenigen Stellung und Haltung, in die uns Ihre Kunst als eine rein ästhetische [. . .] versetzt. Die Anschauung eines rein ästhetischen Kunstwerkes vollzieht sich in strenger Ausschaltung jeder existenzialen Stellungnahme des Intellects [. . .]. Oder besser: Das Kunstwerk versetzt uns (erzwingt es gleichsam) in den Zustand rein ästhetischer, jene Stellungnahmen ausschließender Bedeutung.
>
> (Husserl 1994, p. 133)

Still, Husserl's notion of a "rein ästhetische" perspective vacillates between a fin-de-siècle conception of art to which Hoffmansthal arguably retains a strong allegiance and an avant-garde aesthetic aimed at capturing the raw phenomenality

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19 For Husserl, the image-*sujet* is never intended or otherwise "referred to," but, on the contrary, self-disclosing. As such, an image unveils within the thing *of* which it is the image some poignant meaning or "insight." What is thus being disclosed is never some preexisting referent or state of affairs that is now merely pictorially or symbolically invoked. As Husserl repeatedly stresses throughout his 1905 lectures, the image is not to be conflated with the symbol or the sign (see *Hua* XXIII, pp. 50–53, 82–83). Hence, Gadamer situates the image between the pure "indication" [*Verweisung*] that defines the sign and the pure "substitution" [*Vertretung*] that is effected by the symbol (see Gadamer 1975, pp. 144–148).

of things, undiluted by any expressive and generic conventions such as the symbolism informing the writings of Laforgue, Mallarmè, Maeterlinck, Hoffmannsthal, or the young Eliot and Rilke. Likewise, Husserl does not venture an opinion on whether the objectives of phenomenology and aesthetics, however analogous their aims, are equally well positioned to succeed.

Yet for phenomenology's deeper purposes to be not only *asserted* as a project, but to be descriptively and expressively *realized*, forms of verbal creativity are required well beyond the mostly arid terminology to which Husserl adheres throughout his career. Rilke's stunningly inventive and untiring exploration of lyric and epistolary form pushes the phenomenological project of a return to "die 'Sachen selbst'" (*Hua* XIX/1, p. 10) closer toward what, in his Rodin monograph, he calls "des Dingseins leise Erlösung" (*KA* 4, p. 424). To retrieve things in their pre-discursive givenness through the modalities of their apprehension responds not only to a technical, epistemological challenge. For such retrieval ultimately seeks to *redeem* the reality and integrity of the world of things, a quest about whose ethical and implicitly normative dimensions Rilke becomes more articulate as he leaves behind him a sentimentalizing Catholicism associated above all with his mother. In striking analogy to Husserl's "reduction," Rilke's poetic practice after 1903 thus involves forms of reflection that manifestly suspend or disable any hermeneutic frames conventionally associated with a "natural attitude." Beginning with poems that will end up in *Neue Gedichte*, some of them written as early as 1903, Rilke seeks to realize a mode of lyric speech wholly outside the orbit of symbolist or sentimentalizing rhetoric and unallied with any recognized aesthetic movement or school. Lyric speech is to be reconceived as a form of participation (akin to Plato's theory of *methexis*) in the very being of things, and hence immune to the hermeneutics of suspicion that language steeped in expressive convention inevitably calls forth. As Rilke remarks, "nur die Dinge reden zu mir, [. . .] alle Dinge, die vollkommen sind. Sie wiesen mich auf die Vorbilder hin; auf die bewegte lebendige Welt, *einfach und ohne Deutung gesehen* als Anlaß zu Dingen" (*RB* 1, p. 153, italics mine).

Rilke's profound investment in the visual arts, particularly between 1902 and 1914, has long been recognized and has been the subject of some probing scholarship.[20] As has increasingly been recognized, the significance of a few preeminent artists for Rilke, above all Rodin and Cézanne, is rooted not so

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20 See esp. Antje Büssgen's fine survey of Rilke and the visual arts (Büssgen 2013, pp. 130–150); on Rilke and Cézanne, see Meyer 1963, pp. 244–286; Jamme 1992; and Fischer 2015, pp. 69–169.

much in their artistic creations than in what these works divulge about their approach to art and its ultimate aims. Whereas Rilke's early writings on visual art, especially his short monograph *Worpswede* and shorter essays written between 1898 and 1901, tend to ring overly sentimental and diffuse, they occasionally offer glimpses into what will become the poet's fundamental concern after 1904. Thus, in a short essay on "Impressionism" (1898), Rilke credits the arts with striving for the simplest and most elemental means, "diesem Hindrängen der Künste zu den einfachsten, elementaren Mitteln" (*KA* 4, p. 133). Another early piece finds Rilke distinguishing the realm of effects and meanings from the sheer being of things when remarking that "das Wesen der Schönheit nicht im Wirken liegt, sondern im Sein," and affirming that "ein Ding [. . .] nicht schlechter [ist] als ein Wort oder ein Duft oder ein Traum" (*KA* 4, pp. 116; 127). In his 1902 essay "Of Landscape," Rilke sharpens the point when noting that, in order to open up the realm of things for simple, undesigning apprehension, "einer kommen muß von fern, um uns zu sagen was uns umgiebt," which means that one must "[die Landschaft] nicht mehr stofflich empfinden [. . .], sondern gegenständlich" (*KA* 4, p. 213); similarly, in an essay of 1907, Rilke speaks of "unwählerische[m] Schauen" (*KA* 4, p. 652).

Prior to Rilke's momentous encounter with the paintings of Cézanne, it is above all Rodin whose art "absichtslos aus Schauen und Arbeit entsprang" (*KA* 4, p. 213). Yet the Rodin monograph is also the apex of Rilke's writing about art, such that by late October 1907, though still enthralled by Cézanne's paintings, Rilke realizes that he does not actually wish to write *about* painting. For his true project, already underway for some time, involves capturing, in the medium of poetry, what it means to apprehend things as they constitute themselves in an apprehending consciousness and, in so doing, transform it. As far as Rilke is concerned, Cézanne's purpose has been achieved insofar as the painter has enabled the poet fully to articulate his poetic conception of "sachliche[m] Sagen: Daran wieviel Cézanne mir zu tun gibt, merk ich, wie sehr ich anders geworden bin" (*KA* 4, p. 616), Rilke muses and, having just received the proofs for his *Neue Gedichte*, he finds in these poems confirmation of "instinctive Ansätze zu ähnlicher Sachlichkeit" (*KA* 4, p. 617). By 18 October 1907, Rilke has grown weary of writing much more about Cézanne, for it is not so much painting as such that engages him but, rather, "die Wendung in dieser Malerei, die ich erkannte, weil ich sie eben in meiner Arbeit erreicht hatte" (*KA* 4, p. 622). Moreover, in embracing Cézanne's congenial aesthetic, Rilke takes many of his cues from the painter Émile Bernard, whose "Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne," published in the *Mercure de France* in

two installments (October 1 and 16, 1907), Rilke's letters to Clara at times echo verbatim.[21] Even so, the fifty paintings by Cézanne displayed at the Salon d'Automne exactly one year after the painter's death made a profound impression on Rilke, who remarks on having spent as much as two hours in front of individual paintings (*KA* 4, p. 612).

What so absorbs Rilke is above all the primal givenness of color in Cézanne's painting. In his afterword to the publication of Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne* (1952), prepared at Heidegger's urging, Heinrich Petzet speaks of color in Cézanne as a "numinose Wesenheit." Focusing almost exclusively on the primary datum of color, Rilke takes Cézanne's notion of *réalisation* in strict etymological fashion as the phenomenological project of *Dingwerdung*, that is, as the self-constitution of things in the apprehending consciousness prior to any positing or reification of the appearance in question. It is telling in this regard that Rilke never comments on Cézanne's influential destabilization of linear perspective. Instead, he quite single-mindedly insists "daß es die Farbe ist, die die Malerei ausmacht" (*KA* 4, p. 606). Cézanne, he marvels, has taken color personally, "wie kein Mensch noch Farbe genommen hat, nur um das Ding damit zu machen. Die Farbe geht völlig auf in dessen Verwirklichung" (*KA* 4, p. 614). Particularly in the painter's late works, Rilke detects an impersonal, dispassionate, and unsentimental idiom that shows "keine Vorlieben [. . .], keine Neigungen und keine wählerischen Verwöhntheiten" such as to render reality reduced "so unbestechlich [. . .] auf seinen Farbeninhalt [. . .], daß es in einem Jenseits von Farbe eine neue Existenz, ohne frühere Erinnerungen, anfing" (*KA* 4, p. 623).

Color gives a thing its presence, its primal thereness, independent of how the thing in question might fit into a world of practical purposes or be framed by discursive knowledge. Anticipating Alex Danchev's remark that "a Cézanne portrait is more a thereness than a likeness" (Danchev 2012, p. 293), Rilke famously comments on Cézanne's apples: "Bei Cézanne hört ihre Eßbarkeit überhaupt auf, so sehr dinghaft wirklich werden sie, so einfach unvertilgbar in ihrer eigensinnigen Vorhandenheit" (*KA* 4, p. 608). By focusing the apprehension of a thing on its surface presence, color prompts consciousness to immerse itself in the thing's sheer phenomenality, untroubled by how it may be contextually embedded in the world. Again, color opens the path toward a mode of visual apprehension not (yet) attenuated by hermeneutic perplexities of any

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21 See Herman Meyer's scrupulous philological account of "Rilkes Cézanne Erlebnis" (Meyer 1963, pp. 244–286); the text of Bernard's "Memories of Paul Cézanne" and letters exchanged between the two painters can be found in Doran 2001, pp. 25–79. For an extensive and rich discussion of Rilke and Cézanne, see also Fischer 2015, pp. 69–169.

kind. It is "als ob diese Farben einem die Unentschlossenheit abnähmen ein für allemal" (*KA* 4, p. 616). Cézanne's use of color thus aligns with the dialectical function of surfaces that Rilke had previously observed in Rodin's sculptures. There, the boundless aspectual variety of surfaces amounts not to a concealment but works as a conduit to the very being of the sculpted thing itself. A prime instance of Husserl's concept of *Abschattung*, the infinite gradation of surface and color in Rodin's and Cézanne's work, respectively, opens access, in the modality of appearance, to what lies beyond all appearance. Rilke speaks of Rodin's "Wissen von der *einen* Oberfläche, mit welchem dieser Kunst die ganze Welt angeboten war. Angeboten, noch nicht gegeben" (*KA* 4, p. 460); the surface of Rodin's sculptures "bestand aus unendlich vielen Begegnungen des Lichtes mit dem Dinge, und es zeigte sich, daß jede dieser Begegnungen anders war und jede merkwürdig" (*KA* 4, p. 411). Art thus throws into acute relief the epiphanic potential slumbering in things of all kinds. Having returned to his apartment in the Rue Cassette in Paris, Rilke remarks on how the very familiarity of his setting, though "nicht merkwürdig, nicht auffallend" in itself, nevertheless "ordnet sich anders, [. . .] als ob jemand dastünde und befähle, und das Gegenwärtige ist mit aller Inständigkeit gegenwärtig, als läge es auf den Knien und betete für Dich" (*KA* 4: 594).

It is not the image as mere artifact and token of some representative notion of "beauty" that engages Rilke. Rather, the goal is to transpose into the written word *how* consciousness apprehends a thing in its very givenness and presence and, thus, to "transfigure things into the indestructibility of the written word" (Jamme 1992, p. 388).[22] Revealing some significant, if coincidental, affinities with the goals of Husserl's phenomenology, Rilke aims to rehabilitate the poetic word for the sake of capturing the reality, presence and, indeed, numinous integrity of things.[23] For that to happen, a fundamental adjustment in

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22 On difficulties framing Rilke's transposition of object perception into language in phenomenological terms, see Müller 1999. Luke Fischer, though more sanguine about such a project, largely eschews Husserl's conception in favor of Merleau-Ponty's; see also my discussion below.
23 Throughout his letters and prose writings, Rilke frames his poetic ideal of *sachliches Sagen* with a stream of allusions to religious life and the sacred, though notably lifted out of any doctrinal and ecclesiastic framework. He praises van Gogh's capacity for infusing the most mundane things with a sacred dimension, writing, "ein Garten, oder ein Park, ohne Stolz gesehen und gesagt, oder Dinge einfach, ein Stuhl einmal, nichts als ein Stuhl, der aller-gewöhnlichste: und doch, wieviel ist in alledem von den 'Heiligen,' die er sich für viel später versprach und vornahm!" (*KA* 4, p. 601). Beyond Cézanne's "Hingabe" liegt "die Heiligkeit" (*KA* 4, p. 624). Elsewhere, Rilke likens the artwork's synoptic, life-sustaining power to prayer: "darin liegt die ungeheure Hülfe des Kunstdings für das Leben dessen, der es machen muß, – daß es seine Zusammenfassung ist; der Knoten im Rosenkranz, bei dem sein Leben ein Gebet spricht, der

the understanding of language is required. The word must be freed from the shackles of aesthetic convention and its pre-established codes of beauty and mundane reference. Beauty is not the declared aim but an inevitable consequence of a quasi-phenomenological turn in poetic practice. As Rilke insists, beauty cannot be manufactured, but only witnessed and endured. To advance to a poetics of *sachliches Sagen* is to recognize "daß man Schönheit nicht machen kann. Niemand hat je Schönheit gemacht. Man kann nur freundliche oder erhabene Umstände schaffen für Das, was manchmal bei uns verweilen mag: einen Altar und Früchte und eine Flamme – Das Andere steht nicht in unserer Macht" (*KA* 4, p. 457). Coded into this strictly negative characterization is the prospect of a form of lyric writing fundamentally cognate with Husserl's transcendental perspective [*Einstellung*]. Its sole focus is the intentionality wrought by the event of appearance [*Erscheinung*], that is, the unfathomable fullness of a thing as the correlate of apprehension [*Auffassung*].

At the same time, and in ways that Husserl would ever resist, Rilke's conception of objective [*sachlich*] lyric speech shows consciousness being utterly absorbed and transformed by the operations of phantasy and image in the very process of apprehension. Rilke's *Neue Gedichte* time and again extend the visual trope of *Evidenz* that, in Husserl's writings, stands for "a perfect synthesis of fulfillment where an [. . .] existence-positing intention is adequately fulfilled by a corresponding perception" (Zahavi 2003, p. 32). Located not so much *beyond* as *within* the event of the apprehension, Rilke finds not simply evidence of a thing's "adequate" fulfillment in perception, but an epiphanic potential whereby consciousness transforms, and in turn is transformed by, its sustained encounter with an object. For that dynamic to be accessed, it is vital that the artist desist from all meta-reflections about art, poetry, form, and aesthetic goals. With evident approval, Rilke thus recalls (by way of Émile Bernard's reportage) Cézanne's frequent claims that "talking about art is virtually useless. Work that leads to progress in one's own *métier* is sufficient recompense for not being understood by imbeciles" (Cézanne 2013, p. 339; see also Cézanne 2013, p. 336). Previously, Rilke had been similarly taken with Rodin's "dunkle[r] Weg seiner absichtslosen Arbeit" (*KA* 4, p. 467), and in his letters on Cézanne, he recalls Rodin's capacity for not letting reflection disrupt artistic labor. Instead, the sculptor allows himself to stand "vor seinen vollendeten Dingen, die er nicht überwacht und bevormundet hat, selber bewundernd [. . .], wenn *sie* erst da sind und ihn übertreffen" (*KA* 4, p. 467). In his letters on Cézanne, Rilke

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immer wiederkehrende, für ihn selbst gegebene Beweis seiner Einheit und Wahrhaftigkeit" (*KA* 4, p. 594).

remarks once again "daß Rodin nicht 'nachdenkt', sondern innerhalb der Arbeit bleibt" (*KA* 4: 596). Likewise, Cézanne's paintings reveal:

> wie sehr das Malen unter den Farben vor sich geht, wie man sie ganz allein lassen muß, damit sie sich gegenseitig auseinandersetzen. [. . .] Wer dazwischenspricht, wer anordnet, wer seine menschliche Überlegenheit, seinen Witz, seine Anwaltschaft, seine geistige Gelenkigkeit irgend mit agieren läßt, der stört und trübt schon ihre Handlung.
>
> (*KA* 4, pp. 627–628)

To emphasize the artist's almost canine submissiveness to the appearing thing, and to the impersonal logic of its visual apprehension, is Rilke's rather more creative way of delineating what Husserl develops under the heading of *epoché*. Both in his letters on Cézanne and, far more richly yet, in his *Neue Gedichte*, Rilke delineates an entirely undesigning, artless, seemingly unself-conscious concept of vision. While it would seem an exaggeration to characterize this ideal as "almost rabidly anti-literary," it does indeed seek to fortify the poetic word against the distractions posed by referential speech and discursive practice (Meyer 1963, p. 259). Rilke's attempted repristination of the word thus constitutes a crucial step toward grasping the mind-world relationship at the point of its phenomenological origination or *Selbst-Konstituierung*. Quarantined from all discursive mediation and referential entanglements, lyric speech in particular aims to forge a path from the "evidence" to epiphany, that is, from the sheer apprehension of what is manifestly given in appearance to "insight" [*Einsicht*] into its actual being.

For such a project to succeed, however, one must begin by acknowledging that all perception is by definition a temporal event and, as such, contingent on the operation of fantasy. To clinch the point, a brief return to Husserl, particularly his 1907 lectures on *Ding und Raum*, is in order. Acknowledging that his examples of perception thus far somewhat resemble "idealisierenden Fiktionen" (*Hua* XVI, p. 86), Husserl confronts the fact that, as the apprehension of a thing unfolds in time, it necessarily causes consciousness itself to be caught up in more or less continuous mutation. Insofar as apprehension unfolds as a temporal sequence rather than an instantaneous and total intuition, it requires a continuous synthesizing of fulfilled [*erfüllte*] intentions with aspects as yet unfulfilled (anticipated) and awaiting future confirmation or correction. Far from originating in strictly "evident" aspects, perception must continually transcend what is manifestly [*leibhaft*] given to it. Yet even as he admits that "zu jeder Dingwahrnehmung ein gewisses Hinausgehen über das in eigentliche Erscheinung Fallende [gehört]," Husserl hastens to point out that "dieses Hinausgreifen [. . .] sehr wohl ein sich Vergreifen sein [kann]" (*Hua* XVI, p. 96).

Nevertheless, once perception is grasped in its temporal dimension, the role of fantasy resurfaces. For if the temporal sequence of a thing's aspectual presentations

is to issue in a coherent perception, it must be "durchherrscht von einer gewissen Teleologie" (*Hua* XVI, p. 103).[24] A book read backwards, a melody listened to in reverse, will not amount to a meaningful [*erfüllt*] intention. Yet for the sequential aspects of an object-presentation to be synthesized into a meaningful whole, whatever feature happens to be apprehended right now furnishes not merely "evidence," but simultaneously foreshadows aspects yet to be apprehended. As Husserl notes, the succession of discrete aspects [*Abschattungen*] synthesized in perception pivots on "ein anderes, engeres und hier eingeflochtenes Spiel von Intentionen und Erfüllungen" (*Hua* XVI, p. 106). Put differently, the very coherence of what is evidently given in intuition demands that consciousness synthesize all presentations [*Darstellungen*], including those of aspects either no longer or not yet present. For "es gilt nicht das Gegebenheitsbewußtsein als vollendetes, es gilt nicht schlechthin, es weist über sich hinaus; es ist Andeutung für das eigentlich Gemeinte" (*Hua* XVI, pp. 106–107). All perception of a thing hinges on a synthesis of sorts, that is, on an image mediating present ("fulfilled") intentions with those that have either faded from view or have yet to come into focus. Elsewhere, Husserl remarks that "das Schauen über den reinen Jetztpunkt hinausreicht, also das nicht mehr jetzt Seiende im jeweiligen neuen Jetzt festzuhalten [. . .] vermag" (*Hua* II, p. 67). Indeed, from a phenomenological standpoint, "für die Wesensbetrachtung rangiert Wahrnehmung und Phantasievorstellung ganz gleich, aus beiden ist dasselbe Wesen gleich gut herauszuschauen" (*Hua* II, p. 68).[25]

For apprehension to issue in a *bona fide* perception, every aspect must be imbued with an intimation [*Andeutung*] of the fullness that is ultimately and properly intended [*gemeint*]. This implies (though Husserl often resists the implication) that fantasy has to generate an image capable of supporting "Intentionen, die in Richtung auf vollkommenere Darstellungen weisen" (*Hua* XVI, p. 107). Husserl's deictic (and notably dynamic) turn of phrase [*weisen*] shows consciousness to be enmeshed with "Darstellung" and its constitutive "Medium" – the image: "Und sie weisen darauf [auf den Gegenstand] hin durch das Medium der ihrem Wesen nach vermittelnden Darstellungen" (*Hua* XVI, p. 107).[26] In so

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24 See also Husserl's remark in *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*: "Erkenntnis versehen das heißt, die teleologischen Zusammenhänge der Erkenntnis zu genereller Klärung zu bringen" (*Hua* II, pp. 57–58).

25 Husserl reinforces the point quite dramatically: "Phantasie fungiert aber nicht nur für die Wesensbetrachtung gleich der Wahrnehmung, sie scheint auch in sich selbst singuläre Gegebenheiten zu enthalten, und zwar als wirklich evidente Gegebenheiten" (*Hua* II, p. 69).

26 Yet again, Husserl hedges on whether this type of mediation is even conceivable without fantasy: "Ob die Phantasie mitspielt oder nicht [. . .] Bedeutung ist da, und in ihrem Wesen liegt der 'Hinweis' auf mögliche Erfüllung in der explizierenden Darstellungskontinuität" (*Hua* XVI, p. 108).

effecting the passage from apprehension to perception, fantasy and its medium, the image *qua* presentation [*Darstellung*], show the early Husserl to conceive intentionality as *creative* agency.

We do not yet have here the kind of "passive synthesis" of consciousness with "absolute givenness" that will dominate Husserl's later writings (beginning with the *Ideas* and culminating in his *Cartesian Meditations*), which has been sharply queried, among others, by Jean-Luc Marion.[27] The question of whether the "synthesis" of noesis and noema is passive-receptive or dynamic-creative has a decisive bearing on the role that fantasy and image play in the apprehension of an appearance: is the image essentially constitutive or merely derivative? Ultimately, answering either question depends on how we understand the *epoché* itself. In his *Ideas*, Husserl's diction revealingly slips from a strictly heuristic characterization of *epoché* as "suspending" [*aussetzen*] any positing of real entities external to consciousness toward positively "decommissioning" that very thesis: "wir 'schalten sie aus'" (*Hua* III, p. 63). Yet as we have already seen, the "irreality" of the contingent, external world, the "bracketing" of which supposedly enables the project of transcendental phenomenology itself, effectively reappears within the realm of the noema. For inasmuch as fantasy, image [*Bild*], and presentation [*Darstellung*] facilitate the constitution of the phenomenon *in* and *for* consciousness, the *external* contingency that the phenomenological reduction means to quarantine for the time being resurfaces as the *internal* contingency of the creative element at work in all perception. All apprehending of things in what Husserl calls their absolute givenness pivots on a creative dynamic operative within consciousness itself. Put differently, Husserl's notion of immediate evidence – that is, the givenness that categorically rules out all meaningful doubt, such that "Unglaube und Zweifel ausgeschlossen sind" (*Hua* XVI, p. 22) – turns out to be indissolubly entwined with an epiphanic dimension.

As Hans Urs von Balthasar pointed out long ago, the "'Irrealität' der bloßen Tatsachenwelt, mit der der Phänomenologe sich nicht zu beschäftigen vorgab, [kehrt] innerhalb der Klammer als Irrealität des Noëma wieder[. . .]" (Balthasar 1998, pp. 116–117). For the intimate filiation of noesis and noema is such that "aktiv-noëtische Operationen jeweils das Noëma verändern und zu seinem Aufbau beitragen" (Balthasar 1998, p. 117). It is this creative dimension, dealt with equivocally at best in Husserl's early writings and eventually written out

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27 Marion's *Being Given* arguably offers the most scrupulous discussion of the concept of "givenness" in phenomenology (Marion 2002a, pp. 7–70), including its function within the broader economy of Husserl's "reduction" (Marion 2002a, pp. 14–27).

of the picture altogether, that features prominently in Rilke's mature lyric works, particularly in his *Neue Gedichte* (1907). Hence, Wolfgang Müller considers Rilke's lyric oeuvre fundamentally incommensurable with Husserl's phenomenological reduction as defined in *Ideas* (1913), and he thus rejects Käte Hamburger's reading of a poem like "Blaue Hortensie" as a prime example of Husserl's "Wesensschau," whereby consciousness lays claim to an object's essence without venturing any actual predications about it (Müller 1999, p. 225). In fact, Müller insists, Rilke's poem leaves no doubt that the color blue remains "contextually determined" and, in contrast with Husserl's eidetic intuition, does not categorically exclude "inessential" and "imperfect" elements (Müller 1999, p. 225, my translation). This becomes especially apparent in the poem's closing tercet:

> Doch plötzlich scheint das Blau sich zu verneuen
> in einer von den Dolden, und man sieht
> ein rührend Blaues sich vor Grünem freuen,
>
> <div align="right">(KA 1, p. 481)</div>

where the sudden resurgence of luminous color is shown to arise directly from a concrete moment of perception. For Müller, any affinity between Rilke and Husserl is decidedly *not* to be found in the concept of the phenomenological reduction and the "Wesensschau" it means to lay bare (Müller 1999, pp. 225–227).[28] Drawing mainly on Merleau-Ponty rather than Husserl, Luke Fischer largely concurs, arguing that what links Rilke's poetry to phenomenology is a concept of "knowing, not [as] an imposition of meaning from a detached point of view, but [as] an understanding *out of* lived events" (Fischer 2015, p. 65). Yet to distinguish between "a phenomenology of the everyday" and a "phenomenology of the exceptional," even if the two states in question are to "be regarded as parts of a spectrum," remains unsatisfactory (Fischer 2015, pp. 41–42). For such a distinction obscures an integral, properly form-giving feature of Rilke's *Neue Gedichte*, namely, the way that the exceptional already slumbers *within* and erupts *from within* the ordinary. To think of them as distinct states on a spectrum is to miss their essential co-inherence. This is true not only of Rilke but, as we have seen, of Husserl, whose early delineation of transcendental phenomenology time and again confronts this irruption of the epiphanic into the realm of *Evidenz*, such

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28 See Husserl's characterization of eidetic intuition: "Wesenserschauung ist also Anschauung [. . .] im prägnanten Sinn und nicht eine bloße und vielleicht vage Vergegenwärtigung, [sondern] [. . .] eine originärgebende Anschauung, das Wesen in seiner 'leibhaftigen' Selbstheit erfassend" (*Hua* III, pp. 14–15).

that the creative mediations of fantasy and image reveal themselves as integral features of all perception.

Yet to acknowledge this essential conjunction of quotidian perception [*Wahrnehmung*] and creative vision [*Phantasie*], of the visible and the invisible, is to confront the metaphysical entanglements of both phenomenology and modernist poetics. It is a task, however, for which the anti-metaphysical pathos underlying much literary criticism since the 1960s has left that discipline exceedingly ill prepared. Thus, while acknowledging "the nearly ubiquitous presence" of the epiphanic in Rilke's *Neue Gedichte*, Müller is quick to quarantine any numinous implications by characterizing the epiphanic as a strictly formal-aesthetic development: "a concept of modern poetics" (Müller 1999, p. 226, my translation).[29] Similarly, Luke Fischer notes "that an invisible of *things* and the *world* attains a more perfect visibility *in* the work of art" and that the "invisible is revealed through a deep attentiveness to the exterior or visible," effectively "discern[ing] an epiphanic significance in it" (Fischer 2015, pp. 135; 145, see also Marion 2002b, p. 105). This rings true, though the work of art is not so much the source of epiphanic vision it is as a response to, and articulation of, its prior occurrence. Epiphany names a thing's unfathomable capacity for initiating a vision [*Schau*] that unveils the very being of which the thing itself is a manifestation; and it is in the modality of an image that this unveiling takes place. As Rilke puts it in an early letter, "alle Dinge sind ja dazu da, damit sie uns Bilder werden in irgendeinem Sinn" (*RB* 1, p. 41). The artwork, whether poem or painting, responds to and works through the vision that was the result of a thing having manifested itself *qua* image. Particularly in *Neue Gedichte*, Rilke often appears consumed with capturing the phenomenology of the thing-become-image by means of a radically new iconography. In a letter from 1907, Rilke remarks on the unique capacity of images to stabilize the relationship of consciousness [*unser Inneres*] vis-à-vis the world of things: "Wir stellen Bilder aus uns hinaus, wir nehmen jeden Anlaß wahr, weltbildend zu werden, wir errichten Ding um Ding um unser Inneres herum" (*RB* 1, p. 233).[30] Animating his

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29 There is no time here to explore the theological origins of the epiphanic in Patristic, mostly Eastern writing (e.g., Epiphanius, *Contra Haereses*, II.1, Ch. 27; Gregory of Nazianzen, *Oration* 38) and, eventually, also in the West (e.g., Gregory the Great, *Sermon* 34). Suffice it to say that the complementary relationship between Nativity and Epiphany, the event of Christ's birth and its subsequently being witnessed (adoration of the Magi) and sacramentally affirmed (Jesus' baptism), bears an intriguing affinity to Husserl's dual accreditation of the phenomenon as "embodied" [*leibhaft*] and "credible" [*glaubhaft*] (see *Hua* XVI, pp. 15–16; 23–25).

30 Rilke's remark is strikingly echoed by Arnold Gehlen's characterization of "presentation" [*Darstellung*] as "ein Transzendieren ins Diesseits, aus der fließenden Zeit heraus in die Dauer,

poetics is the central premise that, in Marion's formulation, "the icon does not result from a vision but provokes one. The icon is not seen, but appears. [. . .] [It] summons sight in letting the visible be saturated little by little with the invisible" (Marion 1991, p. 17). Marion's stance aligns closely with that of Husserl and Rilke, provided we understand the icon not as an outward artifact, but as the internal image, as the source of epiphanic vision rather than its contingent, formal-aesthetic expression. Hence, *pace* Müller, poetry does not produce epiphanic images. Rather, it is inexorably led toward them by tracing how a given thing, in our aspectual experience of it, is unpredictably transfigured into the diaphanous medium of the image, thereby undergoing "an increase in being" (to recall Gadamer's felicitous phrase) (Gadamer 1975, p. 133, my translation). This epiphanic fullness whereby the image redeems the thing as a manifestation of being, notably resembles Marion's notion of the saturated phenomenon. It is less a discrete entity than the event of manifestation itself, which is to say, the advent of an intuition that, wholly exceeding the scope of the concept, "overflows with many meanings [. . .], each equally legitimate and rigorous, without managing either to unify them or organize them" (Marion 2002b, p. 112).

A concluding look at the final poem in Rilke's *Neue Gedichte*, "Die Rosenschale," will help pull together various strands of the present argument: 1) the structural function of image [*Bild*] and creative presentation [*Darstellung*] within a phenomenology of perception; 2) the dramatic shift from the natural attitude positing the reality of objects to a phenomenological account of Being unveiled *qua* appearance; 3) the mutual transformation of appearance and consciousness; and 4) modernism's understanding of epiphanic meaning as embedded *within* the structure of (visual) experience, rather than being expressively predicated of ostensibly separate, mundane phenomena. By way of illustrating two fundamentally opposed forms of visual cognition, the poem opens with a jarring contrast between ferocious physical violence in the world of human affairs and the imperturbable presence of a rose bowl, whose manifest, if unfathomable "thereness" suspends an outside world denatured and blinded by violence:

> Zornige sahst du flackern, sahst zwei Knaben
> Zu einem Etwas sich zusammenballen,
> das Haß war und sich auf der Erde wälzte
> wie ein von Bienen überfallnes Tier;
> Schauspieler, aufgetürmte Übertreiber,

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vermittelt durch ein Bild: das Göttliche gibt es nicht abstrakt, nur als Anschauliches, Leibhaft-Gewordenes, selbst Lebendiges" (Gehlen 2004, p. 62).

rasende Pferde, die zusammenbrachen,
den Blick wegwerfend, bläkend das Gebiß
als schälte sich der Schädel aus dem Maule.

Nun aber weißt du, wie sich das vergißt:
Denn vor dir steht die volle Rosenschale,
die unvergeßlich ist und angefüllt
mit jenem Äußersten von Sein und Neigen,
Hinhalten, Niemals-Gebenkönnen, Dastehn,
das unser sein mag: Äußerstes auch uns.

<div align="right">(KA 1, pp. 508–509)</div>

Verging on an abstract expressionism that Rilke would never quite embrace, the opening scene is of human beings entangled, convulsed, and disfigured by ineffable aggression. In aspect little more than a contorted, nearly indecipherable *Gestalt*, the combatants have been reduced to a mere "Etwas," denatured by an inexplicable rage ("Zornige sahst Du flackern") that has notably vanquished the power of sight: "den Blick wegwerfend." In a brilliant and startling *prolepsis*, the combatants' embodied being is captured in all its transience, as the skull seems to protrude through a barely enfleshed face: "bläkend das Gebiss / als schälte sich der Schädel aus dem Maule." No less startling is the shift from disordered and fragmented perception to consciousness becalmed by and focused on the poem's eponymous object. The shift is not, however, wrought by an act of will but, in a peculiarly reflexive turn of phrase – "wie sich das vergißt" – by the sheer presence of the rose bowl that appears indelibly etched into consciousness ("unvergeßlich"), and "angefüllt mit jenem Äußersten von Sein und Neigen." The bowl fills space without in the least reducing it, as ambient things would be expected to do. Instead, its "reality" or, rather, "effectivity" arises from the way that its qualities appear wholly enmeshed with the beholding consciousness: its self-focused radiance ("Sich-bescheinendes"), its delicacy ("viel Zartes"), its plentiful interiority ("lauter Inneres"), and its silent, life-like, and open-ended self-disclosure ("Aufgehen ohne Ende"):

Lautloses Leben, Aufgehn ohne Ende,
Raum-brauchen ohne Raum von jenem Raum
zu nehmen, den die Dinge rings verringern,
fast nicht Umrissen-sein wie Ausgespartes
und lauter Inneres, viel seltsam Zartes
und Sich-bescheinendes – bis an den Rand:
ist irgend etwas uns bekannt wie dies?

<div align="right">(KA 1, p. 509)</div>

The last line's ambiguous query, "[I]st irgend etwas uns bekannt wie dies?" can be taken either as a rhetorical question pointing to something *unprecedented* or as affirming the familiarity between consciousness and this thing as *incomparable*. Indeed, it may be precisely the profound intimacy of consciousness with its object that renders the experience also unprecedented. As the boundaries between consciousness and its intentional object dissolve, it becomes apparent that three-dimensional, Newtonian space and the spatiotemporal nature of eidetic intuition are not fungible, but ontologically distinct. Whereas the former is grasped by quantification and division, the latter exhibits absolute continuity: "ohne Raum / von jenem Raum zu nehmen, den die Dinge rings verringern." In a letter from 1919, Rilke recalls another such epiphany, which likewise had filled, indeed expanded phenomenological space rather than subtracting from it: "[A]uf Capri einmal, als ich nachts im Garten stand, unter den Ölbäumen, und der Ruf eines Vogels, über dem ich die Augen schließen mußte, war gleichzeitig in mir und draußen wie in einem einzigen ununterschiedenen Raum von vollkommener Ausdehnung und Klarheit" (*RB* 1, pp. 702–703).[31]

It is here that Rilke moves well beyond Husserl by focusing on the ineffable fullness of visual experiences that fuse consciousness and thing in nongeometric space [*Raum*]. Fullness here does not merely refer to the multiplicity of "aspects" [*Abschattungen*] that, as such, prevent an object's spatiotemporal complexity from being taken in at once. At issue is not fullness as sheer manysidedness, as epistemological constraint, as the negativity of perception dispersed into countless aspects and thus struggling to achieve their synthesis. Rather, fullness names a timeless radiance intrinsic to appearance, not begging causal explanation, but of such abundance as for the beholding eye to vacillate between gazing with stunned absorption and closing its lid in self-protection:

> Und dann wie dies: daß ein Gefühl entsteht,
> weil Blütenblätter Blütenblätter rühren?
> Und dies: daß eins sich aufschlägt wie ein Lid,
> und drunter liegen lauter Augenlider,
> geschlossene, als ob sie, zehnfach schlafend,
> zu dämpfen hätten eines Innern Sehkraft.
> Und dies vor allem: daß durch diese Blätter
> das Licht hindurch muß. Aus den tausend Himmeln
> filtern sie langsam jenen Tropfen Dunkel,

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31 The letter closely echoes a passage from the 1913 fragment, "Ein Erlebnis," where "ein Vogelruf draußen und in seinem Innern übereinstimmend da war, indem er sich gewissermaßen an der Grenze des Körpers nicht brach, beides zu einem ununterbrochenen Raum zusammennahm" (*KA* 4, p. 668).

in dessen Feuerschein das wirre Bündel
der Staubgefäße sich erregt und aufbäumt.
Und die Bewegung in den Rosen, sieh:
Gebärden von so kleinem Ausschlagswinkel,
daß sie unsichtbar blieben, liefen ihre
Strahlen nicht auseinander in das Weltall.

(*KA* 1, p. 509)

With its metaphoric fusion of lid and petal, Rilke's central trope thematizes the relation between vision and the diaphanous medium of the image through which eye and object may absorb and contain the other's respective energy. The petals occlude the innermost being of the rose "als ob sie [. . .] zu dämpfen hätten eines Innern Sehkraft." Conversely, as the petal "sich aufschlägt wie ein Lid," it solicits the very light that renders it visible to the conscious gaze. Both lid and petal owe their function and being to this light, which wholly transcends their order of being and which, conversely, registers in consciousness only insofar as it is refracted by the membrane of lid and petal, respectively. Rilke's imagery recalls the (in origin Platonist) conception developed by Plotinus, and subsequently incorporated into Christian eschatology (e.g., in Bernard, the Victorine School, and Bonaventure), according to which matter is both a manifestation of and, for its beholder, a conduit back to its transcendent source. All seeing is a motion *through* and *by means of* the visible toward the invisible – *per visibilia ad invisibilia.* Put differently, the medium both enables and "filters," unveils and conceals – "daß durch diese Blätter / das Licht hindurch muß" – just as being is only ever manifested by means of, though never reducible to, the particularity and concretion of a given thing. Possibly alluding to Plato's allegory of the cave (*Rep.* 514a–520a), Rilke thus depicts the petals as filtering light, just enough for the stamen in the depth of the chalice to erupt into a riotous appearance – "das wirre Bündel" – that, recalling the poem's opening image of violent struggle, now appears consumed by an ineffable longing for the very fullness [*pleroma*] from which it has sprung.

Rilke's phenomenology of vision here appears "liberated from transcendental stricture" of the kind Husserl so insistently places on perception (Hart 2017, p. 36). This stricture or

transcendental prejudice would dictate in advance that, in the event of manifestation and in the indiscerptibility of phenomenon and perception, one may not and cannot see a light exceeding them as an ever more eminent phenomenality: not merely an object's hidden sides, or the interplication of the visible and the invisible in one another, but the [. . .] incandescence of the infinite simplicity that grants world and knower one to the other.

(Hart 2017, p. 36)

As had already been modeled for Rilke by Cézanne, the infinite simplicity that enfolds thing and beholder is most poignantly conveyed by the primal givenness and incontrovertible presence of color. In Rilke's poem, it makes its return with an allusion to Botticelli's "Birth of Venus," the goddess standing erect in her shell, blushing and turning against the backdrop of those white petals, expansive, open, and mirroring the beholder's unsettled gaze with a fusion of beguiling innocence and erotic longing. The metaphysics of *Dingwerdung* rests above all with understanding that visual experience is fundamentally an act of witnessing, not appropriation. Defining of its phenomenology is the capacity of the beholder to let the thing in question simply unveil itself by discarding all spatiotemporal trappings ("wie ein Mantel, eine Last [. . .] und eine Maske" [*KA* 1, p. 510]) or *vestigia*, as Bonaventure calls them. Such unveiling of the innermost being is not, however, a matter of mere subtraction but, instead, requires in the beholder an infinite sensitivity to *how* such uncovering is done "*wie* sie's abtun" (*KA* I, p. 510):

> Sieh jene weiße, die sich selig aufschlug
> und dasteht in den großen offnen Blättern
> wie eine Venus aufrecht in der Muschel;
> und die errötende, die wie verwirrt
> nach einer kühlen sich hinüberwendet,
> und wie die kühle fühllos sich zurückzieht,
> und wie die kalte steht, in sich gehüllt,
> unter den offenen die alles abtun.
> Und *was* sie abtun, wie das leicht und schwer,
> wie es ein Mantel, eine Last, ein Flügel
> und eine Maske sein kann, je nach dem,
> und *wie* sie's abtun: wie vor dem Geliebten.
> (*KA* 1, pp. 509–510)

This infinite fragility of the thing as given in visual experience is subsequently developed in a series of chromatic transitions of color and texture – of a fruit's yellow outside to its fuller, orange-red nectar within; of an ineffable rose-color (Venus blushing?) suspended between the bitter after-taste of lilac and the opal whiteness of a porcelain cup "die nichts enthält als sich" (*KA* 1, p. 510); of a batiste covering beneath whose linen texture one can fathom the "atemwarm [es]" gown discarded for a bath in a forest's morning shade:

> Und die batistene, ist sie kein Kleid,
> in dem noch zart und atemwarm das Hemd steckt,
> mit dem zugleich es abgeworfen wurde
> im Morgenschatten an dem alten Waldbad?
> (*KA* 1, p. 510)

With their infinite gradation in quality and force, the primal phenomena of color and texture give rise to equally unique and distinctive inner states. Indeed, every sensation is teleologically ordered to do just that, "daß ein Gefühl entsteht" (*KA* 1, p. 509), to "transform" [*verwandeln*] the phenomenon "in eine Hand voll Innres" (*KA* 1, p. 510). It is *within* the phenomenon as the event of its continued apprehension and internalization, not beyond it, that modernism locates the epiphanic. Persistently troubling Husserl's early phenomenology, the constitutive role within perception played by fantasy and image – creativity and its medium – is writ large by Rilke as the generative tension between the thing given in (phenomenological) "evidence" and the epiphanic potentialities unveiled by its undesigning apprehension. This dynamic spatialized model of modernist epiphanies has also been noted by Charles Taylor, who contrasts it with Romanticism's expressive conception and its origins in Kant's notion of the dynamic sublime. By contrast, an epiphany in Pound, Rilke, Eliot, Proust, and other modernists "is of something only indirectly available, something the visible object can't say itself but only nudges us towards" (Taylor 1989, p. 469). On Pound's account, the image is emphatically "interpretive, not just ornamental," a vortex concentrating "otherwise diffuse" energies into "an instant of time" (Taylor 1989, p. 474). The result is a fundamentally new concept of aesthetic work whose epiphanic dimension no longer rests with individual "words or images or objects evoked, but [arises] between them" (Taylor 1989, p. 476). Instead of an "expressive relation" unifying word and thing, poetic speech by its very disruption "of clearly defined images" establishes an "epiphanic field" (Taylor 1989, p. 477). That last phrase also fits the closing stanza of Rilke's "Die Rosenschale," whose subtly extended, interrogative syntax once more intimates a teleological (and, thus, metaphysical) relationship between the phenomenal world of things and their "leise Erlösung" within a human interiority [*Innres*] at once constituted and becalmed [*sorglos*] by their experience:

> Und sind nicht alle so, nur sich enthaltend,
> wenn Sich-enthalten heißt: die Welt da draußen
> und Wind und Regen und Geduld des Frühlings
> und Schuld und Unruh und vermummtes Schicksal
> und Dunkelheit der abendlichen Erde
> bis auf der Wolken Wandel, Flucht und Anflug,
> bis auf den vagen Einfluß ferner Sterne
> in eine Hand voll Innres zu verwandeln.
> Nun liegt es sorglos in den offnen Rosen.
>
> (*KA* 1, p. 510)

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IV Fictional Truths: Phenomenology and Narrative

Nicolas de Warren

The Virtuous Philosopher and the Chameleon Poet: Husserl and Hofmannsthal

Abstract: This paper explores the intricacies of Edmund Husserl's celebrated letter to Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Although Husserl claims to have found "great inspiration" in Hofmannsthal's aesthetics for the forging of his own phenomenological method, this paper examines how Husserl *imagined* this source of inspiration while at the same time actually drawing on insights from Hofmannsthal's aesthetics. In addition to a treatment of Husserl's envisioned analogy between the aesthetic attitude and the phenomenological attitude, this paper further complicates Husserl's perception of Hofmannsthal through a discussion of Hofmannsthal's "magical" conception of symbolism and the essential multi-lingualism of his literary works.

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The beginning is the pure and, so to speak, still mute experience,
which now it is the issue to bring to the pure expression of its own sense.

(Husserl, *Ideas I*)

1 A Letter

The circumstances of Edmund Husserl's meeting with Hugo von Hofmannsthal on 6 December 1906 are well known.[1] Related through Husserl's wife, Malvine, Hofmannsthal visited Göttingen at the invitation of Theodor Lessing to deliver a public lecture, *Der Dichter und diese Zeit*, and took this occasion to make a call on the Husserls.[2] At the time, Lessing followed Husserl's seminars and lectures intensely in his aspiration to write a *Habilitation* and enter into the phenomenological movement then forming in Göttingen. That aspiration would soon come to an unpleasant end. After writing a text on ethics in 1907 bearing the stamp of Husserl's nascent but as yet unpublished ideas on value, Husserl accused Lessing

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1 My thanks to Thomas Vongehr for his assistance in the research for this paper.

2 Malvine Husserl (maiden name: Steinschneider) was related to Hofmannsthal's wife's, Gertrud, or "Gertig", (maiden name: Schlesinger), through her grandmother, Nanette Küffner.

of plagiarism. The ensuing break in their relationship provoked an especially harsh judgment from Husserl otherwise known for his measured temperament. As he quipped: "Theodor Lessing's personality [I know] very well – unfortunately only too well. Lessing is a philosophizing poetaster of extraordinary baseness."[3]

The weather on this 6th of December was apparently conducive to staying indoors. As Hofmannsthal reports to his wife in a letter:

> Leider ist immerfort elendes Regenwetter und so werde ich heute wegen dem Schumpfen gar nicht ausgehen, sondern nur nachmittags in dem einzigen Wagen, den es hier gibt, wenn er frei ist, zu der Husserlin fahren für kurzen Besuch und dann zum Thee zu einem Dr. Deneke.[4]

That evening, Hofmannsthal gave his lecture at the Concert Hall of the Viennese Cafe Hapke, which Husserl in all likelihood attended. No further record of this visit exists, although Gerhard Husserl – Husserl's eldest son – would still recall many years later Hofmannsthal's striking appearance that afternoon: tall and thin with a black frock coat (Hirsch 1995, p. 109). This lasting impression chimes well with Hofmannsthal's cosmopolitan status at the beginning of the twentieth century as a Viennese avant-garde poet, writer, and intellectual, whose literary and artistic reputation was imbued with a nearly mythical aura. For Stefan Zweig, as he recalls in his memoirs, *Die Welt vom Gestern*:

> The appearance of the young Hofmannsthal is and remains notable as one of the greatest miracles of accomplishment early in life; in world literature, except for Keats and Rimbaud, I know no other youthful example of a similar impeccability in the mastering of language, no such breadth of spiritual buoyancy, nothing more permeated with poetic substance even in the most casual lines, than in this magnificent genius, who already in his sixteenth and seventeenth year had inscribed himself in the eternal annals of the German language with unextinguishable verses and prose which today has still not been surpassed. His sudden beginning and simultaneous completion was a phenomenon that hardly occurs more than once in a generation.   (Zweig 2013, p. 44)

By contrast, Husserl at the time of their meeting was a relatively obscure professor of philosophy in a provincial university town, whose only significant publication, *Logische Untersuchungen*, confronted its academic readers with an extremely technical and conceptually daunting apparatus, the revolutionary impact of which on philosophical thought in the twentieth century was still yet to become fully manifest. A small group of devoted students were, however, beginning to enter into the orbit of Husserl's phenomenological approach to philosophy, as developed in his lectures and seminars in Göttingen during the first decade of

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3 Cited in Schmitt 2003. For the details of his accusation of plagiarism, see Bacon 1983, pp. 32–49.
4 Cited in Hirsch 1995, pp. 273–280, p. 108.

the twentieth century, yet this circle of influence remained extremely narrow, numbering but a handful of students. Hofmannsthal himself writes to his wife of visiting *der Husserlin* – "the Husserl woman" – for a "brief call," thus giving no indication of any special appreciation or recognition of Husserl, the philosopher, let alone as "the father of phenomenology." Just as tellingly, Gerhard Husserl would later *wrongly* think that it was his father, and not Lessing, who had invited Hofmannsthal to Göttingen, thus retrospectively attributing to his father a standing that he would only later achieve, as equal to Hofmannsthal's reputation and stature, and implying that Husserl enjoyed a personal relationship with Hofmannsthal.[5]

A few days later, on 13 December 1906, Lessing published a short review of Hofmannsthal's lecture in *Die Göttinger Zeitung*. As he notes, since it would be rather tactless and naive to offer a "critique" of this lecture, his remarks must instead begin with an expression of gratitude [*Dank*] for a "great person's" reflections on the relationship between the poet and our time (Lessing 2006, pp. 97–100). The poet, as Lessing distills for his readership Hofmannsthal's lecture, awakens his readers to a "new life and meaning" against the trivialities and emptiness of the masses, for whom meaning and life have sunk into irony and caricature. Hofmannsthal's rhetorical prowess must clearly have succeeded that evening, for as Lessing stresses, "*jedem* der zweihundert Zuhörer wurde *Etwas* ins Leben geworfen" (Lessing 2006, p. 100). Indeed, among those in attendance to whom *something* was cast into their lives, in the double sense intended by Lessing's statement as something unexpectedly "gifted to" life as well as life being thereby "thrown into" – awoken to – something, was Husserl.

A month later, Husserl writes a letter to Hofmannsthal on 12 January 1907 in which he expresses his belated gratitude for Hofmannsthal's "exquisite gift," namely, a copy of *Kleine Dramen*, given to him at their meeting in December.[6] Husserl immediately expresses his gratitude for an even more exquisite gift: a spiritual gift neither intended by Hofmannsthal's lecture or visit, nor expected by Husserl himself. As Husserl explains in the opening paragraph of his letter, he had been unable to thank Hofmannsthal in a prompt fashion for the *Kleine Dramen* due to an intense period of intellectual work during which, finally and suddenly, as if "falling from the heavens," "long sought-after syntheses of thoughts" [*lang gesuchte Gedankensynthesen*] became revealed to him (Husserl 2009; Husserl 1994,

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5 For Gerhard's faulty recollection, see Hirsch 1995, p. 109. Husserl's own animus against Lessing might also have fostered this son's wishful remembrance.

6 This copy no longer exists: Husserl's library of literary works was destroyed during the bombing of the port in Antwerp in 1940.

pp. 133–136).[7] In the thrall of such revelation, Husserl writes of having been pressed for time to give a stable form to these thoughts as speedily as possible, before, in other words, these precious gifts from heaven might disappear from his grasp. During this period of intense work, Husserl notes that the volume of *Kleine Dramen* provided "a great source of inspiration" for the philosophical discovery of what he calls here his "phenomenological" method, by means of which he hopes to arrive at a decisive resolution of fundamental philosophical problems. The discovery of this method of phenomenology, as inspired by Hofmannsthal's gift, has finally brought many years of searching to an end, so that he can finally make a beginning with his phenomenological enterprise and inaugurate a new form of philosophical thinking. This miraculous appearance of phenomenology, "as if falling from the heavens," would not have been completely possible, were it not for the miracle of Hofmannsthal's presence. Here, it would seem, resides the veritable significance of Hofmannsthal's "exquisite gift," which, in this letter, Husserl announces as *his* philosophical gift to our times in expressing his gratitude to Hofmannsthal for his.

Despite this exceptional testimony of Husserl's now celebrated letter (in fact, doubly exceptional, given that Husserl both acknowledges a *specific* source of inspiration for his novel phenomenological method and recognizes this specific source as *literary*, or *aesthetic*), no other traces of either this meeting or Hofmannsthal's writings, or thinking, are to be found in Husserl's vast written corpus and correspondence. At most, Husserl is said to have once evoked his meeting Hofmannsthal during a seminar in Freiburg in 1919 on questions of aesthetics.[8] The singularity of Husserl's letter and its presentation of the spiritual analogy between phenomenology and what Husserl identifies in Hofmannsthal as "the purely aesthetic" is made all the more peculiar, that is, intriguing, given that, for all of Husserl's sincerity in announcing to Hofmannsthal both his gratitude for his poetic gift and the revelation of his own philosophical gift, phenomenology, Hofmannsthal never bothered to respond or acknowledge the letter from Husserl – that "hopeless and typical professor," as Husserl characterizes himself in his letter, "who cannot open his mouth, without giving a lecture." This lettered-lecture apparently made no impression on Hofmannsthal, even as Hofmannsthal apparently made such an impression on Husserl.

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7 Further references to the English translation of Husserl's letter to Hofmannsthal will not be noted separately, since it appears on a single page in the online publication that has been cited as Husserl 2009.

8 According to Hirsch 1995, who has this from Werner Kraft, p. 115.

2 An Inspiration

Husserl's letter to Herr von Hofmannsthal is one of the more curious literary artifacts in Husserl's extensive correspondence and writings. Aside from its social function as an expression of gratitude, Husserl's *philosophical* letter is meant to make intellectual contact with Hofmannsthal, the poet, by drawing attention to an originally fertilizing contact between Hofmannsthal's aesthetics and Husserl's own phenomenology. Over the course of its brief discussion of the point of contact between Husserl's thinking and Hofmannsthal's aesthetics, and, more broadly, the analogy between phenomenology and aesthetics, it moves from an opening deference of the philosopher towards the poet to an implied parity between the philosopher and the poet, placed, however, as an after-thought, as if to reveal *ex post facto* the true purpose of the letter as the necessary consequence of the "miraculous discovery" of phenomenology, under the inspiration of the poet, of which Husserl's letter mainly speaks.

Letters, of course, need not have but one function or purpose; and just the same, letters need not only be read, and hence, written, as addressing the stated addressee of the letter. A letter can just as much serve as a self-addressed medium and instrument of self-fashioning; indeed, a letter might still function as a letter (maybe even better), even if the recipient never reads it, let alone responds, or, even if the recipient remains imaginary in the addressing eyes of the letter writer. This imaginary contact between Husserl and Hofmannsthal, sealed, as it were, with Hofmannsthal's own silence in not responding, might equally reflect Hofmannsthal's aesthetics as an *imagined* source of inspiration for Husserl. For even as, in one register, Husserl's letter is "real," as a letter actually written by Husserl (and sent) to Hofmannsthal, in another, more subtle register, Husserl's letter reads as *imaginary*, as speaking of an imagined source of inspiration for phenomenology to an imaginary friend of the philosopher, the poet. This would not make Husserl's letter and its testimony, as historically and conceptually significant for understanding the relationship between phenomenology and the literary ("pure aesthetics"), into something false or deceiving, but would rather reveal Husserl's letter as essentially a literary fiction despite itself, thus giving another, angular meaning to Husserl's suggestive statement that "fiction is the vital element of phenomenology" (Husserl 2014, p. 125).

This suspicion of the fictional in Husserl's epistolary testimonial is further motivated by its self-staging as a letter in the opening paragraph of salutation and address. Implicitly signaling deference bordering on the obsequious in acknowledging a renown beyond his own (reach), Husserl begins his letter to Hofmannsthal with a double apology:

> You have told me how difficult life is for you because of a constantly swelling flood of letters. But since you graced me with such an exquisite gift [*Kleine Dramen*], I must thank you nonetheless. You have to bear the consequence of the evil deed, and allow yet another letter to wash over you. I must also deeply apologize for not thanking you right away.

Husserl's apology for his epistolary intrusion into Hofmannsthal life is here multifaceted in its suggestiveness: did Hofmannsthal complain to Husserl about the deluge of letters he receives from admirers as an indirect way to stave off yet another? Or was Hofmannsthal's complaint about the demands made on his time by letters ("washing over him"), and clearly not those of his friends and literary companions, with whom he maintained an extensive exchange, merely part of his depiction to Husserl of his life in Vienna and the necessary costs of his literary reputation? This intrusion into the life of the poet, this demand for time in the implication that a letter received is a letter in need of a response, can be in this instance excused, as Husserl remarks, since he writes to express his gratitude for Hofmannsthal's "exquisite gift." This expression of gratitude, even as it mitigates the impoliteness of having intruded on Hofmannsthal's time with an unsolicited letter, is in turn in need of an apology, since he must now additionally "deeply apologize" for not thanking Hofmannsthal sooner, that is, "right away" after his December visit. Husserl's letter risks impoliteness on two counts: as an unsolicited intrusion in the form of a letter and in its tardiness to express gratitude promptly. Yet, as Husserl continues, this latter social *faux pas* is due to his absorption during the time since their meeting in his work, which has benefitted from the revelation of "long sought-after syntheses of thought." Such illuminating thoughts came to him, "as if falling from heaven," and needed prompt attention, so that they might receive a stable, enduring form. Preoccupied as he was with this revelation of philosophical thinking, Husserl apologizes for not having written sooner.

Hofmannsthal's December visit fortuitously occurred during the closing stages of an extended and arduous period of self-discovery and self-transformation in Husserl's philosophical development. In the wake of his self-styled "breakthrough work" of the *Logische Untersuchungen* (itself an incomplete project) in 1900–1901, Husserl was plunged into a profound personal, intellectual, and even spiritual crisis. In what can justly be called the "second breakthrough" of Husserl's phenomenological thinking, the critical years 1903–1907 witnessed Husserl's prolonged discovery and fashioning of the genuine method of phenomenology, which, although continually requiring further refinement, extension, and calibration, allowed for the transformation of his descriptive psychological approach of the *Logical Investigations* into the mature transcendental approach of his phenomenological thinking. During these fertile years of experimentation in his lecture courses

and (most importantly) his research manuscripts, Husserl acutely *suffered* this process self-transformation and self-discovery, as evident from numerous statements found in his letters and private writings. As he writes on 4 November 1903: "The anguish only grows greater, and I remain in the same old place. No progress has been made" (Husserl 2001, p. 319). Two years later, Husserl writes on 18 February 1905: "I am so firmly convinced that in it [the method of phenomenology] I possess the true method for the critique of knowledge, that I see it as my life-goal to solve by its means the main problems of the critique of knowledge one by one – to that end I will work incessantly, year in and year out" (Husserl 2001, p. 319).

This quest for his phenomenological method, as the Holy Grail of philosophical thinking, reached a critical pitch of intensity and acceleration during the summer and fall of 1906. In manuscripts known as the *Seefelder Blätter* from September 1906, Husserl identifies once again his phenomenological project as the "general task that I must accomplish for myself if I am to call myself a philosopher." This existential devotion to his life-mission came to a head in the closing months of 1906. As Husserl writes in his letter to Hofmannsthal, "long sought-after syntheses of thought" "suddenly" revealed themselves to him just after Hofmannsthal's visit in December, thus bringing to a close a protracted period of intellectual searching reaching back to the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Husserl would, of course, never slacken in his titanic pursuit of stabilizing and deploying his self-defining phenomenological method of research. But it is clear that the academic year 1906–1907 represents an *annus mirabilis* in the evolution of Husserl's thinking. The first fruits of this miraculous year would be presented in a set of five lectures, *The Idea of Phenomenology* (26 April – 2 May 1907), where Husserl introduced the phenomenological methods of suspension and reduction. These lectures served in turn as the methodological introduction for arguably one of Husserl's most fecund and original lecture-courses, *Ding und Raum*.

Husserl's apologetic stance in his letter is revealing of how the signature method of phenomenology is discovered through its own self-performance: Husserl's two-fold apology to Hofmannsthal reflects both a suspension of daily time (the delay in responding; the pressing urgency to give form to his philosophical thoughts) as well as the bracketing of empirical norms in the natural attitude (impoliteness in failing to offer a prompt expression of gratitude). Husserl thus skillfully stages his letter as both an expression of deference (profuse expression of apology) and an insinuation of equality with the poet, given that his distractedness from the world is due to the awakening of another scene of significance within his life of greater profundity and reach. *Something* has been thrown into his life, thus throwing his life inside-out, and this something is nothing less than the revelation of a new method for philosophical thinking: phenomenology.

Even as this philosophical self-absorption prevented Husserl from writing to Hofmannsthal, and hence, distracted him from addressing Hofmannsthal in gratitude for his "exquisite gift," Hofmannsthal was nonetheless spiritually present during this time of revelation, for as Husserl reports, Hofmannsthal's *Kleine Dramen* remained "constantly by [his] side" and provided a "great source of inspiration," even if, as Husserl admits in the same breath, he "was only able to read certain parts here and there." Left unread, and yet physically present by his side, Hofmannsthal's "exquisite gift" has become transformed from an actual gift (the dramas as object to be read) into a spectral gift (as unread object that nonetheless inspires). Inspiration transpires not through reading nor, strictly speaking, through lack of reading (for Husserl claims to have read "here and there"), but in the form of *quasi-reading*, or perusing, edging its way along the seams between reality and fiction, the actual and the spectral. There constantly by his side, as a great source of inspiration, the volume's mute presence speaks. Husserl might in fact be making a playful allusion to a theme in Hofmannsthal's lecture, *Der Dichter und diese Zeit*, where Hofmannsthal speaks of collapsing any opposition or distance between books and life. Books speak to life as in a whisper. As Hofmannsthal remarks: "But they are something different in the hands of each person, and they begin to live only when they come together with a living soul. They do not speak, but rather they respond, which makes them demons" (Hofmannsthal 2011, p. 47). Poetic works whisper to the soul; the *daimonion* of inspiration, or genius, provokes an awakening within a soul for which books have become a vital presence. This marks its magical presence: "The book is there and in it the epitome of wisdom and the epitome of seduction. It lies there and is silent and speaks [. . .] for if books were not an element of life, a highly ambiguous, elusive, dangerous, magical element of life, they would be nothing, and it would not be worth the breath to talk about them" (Hofmannsthal 2011, p. 47).

3 Das Kleine Welttheater

With Hofmannsthal's volume of *Kleine Dramen* constantly at his side and having dipped into its pages here and there, Husserl offers one clue for this original contact between Hofmannsthal's aesthetics and his phenomenology (disregarding the intangibility of their discussion in December, the content of which we know nothing). He notes that he found interesting as a philosopher – and not merely as an art lover – the "portrayal of inner states," or "the elevation of inner states" to the level of "pure aesthetic beauty" in Hofmannsthal's dramatic

works. This "elevation" of inner states to aesthetic beauty is further characterized as an aesthetic objectification. What distinguishes this form of objectification that catches Husserl's *philosophical* interest is precisely not its aesthetic form of beauty, but that such aesthetic objectification requires an attitude towards the world, as embraced in such objectification, that "fundamentally departs from its 'natural' counterpart," namely, the apparently self-evident (or "natural") forms of objectification predicated by the assumption of "existence." These "inner states," as Husserl continues, are thus manifest in pure aesthetic intuition, not as internal states of dramatic characters or internal representations, but as placing "[oneself] with respect to the presented objects and the whole surrounding world." Such a unique form of objectification requires, or better: is enacted "under the strict suspension of all existential attitudes of the intellect," the emotions, and the will. These three fundamental orientations towards the world – knowing, feeling, and acting – are suspended in aesthetic experience in order to become transformed; likewise, the presented objects of aesthetic intuition are not given as "existing," yet nonetheless manifest a summoning of the world. Although Husserl does not here employ the term, within this *aesthetic* suspension of existence in the presentation of aesthetic objects, there resides the fictional.

Husserl's gloss on this aesthetic presentation of "inner states" is not without a certain resonance with Hofmannsthal's own reflections on aesthetic experience. The elevation of "inner states" to purely aesthetic intuition, or presentation, is not conceived as the lyrical expression of internal, or private, experiences of a subject, as that Romantic outpouring of the self to the world. As Gabriel explains in *Das Gespräch über Gedichte:*

> Sind nicht die Gefühle, die Halbgefühle, alle die geheimsten und tiefsten Zustände unseres Inneren in der seltsamsten Weise mit einer Landschaft verflochten, mit einer Jahreszeit, mit einer Beschaffenheit der Luft, mit einem Hauch? (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 497)

Following Hermann Broch's argument in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and His Time*, Hofmannsthal breaks with the cult of interiority and self-expression of *Ich-Lyrik*, as well as with the purely ornamental lyric of inconsequence and aesthetic pleasure (Broch 1984). With Hofmannsthal, poetry, and more broadly, literature in its diverse forms (prose, dialogues, dramatic works, etc.), discovers of the world only what literature can discover. Poetry becomes a form of "knowing," or a transformative medium for the manifestation of the world, albeit *unlike* knowing, feeling, and acting in their "naturalistic" operation. The so-called "subjective" feelings expressed in poetry are not "connected" or "related" to their "objects," nor does the object of aesthetic experience stand alone, awaiting a humanizing emotion or regard. As Gabriel states in *Das Gespräch über Gedichte:*

> Mehr als geknüpft: mit den Wurzeln ihres Lebens festgewachsen daran, dass – schnittest du sie mit dem Messer von diesem Grunde ab, sie in sich zusammen schrumpften und dir zwischen den Händen zu nichts vergingen. Wollen wir uns finden, so dürfen wir nicht in unser Inneres hinabsteigen: draussen sind wir zu finden, draussen. (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 497)

Husserl, for his part, must clearly have discerned in Hofmannsthal's "elevation of inner states" the outlines of what he himself identifies as *intentionality* in its noetic *and* noematic dimensions, and which Husserl would first present (in contrast to the noetic perspective of the earlier *Logische Untersuchungen*) in his 1907 lectures, *The Idea of Phenomenology*. As the argument of *Das Gespräch über Gedichte* makes clear, however, the emotional tenor of a poem is *not* the expression of a subject in the face of or in relation to the world set at a distance [*geknüpft*], but the evocation of the world itself in its ensouled manifestation. The soul does not find itself within itself, but outside, there in the world, as the landscape and seasons of which it speaks and to which it remains, in speaking, beholden.

What distinguishes aesthetic experience is not, as with Kant, an attitude of disinterestedness in which an aesthetic judgment beholds the form of an object without any regard for its existence, and hence, without any possibility of discovering, or "knowing," the world. As Husserl stresses in his appraisal, although the aesthetic attitude towards the world remains disinterested, in having suspended "the natural stance of consciousness," namely, its default existential attitude, it is nonetheless an attitude in which the world *appears* in a new form of objectification; an aesthetic object is not posited as "actual" or "real," and yet nonetheless, in this suspension of any existential positing, an aesthetic object is robustly given in intuition, as a "pure phenomenon," to wit, as a phenomenon discovered anew. Hofmannsthal's notion of inner states thus represents an antithesis to Kant's aesthetic judgment: for if the latter is a type of judgment bereft of any claim of knowledge, the former is a form of intuition in which the world renews its manifest claim on us. Art is not there to please or to confess, but to discover, and to discover what is *other*. As Gabriel remarks in *Das Gespräch über Gedichte*: "Diese Jahreszeiten, diese Landschaften sind nichts als die Träger des *Anderen*" (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 497). Likewise, the soul and its "inner states" are bearers of otherness; both the landscape and the soul are entwined, interwoven, textured: *verflochten* (Hofmannsthal's term). The world becomes discovered through aesthetic experience in a manner that only aesthetic experience can discover, as neither "knowledge," "emotion," nor "action" in any conventional, that is, "natural" sense. This world-disclosing service of art and its soul-disclosing communion makes of aesthetics a new form of seeing, but not enacted in the interest of knowledge or *theoria*. Rather, aesthetic experience, as world-disclosing, is essentially *theatrical*.

What might have caught Husserl's roving (or distracted?) attention while leafing through that exquisite gift next to him is, perhaps, signaled with his terms: "portrayal" and "elevation." As transparently represented with dramatic works, aesthetic experience is a staging of the world; the world becomes manifest within a scene of presentation that stands both inside and outside the world in its natural, default condition of belief. This elevation of the world to an aesthetic phenomenon is its theatrical staging. The suspension of the natural attitude and its existential positing does not remove the world from the scene of appearance, but rather, through an appropriate and transformative, indeed: radical shift in attitude, reveals the world anew in the medium of the fictional, or, better: the theatrical. Such a form of aesthetic objectification is best exemplified in drama: the actor on the stage enacts *otherness* (King Lear, a world, an emotion, etc.) in an intuitively given manner. King Lear is there on the stage, not posited as "existing," but as a "fictional," albeit real presence, whose medium of artifice bears an otherness within itself such that fiction can become, as present in pure intuition, what is other than itself without this presented (portrayed, elevated) otherness succumbing to any possible conflation with any form of "existence."

The volume constantly at Husserl's side, *Kleine Dramen*, contains three short plays: "Das Bergwerk zu Falun," "Das kleine Welttheater," and "Der Kaiser und die Hexe." Of these three plays, "Das kleine Welttheater" offers the most suggestive instance of what Husserl calls "aesthetic objectification." Hofmannsthal himself described his 1897 play as a "dialogue of 7 or 8 figures as in a puppet theatre" (Hofmannsthal 1937, p. 215). Conceived in part as an allegorical drama, the stage for its action is intriguingly static in composition: different characters appear and disappear in turn on a bridge spanning a flowing river. Each speaks about their life and manifests the richness of their inner life, as Hofmannsthal himself interpreted this piece. The play has been alternatively described as a "solipsistic theatre with various lyrical fragments of the self" (Beniston) and as the staging of "changing masks, in which the poet probes and instills possibilities of his own existence" (Alewyn). A mystical sense of sadness or longing has also been identified in this play (Szondi), a dreamlike quality that exudes, or suggests, an atmospheric quality of something elusive and fleeting (see Beniston 1998, pp. 36ff.); not a great theater of the world, as with Calderón's play, but as a small theater of the world in which roles are played and explored without any punishment or reward dispensed by the Author of the play, God, who, in fact, remains entirely absent from the small theater of the world.

Understood as the elevation of the world into the theatrical, in both the figurative and literal meaning of "staging the world," the suspension of the natural attitude enacted through an aesthetic attitude transforms the world into

another form of manifestation, as theater of the world. This theater of the world is not an appearance or illusion standing in contrast to the "existence" of the world, but something like an orthogonal shifting, such that the world theater sits at the side the world, much like the edition of the *Kleine Dramen* at Husserl's side. The suspension of the natural attitude through the aesthetical does not demand or imply its denial or negation, but its transformation into another scene of world-manifestation, placing the world at a distance such that the world might be more intimately, that is, immanently revealed. Thus, even though Husserl speaks of the aesthetic beholding of the world as an "opposite pole" of that stance towards the world in the natural attitude (much as the phenomenological attitude is deemed an opposite pole), this opposition is not direct, but standing astride, to look at the world sideways-on so as paradoxically to see the world more directly. As with the characters in Hofmannsthal's *Das kleine Welttheater* who enter and exit the scene of life ("the bridge" in its allegorical meaning as a bridge spanning birth and death, or becoming, or the flow of time), it is from our perspective, as contemplators of this stage, that we see directly this montage of passing lives which we otherwise, were *we* to sit upon the bridge alongside them on the stage, would not be able to see ourselves.

If both the aesthetic and the phenomenological attitudes are set "opposite" to the natural attitude, what is their relation to each other? Although Husserl himself does not raise this question in his letter (nor elsewhere in his writings), the aesthetic attitude bears a striking resemblance to what Husserl in *Ideen I* identifies as "neutrality-modification." Unlike the suspension of the natural attitude that leads directly to and facilitates the performance of the phenomenological *reduction* – the defining method of phenomenological thinking – the aesthetic attitude beholds the world as theater, as pure phenomenon, in an entirely neutral gaze. This neutrality, or indifference, has not only neutralized the existential positing of objects; it has also neutralized any existential positing of the self, or consciousness. Moreover, as Husserl states in *Ideen I*, the neutrality modification renders the question of reason and unreason, or truth and falsity in the cognitive form of judgment moot, besides the point. There is no truth to art, even as art enacts a truthful manifestation of the world. Having suspended the meaningfulness of the distinction between reason and unreason, an aesthetic contemplation of the world, as performed through a neutrality modification, allows for an upsurge of the world's manifestation without any *theoretical* orientation (or practical). Under the sign of neutrality modification, the world becomes beholden in theater.

In contrast to the aesthetic suspension of the world and its neutralizing transformation of the world into theater, the phenomenological suspension of the natural attitude allows for a different attitude and interest animated by the

theoretical question of knowledge, as the transcendental concern for the possibility of knowledge as such. It is here that the phenomenological reduction takes on its genuine theoretical promise. As Husserl writes in his letter, "the *artist*, who 'observes' the world in order to gain 'knowledge' of nature and man" does so for her own purpose, to wit, not for the purpose of philosophical knowledge, but for the purpose of the creation of "aesthetic forms." The artist knows through her creations: this is the talent of aesthetic discovery. By contrast, the philosopher knows through the finding of solutions or answers to questions that only the attitude of philosophy, in its suspension of the unquestioned acceptance of the world as *known*, brings to the world. Phenomenology is, in this sense, a theoretical space for the orchestration of the *incomprehensibility of the world*. As Husserl writes: "*Everything* becomes questionable, everything incomprehensible, everything enigmatic! The enigma can only be solved if we place ourselves on its own ground and treat *all knowledge* as questionable, and accept no existence as pre-given" (Husserl 2009). The phenomenological suspension of the natural attitude and reduction to what Husserl calls in his writings (but not discussed in his letter to Hofmannsthal, although here implied) the "pure field of experience" is akin to the opening of a *theoretical space of contemplation* [*Fundamentalbetrachtung*]. The world becomes "observed" from the attitude of a philosophical interest, and thus transformed into a phenomenological *Welttheater*. Within this phenomenological *Welttheater*, or what Husserl often calls the "phenomenological residuum," there appears the world under the index of its fundamental questionability.

It is striking that Husserl in his writings consistently employs the metaphors of "landscape," "field," and "ground" [*Boden*] to characterize the "infinite expanse of transcendental experience," or, in other words, the residuum of pure phenomena. In phenomenological experience, the world becomes elevated and portrayed – staged – as a question of transcendental significance, not, in other words, in terms of "what is the world?" but in terms of how the world is at all possible in its manifestation, as possible experience. Within the phenomenological landscape of pure consciousness, Husserl deploys the apparatus of his phenomenological investigations in its theoretical pursuit of knowledge. As Husserl remarks, what distinguishes the aesthetic *Welttheater* of the artist from the phenomenological *Welttheater* of the philosopher – *theater* from *theory* – is that whereas the philosopher attempts to "found the 'sense' of the world-phenomenon and grasp it in concepts" which are ultimately grounded in the principle of all principle, namely, intuition, the artist "appropriates it intuitively, in order to gather, out of its plenitude, materials for the creation of aesthetic forms."

4 Another Letter, the Other Hofmannsthal

In the form of its address as well as with the content of its self-revelation, Husserl's letter to Hofmannsthal bears a suggestive resemblance to another letter. Husserl's discovery of his mature method of phenomenology provided the Archimedean lever for what can justly be termed the Great Instauration of Philosophy in our times at the dawn of the twentieth century. Lest one fails to grasp the audacity of Husserl's ambition, phenomenology seeks nothing less than to renew the very possibility of philosophy, and through this renewal [*Erneuerung*], usher forth a renewal of Humanity and the project of Europe in its quest to establish a historical community dedicated to a life in truth. In 1907, Husserl stood at the threshold of this enterprise, his life-mission, which would progressively expand and diversify over the course of the following decades. In announcing to Hofmannsthal in this letter the discovery of his revolutionary method and, implicitly, the launching of an enterprise of philosophical research, Husserl's letter, whether Husserl intended it or not, can be seen as an inverse mirroring of Hofmannsthal's *Ein Brief*. This is not to claim any real relation or even any awareness on Husserl's part of Hofmannsthal's iconic modernist text. Suspending any claim of actual influence (it is unknown if Husserl knew of Hofmannsthal's text), there lurks a Borgesian exchange between these letters. Whereas in Hofmannsthal's *Ein Brief*, Lord Chandos breaks his silence of many years to tell of his spiritual crisis and explain the abandonment of his literary projects to the established philosopher, Francis Bacon, in Husserl's letter, a provincial philosopher, who claims the mantle of Bacon's unfulfilled call for a philosophical Great Instauration, tells of his spiritual awakening and launching of his literary enterprise, phenomenology, as the fulfillment of the "secret desire of modern philosophy" (as Husserl states in *Ideen I*). In calling for the dismantling of idols of knowledge and superstition, along with an emphasis on a return to the "phenomenon" and the use of experimental method, Bacon's project of creating a "new instrument of science" can arguably be considered as a forerunner, not to Husserlian phenomenology *pe se*, but to a certain *modernist impulse*, of which Husserl himself partakes in the lineage of Kant (who appended an epigraph from Bacon to the second edition of his *Kritik der reinen Vernuft*). In Husserl's letter, the places are both reversed and inverted: the role played by Bacon in *Ein Brief* becomes the letter writer, Husserl, who reverses the crisis of language and belief of Lord Chandos into the awakening of a new language and way of knowing: phenomenology.

Hofmannsthal's *Ein Brief* has widely been read as a critical modernist expression of the crisis of language. In Wolfgang Riedel's formulation, *Ein Brief* testifies to "der Sturz der Dichter aus dem Haus der Sprache" (Riedel 1996, p. 2).

Almost immediately after the publication of *Ein Brief* in October 1902, this reading entered into literary circulation. In a letter to Hofmannsthal written towards the end of October, Fritz Mauthner remarks:

> Ich habe soeben Ihren "Brief" gelesen. Ich habe ihn so gelesen, als wäre er das erste dichterische Echo nach meiner "Kritik der Sprache." In diesem Glauben genoß ich eine ernste Freude, wie sie mir noch keine, noch so starke Lobpreisung meines Buches bereitet. Ich glaubte das Beste zu erleben, was ich geträumt hatte: Wirkung auf die Besten. (Stern 1978)

But, whereas Mauthner's *Sprachkritik* orchestrates a methodologically controlled *critique* of philosophical vocabulary, as the indispensable instrument for establishing a theory of knowledge [*Erkenntnistheorie*], Hofmannsthal's Lord Chandos suffers a *crisis* of language. In his letter, Lord Chandos begins with an apology to Francis Bacon for his extended silence of two years as well as for his abandonment of his literary projects. As described in this letter, Chandos has succumbed to a paralyzing lethargy; the dismantling of his various literary projects corresponds to a progressive slippage of the world from the grasp of language and meaningful expression. This neutralization of the world into stupor (and not merely silence) is keyed to an increasing coefficient of the world's incoherence. As he writes: "I have completely lost the ability to think or speak coherently about anything at all" (Hofmannsthal 2005, p. 121). Beginning with the slippage of abstract words, Lord Chandos plunges into an all-encompassing crisis of language and belief. As he writes: "I felt an inexplicable uneasiness in even pronouncing the words 'spirit,' 'soul,' or 'body.' I found myself profoundly unable to produce an opinion on affairs of court, events in Parliament, what have you." Along with this crisis of language, the substance of the world, as a textured order of things, "came to pieces," with pieces breaking into more pieces, such that nothing, neither thoughts nor things, could be encompassed by one idea, let alone, one word (Hofmannsthal 2005, p. 122).

Lord Chandos's crisis in language would nonetheless seem to be at least successful in its own writing, such that the crisis of language of which it speaks would seem itself to be suspended in the performance of its own speaking. In an illuminating interpretation of Hofmannsthal's *Ein Brief*, Brigitte Rath convincingly argues, however, that Hofmannsthal's text is "not in one language, but oscillates between different language systems," such that *Ein Brief* is a multilingual text that responds to the crisis not of language, but more specifically, of *mono-lingualism* (Rath 2017, pp. 75–106). Moreover, this crisis of (mono)-language is a function of a certain conception of the speaking self, identical to itself in being (speaking) in a self-identical language. As Rath proposes, "the Letter anatomizes the language crisis as the inherent effect of an identitarian conception of language that implies an utterance, governed by the rule of one

language, must come from one individual speaker aiming at one meaning, at truth" (Rath 2017, p. 101). The writing "I" of *Ein Brief* is a self-declared "speaker of tongues" who operates in this letter between and across different languages, including those mute languages of things that speak to him in a plentitude of meaning and presence. By means of this multi-lingualism of *Ein Brief*, the writing of this crisis of (mono)-language does not succumb to any performative self-contradiction, but becomes instead propelled into a liberating (and perhaps even redemptive) multi-lingualism. Is *Ein Brief* originally an English text that has been tacitly translated into German or an original German text that represents an English text? As Rath insightfully notes, Hofmannsthal's text is "both (mostly) 'German' and (mostly) 'English'" (Rath 2017, p. 103). It is neither just German nor just English (in fact: the letter is written in at least three languages), but an "original translation" in that each word can be read *simultaneously* as a German translation of (fictional) English and as German imitating, or fictionalizing, itself into English. On this suggestive reading, the modernist crisis of language, as epitomized in *Ein Brief / A Letter*, bespeaks the project of modernism as intrinsically beholden to the textuality of multi-lingualism and the undecidability of what Rath calls "original translation," as *either* "original" *or* "translation." Modernism is both the orchestration of the crisis of language, understood here as the mono-lingual conceit that *one langue* exhaustively defines *the one langage*, and its productive transformation, or over-coming, into the pluralization of *langues* as the veritable *langage*. To speak is to speak in tongues.

This over-coming of the crisis of (mono)-language through the multi-lingualism of the *langues* of art can be understood in Hofmannsthal's aesthetics as effecting a transformation from the rhetoric of persuasion to the persuasion of things. This rehabilitation and liberation of the persuasiveness of things in their carnal presence from the obscuring overlays of the rhetoric of persuasion is a central theme in Hofmannsthal's writings around the time of *Ein Brief*. In *Die Briefe des Zurückgekehrten*, which exhibits numerous parallels with the crisis in language and belief suffered by Lord Chandos in *Ein Brief*, the author of these letters finds a redemptive experience of entering into a more immediate contact with the world from the implosion of ways of speaking and perceiving – the rhetoric of persuasion – through the chance discovery of Van Gogh's paintings. In a manner that recalls Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne,* the author of these letters comes to experience the persuasiveness of things in the vibrancy of colors exhibited in Van Gogh's paintings of the most ordinary objects. In such paintings, the muteness of things comes to speak, once the rhetoric of persuasion – the (mono)-language that we bring to the *langues* of things – has been neutralized. As he writes: "So soll ich Dir von den Farben reden? Da ist ein

unglaubliches, stärkestes Blau, das kommt immer wieder, ein Grün wie von geschmolzenen Smaragden, ein Gelb bis zum Orange". Objects return to their rightful manifestation in pure aesthetic intuitions: "Wie kann ich es Dir nahebringen, dass hier jedes Wesen – ein *Wesen* jeder Baum, jeder Streif gelben oder grünlichen Feldes, jeder Zaun [. . .] sich mir wie neugeboren aus dem furchtbaren Chaos des Nichtlebens, aus dem Abgrund der Wesenlosigkeit entgegenhob" (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 565).

Contrary to the thought, as proposed by Hang-Sun Kim, that in *Ein Brief*, "through the very act of writing this letter, Chandos demonstrates his inextricable entanglement in the symbolic order, in spite of his desire to reject it," Chandos in fact (as with this counter-part, the Returned One) enacts a transformation of symbolism from the defunct rhetoric of persuasion to the vibrant persuasion of things (Kim 2012, p. 36). With such a trans-valuation of symbolism, Hofmannsthal avoids in one stroke, on the one hand, the danger of reducing nature to a symbolic language projected upon it by a narcissistic self and, on the other hand, the aesthetic impotency of an uncreative mysticism, or quietude, in the presence of the world. Hofmannsthal avoids, in other words, stupidity on the one hand and stupor on the other. As Gabriel explains to Clemens in *Das Gespräch über Gedichte*, "Symbole sind keine Vergleiche." While Clemens still clings to a notion of the poetical symbol as semantic reference ("Sie setzt eine Sache für die andere"), which, if this were the case, would engender the paradox of replacing or displacing the thing for the sign, the persuasiveness of things for the rhetoric of their persuasion, Gabriel instead speaks of poetry as endowed with "einer ganz anderen Zauberkraft" (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 499). In a striking image, Gabriel explains this magical power of the symbol in terms of a sacrificial offering [*das Schlachtopfer*]: the one who offers, or sacrifices, an animal must herself *die* in the death of the animal, and only in this sense, does the animal die for the one who sacrifices it. As Gabriel remarks:

> Er muss, einen Augenblick lang, in dem Tier gestorben sein, nur so konnte das Tier für ihn sterben [. . .] Das Tier starb hinfort den symbolischen Opfertod. Aber alles ruhte darauf, dass auch er in dem Tier gestorben war, einen Augenblick lang.   (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 503)

Here, then, resides "die Wurzel aller Poesie: wie durchsichtig im Grossen: denn was ist klarer, als dass sich mein Fühlen in Hamlet auflöst, solange Hamlet auf der Bühne steht und mich hypnotisiert?" (Hofmannsthal 2009, p. 503).[9] As a

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9 In *Ein Brief*, this transformation of the symbol from semantic reference to magical transubstantiation occurs in the poisoning of the cellar rats – a sacrificial death in which Chandos momentarily loses himself: "suddenly this cellar unrolled inside of me, filled with the death throes of the pack of rats. It was all there."

speaker of *tongues-things*, the poet has no identity, no self. At the beginning of *Das Gespräch über Gedichte*, Hofmannsthal drops a subtle clue of where he himself draws an inspiration for this vision of poetry: Keats. As Keats writes to Richard Woodhouse in a letter from 27 October 1818:

> As to the poetical Character itself (I mean that sort, of which, if I am anything, I am a member; that sort distinguished from the Wordsworthian, or egotistical Sublime; which is a thing per se, and stands alone,) it is not itself – it has no self – It is everything and nothing – It has no character – it enjoys light and shade; it lives in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated – It has as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen [. . .] A poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no Identity – he is continually in for and filling some other body.   (Colvin 2014)

5 Postscriptum

Catching himself in the act, Husserl suddenly interrupts himself in the midst of his presentation of the affinity between aesthetics and phenomenology: "What a hopeless and typical professor! He cannot even open his mouth without giving a lecture." Indeed, he cannot even write a letter without turning his letter into a lecture and, by the same token, turning his letter into a form of self-address, having momentarily slipped back into his absorption in those "long sought-after syntheses of thought" which had originally prevented him from writing to Hofmannsthal, and which, once again, prevents him from speaking *to* Hofmannsthal, as opposed to speaking, as he has been doing, *at* Hofmannsthal. To whom is this lecture actually addressed? Is Hofmannsthal merely the imaginary recipient of this letter addressed to him in name only? Husserl continues with the declaration (or apology?) that "happily enough, part of the philosophical 'essence' of a lecture is the absence of a demand for an answer," thus excusing Hofmannsthal in advance for any need to respond to or acknowledge this letter that is not actually a letter (for which an answer would be required or, at least, politely expected), but in fact a lecture which professes itself without truly addressing another. Husserl closes, however, with how letters must end: with cordial wishes for the New Year and good wishes for "the entire world of people who take such a great interest in your inner development and growth, with its blossoms and flowers."

In a postscript, however, Husserl finally addresses his hesitancy to address Hofmannsthal's work directly. As he notes: "I find myself reluctant to say anything about your work. I think that you would be indifferent to praise and scorn, and wise talk of any kind." It is a curious comment, since, among implications, it

betrays that Husserl's entire letter-lecture, predicated as it was on attesting to Hofmannsthal's work as a "great source of inspiration," was in fact not actually speaking about Hofmannsthal's work, but only his own as a kind of "original translation," neither fully actual nor fictional in its claimed source of inspiration in Hofmannsthal's aesthetics.

If Husserl began his letter with an implicit deference towards Hofmannsthal, he now ends his letter in this postscript with what he states as the "three golden rules for the artist," as the "secret of all true greatness," which, Husserl is quick to note, "are surely familiar and evident to you." According to Husserl, the truly great artist shall have genius; shall follow only his *daimonion*; and shall look upon the theater of the world as an observer, whether "in a purely aesthetic and phenomenological fashion." As Husserl remarks, these golden rules apply for the artist "in the widest sense," to wit, in a sense now wide enough to include *himself* as the virtuous philosopher along with the recognized greatness of the chameleon poet, even as what delights the chameleon poet would only shock the philosopher, if only he were actually looking.

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Claudia Brodsky

"A Now Not *toto caelo* a Not-Now": The "Origin" of Difference in Husserl, from Number to Literature

Abstract: This paper attempts to re-evaluate the bases of the "process" of "differentiation" with which Husserl identified the "aim" of phenomenological "analysis" itself. It traces the arc of Husserl's thinking from the early mathematical writings, *Über den Begriff der Zahl* (1887) and *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (1891), to the posthumously published "Die Frage nach dem Urpsrung der Geometrie" (1939), relating these to Husserl's intervening "steps" toward the development of a comprehensive theory of perception, consciousness, "I" and "other," and, underlying all these, temporality. The thesis of the paper is that Husserl's original understanding of "number" not as an independent means of identification but as a "concept" discernible only within a "collective" "group" of "'plural'" differing identities interrelated only by "the little [useful] word, 'and'" and unsubordinated to any single principle, is consistent with the overlapping theories of "interaction," "exchange," "reflection," "representation," "image-formation," "protention" and "retention" by which he "describes" mental "acts" as well as the methods of "bracketing" and "framing" that make such descriptions possible by marking the presence of externality within "the analyzing activity." The "question" of the transmissibility and reactivation of the self-identical "origin of geometry," resolved ultimately for Husserl in the material form of "virtuality" it shares with all "intellectual products of world culture," i.e., its "transtemporal" "sedimentation" in *Schrift*, relates directly, the paper concludes, to the historically contemporaneous origin of modern literary theory in Georg Lukács's analysis of literature that, taking the "sedimentation" of time itself as its thing-like object, puts the very future of literature, as a mode of representing and thus extending both consciousness and history, at risk, and, finally, to Marcel Proust's turning of the tables on that prediction by rendering time instead the "lost" object of necessarily interminable "research," very much in the mode of the differential, undelimitable investigations with which Husserl founds phenomenology.

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Phenomenological analysis, Husserl states, is a "process," or, as he proceeds to describe it with specific reference to the disciplinary practice of arithmetic, "dieser Prozess" by which "exchanges" [*Verwechslungen*], produced by an "analyzing

activity" [*analysiernde Tätigkeit*] composed of "acts of comparing and differenti-
ating" [*Akte des Vergleichens und Unterscheidens*] (*Hua* XII, pp. 62–63), allow
knowable identities to emerge from merely symbolic designations. Knowable
identities are not positively "available" or "present" to consciousness [*dem
Bewusstsein gegenwärtig*] before this production begins, but become available
"as this process develops" [*während dieser Prozess sich anspinnt*] (*Hua* XII, p. 62).

As we can now recognize in retrospect, the discussion of the production of
acts of differentiation and comparison in the early *Philosophie der Arithmetik* al-
ready contained within it the "origin" of Husserl's later thinking about the "origin
of geometry," the numerically comparable, representationally incomparable mode
from and with which arithmetical mathematics have been alternately differenti-
ated and conjoined historically. That Husserl returned to mathematics by turning
to geometry, the known "other" of arithmetic analysis, at the close of a life of re-
flection that ended in professional banishment from both lecturing and publishing
in Germany, so as to consider what he called its "Ursprung," the recurrent enact-
ment and extension of the bases of geometric analysis in time, is entirely of a
piece with the process of phenomenological analysis itself. The most discriminat-
ing analyst of the cognitive (or, in his terms, "psychological" or "psychical") con-
tent of perception in history, Husserl begins and ends his writing career with the
non-phenomenal contents of mathematics, and it is worth underscoring that,
even before his focus moves, as it need not have done, from the numerical to the
phenomenal, Husserl already called the coming "to consciousness" of even such
abstract objects as mathematical unknowns a "process." As if number and calcu-
lation were not themselves arithmetically all-decisive, Husserl's "philosophy of
arithmetic" describes arithmetic practice as an internal *experience* of externalities
entailing "acts" of "exchange" and "comparison" of unknown objects (*Hua* XII,
pp. 61–63). Using Husserl's later vocabulary, we could say that, for Husserl, doing
arithmetic was already a way of identifying "prägnanten," or, in the technical ter-
minology of *Ideen I*, "'noematischen Sinn.'"[1]

For, even in a numerical context delineated by operations of logic, the
"process" of coming to "consciousness" is neither "naturally" mechanical nor
positively "analytical" in Husserl's understanding of its practice. It is, rather,

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[1] Husserl regularly uses the term "noematischer Sinn" in quotation marks (i.e., "'noema-
tischer Sinn'") within the body but not the subtitles of his text, thereby indicating its own "vir-
tuality" (to use the term by which he will describe the always re-enactable "origin of
geometry") as an intended object. The same does not apply to his nontechnical use of
"prägnanter Sinn" or "prägnanter Begriff" as its approximate, discursive synonym (see *Hua*
III, pp. 313–333). For citational usage of the term within the text, see *Hua* III, pp. 318–323; for
"prägnanten Sinn" and "prägnanten Begriff," see *Hua* III, pp. 38 and 332.

"rigorously" (*Hua* III, p. 229) "investigative," (*Hua* III, pp. 227–228) self-consciously "meditative" (*Hua* III, p. 24), unrelentingly differentiating, "unterscheidend" (*Hua* III, pp. 35–36) which is to say, negating of the insufficiently intellectually differentiated identities of objects and activities posed within it just "one," among a "series" of temporally non-identical "moments" [*Momente*] or "times" [*Einmal* [. . .], *das andere Mal*; *bald* [. . .], *bald*] before (*Hua* III, pp. 227–228). Such a "process" is no more "methodical" than is René Descartes' method-free *Discours de la méthode,* or, for that matter, any theory that is *critical*, which is to say, understands itself as well as its object to be representations first made available by discourse rather than sensory or primordial givens. Like Husserl's philosophy, Descartes' *Discours* is explicitly, self-consciously *discursive*, and thus representational and self-critical above all, for the same reasons that positivist, object-independent methods, whether scholastic or historicist, and critique of any kind are inimical. Critique is criticism of an object, whether material or ideational; its opposite is neither materialism nor idealism, nor the purely speculative conceits of "ontology," but solipsism. Developing upon Descartes' identification of the capacity differentiating specifically human being from the exclusively artificially or naturally constituted existence of automata or animals, with humans' unique ability "to use" and "arrange words together" into "discourse" "so as to make their thoughts understood" [*d'arranger ensemble diverses paroles et d'en composer un discours par lequel ils fassent entendre leur pensées*],[2] on which, as the *Discours* itself demonstrates, the distinctiveness of human "reason" also depends, Husserl explicitly defends the epistemological "process" he describes against the "Einwand des Solipsismus" in the pathbreaking analyses of the perceptual necessity of "intersubjectivity" presented in the fifth of his *Cartesianische Meditationen* (*Hua* I, pp. 121–178).[3] If

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2 "Car c'est une chose bien remarquable qu'il n'y a point d'hommes si hébétés et si stupides, sans en excepter même les insensés, qu'ils ne soient capables d'arranger ensemble diverses paroles, et d'en composer un discours par lequel ils fassent entendre leurs pensées; et qu'au contraire il n'y a point d'autre animal, tant parfait et tant heureusement né qu'il puisse être, qui fasse le semblable. Ce qui n'arrive pas de ce qu'ils ont faute d'organes: car on voit que les pies et les perroquets peuvent proférer des paroles ainsi que nous, et toutefois ne peuvent parler ainsi que nous, c'est-à-dire en témoignant qu'ils pensent ce qu'ils disent; au lieu que les hommes qui étant nés sourds et muets sont privés des organes qui servent aux autres pour parler, autant ou plus que les bêtes, ont coutume d'inventer d'eux-mêmes quelques signes, par lesquels ils se font entendre à ceux qui étant ordinairement avec eux ont loisir d'apprendre leur langue" (AT VI, p. 57). For Descartes' demonstration that the mode of "using words" constitutes the "certain mode" of distinguishing human from other "animals," see Part Five of the *Discours,* directly following his temporally conditioned, syllogistically *non*conforming *cogito* (AT VI, pp. 56–59).
3 See the discussion of the "Leib des Anderen," "Schritt zum Anderen," and "Rätsel" of our perception of the reality of others across the "Abgrund" between us (esp. *Hua* I, pp. 138–150).

"solipsism" had been the charge leveled historically against Husserl's investiga-
tions of "objective" thought processes, much as "innate-ism" was the error incon-
gruously identified with the first radically skeptical thinker, experimental scientist,
and sign-inventing geometer, Descartes, then "metaphysical" blindness to the ma-
terial world has since replaced it, even as Husserl continues to surpasses his stu-
dent Martin Heidegger as the most severely self-critical analyst of our *interrelation*
with the material, which is to say, of the always necessarily incomplete ways we
experience and conceive it. *Noesis* and *noema* – names, Husserl characteristically
discriminates, designating the "aim" [*Ziel*] (*Hua* XII, p. 62) rather than actual
achievement of any "pure" knowing – have adhered, like bad passport photos, to
Husserl's identification with a rearguard metaphysics (the same rearguard to
which Kant has historically been assigned, despite having "dare[d]"[4] to reinvent
philosophy as the "revolution" in "mode of thinking" he called "critique,"[5] only
to be "re"-discovered, time and again, in theoretical advance of us all),[6] their
never perfectible "potential" and "positionality" somehow viewed, from the van-
tage point of something called the "present," to be as completely eclipsed by cur-
rent "knowledges" as candlelight by digitally programmed "Strom" (*Hua* III,
pp. 276, 280, *et passim*). Yet, the mid-career *Ideen I* from which the (bracketed)
concepts "*noema*" *and* "*noesis*" spring, includes the distinctly re-mark-able, *non*-
ideational notions of "Schichten," "Teilen," "Bestimmtheiten," "Seiten," and
"Momenten": the non-exhaustively demarcated individual contents of any "po-
tentially" "full Noema," [*vollen Noema*], let alone "plural" [*mehrfachen*] "Noesen"
(*Hua* III, pp. 227–232; *Hua* XIX, pp. 415; 416; 419; 420; *Hua* XXVIII, p. 32).
Similarly, the sudden replacement of any, always only partially perceptive, pres-
ent act of noesis ("bald auf diese oder jene Teile und Momente desselben"

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4 See WAK III, pp. 26n and 28 especially, for Kant's comparison of the "Umänderung der
Denkart" enacted and required by his *Kritik* with the "daring" (because specifically *not* "visi-
bly" demonstrable) "hypothesis" of Copernicus: "*So verschafften die Zentralgesetze der
Bewegungen des Himmelskörper dem, was *Kopernikus* anfänglich nur als Hypothese annahm,
ausgemachte Gewissheit, und bewiesen zugleich die unsichtbare den Weltbau verbindende
Kraft (der *Newtonische* Anziehung), welche auf immer unentdeckt geblieben wäre, wenn der
erstere es nicht gewagt hätte, auf eine widersinnische, aber doch wahre Art, die beobachteten
Bewegungen nicht in den Gegenständen des Himmels, sondern in ihrem Zuschauer zu suchen.
Ich stelle in dieser Vorrede die in der Kritik vorgetragene, jener Hypothese analogische,
Umänderung der Denkart auch nur als Hypothese auf."
5 See WAK III, pp. 22–23, 26–28
6 Frederic Jameson's introduction of "one of Kant's great discoveries," that of the "impossibil-
ity of thinking about origins" (or antimony of time), into his important re-evaluation of Kant's
guiding predecessor, Rousseau, as "the impossible founder" "not only [. . .] of structuralism"
but "of the dialectic itself" (Jameson,2009, pp. 303–314).

"perzeptiv") by a non-identical "Erinnerungsnoese" of a not-present "to which we turn our glance" as if to something outside ("wenden [. . .] den Blick einem uns 'einfallenden' Erinnerungsobjekt zu"), is no less a part of the heterogeneous, "attentive," and descriptive analytic "process" of phenomenological cognition Husserl relates (*Hua* III, p. 229; *Hua* XIX, p. 420.). The moments of the conscious analysis of perception consist in "acts" not of prioritization or unification but differentiation, and, differentiation, rather than enabled by a unitary "I," first enables the "I," as Husserl observes in the *Logische Untersuchungen* (*Hua* XIX, p. 420) and *Ideen I* (*Hua* III, p. 231), to "'live'" (and thus, reciprocally, to "act") in the process: "Das Ich, so drücken wir uns auch aus, 'lebt' in solchen Akten" (*Hua* III, p. 231).

As Descartes' predication of being on thinking made clear long before Husserl, and Heidegger's questioning of technology will later describe, to "live," in Husserl's view, is not merely to "be" a conductor of "Strom" (or, as we now call it, without the slightest apprehension regarding our "meaning" in doing so, "being wired"). Husserl continues, "Dieses Leben" – the intermittently active life – "bedeutet nicht das blosse Sein von irgenwelchen 'Inhalten' in einem Inhaltsstrome, sondern eine Mannigfaltigkeit von beschreibbaren Weisen" (*Hua* III, p. 231). To that nondescript, because homogeneous "Inhaltsstrom," Husserl opposes his own version of inherently mutable candlelight, a "mehr oder minder hellen Lichtkegel," or "Beleuchtungswechsel" that, in addition, "kann aber auch in den Halbschatten und in das volle Dunkeln rücken" and, in so doing, render "Änderungen am Erscheinenden als solchen" visible (*Hua* III, p. 230). Every "I" that "lives" has a "wandernden [. . .] Blick" (*Hua* III, p. 237), productive of "merfach[e]" perceptions (*Hua* III, p. 269) of "eines konkreten Erlebnisses" (*Hua* III, p. 208, 232, 247, 248 *et passim*), and its own experience produces a second, "von jedem zu jedem Erlebnis [. . .] verbindender Strom" (*Hua* III, p. 317) containing no "content" other than the alternating, perceptive and reflective relationality, "worin ich bin" (*Hua III*, p. 317).[7] It is that partiality and variability of experience that "reduces" the very notion of objectivity to neither a variant of ("solipsistic") subjectivity nor a mirroring of autonomous ("sensuous") reality but, rather, absolutely counter-intuitively, to an infinitely repeatable, conceptual placeholder for

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7 The full statement reads: "Es ist weiter evident, daß zwei solche Ströme, die ein Erlebnis gemein hat, als Teile in die Einheit eines umfassenden Stromes eingehen; ferner, daß von jedem zu jedem Erlebnis ein verbindender Strom führt und enthüllbar ist, schließlich daß ein Strom alles umspannt mein universales Leben, worin ich bin. Alle Beziehungen und Verbindungen, die zu Erlebnissen nach ihrem immanenten Eigenwesen gehören, haben den Charakter Hume'scher 'relation of ideas'. Sie liegen apriori im Erlebnisstrom selbst als dem konkreten in sich selbst durchaus eigenwesentlich geschlossenen Strom" (*Hua* III, p. 317).

itself: "die 'vermeinte Objektivität als solche'" (*Hua* III, p. 232). In stark contrast to idealist and empiricist conceptions of "pure" object-perceptions alike, i.e., perception purified equally of either sensory or intellectual components, Husserl's conception is instead of an "'objectivity'" that can never be properly identified with any object or subject, a purely nominal, because unspecifiably notional objectivity that Husserl (*before* rather than *contra* Derrida) specifically calls "die Objektivität in Anführungszeichen" (*Hua* III, p. 232), which "is" (quite literally) "to say," an "'objectivity'" with no identifiable, positive qualities except for its own graphically indicated transmissibility, as a notion of itself, across an unlimited number of experiential contexts. It is this single "concrete experience," then, of that whose every appearance indeed "*means*," and can only ever "mean," the non-concrete – a notion that is itself a notion *of* itself, or "aim," whose own articulation "between quotation marks" marks its irreducible difference from any particular set of concrete qualities or circumstances – which, according to Husserl, "die phänomenologische Reduktion fordert" (*Hua* III, p. 232). For the same reason that the objectivity at which it aims *is* the "aim" of "objectivity," [*Objektivität*], the aim of achieving a "method" of "phenomenological reduction" must remain as unachievable as that of identifying a singular, neither experientially nor intellectually contingent, which is to say, *non*-linguistic "origin" of language. For, like that of any "origin" of language account, the "'objectivity'" "required" by "phenomenological reduction" reduces to an origin or invention of "quotation marks" the perceptible indication of the specifically notional and unidentifiable, imperceptible, or *non*-phenomenal.

If ever there were a refutation, not of the ideational, but of "the ideal" *of* "idealism," it "lives in the acts" called "quotation marks." Phenomenological "reduction" requires the mental, graphically represented act of "bracketing" (*Hua* III, pp. 225–226; 227, *et passim*), the intellectual *and* diacritical insertion of alterity. Rather than subsume what is not, the reduction indicates it, physically. Rather than replace absence, the reduction memorializes it. In this, the reduction merely represents, in succinct, diacritical form, the undelimitable "Doppelheit," "Verdoppelung," or "Zwiespältigkeit" of the intertwined [*verknüpft*; *ineinander geflochten*; *zweifach*] production of the declared foundation of phenomenology, "Wahrnehmung" as such, with the interactive operations of "Bewusstsein" and "Phantasie" (*Hua* III *in toto*; *Hua* XII, p. 75; *Hua* XXVIII, pp. 20; 23–35; 29; 30; 34; 35, *et passim*), an infinitely varying refraction and "reflection" of the single, absolutely anti-"ideal" "identity," that of iterability "itself" that echoes across every Husserl text regardless of its individual "Inhalt," "Titel," or "Thema" (*Hua* XII, pp. 73n, 74, *Hua* XIX, pp. 322–372; 419; 421; 426; 427; 428; *Hua* I, pp. 126; 130; *Hua* XXVI, pp. 33; 34; 36; 38, *et passim*). To read those texts *as written*, is to recognize the necessarily elusive identity of any method, "mode," *or* "content" of the

cognizable reduction of perception (*Hua* XXVIII, p. 25) in the mental production of the innumerable differentiations and "differences" first identified in "series"[8] that they continually perform: "ein Mal [. . .], das andere Mal;" "einmal dieses und einmal jenes" (*Hua* III, pp. 227–229; *Hua* XXVI, p. 37); "wirkliches Objekt," "intentionales Objekt" (*Hua* III, pp. 223–225, *et passim*); "physisches Bild," "repräsentierendes Bild," and "geisteiges Bild," "Bildobjekt" and "Bildsubjekt" (*Hua*, XXVIII, pp. 19–22); "mehr oder minder Helligkeit" (*Hua* III, p. 230); "gegenwärtig" and "erinnert" or "vergegenwärtigt" [*present* and *remembered* or *made present*] (*Hua* XIX, p. 424, *Hua* XXVIII, pp. 19–50; 30; 31; 32; 33; 34–37; *Hua* III, pp. 228–229; Husserl, 1939, pp. 214–215; 222); "intentionaler Gegenstand," "nominaler Gegenstand," and "nominaler Gesamttakt;" "Akte" and "Teilakte" (*Hua* XXVI, pp. 30–31; *Hua* XIX, pp. 397–425, *et passim*); "Einheit" and "Vielheit" (Husserl 1887, p. 10; 12; 13: "Die Zahl ist eine Vielheit von Einheiten. Statt 'Vielheit' sagt man auch Mehrheit, Inbegriff, Aggregat, Sammlung, Menge etc."), "Identischsetzen" and "Unterscheiden" (*Hua* XII, p. 61, *et passim*); "primär" and "sekundär" (*Hua* III, p. 229; *Hua* XIX/1, p. 129; 271–272; 356; 396; 495; 498); "Wahrnehmungsvorstellung" and "Wahrnehmungsbild," "geistige Bilder" and "Bildvorstellungen," "Phantasievorstellung" und "Phantasiebild" (*Hua* XXVIII, pp. 19–28, *et passim*); the "Inhalt" [*content*] grasped by "Bewusstsein" [*consciousness*] and "das blinde Dasein des Inhalts" (*Hua* XXVIII, p. 24); a "known" historical "Ursprung" and the "Ursprung" of knowledge across history (Husserl 1939, p. 207); and, ultimately, "das reelle," "konkrete," or "wirkliche Objekt," that is the stated cognitive object of phenomenological perception itself, and the phenomenological "reduction" or "'Einklammerung'" "proper" to the reality of the object, or, as Husserl calls it, its "eigentümliche Form der Virtualität" (*Hua* III, pp. 223–227; *Husserl* 1939, p. 212). These and innumerable other "otherings" are not only, in Husserl's words, "essential" ("wesentlich") to the "task" of phenomenological "description" (*Hua* XIX *in toto*) but instantiate the essentially *relational* basis of its analysis of perception to begin with.

Returning to *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, we see this from the start. For what is arithmetic, other than a method for manipulating and identifying numbers? And, as Heidegger's "Identität und Differenz," in "identifying" identity "*with*" difference, asked, over half a century after Husserl had already done so: how can we identify any numerical identity other than on the basis of self-identity defined by the "Identitätssatz"? For every "A," after all, there can only be a "B"

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8 See, for instance, *Hua* III, pp. 223; 228; 232, *et passim*; *Hua* XII, pp. 23–33; *Hua* XIX, pp. 32; 419; 425–426; 452; *Hua* XXVI, p. 34; and *Hua* XXVIII, pp. 22; 32–33; 33; 36.

in an equation, group or series of identities, if the knowledge that "A=A" is self-evident.

Husserl disputes this account. According to him, identity works quite differently. The text of Husserl's argument against the great mathematician and ethical logician, Christoph Sigwart, from which the previously cited term, "Prozess," is taken, states specifically that identities are not initially discretely given as such, but rather first appear *within* what he calls their "kollektive Verbindung" (*Hua* XII, p. 75) to each other, itself established in "der kollegierende Akt" (*Hua* XII, p. 75). Regarding the supposed singularity of identity, Husserl reasons,

> A ist mit sich selbst identisch, d. h. A ist *nicht* B, C, D, . . ., sondern eben A. Eine solche Reflexion zielt dahin, Verwechselungen des A mit dem andern Inhalten vorzubeugen, ein Ziel, welches erreicht wird, indem mir die "Unterschiede" des A *von* den B, C, D, . . . (d.h. die charakteristische Merkmale, die ihm zukommen und den andern nicht) aufsucht und hervorhebt. Aber während dieser Prozess sich anspinnt, sind A, B, C, D, . . . dem Bewusstsein gegenwärtig, und es ist durchaus nicht seine Aufgabe, erst zu trennen, was ursprünglich ein identisches Eins ist, und so durch die Scheidung der Einheiten die Vielheit allererst zu ermöglichen. (*Hua* XII, p. 62)

Following Husserl's non-prioritizing logic, one can say that no A *is* identifiable, as A, without or outside of "B, C, D, . . . and so forth," the "collective" or "unanalyzed whole" [*unanalysierten Ganzen*] (*Hua* XII, 63) that Husserl will later call, in the *Vorlesungen über Bedeutungslehre*, not "die Sache" or "Sachverhalt" but "die Sachlage,"[9] a "term" he states he introduces "now" – "[f]ür diesen Begriff von Sachverhalt gebrauche ich jetzt den Terminus Sachlage" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 29)[10]– i.e., in the "process" of analyzing that making of "meaning" whose own analytic acts of differentiation make *its* meaning, to be used whenever, on the basis of "verschiedene Subjekte und verschiedene Prädikate, wir haben also [. . .] verschiedene Sachverhalte," whose "collective" positioning, or common "Lage," gives them "situational" and "reciprocal" [*wechselseitig*] rather than individual, "factual" [*faktisch*] meaning (*Hua* XXVI, p. 29). A *Sachlage*, then,[11] names not objects – but, rather, *objects specifically in the context of the verbs and prepositions*

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9 Rather than ascribe logical and arithmetic priority to any element of a set or "situation," then, Husserl considers each grouping of identities in its entirety, effecting a kind of proto-Kenneth Burkean framing move upon the very concept of enumeration (cf. Burke 1966).
10 See also *Hua* XXVIII, p. 23: "Die Sachlage ist nun zwar komplizierter im Fall der physischen Imagination als in dem der gewöhnlichen Phantasievorstellung, aber im Wesen finden 'wir' Gemeinsamkeit: Dort ist ein physischer Gegenstand vorausgesetzt, der die Funktion übt, ein 'geistiges Bild' zu wecken, in der Phantasievorstellung im gewöhnlichen Sinn ist das geistige Bild da, ohne an einen solchen physischen Erreger geknüpft zu sein."
11 See, again, Burke 1966, for the language theorist's comparable, referentially upending concept of "entitling."

that interconnect them, which is to say, not substantives *per se* but sentences or sentence fragments. The consistency of Husserl's thinking on this remains striking. The necessity of the perception of a collectivity to perceiving any individual identity, already stated in its "purest" (and thus most heterodox) mathematical form in the early *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, and developed in the opposite objective orientation to abstract number in the discussion of the "Leiblichkeit" "fungierendes Organ" – the individual, yet co-situated parts "through which" [*dadurch*] any "Ich" "[w]ahrnehmend tätig" "die eigene Leiblichkeit" "erfahre" "(mittelst der einen Hand die andere, mittelst einer Hand ein Auge, usw.)" – and of my "own" perceived "Leiblichkeit" or collective "corporeality" as itself "a piece" of yet another collective "objective phenomenon, I as this human" ("ein Stück [. . .] des objektiven Phänomens *Ich als dieser Mensch*"), in the later *Meditationen* (*Hua* I, p. 128), is perhaps most effectively stated in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Analyzing how we "intend" "objects" [*Gegenstände*], he describes not the objects themselves but their "relational" "acting in place of" ("Sie fungieren etwa als Beziehungspunkte") a composite "Sachlage," a situational interrelation or framing together of individual objects that Husserl exemplifies in an "act" of collective "naming" as unforgettable as it is commonplace:[12] "[D]er Akt, der dem Namen, *das Messer auf dem Tische* entspricht, ist offenbar zusammengesetzt" (*Hua* XXIX, p. 415). The object "corresponding" to that intentional "act" is, and must be, "offenbar zusammengesetzt," for, as Husserl goes on to say as if merely stating the obvious, even while flying in the face of both traditional logic and every outcropping of so-called "object" ontology: "[E]rfagt ist nicht das Messer (was ja gar keinen Sinn hatte), sondern des auf dem Tisch Liegen des Messers, es ist gefragt, ob es so sei" (*Hua* XIX, p. 416).

How we perceive one only in perceiving the many together, or, for that matter, "how the "identification" of one's own "body" [*Identifikation des Körpers*] with another "completely separately constituted body" [*ganz getrennt konstituierten Körpers*], such that we can perceive that "body" "not merely as an advertisement for the other" [*nicht bloss als Anzeige für den Anderen*] but as "what is called" [*heißt*] the "Leib des Anderen" – how any of this "can come about at all" [*überhaupt zustandekommen* [*kann*]] remains a mystery, or "Rätsel," Husserl openly admits in the *Meditationen* (*Hua* I, p. 150). Even in arithmetic, he observes, the cognitive "Rätsel" at the heart of a necessarily collective phenomenology is made evident in the paradox of any attempt to combine identificatory with ordinal logic, in that any identity produced in the context or terms of relations logically depends first upon a second, chronological rather than logical moment of

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12 In its prosaicism, this act is, again, Burkean.

"Rücksicht" or "Reflexion" (*Hua* XII, p. 73n1). For the same reason, rather than any logical determination, it is the single, immensely useful, entirely *il*logical "Wörtchen, Und" that has always filled "alle praktische Bedürfnisse" in this regard:

> Vermöge der elementaren Natur der kollektiven Verbindung ist es natürlich, dass sie auch in der gewöhnlichen Sprache ihre Ausprägung haben muss. In dieser Hinsicht genügte das synkategorematische Wörtchen Und allen praktischen Bedürfnissen.
> (*Hua* XII, p. 75; see also *Hua* XII, pp. 184; 334; 335)

Of this perfectly "practical" *because* "in itself meaningless," "little syncategore-matical [*sic*] word," Husserl incisively observes: "An und für sich ist es ohne Bedeutung; aber wo es zwei oder mehrere Namen verbindet, deutet es die kollektive Verbindung der benannten Inhalte an" (*Hua* XII, p. 75). For, given that "die Einheit der Gesamtkollection" (*Hua* XII, p. 75) entails the relatedness, rather than figural subreption *or* eidetic independence of its "named" constituent parts, it is a "unity" as difficult to subsume by the rules of logical definition as collections of social constituents are by political ones. What Heidegger will later call difference within identity, "being with" [*Mitsein*], and Saussure will specifically call not "lan-gage" but "langue" – that is, a system of "values" in which "il n'y a que des différences, *sans termes positifs*," i.e., "ni sons ni idées qui préexisteraient au système linguistique" (Saussure 1971, p. 166) – is an interrelatedness or "kollektive Verbindung" without identifiable qualities for which, Husserl observes, "die Sprache des Volkes [besitzt] keinen selbständigen Namen" (*Hua* XII, p. 75). We in turn can call such a linguistic situation, or "Sachlage," objective in just the phenomenological sense Husserl describes, in that any *means of relating identities* is precisely *not itself an identity*, and cannot be "identified" in any but an iterable, graphic sense. Not a phenomenon but part of the lexicon, "Und" is nothing, nor, logically, could be anything more than a "linguistic fixation of the circumstance of the collective connectedness of contents" with which "our language" "achieves" the "abiding aims" of all acts of "thinking and speaking":

> Die ständige Zwecke des Denkens und Sprechens verlangen eben nur die sprachliche Fixierung des Umstandes, dass gegebene Inhalte in kollektivischer Weise verbunden seien, und dies leistet für unsere Sprache in vollkommen angemessener Weise die Konjunktion Und. (*Hua* XII, p. 75)

From the enduring "Rätsel" of intersubjectivity – the perception by each of others as other than merely phenomenal "bodies" – that is the Cartesian[13] core

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13 See Descartes' original discussion of the problem of the exclusively phenomenal perception of others as "bodies," coverings of bodies, or mock bodies ("des chapeaux & des manteaux

of the *Meditationen* and "das Rätsel aller Rätsel" (*Hua* XXX, p. 341) of the conscious act of object-cognition, so-called by Husserl himself, to the "Rätsel der lebendiger Gegenwart" (Held 2013, p. 94, *et passim*), of "knowledge" (Ryan 1995), "des Ich" (Taguchi 2006, p. 105, *et passim*), "[der] intrinsische Intentionalität des Bewusstseins" (Fasching 2010), "des Ausdrucks" (Melle 2008), and – perhaps most importantly for the history of philosophy before and since Husserl – "des Zeitbewusstseins" (Becker 2003, p. 58, *et passim*), that continue to be attributed to the Husserl corpus, Husserl's interrelated reflections can readily be viewed as a string of problems posed by a kind of riddler-philosopher-king. If this view misconceives philosophy, alongside literature, as a kind of neo-Aristotelian detective story, a "whodunnit" written and resolved so as to be filed in the archives, then the answers to the riddles which it would also be the positive function of philosophy to provide, would have to rest, too, on a series of positive identifications, principally those of the actor, motive, and timeline "behind" the crime. This seems least appropriate in the case of the "process" (rather than story) "described" (rather than narrated) by Husserl, in which not even an empty placeholder for first and final agency, a (Fichtean) "self-positing Ich" or transhistorical, transsubjective (Hegelian) "universal Spirit," is ultimately summoned from the wings to move (speculatively staged) things forward, in the manner of the Euripidean *deus ex machina*. Nor is a "hypothetical" "experiment" in limiting all objective knowledge to non-eidetic "representations" formed in the very act of perception, on the model of "critical" "thinking" first proposed by Kant, ever posited as possible guarantor of both knowledge and ethical action within the framework of a larger architectonic project. Husserl's "process" has no prime mover and offers no overarching structure for intellectual and practical exchange. Every act committed and object perceived within it is instead doubled, and each moment or instance of perception, each "before" and "after," "first" and "second," "seeing" and "imagining," "Bewusstseinsbild" and "Phantasiebild," "Gegenwart" and "Vergegenwärtigtes," involved in the differential production of "protention," "retention" and "memory" that Husserl first hypothesizes, is, as he just as differentially *repeats*, "interwoven" with its nonlogical, yet intellectually and perceptually extant, "multiple" "other." In short: if Husserl's philosophy *did* tell a story, resolvable by singular identification, both *Tat* and *Täter* would be "Und."

Of the "doubleness" of every one with its "collective," and the other otherings, *Zwiespaltungen*, bracketings, and retrospections, in which the *Gesamtwerk* of knowledge, the ever-expanding contents of the process of reduction consist, the

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[. . .] ou des hommes feints qui ne se remuent que par ressorts") in the *Méditations* (AT IX, p. 25).

following concise statement in the *Logische Untersuchungen* may be read to stand as a "whole": "In Beziehung auf den Gegenstand des Aktes verstandenen intentionalen Inhalt ist folgendes zu unterscheiden: der Gegenstand, so wie er intendiert ist, und schlechthin der Gegenstand, welcher intendiert ist." (*Hua* XIX, p. 414) Already, in differentiating the conventional "Was" – what "object" or "collective" group of objects – from the way, or "Wie" by which "it is intended," Husserl makes evident the "multifaceted" [*mehrfältige*] identity of "Gegenständlichkeit" explicitly attributed to phenomenological analysis in his *Phantasie und Bewusstsein (Drittes Hauptstück der Vorlesungen aus dem Wintersemester 1904/05 über "Hauptstücke aus der Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis")*:

> Das ist überhaupt die Eigenheit der phänomenologischen Analyse. Jeder Schritt vorwärts gibt neue Gesichtspunkte, von denen aus das schon Gefundene in neuen Beleuchtungen erscheint, so dass oft genug das als mehrfältig und unterschieden sich darstellt, was ursprünglich als einfältig ungeschieden angenommen werden konnte. (*Hua* XXIII, p. 18)

It is in taking "steps," including "der Schritt zu dem Anderen" (*Hua* I, p. 138), resulting in "new points of view," that the "I" "lives," and this "process" works both ways: the life of the analyzing subject is itself composed of "what" and "how" it knows. Thus the doubleness of the object is doubled by the "Zwiespaltung des Bewusstseins" between physical objects and "Bilder," and "Phantasieobjekte und -bilder" (*Hua* XXVIII, p. 35), none of which can be excluded on the basis of experience, and whose relation is such, "daß man das Wort Gegenständlichkeit in einem außerordentlich weiten Sinn, im denkbar weitesten faßt" (*Hua* XXVI, p. 27).

Rather than conclude, as Husserl does not, by prioritizing any single "side" of this always recognizably subdividing, intentionally multiplying "collective," represented, as it can only be, between the "quotation marks" "required" by the "reduction," perhaps it would be more helpful, if less phenomenologically conventional, to consider the non-phenomenal "content" that each ongoing "moment" of the phenomenological "process" produces. The "process" which differentiates these many modes ("wie") and objects ("welcher") of knowing itself collectively produces "the internal consciousness" of differentiation whose own always partial objectivization we call "time." For what the consciousness of each changing "layer" of experience makes apparent is not a phenomenon but the *Zusammenhang, Sachlage, Inhalt,* and *Titel* of its own collective production, temporality. While Heidegger, unable or unwilling to write the disquisition on time originally planned for *Sein und Zeit*, instead returned again and again, over a half century of subsequent writings, to the notion of a divinely intervening "Ereignis," the absolutely singular, historically eradicating, radically interruptive "event" whose own occurrence must be atemporal, unrelated to *Dasein* of any embodiment or kind, Husserl, before and after writing the

lectures and notes that would comprise the *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* (*1893–1917*), repeatedly describes all perceptual (as he had mathematical) experience as an interweaving of the "present" [*gegenwärtig*] with the "past" or "made present" [*vergegenwärtigt*], an equally nonobjective and nonlogical "act" of "Verbindung" that, like the purely syntactic, "das Wörtchen, Und" routinely constitutes the basis of both "objective" and "phantastical" perception. In one of the most remarkable, because most apparently commonplace moments in the profoundly temporally-minded "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem," and in direct contrast to the otherworldly rhetoric of his student and eventual editor, Heidegger, Husserl observes that such temporally differential experience is only interrupted by equally routine "Berufs- and Schlafpausen" (Husserl 1939, p. 214), the "catnaps," or periods of "downtime" or "shut-eye" incurred by the ongoing existential work of "being on the job."[14]

In the *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, Husserl makes a statement about temporality and "ideality" that Derrida twice quotes in his own early works on Husserl: first in his master's thesis, *Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*, completed in 1953 at the E.N.S. but not published till 1990; and second, in the professionally inaugural commentary on the *Logische Untersuchungen*, *La voix et le phénomène* (1967).[15] While in the former work Derrida uses the quotation to bolster his own critique of Husserl's failure to do precisely what Husserl had no intention of doing (i.e., establish a singular, genetic account of cognition), in the latter, in many ways unsurpassed work, he in essence quotes himself (quoting Husserl) but in so doing reverses the

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14 The reference to those "pauses" or "breaks," at the end of a life now relegated elsewhere, in the context of an essay on transhistorical phenomena whose own publication was rendered posthumous by historical agents and events, only adds another "layer" to Husserl's apparently banal "meaning" here, of the kind the divinely eradicating *Ereignis* would erase.

15 For Derrida's citations of the passage from the *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins*, "dass auch dieses ideale Jetzt nicht etwas *toto coelo* [*sic*] Verschiedenes ist vom Nicht-Jetzt" (given in full below), see Derrida 1990, p. 123; Derrida 1967, p. 73. The irony of this about-face by Derrida, in which one and the same statement by Husserl is described, first, as the "*problem*" of the expressly *non*-self-identical "genesis" (or what Husserl might call *Ursprung*) of phenomenology itself, and, second, as that problem's solution, as well as the basis of not only Derrida's own but Heidegger's critique of conventional metaphysics before him, only serves to underscore Husserl's point here, about the (temporal) untenability of any, even "ideal" identity, the "same" untenability that, like Husserl in the "Ursprung der Geometrie," published less than two decades before the writing of *Le problème de la genèse*, Derrida will proceed to recognize is represented, supplemented, memorialized, and transmitted in the (nonphenomenal) mode of *écriture*, Husserl's *Schrift*.

quotation's persuasive or argumentative function. Inserted at the declarative turning point of "Le signe et le clin d'œil," the pivotal, fifth chapter of *La voix*, whose very title serves as riposte to all avowedly presentist, exclusively aesthesis-based phenomenologies, the repeated quotation serves as a *clin d'oeil* of another kind, namely, a wink of recognition that the argument for the heterogeneity of experience, and, correlatively, the inherently differential structure of any conception of *temporal* experience formed *hic et nunc* on the basis of the "sign" is one the absent Husserl could well have, indeed is presently perceived, to have written "here and now:" a moment of doubling about another moment of doubling that entitles the present essay as well. The full text of the doubly differentially (or, as Husserl might describe it, "einmal" negatively, "einmal" affirmatively) quoted passage from §16 of Husserl's *Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins* reads as follows:

> Im idealen Sinne wäre dann Wahrnehmung (Impression) die Bewußtseinsphase, die das reine Jetzt konstituiert, und Erinnerung jede andere Phase der Kontinuität. Aber das ist eben nur eine ideale Grenze, etwas Abstraktes, das nichts für sich sein kann. Zudem bleibt es dabei, dass auch dieses ideale Jetzt nicht etwas *toto coelo* [*sic*] Unterschiedenes ist vom Nicht-Jetzt, sondern kontinuierlich sich damit vermittelt.   (*Hua* X, p. 40)

The "continuous" "communication" between a "now" not completely "different" from the "not-now" that both negates and defines it is exemplified in the *Zeitbewusstsein* lectures by our experience of the appearance and disappearance of the necessarily transitional "notes" of a "melody," the same modality singled out by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the "Essai sur l'origine des langues," whose long delayed modern publication[16] succeeded Husserl's death by decades. Like the constitutive "acts" of the phenomenological process, the receptive acts constituting the perception of melody "pass into one another": "Die Auffasungen gehen hier kontinuierlich in einander über" (*Hua* X, pp. 3–4). As in Rousseau, so in Husserl the process of "übergehen" entails no ideal synthesis or positive identification in the present.[17] The series of positings and negations composing melody instead

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16 See "Essai sur l'origine des langues" (first published in France, in partial form, in the *Cahiers pour l'analyse*, E.N.R.S., 1966), Chap. III, "Que le premier langage dût être figuré," and Chap. XII, "De la mélodie," esp., for Rousseau's parallel arguments against "physical needs" and "sensations" and for the "morally" or internally produced modes of "succession" and "transposition" as the bases for music and language (Rousseau 1969, pp. 45–47 and 147–153).

17 In his extensive essay critiquing Derrida's mischaracterization of Rousseau's understanding of language as a mode of presence, de Man cites Rousseau's direct comparisons of the essentially temporal functioning of language with the fundamental diachrony of melody, rather than synchronic effects of harmony, thus cementing his and Derrida's own friendship, appropriately enough, by way of a *différend* concerning the differential nature of language described

recall what Husserl had already called, in his 1887 Habilitationsschrift *Der Begriff der Zahl*, the "Vielheit" and "kollektive Verbindung," not only of "mehrfache" "Mengen," but of the "Tonqualitäten einer 'Tonbewegung'," "Zusammenhänge der Punkte einer Linie," and "Momente einer Zeitdauer," all of which he (like Kant) understood to be impossible to derive from a purely positive conception of "unities" [*Einheiten*] (Husserl 1887, p. 14).

We can only assume that, unlike a still, mimetic rendering of worn peasant shoes, whose very permanence can provide the occasion for imagined narrative accounts of the "life" of the objects it represents, the diachrony of different, continuously changing tones offered no emblem of *Dasein* to Heidegger, in part, because, by definition, a series of sensory appearances and disappearances is not a *Ding.* For the same reason, the melodic interweaving of present and absent sensation by the mind is perfectly exemplary of the necessarily imperfect processes of phenomenological reflection and reduction. For what "is" melody but a series of interrelated tonal replacements produced so as to be "reduced," i.e., reproduced between quotation marks? Before the series of successors that replaced him, Husserl recognized the internal and external interrelation of presence and absence shaping any "now," no less than the diachrony of melody or any linear extension, to be the irreducibly double element of all ongoing phenomenological experience, temporality, and that temporality, rather than existing in independence of,[18] depended upon perception itself. Husserl calls our "continuous" enactment of that interrelation both the "characteristic act" of "perception" and "origin" in "successivity" of "consciousness": "Wahrnehmung ist hier also ein Aktcharakter, der eine Kontinuität von Aktcharakteren zusammenschliesst [. . .]. Das Sukzessionsbewusstsein ist ein originär gebendes Bewusstsein, es ist 'Wahrnehmung' von diesem Nacheinander" (*Hua* X, p. 40).

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in an *Essai* whose own publication was delayed. Neither in that important essay nor elsewhere, to my knowledge, does de Man acknowledge, however, the use of nearly identical language to describe temporality itself by Husserl, the very philosopher whose – by turns critically, by turns affirmatively cited – textual language provided the springboard for Derrida's then fledgling career. See de Man 1971, pp. 102–141.

18 The ontological notion of such independence is indicated in Heidegger's encompassing concept of *Sein*; its perceptual manifestations, in his individual *Seiende(n)*. The absent discussion of *Zeit* from *Sein und Zeit* (1927), published one year before Heidegger's compilation of his teacher's 1904–1910 lectures on time, indicates the difficulty, already declared openly by Kant, in describing time in any way other than our comparative, perceptual and internal construction of it, the temporality that Kant already calls, "Dasein in der Zeit" (WAK III, pp. 38–9). See also the expressly temporal conditions (successivity, duration, simultaneity) described by Kant to enable "Verbindungen von Wahrnehmungen" in the first place in his three "Analogien der Erfahrung" (WAK III, pp. 216–248).

Shadowing perception, then, are retention and protention, the two overlapping modes of non-presence, in which fleeting "Empfindung [. . .] wird nun selbst schöpferisch" (*Hua* X, p. 7) in that its absence produces what its presence could not, a "Phantasievorstellung" that proves "productive" in turn. Just as "[j]edes aktuelle Jetzt des Bewusstseins [. . .] wandelt sich in Retention von Retention" (*Hua* X, p. 29), each act of retention occurs "in" a kind of future perfect. The dynamic works as follows: in remembering, I look forward to looking back on myself as someone who will have remembered, and thus, in retention, produce protention, the future memory of an (absent) present.

In "character" with the "successivity" of "acts" of "consciousness" that Husserl describes, his account of the constitutive temporality of perceptual experience "produces" in turn two interrelated questions, both of which contribute to the larger, interrelated philosophical and literary question, of what constitutes representation.[19] These are, first, how can *non*differential, fully perfected forms, those *not* definable as "representations," be enacted, conceived and reconceived over time; and second, what happens to the temporal enactment of consciousness when the "primary" object of perception is the "representation" of temporality itself? The second question, to adapt Walter Benjamin's phrase (in the opening sentence of the *Trauerspiel* book),[20] "is the question of literature," and, in particular, the relation of literature to the relational content of phenomenology described in every instance or object of analysis explored by Husserl with one exception.

That singular, expressly formal exception, and precise inverse of the problem of literary form to which this essay turns in closing, inheres in the uniquely synthetic forms of geometry. As the subject of one of Husserl's final investigations, geometry presents the inverse mathematical mode to Husserl's first subjects, arithmetic and number. His concerns in "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem" are neither the mental operations of "collection," situation, or context-framing [*Sachlage*] indicated, most simply, by "the little word, 'and'," nor those of "differentiation" and "comparison" they enable. Nor, as the opening words of the essay make plain, is its concern a "philological-historical" one either:

> Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie, wie wir sie hier stellen wollen, ist nicht die äusserliche, philologisch-historische Frage. Sie ist nicht eine Erkundung der faktisch

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19 The opening sentence of Benjamin's analysis of the "original" temporal bases of allegorical drama makes the meeting of philosophy, literature, and temporality within the "question of representation" clear: "Es ist dem philosophischen Schrifttum eigen, mit jeder Wendung von neuem vor der Frage der Darstellung zu stehen" (Benjamin 1978, 9).
20 See preceding note.

ersten Geometer, welche wirklich rein geometrische Sätze, Beweise und Theorien aus-
sprachen; sie ist keine Nachforschung nach den bestimmten Sätzen, die sie entdeckten.

(Husserl 1939, p. 207)

Instead of a "factual" investigation of the "first geometers" or the "principles,
proofs and theories they articulated," the "question" informing Husserl's
stated "interest" in the essay is itself, he further reflects, a "*Rückfrage*," one
concerning not the past as such, but its inherent, "living" futurity – in the
case of geometry, its "origin": "Unser Interesse gilt vielmehr der *Rückfrage*
nach dem ursprünglichsten Sinn, in welchem die Geometrie als Tradition der
Jahrtausende da war und – in lebendiger Fortarbeit begriffen – noch für uns
da ist" (Husserl 1939, p. 207).

In asking how the "tradition" of geometry can continue, Husserl questions
how objects most unlike melody and number can be enacted in the mind *un-
changed*, at different times and in different contexts, repeatedly. How does the
"Sinn" of the content of already "abstracted," "titular" (*Hua* I, pp.126; 127; and 13
respectively) forms – perhaps the only perceptible forms that originate *as* reduc-
tions, i.e., objects whose "names" (equilateral triangle, acute angle, etc.) literally
require no quotation marks, in that every perceptible manifestation of them
"measures up," i.e., fits the cognitive bill – how can the descriptions of such
mathematically circumscribed forms appear to us as anything but dead letters,
given that their original constitution, as interchangeably discursively and graphi-
cally producible forms, is not only past, but long commemorated as the most
"traditional" foundation of the cognitive tradition itself (Husserl 1939, 207)?
Indeed, how does the act of *traditio*, of "transmitting possession of objects," ever
transmit anything but dead letters, in that the objects that tradition conveys orig-
inate by definition in a "leistender Subjektivität" (Husserl 1939, p. 208) no longer
"living," i.e., no longer capable of the "Akten" in which "das Ich 'lebt.'" How, in
other words, does "die aktive Erzeugung des Sinnes" change from "ein [. . .]
vorübergehendes Geschehnis" to a *non*-temporal, non-subjectively delimited, yet
activate-able one (Husserl 1939, p. 209)? For, as Husserl describes, regardless of
the particular language of its "translation" (Husserl 1939, p. 210),

[d]ie Geometrie hat von ihrer Urstiftung her ein allgemeines, auf individuelle Subjekte ir-
relatives und eigenartig *überzeitliches Dasein*, das prinzipiell für alle Menschen, zunächst
für wirkliche und mögliche Mathematiker aller Völker und aller Zeitalter zugänglich ist.
Alle von Irgendjemand aufgrund der vorgegebenen geometrischen Getsalten neu er-
zeugten Gestalten nehmen alsbald dieselbe Objektivität an. Es ist, wie wir bemerken, eine
'*ideale Objektivität*.'

(Husserl 1939, p. 209)

The surprising mention of "'ideal objectivity'," even while between brackets, at
once brings to mind and alters the underlying, "productively" elusive "aim" and

accounting for the cognitively indispensable "Möglichkeit des sprachlichen Ausdrucks" (Husserl 1939, p. 210) – freely acknowledged by Husserl as the enduring empirical "Problem des Ursprungs der Sprache" from "intersubjektiven Gebilde" "in der realen Welt" – is one he also demurs to "go into further here" ("wollen wir hier nicht eingehen" [Husserl 1939, p. 210]). But Husserl does venture to draw direct parallels between the representational operations of language per se; the acts of entitling, citation, and reduction articulated in *Ideen* I; the frames of *Vielheit*, *kollektive Einigung*, and (citing William Stanley Jevons) "'plurality'" articulated in the studies of arithmetic and number (see *Hua* XII, pp. 62–63; Husserl 1887, pp. 16; 39–40; 63–64, *et passim*); and, most remarkably, the basis of the uniquely "ideal objectivity" of geometry: "Hier setzen wir die Sprache voraus und die ihre Möglichkeit begründende Einfühlungsgemeinschaft der Menschen untereinander und auch deren Korrelat: die gemeinsame Welt von Objekten" (Husserl 1939, p. 210).

In the *Cartesianische Meditationen* such an "Einfühlungsgemeinschaft der Menschen untereinander" demonstrates "ihre Möglichkeit" in the act of the "Schritt zu dem Anderen" "in dem" "der Andere," indeed, "zu dem Sinn Mensch gekommen ist" (*Hua* I, pp. 33–36). In "Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-historisches Problem" that "Schritt zu dem Anderen" is not only embodied in language but in a specific mode of language, one that uniquely enables both "the community of empathy among human beings" along with its "correlate," a "common object world," at any given moment *and* the "Wiedererinnerung" of "intersubjektive" cognitive experience and feeling in time, and thus, in so doing, constitutes time "itself" as a "continuous" experiential and phenomenological circumstance for us. Along with sensations and perceptions, the life of "die lebendige Evidenz" [*living evidence*] that occasion them, and even that of our "retention" of all these, every utterance, like Husserl's experiential "phenomenon," and every moment of his "differentiating" phenomenological "process," "disappears" [*verschwindet*]: every subject's "act" of speech "geht vorüber" (Husserl 1939, p. 211). Like Saussure's necessary distinction of "sign" from "sound," "*langue*" from "*parole*," and "general linguistics" from "phonology," in "*grounding*" for the first time in history an analysis not of the local history or historical usage of languages, but of how language itself at any time and in any place operates,[21] the "side" or "doubling" of language that allows both "ideal objectivities" and "intersubjective" "communities" to be cognized and

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21 In Husserl's terms, Saussure's "langue" describes the "objectivity" of language "aller Völker und aller Zeitalter," one whose "'Lokalisation' und 'Temporalisation' [. . .] nicht-lokal und nicht-temporal ist" (Husserl 1939, pp. 209–210).

recognized, constituted and reconstituted in the "real world" by any historical subject within time, is, according to Husserl in his writing on the "tradition" enabling geometry, science and literature, its own "*ständige Objektiviertheit*" or "Sedimentierung," "Schrift" (Husserl 1939, p. 212).[22]

"Schrift" is the singularly "constant state of objectivization" ultimately named and recognized in Husserl's final essay on any re-enactable "origin," and *Schrift*, it can "now" be recognized in retrospect, was always part and parcel of the "reduction" – the aspect of language that allows language to put any part of itself into relief, between "Anführungszeichen" or "Klammern." Writing, a recognizable form of phenomenality without phenomenon – the non-intentional object and non-image and thus only "eigentümlichen Form der *Virtualität*" (Husserl 1939, p. 212) – is to the "world" of "cultural objects," including philosophy, what forms and theorems are to the "tradition" of geometry, except that its shapes – transmissions of a rote code – construct nothing that any theorem, or dreamed-of mathesis of language, can generate. *Schrift*, in Husserl's view, is an even more complex "eigenartig *überzeitliches* Dasein" than those whose repeated origination, "tradition," or re-enactment, it ensures.

As "plural" in their own "objects" or "themes" of attention as the ways in which they describe productive perception, Husserl's *Schriften* are both the "sedimentation" of the "passing" production of perceptions in time and the material occasion for the internal production of temporality that they themselves describe, enacting, so to speak, what they say. Like "geometry" and "literature," "writing" is both transmissible and an "art" or concrete mode of transmission, and in this respect, it can be called the "objective" content of time. Contemporaneous to Husserl's lectures on the construction of temporality by consciousness, modern literary theory constitutes its own origin in the analysis of literature that takes the representational construction of temporal experience as its object. Taking its "own" origin in the dialectical history of "sensory embodying" laid out in Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik* that itself originates, according to Hegel, in the (quintessentially Husserlian) "ambiguity" of the "double" existence of the "symbol" as "arbitrary sign,"[23] Lukács's *Theorie des Romans* (written in 1914–1915 and published in 1917) recognized the capability of "geistigen Erzeugnissen der Kulturwelt" to undergo and transmit the

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22 While Saussure expressed displeasure with the sentence-length semantic ambiguities produced by the phonetic doublings plaguing French orthography, he explicitly identified "writing" as the only possible "object" of the study of "langue" (see Saussure 1995, pp. 32–33; 44–54).

23 Cf. Hegel's complete discussion of the interwoven semiotic and aesthetic existence and resulting enduring "ambiguity" [*Zweideutigkeit*] of the "symbol" (TW XIII, pp. 394ff.).

production of perceptible, because formally and thus externally re-markable, intellectual change and, in so doing, both to reflect and effect history. For Lukács, the consciously constructed form of the novel actively represents the "objectivity" of time *and* the literary origin of temporality *as* "object," such that, independent of any individual action and referent defined against it, the "content" of the "continuous successivity" of time can be intersubjectively internalized in the "common" act of reading. For Lukács, the diachronic development both of the novel as a representational genre and of the action represented within the novel are dialectical through and through, a "Prozess" (Lukács 2009, p. 62) that, beginning with Miguel de Cervantes' disenchantment of chivalric romance in a detailed "*historia*" of its "idealist" "re"-enactment in the real world, represents subjectivity and, with it, the medium of literature as such, as necessarily lacking both "immanence" and the means of its own "transcendence" (Lukács 2009, pp. 63; 72–73).

Lukács argues that in its capacity to perceive clearly, to see a windmill for a windmill rather than a fictive object of one's own imaginings, the reflective consciousness represented in the novel also represents its own impasse (see Lukács 2009, pp. 62; 70; 78). Whereas the interactive doublings of consciousness and perception constitute "passing" moments of an ongoing "process" of cognitive perception in Husserl, the double bind of cognizant "Innerlichkeit" with which Lukács identifies the form of the novel, understood as one in a series of "answers" to "questions" themselves only retroactively recognized as such by consciousness, coheres in the single "innere Form" that a consciousness capable of self-reflection achieves the "freedom" to impose upon itself (see Lukács 2009, pp. 22–26; 62–69). That "internal form" is not the objective form of knowledge "intended" by phenomenology, but the specifically literary form of objective knowledge, "die Ironie," defined by Lukács as "die [. . .] Freiheit" "der zu Ende gegangene Subjektivität," not to surpass, nor even alter, but to recognize its own limits (Lukács 2009, pp. 62; 69; 72, *et passim*).

True to the binding form of irony it perceives in its object, and the larger, Hegelian story of the incommensurable relation between internal and external experience, that its account of the origin and development of the novel tells, Lukács's self-reflective theory proceeds past that story to recognize its own blindspot: the appearance in fiction of a kind of "content" that spells the end of the novel by vitiating any possible distinction between subject and object, inside and outside, and with them, the possibility of experience and change. Lukács calls that content "die wirkliche Zeit": "der Ablauf der Zeit als Dauer" that is the cancelation "des Lebens" (Lukács 2009, pp. 93; 95). Lukács accurately observes, "Jede Form muss irgendwo positiv sein, um als Form Substanz zu bekommen" (Lukács, 2009, p. 92); yet, the novel, in making time itself substantial, negates the positivity of form. The "internal" constitution of time by

way of acts of perception that Husserl describes, is instead inverted in the representational world of the novel into an "internal act" of "struggle against" no external limit but "time" – an independent, fully non-ideational "power" unknown to the non-representational ("organic") "immanence of meaning" in "epic":

> In der Epopöe ist die Lebensimmanenz des Sinnes so stark, dass die Zeit von ihr aufgehoben wird: das Leben zieht als Leben in die Ewigkeit ein, die Organik hat aus der Zeit nur das Blühen mitgenommen und alles Verwelken und Sterben vergessen und hinter sich gelassen. Im Roman trennen sich Sinn und Leben und damit das Wesenhafte und Zeitliche; man kann fast sagen: die ganze innere Handlung des Romans ist nichts als ein Kampf gegen die Macht der Zeit. (Lukács 2009, pp. 94–95)

The *Sedimentierung* of *Schrift* that ensures the ongoing productivity of cultural products across time threatens itself to become *sedimentiert*, reified, indeed *erstarrt* and unavailable to temporal reactivation, when, in phenomenological terms, it makes time itself its "object," "aim," or "content": time represented as thing or non-time, quotation marks removed, and thus with nothing to mark the difference between the transitory and the permanent, and so no occasion for the experiential enactment of temporality in sight. What Lukács understood, correctly, as a threat to the possibility of phenomenological experience, as active basis of both perception and self-reflection, he also misunderstood as the usurpation of the future of the novel by a fully "alien" [*fremde*] externality (thus his famous ambivalence toward the "modernist," Franz Kafka [see Lukács 1958]), when the novel's aim is to objectify time. The name of that threat, in *Theorie des Romans,* is Gustave Flaubert, and long after the scandal of his obscenity trial regarding *Madame Bovary* was replaced by Flaubert's canonization as "realist," and long before his subsequent canonization as demystifier of bourgeois historicism, "quixotic" "idealism," and culture, Lukács perceived that what Flaubert had effectively represented in *Schrift* was the implacability of unilateral, uninternalized time as such:

> Die grosse Diskrepanz zwischen Idee und Wirklichkeit ist die Zeit: der Ablauf der Zeit als Dauer. Das tiefste und erniedrigende Sich-nicht-bewähren-Können der Subjektivität besteht weniger in dem vergeblichen Kampfe gegen ideenlose Gebildete und deren menschliche Vertreter, als darin, dass sie den träg-stetigen Ablauf nicht standhalten kann, dass sie von mühsam errungenen Gipfeln langsam aber unaufhaltsam herabgleiten muss, dass diese unfassbar, unsichtbar-bewegliche Wesen ihr allen Besitz allmählich entwindet und für – unbemerkte – fremde Inhalt aufzwingt [. . .]. Ein solches Zeiterlebnis liegt Flauberts *Éducation sentimentale* zugrunde [. . .]. [E]s wird hier gar kein Versuch gemacht, das Zerfallen der äusseren Wirklichkeit in heterogene, morsche und fragmentarische Teile durch irgendeinen Prozess der Vereinheitlichung zu überwinden, noch die fehlende Verbindung und sinnliche Valenz durch lyrische Stimmungsmalerei zu ersetzen: hart, abgebrochen und isoliert stehen die einzelnen Bruchstücke der Wirklichkeit nebeneinander. (Lukács 2009, pp. 93–96)

Flaubert succeeds in objectivizing time, according to Lukàcs, by representing it in "Bruchstücken" without "Verbindung": narratively *dis*jointed pieces that remain disconnected from each other and "alien" to narration. The effect of his doing so, however – as the "ideen[-*vollen*]" "Gebilde" of Lukács's own description here unforgettably convey – is to render that "fremde Inhalt" not "unbemerkt" but indeed re-markable, memorable, as "hart" and hard to overlook as any fragments or ruins whose visible, postclassical embodiment of the implacability of time provided the "resistant" impetus for reflection for such writers before and after Flaubert as Diderot, Keats, Dickinson, P.B. Shelley, Hölderlin, Baudelaire, Benjamin, Broch, and Sebald. In this critically productive way, rather than a eulogy for the novel form, Lukács's *Theorie des Romans* provides the single most prescient, uncannily accurate anticipation of the greatest representational novel still to be written, the work in which, perhaps more than any other, to use Husserl's terms, the "'I'" made of its activation and "transmission" "lives." The subject or entitling *Sachlage* of that novel is the self-reflective "re-searching" of "time": time not permanently objectified, an omnipresent thing, but "lost." The fact that Proust's *Schrift* – both its permanent iterability, *as* writing, and fragile phenomenal existence in continuously amended manuscripts supplemented by *paperolles* curtailed only by their authors' death – never achieves the "origin" of authorship in the recuperation of *temps perdu* at which it professes to aim, so that to "finish" reading the *Recherche* is always to be brought back to its "beginning," indicates that Flaubert's objectivization of time, powerfully recognized by Lukács as an "alien" externality whose "heterogeneous" pieces ultimately end up just as externally "united," "smoothed" into a "homogeneous" mass by the passage of "time" itself ("Es ist die Zeit, [dessen] vereinigendes Prinzip der Homogeneität, das alle heterogenen Stücke abschleift" [Lukács 2009, p. 97]), has indeed remained "alien" to, and thus become the resistant subject of representational writing itself.[24]

Proust's novel represents time as the basis of perceptions "lost": as neither external nor internal to acts of perception but the necessary origin and medium of their "research." If the "aim" of Husserl's phenomenological "process" is precisely not to reify the "alien" contents of time, but, like Proust, to understand the

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24 See Proust's own appraisal of Flaubert's "entirely new use" of verbal tenses, pronouns, and prepositions as tantamount to the "renova[tion]" of "our vision of things" effected by "Kant," in the deservedly celebrated, "A propos du 'style' de Flaubert" (Proust 1920). Central to the "style of Flaubert" Proust describes is its non-subordination of time to action, in particular, the experientially disorienting substitution of sequential narrative tenses by what Proust repeatedly calls Flaubert's "éternel imparfait."

"alien" as the origin of what, within experience, we missed the "first" time around, and so actively, in ongoing reference to the external, work internally to produce, like Proust, too, Husserl objectifies, externalizes, that aim itself, the *Schritt* toward time's implacable otherness in *Schrift*.

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Rochelle Tobias

Gregor Samsa and the Problem of Intersubjectivity

Abstract: This paper examines Husserl's theory of other minds through an unusual lens. It argues that Kafka's short story "Die Verwandlung" poses a unique challenge to Husserl's account of the apprehension of other minds by highlighting the experience of a being (Gregor Samsa) that is like-minded but not like-bodied and hence cannot be recognized as a subject. It might be tempting to dismiss Kafka's story as a mere play of the imagination, but such a judgment ignores the stakes of a work in which the protagonist is shown to constitute the world as an egological sphere while, at the same time, being excluded from the community of his fellow beings or subjects by virtue of his appearance. Gregor Samsa's exclusion from the shared world of his family calls into question the normative basis of Husserl's claims that it is through the motor coordination of another body that I discern a mind at work; I "appresent" the consciousness of another that is never given directly to me but accompanies my perceptions. Kafka's implicit critique of Husserl's notion of analogical apprehension is all the more trenchant as his tale otherwise affirms the intentional structure of the universe so central to Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. How do we respond to the animal in our midst? How do we acknowledge another that may be like-minded but not liked-bodied and in whom we cannot recognize ourselves? To what degree do we – or can we – inhabit a shared sphere when the subjectivity of another remains all but inaccessible to me? For Kafka, the answer to these questions lies in fiction, which is unique among genres in its capacity to represent other minds in the third person.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In the second volume of *Ideen*, which Husserl wrote in 1912 but did not publish in his lifetime, he refers briefly to the playing of the violin to illustrate the ways in which the world we construct through our intentionality motivates us in turn:

> Höre ich den Ton einer Geige, so ist die Gefälligkeit, die Schönheit originär gegeben, wenn der Ton mein Gemüt ursprünglich lebendig bewegt, und die Schönheit als solche ist eben im Medium dieses Gefallens ursprünglich gegeben, desgleichen der mittelbare

Wert der Geige als solchen Ton erzeugender, sofern wir sie selbst im Anstreichen sehen und anschaulich das Kausalverhältnis [. . .] erfassen.[1]   (*Hua* IV, p. 186–187)

It may be hard to hear the strains of the violin in Husserl's less than musical prose, but a few points are worth noting as they bear on Kafka's "Die Verwandlung," whose protagonist is likewise moved by the sound of a violin.[2] As soon as Gregor Samsa hears his sister play, he is moved to venture forth from the room that served as his simultaneous prison and shelter in a final attempt to rejoin his family. The scene marks a crucial episode in the tale to the extent that Gregor is forever excluded from his family following this episode and dies soon thereafter. What both the passage from Husserl and the corresponding scene in "Die Verwandlung" tell us is that the surrounding world should not be confused with the physical world. It is not limited to empirical objects. Something as evanescent as the beauty of a musical composition can be said to make up "my" surroundings because it stimulates "me" and directs "my" thoughts and actions. This means – and this is the second point – that cultural phenomena are "given originarily" [*originär gegeben*] in consciousness. They do not present themselves as anything other than themselves, and in this they differ from what we traditionally think of as a phenomenon, which is either the effect of a foreign cause or the outward manifestation of something hidden.

Throughout his career Husserl sought to distinguish his concept of a phenomenon from two related but opposing accounts. The first was the Kantian notion of experience, which he insisted was based in an inaccessible but necessary reality (the so-called *Ding-an-sich*) that precedes all consciousness. He emphasized that the idea of a thing independent of consciousness is a contradiction in terms, since what defines things in the first place is that they present themselves

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1 The work we call *Ideen II* is drawn from several sources and was compiled by multiple editors and scholars over a forty-year period. Husserl conceived the volume and wrote significant portions of it in 1912 but then set the text aside for other projects. Edith Stein produced two longhand versions of the work based on Husserl's shorthand text as well his notes on related themes in 1916 and 1918, which Husserl edited, annotated, and revised. Between 1924 and 1925 Ludwig Landgrebe produced a typoscript of *Ideen II* and *III* based on Stein's 1918 version, which Husserl also proceeded to edit and revise over a four-year period. Marly Biemel edited and compiled the text of *Ideen II* printed in the *Husserliana* based largely on Stein's 1918 longhand version and Landgrebe's 1924/25 typoscript. See her Editorial Introduction in *Hua* IV, pp. viii–xx.
2 Kafka wrote "Die Verwandlung" between November and December 1912 but did not publish it until 1915 in the journal *Die weißen Blätter*. Kurt Wolff published the story in book form in 1915 and then again in 1916. See KKA VI/2, pp. 177–191. To the extent the story was drafted in 1912, it overlaps with Husserl's work on the second volume of *Ideen*, though Kafka could not have had any knowledge of the latter text since it was not published until 1952.

to consciousness.[3] From a phenomenological standpoint, reality is what appears to us. To suggest otherwise is to engage in fiction, not "philosophy as a rigorous science," to quote the title of Husserl's 1911 essay. The second concept he took issue with was what he characterized as the theoretical or scientific approach to phenomena, which reduces phenomena to signs of an intelligible order that is never empirically manifest, even if it represents the truth of all phenomena.[4] As an example, he points to the ideal world of mathematics, which is not embodied anywhere, but which provides the measure for all empirical objects. According to him, it was the founder of modern science, Galileo, who introduced the split between physical nature, which is composed of bodies that are *sui generis*, and intelligible nature, which consists of geometrical forms derived from the laws of mathematics.[5]

In lieu of these two methods, Husserl proposed that philosophy should be guided by what presents itself to us without reference to any external reality or

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3 In the first volume of *Ideen*, Husserl declares, "W a s d i e D i n g e s i n d, [. . .] das s i n d s i e a l s D i n g e d e r E r f a h r u n g" (*Hua* III, p. 100). The presumption of anything apart from experience is to be bracketed following the method of the *epoché*, so that philosophy can explore how consciousness constitutes its objects and generates their sense. Sebastian Luft notes that this procedure is very much in keeping with Kant's Copernican revolution, even if Husserl tries to distance his version of transcendental idealism from Kant's method. He argues that there is a way in which Husserl even preserves the *Ding-an-sich* in spite of his disavowal of this position. The thing itself functions for Husserl as a regulative idea. It is the idea of an object experienced in all its aspects all at once: "Thing-in-itself and thing-as-experienced (noematic sense) differ not as two different viewpoints on the same thing, or as two different considerations . . . The difference concerns the object as experienced *now*, at point t_1, and the (idea of the) object experienced at *all* points in time, all of which would only show *appearances* but appearances of *the real thing 'in the flesh'*" (Luft 2007, p. 382). Iso Kern stresses that although Husserl frequently attempts to portray Kant as a realist thanks to his notion of the *Ding-an sich*, he also relies on Kant to make the point that were one to posit "eine unerkennbare Ursache der Erscheinungen" (Kern 1964, p. 123), cognition would be a mere causal phenomenon and consciousness would acquire the status of something innerworldly such as the mind of an individual. Philosophy would be no different than psychology, were it concerned with the effect of causes external to the ego (Kern 1964, pp. 119–134).

4 Husserl discusses the presuppositions that underlie the scientific and theoretical attitude at some length in the first volume of *Ideen*. See especially *Hua* III, pp. 110–118. His remarks in this text are surprisingly consistent with those on the emergence of the scientific method in the *Crisis of the European Sciences*, published shortly before his death in 1938. See *Hua* VI, pp. 36–41.

5 Husserl highlights Galileo's role in establishing intelligible nature as a purely mathematical sphere in *Hua* VI, pp. 23–59. Empirical nature, by contrast, is a mere approximation of the ideal figures of mathematics according to the attitude [*Einstellung*] of the modern sciences.

preexisting concept. In the section on the "principle of all principles" in the first volume of *Ideen*, he specifies,

> daß jede originär gebende Anschauung eine Rechtsquelle der Erkenntnis sei, daß alles, was sich uns in der "Intuition" originär, (sozusagen in seiner leibhaften Wirklichkeit) darbietet, einfach hinzunehmen sei, als was es sich gibt, aber auch nur in den Schranken, in denen es sich da gibt. (*Hua* III, p. 51)

The principle that governs phenomenological inquiry is quite literally the *principium*: the beginning of all knowledge in the phenomenon. Phenomenology in this sense turns "zu den Sachen selbst," to quote the motto most often associated with this philosophical movement.[6] The same approach is evident in the passage quoted in the introduction to this essay concerning the sound of a violin. Husserl indicates that the instrument has only intermediate value [*mittelbarer Wert*] as the ostensible cause of the sound. The immediate phenomenon is the music itself, which moves me and commands my attention because I am more than merely a physical body [*Körper*], or even an animated body [*beseelter Leib*], but a person or *Geisteswesen*.[7] Husserl introduces this threefold classification in *Ideen II* to underscore the difference between things, animals, and humans, who are the only beings capable of producing and responding to cultural phenomena like music. In "Die Verwandlung," the narrator would seem to concur with this threefold classification when he asks, "War [Gregor] ein Tier, da ihn Musik so ergriff?" (KKA VI/1, p. 185).

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6 The slogan likely derives from Husserl's pronouncement in the second volume of the *Logical Investigations* (1901): "Wir wollen auf die 'Sachen selbst' zurückgehen" (*Hua* XIX, p. 10).

7 In *Ideen II*, Husserl makes a three-fold distinction between things, which he designates as *Körper*, animate organisms, which he designates as *Leiber* or *beseelte Leiber*, and finally persons, which he designates with multiple terms including *Person*, *Ichsubjekt*, *Ich-Mensch*, and *Geisteswesen*. See *Hua* IV, pp. 27–33 and pp. 90–97. David Woodruff-Smith argues with respect to the various designations of the subject as an embodied being, person, and pure ego that all these are aspects of one and the same ego understood in different contexts: "In [the Second Book of *Ideen*] Husserl stressed that there is just one entity that is I, but it has very different aspects including those that qualify it as a subject and those that qualify it as an embodied, psychophysical organism, an 'empirical ego.' These views eventually appeared in *Cartesianische Meditationen* (1931)" (Woodruff-Smith 1995, p. 339). Dermot Moran notes that in terms of lived experience these different aspects are organized as a progression from the ego's encounter with itself as an embodied being to its discovery of itself as free agent. He explains, "Husserl gives primacy to the notion of the person as a *sum cogitans* (*Ideen* II §22) which does not primarily apprehend itself as a body – but rather thinks of itself as a free-acting ego which makes decisions, forms independent judgments, moves at will, and so on" (Moran 2017, p. 21). He emphasizes, however, that the person as a "spiritual self" is never divorced from the social and historical order. Rather what distinguishes the "spiritual self" from the psychophysical ego is that it "consider[s] the individual under the universal" (Moran 2017, p. 21).

One does not have to be too shrewd a reader to catch the irony of this statement. Gregor is not recognized by his sister or parents as a member of the social community in spite of his love of music. Indeed, the episode marks a turning point in the tale to the extent that he ceases to be called Gregor after this incident, and his sister is adamant that he be referred to henceforth as "it," not "he":

> "Liebe Eltern", sagte die Schwester [. . .], "so geht es nicht weiter. [. . .] Ich will vor diesem Untier nicht den Namen meines Bruders aussprechen, und sage daher bloß: wir müssen versuchen, *es* loszuwerden. Wir haben das Menschenmögliche versucht, *es* zu pflegen und zu dulden. (KKA VI/1, p. 189, emphasis added)

The statement is as remarkable for its denigration of Gregor, as it is for the elevation of the family to the level of exemplary human beings, who according to the sister have done "everything humanly possible" [*das Menschenmögliche*], even as they come more and more to resemble brutes. Gregor, by contrast, is described as an *Untier* which, taken literally, means that he does not fit into any known category of being, not even that of an animal, and for this reason is so terrifying. The narrator's initial description of Gregor as "ein *un*geheures *Un*geziefer" (KKA VI/1, p. 115, emphasis added) likewise stresses his distance from any species we could name, save the singular creature named Gregor Samsa.[8] Michael G. Levine pointedly observes that "ein ungeheures Ungeziefer" is a "doubly negative monstrosity" (Levine 2008, p. 127). Why "Die Verwandlung" would matter in the context of Husserl's theory of intersubjectivity is worth spelling out, especially since the pretext of the tale – namely, that a member of the social community could wake up one morning to find himself in an insect's body – strains credulity in anything but the realm of fiction.[9]

Although the evidence is limited, there is good reason to believe that Kafka had more than a passing familiarity with phenomenology. Barry Smith has shown that he took several philosophy classes at the Charles University with Christian von Ehrenfels and Anton Marty, both committed students of Franz

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8 Melissa de Bruyker highlights the passage in which Gregor's mother catches sight of him as "den riesigen braunen Fleck auf der geblümten Tapete" (KKA VI/1, p. 166) as yet another example of Gregor's ontological indeterminacy: "The protagonist is reduced to a shapeless brown spot that disturbs the bright flowery wallpaper. His legs, belly, and head are no longer mentioned. The already fragmented hybrid body is expelled from human categorization" (de Bruyker 2010, p. 194). Of note is that in the absence of any species designation, Gregor assumes the status of a "stain" [*Fleck*] with all the biblical resonances associated with this term: the mark of what is unholy, not created or sanctified by God, evil.

9 Kafka's fascination with animals (Josefine, Rotpeter, among others) and otherwise unclassifiable creatures (Odradek) may be connected to his own name, which is close to the Czech noun *kavka* for a jackdaw, a member of the blackbird family.

Brentano, who was Husserl's mentor as well (Smith 1997, pp. 2–11). In 1901 and 1902, he enrolled in Marty's lecture course on descriptive psychology where he would have been introduced to theories of intentionality. According to Arnold Heidsieck, Kafka joined the Brentano Circle – a study group that met regularly at the Café Louvre in Prague – from 1902 to 1906 at the invitation of his friend Hugo Bergmann, himself a Bolzano and Brentano scholar (Heidsieck 1994, pp. 5–9). In this context he likely read portions of Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*, which would have been a subject of heated debate in this circle.[10] Yet he could not have had any familiarity with Husserl's writings on intersubjectivity and the role it plays in the formation of a common world, since most of these texts were not published until after Kafka's death in 1924.

Nevertheless "Die Verwandlung" would seem to anticipate, if not preempt, these works inasmuch as it exposes phenomenology at its weakest point: at the point it tries to construct an ethics out of what Husserl referred to as both a monad and a solipsistic subject. "Die Verwandlung" demonstrates with almost clinical precision the pitfalls of a philosophy that attempts to build a common surrounding out of a world grounded in a transcendental ego that can never know, only surmise the mind of another. In the first part of this essay, I will summarize Husserl's argument concerning intersubjectivity and the role it plays in the construction of a shared world or what Husserl also calls an objective sphere. Although his thought changed considerably from his middle to his late period, he remains remarkably consistent in his account of intersubjectivity from the second

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10 Although Kafka is known to have taken courses with both Ehrenfels and Marty and to have attended the meetings of the Brentano Circle, there has been little work done to date on the connection between his writing and either empirical psychology or phenomenology. The absence of scholarship in this area is all the more striking given the number of close friends he had who were committed to Brentano's thought including Max Brod, Hugo Bergmann, and Felix Weltsch. Neil Allan's *Kafka and the Genealogy of Modern European Philosophy* (2005) is one of the few studies devoted explicitly, if not exclusively, to the traces of Brentano's philosophy in Kafka's work (Allan 2005, pp. 11–57). Cyrena Norman Pondrom examines the similarities between Husserl's account of how the ego constitutes the sense of the world and Josef K.'s attempt to know and decipher his universe in one of the only works besides Heidsieck's study that explores the similarities between Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and Kafka's narrative strategies (Pondrom 1967, pp. 78–95). More recently Sonia Kamínska has argued for the importance of Anton Marty's and Brentano's philosophy for understanding Gregor Samsa's experience in "Die Verwandlung." She argues that Kafka was inspired by Brentano's definition of psychology as the "science of mental phenomena" (Kamínska 2015, p. 39) and that "Die Verwandlung" largely consists in Gregor's perception of his own mental life. (Kamínska 2015, pp. 41–42). Kafka's debt to phenomenology, however, deserves a more extensive study than has been pursued to date.

volume of *Ideen*, drafted in 1912, to the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, delivered as a series of lectures in 1929. In the second part, I will turn to "Die Verwandlung" to highlight the story's debt to phenomenology and especially to the idea of the subjective constitution of the world. It is this debt, however, which also makes the tale's critique of Husserl's account of other minds all the more salient, as I explain in the third section, which addresses whether a world construed as an egological sphere can serve as the basis for a community. How do we respond to the animal in our midst that is more stirred by music than we are? How do we acknowledge another that may be like-minded but not like-bodied and in whom we consequently cannot see ourselves? The four walls of Gregor's room with its many doors and one window turn out to be the test case for the possibility of exchange between subjects of whatever stripe through the orifices of their bodies.

Other Bodies, Other Minds

In the notes for his 1907 lecture course *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, Husserl poses a series of rhetorical questions:

> Soll ich sagen: nur die Phänomene sind dem Erkennenden wahrhaft gegeben, über den Zusammenhang seiner Erlebnisse kommt er nie und nimmer hinaus, also kann er mit wahrhaftem Rechte nur sagen: Ich bin, alles Nicht-Ich ist bloß Phänomen [. . .]? Soll ich mich also auf den Standpunkt des Solipsismus stellen? (*Hua* II, p. 20)

If the questions are rhetorical, it is because the answer should be a resounding no. Here, as elsewhere, Husserl will contend that the accusation of solipsism mistakes the nature of phenomenology, which concerns itself not with the existence of the world but with the intentional structure of consciousness. David Carr explains that Husserl's aim was not to prove the existence of the world on the basis of the ego, as it was for Descartes, but to elucidate the *sense* of the world for a transcendental ego that is not itself a phenomenon (Carr 1987, pp. 46–48).

According to Husserl, consciousness is always directed outside itself toward something that transcends it in the sense that it is never exhausted by the ego's intentional acts, be they thoughts, dreams, memories, or fantasies. The orientation of consciousness toward what lies beyond it represents the opposite of solipsism, which consists in the claim that the only being is the subject, which, in projecting its thoughts, generates the world. With the introduction of the transcendental reduction, Husserl believed he made sufficiently plain that the object of phenomenology is not reality itself, whatever the merits of this concept may be, and that his philosophy, consequently, could not be accused

of passing judgment on the world's existence.[11] Yet the charge of solipsism would continue to trouble him until his final years, and in 1929 he devoted the fifth of his *Cartesianische Meditationen* to the experience of other minds and the relation of this experience to the establishment of a common sphere.

Throughout the Fifth Meditation he reiterates that the other cannot be there for me like any other object for several reasons, which are worth enumerating, as they draw attention to some of the fundamental concepts of transcendental phenomenology, which also structure Gregor Samsa's experience. First and foremost, the other is not an object understood specifically as the synthetic unity produced out of the stream of my mental life and operations, "dem Strom meiner reinen Bewußtseinserlebnisse."[12] In other words, it is not an intentional object that I perceive in always different aspects – *Abschattungen* in Husserl's vocabulary – but which I recognize as aspects of one and the same object. Furthermore, the other does not exist for me as an innerworldly phenomenon or object I intend but constitutes the condition for such phenomenality as a consciousness itself. This amounts to saying that the ego does not belong to the world as an object but represents instead the conditions necessary for an object to appear to us as a thing of the world.

This leads to Husserl's second point: every ego inhabits its own sphere or *Eigenheitssphäre* (*Hua* I, pp. 124–130) – a fact phenomenology brings to the fore in bracketing the assumption, characteristic of the natural attitude, that the world is there for us as an incontrovertible reality that not only precedes but also succeeds our existence.[13] In setting this assumption aside, phenomenology directs our attention toward the objects and practices given to each of us as egos that occupy individual spheres, i.e., spheres whose "Sinn" and "Seinsgeltung" (*Hua* I, p. 65) derive from mental acts, or what Husserl calls *Erlebnisse* in an idiosyncratic translation of Descartes's *cogitationes*. How another ego can present itself to me in its subjectivity when we do not share a universe becomes a problem

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11 Husserl's shorthand for the world-in-itself apart from all thought is "das An-sich-Seiende," which is how he describes Descartes's notion of formal reality in *Hua* VI, p. 81.

12 The phrase appears in one form or another throughout Husserl's writings, especially from the first volume of *Ideen* onward. The quoted phrase is found in the *Cartesianische Meditationen* (*Hua* I, p. 121), though this and similar locutions can be found in countless other texts by Husserl.

13 Dermot Moran and Joseph Cohen offer a lucid definition of the *Eigenheitssphäre* or what they translate as "sphere of ownness": "'Sphere of ownness' [*Eigenheitsphäre*] or 'original sphere' [*Originärssphäre*] are expressions used by Husserl to refer to the range of conscious experiences, in which one experiences oneself in one's own particular domain of immanent, egoic, conscious experiences, after the transcendental reduction has taken place" (Moran and Cohen 2012, p. 304).

for Husserl, and the only way he can resolve it is through what he calls an "*analogisierende* Auffassung" (*Hua* I, p. 140) in which the subject perceives another as analogous to itself. To make this claim, however, Husserl must first consider how the subject experiences itself as an embodied being, since it is only this experience which enables it to perceive others as psycho-physical unities or, in the vocabulary of *Ideen II*, as *Ich-Menschen*.[14]

In both *Ideen II* and the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, Husserl insists that even after the ego has set aside everything other than itself in the transcendental reduction, a synthetic unity remains: the world as a phenomenon, a correlate of consciousness, an intentional object. So all-encompassing is this unity that he will proclaim, "Wir haben eigentlich nichts verloren, aber das gesamte absolute Sein gewonnen, das, recht verstanden, alle weltliche Transzendenzen in sich birgt, sie in sich 'konstituiert'" (*Hua* III, 107). The absolute being referred to in this passage is the pure I that serves as the basis for phenomena understood specifically as something experienced, apprehended, *erlebt*; in Cartesian terms one could say that the *cogito* is the ground for all meaningful entities or intentional objects generated through its own *cogitationes*. Yet *Ideen II* and the *Cartesianische Meditationen* will complicate this argument otherwise so central to Husserl's later work. In both texts he will assert that what is given with the world that appears to me is my own body [*Leib*] as a perceptual organ.

In *Ideen II* Husserl writes with uncharacteristic bluntness, "[z]unächst ist der Leib das Mittel aller Wahrnehmung, er ist das Wahrnehmungsorgan, er ist bei aller Wahrnehmung notwendig dabei" (*Hua* IV, p. 56); and in the *Cartesianische Meditationen* he elaborates,

> [u]nter den eigentlich gefaßten Körpern dieser *Natur* [einer von jedem Sinn fremder Subjektivität gereinigten Natur, RT] finde ich dann in einziger Auszeichnung meinen Leib, nämlich als den einzigen, der nicht bloßer Körper ist, sondern eben Leib, das einzige Objekt innerhalb meiner abstraktiven Weltschicht [. . .], *in* dem ich unmittelbar *schalte und walte*. (*Hua* I, p. 128)

Among the sensations that present themselves to the pure ego, there is one that is like no other, namely, the sensations of my body, which Husserl refers to as *kinaestheta*, to distinguish them from *aestheta*, the sensations associated with

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14 Curiously, this turn of phrase is reversed to become *Menschen-Ich* in the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, as if Husserl wanted to indicate that there is no particular species of ego, such as an *Ich-Menschen*, only one ego that presents itself to us in the cultural and social sphere as a human ego or *Menschen-Ich*.

foreign objects. Whereas all the other bodies that the ego perceives are merely things that it intends [*Körper*], the body [*Leib*] I regulate and govern [*schalte und walte*] is unique in that it accompanies all my mental acts and is an essential component of my representations. In *Ideen II*, Husserl points to the example of a centaur to demonstrate that even imaginary creatures bear a relation to my body:

> Imaginiere ich mir einen Zentauren, so kann ich nicht anders als ihn in einer gewissen O r i e n t i e r u n g und in einer gewissen Beziehung zu meinen Sinnesorganen imaginieren: er steht "rechts" von mir, "nähert" sich oder "entfernt" sich, "dreht" sich, wendet sich "mir" zu oder ab. (Hua IV, p. 56)

Whenever I perceive an object, whether real or imaginary, I do so from a vantage point in space and time and my experience of myself as an embodied being paves the way for my recognition of others as embodied beings, that is, *alter egos*, similarly situated in space and time.

At first glance, Husserl would seem to suggest that the perception of the other should be understood as a reciprocal process. For instance, in *Ideen II* he writes:

> Indem wir sie [fremde Subjekte] einfühlend als Analoga unserer Selbst erfassen, ist uns ihr Ort als ein "Hier" gegeben, dem gegenüber alles andere "Dort" ist. Aber zugleich mit dieser Analogisierung, die nicht ein Neues gegenüber dem Ich ergibt, haben wir den fremden Leib als "Dort" und identifiziert mit dem Hier-Leib-Phänomen. (*Hua* IV, p. 168)

To recognize the other as another means to understand that it inhabits a "here" from which it regards and intends what transcends its consciousness. In this respect, it functions as an analogy of myself. It constitutes its surroundings, as I do mine, from the vantage point provided by its body, which stands opposite me and figures as the "there" to my "here." My "here" as such constitutes the other's "there" and vice versa, in what would seem like a perfect instance of mirroring. If there is any hesitation in *Ideen II*, it is in the admission that the ego of the other is not given to me in exactly the same fashion as its body. Rather the other's subjectivity, its status as a thinking being is "appresented," which is a term Husserl coins to designate what accompanies an intuition but is not presented directly in the intuition. What is appresented is "Mit-da" but not "Selbst-da" (*Hua* I, p. 139), to quote from the *Cartesianische Meditationen*. By comparing or analogizing the other's movements and gestures with my own, I am able to discern that the other is not a thing, animal, or machine but a person like myself. The mental life of the other is appresented with his or her movements, which resemble mine, and the similarity is what enables me to empathize with him or her as my counterpart. Indeed, in *Ideen II* Husserl underscores that empathy is the sole means for establishing a common world: "Die von Anderen gesetzten Dinge sind auch die meinen: in der Einfühlung mache ich die Setzung des Anderen mit

[. . .]ich stelle mich auf den Standpunkt des Anderen" (*Hua* IV, pp. 168–169). In adopting the vantage point of the other, I succeed in seeing the world through its eyes, and this provides the foundation for a shared world or what Husserl also calls an "objective" sphere, i.e., a sphere anyone would agree to, were they to stand in my position and I in theirs.

If there is a critical difference between *Ideen II* and the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, it is that in the latter work Husserl questions whether the self can occupy the position of the other and vicariously experience its mental acts. He continues to emphasize the importance of an analogizing apprehension, but this time he is insistent that the apprehension of the other still occurs within an egological universe, an "Eigenheitssphäre," as previously mentioned. The difference may appear slight, but it is crucial all the same, as it reveals the necessity but also difficulty of justifying a shared, objective sphere from a transcendental perspective.

In the *Cartesianische Meditationen*, Husserl stresses that the body of the other is not an expression, sign, or organ of the other's spirit, as he had argued in *Ideen II*. It is not the vehicle for a subjectivity that exists independent of me. Such a claim would amount to positing the existence of something apart from consciousness, which, as discussed previously, is a presumption that philosophy cannot substantiate and consequently must set aside in keeping with the phenomenological procedure known as the *epoché*. While Husserl had gestured at the act of bracketing any realist or dogmatic assumptions in his 1911 lecture course *Die Idee der Phänomenologie*, it is only in the first volume of *Ideen*, published in 1913, that he introduces the technical term *epoché* as a preliminary step toward the transcendental reduction, in which, as Sebastian Luft writes, "being" is reduced to "being-given" (Luft 2007, p. 374.) Looked at from this perspective, we can say that what philosophy addresses is the sense the world has for us and the operations of consciousness that produce this sense. On this basis we can distinguish between, say, a fellow conscious being and an insect which would appear from the outside to be governed not by its intellect but by natural instinct as a near machine rather than a free subject. In this vein Husserl writes,

> Es ist nicht so und kann nicht so sein, daß der Körper meiner Primordialsphäre, der mir das andere Ich [. . .] indiziert, sein Dasein und Mitdasein also appräsentieren könnte, ohne daß dieser Primordialkörper *den Sinn gewönne* eines mit zu dem anderen Ego gehörigen, also nach Art der ganzen assoziativ-apperzeptiven Leistung den Sinn des fremden Leibes, und zunächst des fremden Leibkörpers selbst.
>
> (*Hua* I, p. 151, emphasis added)

While the point Husserl makes here would appear to be technical, it is of central importance to his claim that the world I perceive can have objective value

even if I cannot see it from the other's perspective. Owing to its coordinated movements and gestures, the body facing me strikes me as belonging to another person; it has this sense. This is its function within the universe that presents itself immediately to me, which is to say within my own "primordial sphere."

Where Husserl differs in this text from *Ideen II* is in his explication of what it means for the ego of another to be appresented or given indirectly along with its body. In lieu of defining the other merely as an opposing pole, he emphasizes instead that the other has a relation to its body and, by extension, to the world that appears to it through this medium. This is what it means to apperceive another as an *alter ego*. It belongs to its definition or sense that it exists with its own intentional life, as do I, with one notable exception. The other *as apperceived* is not independent of me; it remains a part of my world. It derives its meaning from my experience of it as another mind that exists for itself: "[eine] in mir als fremd[e] und somit für sich seiend[e] [. . .] Monade" (*Hua* I, p. 156).

Throughout the Fifth Meditation, Husserl argues again and again that I apperceive the other *in me* as something *other than me* and this has significance for two reasons. First it shows that even within my egological sphere, I can experience "Nichteigenes" (*Hua* I, p. 176), what is not my own; secondly, this experience enables me to recognize other perspectives on the world I inhabit, thereby establishing this world's legitimacy and objectivity as a common surrounding. Dan Zahavi comments in this vein: "When I realize that I can be an *alter ego* for the other just as he can be it for me, a marked change in my own constitutive significance takes place. [. . .] I come to the realization that I am only one among many and that my perspective on the world is by no means privileged" (Zahavi 2001, p. 160). My world is enlarged and turned into the shared, if contested, property of all through the encounter with the other in my own primordial sphere. The *alter ego* in me transforms the nexus of meaning and ontological validity that is properly speaking my own into something that others also have a stake in, even if their impressions are widely divergent.

Much the same could be said of Gregor Samsa, who is as moved by his sister's violin playing as he surmises his parents are. He assumes he is a member of the community once he sees the tension drain from their faces and presumes that they, like him, are transported by his sister's performance: "Die Familie war gänzlich vom Violenspiel in Anspruch genommen" (KKA VI/1, p. 185). Yet, the experience of community is short-lived, since it turns out that neither Gregor's sister nor his parents find appresented in his body another ego. What Kafka's "Die Verwandlung" reveals is that Husserl's account of intersubjectivity, of a community of like-minded subjects hinges on the presence of another in a body that is also like mine and which I consequently recognize as belonging to a

fellow human being. In the pages that follow I will consider what place a character like Gregor Samsa has in a world so conceived. Husserl's contention that I apprehend the other, the *alter ego*, by comparing its bodily movements to my own meets its match in a figure like Gregor who is like-minded but not like-bodied and hence cannot be recognized as a member of the community – in this case, his family. Kafka's tale exposes the difficulties transcendental phenomenology has in accounting for other minds. At the same time, through the force of its own example it shows the power of fiction to represent other minds as other minds, that is, subjectivity in the third person.

Gregor Samsa and the Problem of Transcendental Subjectivity

Although "Die Verwandlung" is narrated in the third person, it adopts Gregor's point of view until his death a few pages before the end, and this means that every observation the narrator makes is unreliable in the sense that it reflects both the scope as well as limitations of Gregor's perspective. Do Gregor's sister and mother clean his room out of concern for him, as he surmises? Do they realize that he hides himself, so as not to disturb them? Gregor is convinced that he understands their motives and they understand his, but this remains a supposition the text can only report but never corroborate, as it is limited to his perspective. A case in point for this constraint is the passage in which Gregor remarks on the swiftness with which his sister leaves his room after delivering food: "Und *aus Zartgefühl*, da *sie wußte*, daß Gregor vor ihr nicht essen würde, entfernte sie sich eiligst und drehte sogar den Schlüssel um, *damit* nur Gregor merken könne, daß er es sich so behaglich machen dürfe, wie er wolle" (KKA VI/1, p. 147, emphasis added). The number of speculative claims made in this one statement is nothing short of remarkable. Gregor imputes motives ("aus Zartgefühl"), awareness ("da sie wußte"), and intentionality ("damit nur Gregor merken könne") to his sister because he assumes that she is like him – a human? an animal? – and that they stand in a reciprocal relation.

Who or what is Gregor? However naïve this question may seem, the text can answer it with a surprising degree of certainty and in keeping with the phenomenological definition of a subject, which is as much a testament to as a critique of this school of thought for reasons I will explain shortly. To the degree that the text is focalized through Gregor, we are witness to his inner life, but the narrative also quotes his ruminations in a manner that immediately calls to mind another work central to the philosophical tradition and at the

heart of phenomenology. The first citation reads, "'Was ist mit mir geschehen?', dachte er" (KKA VI/1, p.115), which is followed one paragraph later by, "'Wie wäre es, wenn ich noch ein wenig weiterschliefe und alle Narrheiten vergäße', dachte er" (KKA VI/1, p. 116). The sequence continues with the statement, "'Ach Gott', dachte er" (KKA VI/1, p. 116), and culminates in the exclamation, "'Dies frühzeitige Aufstehen', dachte er, 'macht einen ganz blödsinnig'" (KKA VI/1, p. 117). As is likely evident, each of these claims is punctuated by the refrain "dachte er" which singles Gregor out as a thinking being, a *res cogitans*. Gregor is first and foremost a *cogito*. And lest this interpretation seem too far-fetched, it is worth pointing out that he wonders in the first few pages whether he is asleep or awake much like Descartes, who in the first of his *Meditations* realizes that his dreams are indistinguishable from his waking reality: "Combien de fois m'est-il arrivé de songer, la nuit, que j'étais en ce lieu, que j'étais habillé, que j'étais auprès du feu, quoique je fusse tout nu dedans mon lit" (Descartes 1904, p. 14).[15] The fact that Gregor awakens, as the first line of the text tells us, "aus unruhigen Träumen" (KKA VI/1, p. 115) and struggles to affirm the reality of his situation, "[e]s war kein Traum" (KKA VI/1, p. 115), echoes Descartes' concerns, as does his position under a blanket (KKA VI/1, p. 115), which recalls Descartes' own position in bed.

Descartes concedes that he can never know whether he is asleep or awake but adds that the difference is of little importance in any event since, in doubting his perceptions, he ends up confirming his existence as a thinking thing, a mind unencumbered by the flesh. Gregor, by contrast, does not have the luxury of ignoring his body given the pressures on him as the sole bread-earner for his family, who must rise early in the morning to travel to far-off places to generate sales for his firm. His is a life in which he has no time to sit by the fire or lie naked in bed. And yet circumstance compels him to do what for Descartes cannot be coerced: to meditate on his existence, which for the French philosopher is an act that rises above all contingency.

In other words, as a result of his physical inability to get out of bed, he is forced to reflect on his existence, which for Descartes is a contradiction in terms. Yet Gregor is not only a *cogito* but also an embodied being, which is why the text's evident allusions to the *Meditations* are at the same time a parody.

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15 Stanley Corngold's argument that the tale brings to the foreground the discrepancy between mind and body fits within this Cartesian frame. He characterizes Gregor Samsa as a distorted or mutilated metaphor, divided between an insect body as the vehicle and human consciousness as the tenor: "In shifting incessantly the relation of Gregor's mind and body, Kafka shatters the suppositious unity of ideal tenor and bodily vehicle within the metaphor" (Corngold 1988, p. 56).

Gregor is trapped in the world of the flesh, weighed down by the body that prevents him from fulfilling his duties as a member of the social world. It is this body that he must first learn to manipulate and control to participate in a world of supposedly like-minded individuals in an almost textbook demonstration of Husserl's theory of kinaesthetics or bodily motion based on the ego's perceptions of its own body. Indeed, following an initial awkward period, in which he could not figure out how to rotate his body or to orchestrate the movement of his many thin legs, he becomes quite skilled in scaling the walls and ceiling of his room: "Aber nun hatte er natürlich seinen Körper ganz anders in der Gewalt als früher" (KKA VI/1, p. 159).[16] One could say that mind is victorious over matter, depending on how much emphasis one places here on the use of "force" [*Gewalt*]. Yet Gregor's body is also the obstacle to his integration, the hurdle he cannot surmount no matter how deft he becomes in his locomotion. Thus, he is continually astonished that the world in which he sees himself does not see him, and the individuals to whom he turns for support do not recognize him.

It begins with his voice which to his mind is still suitable for verbal communication but which no one else can understand despite his best efforts at concealing its metallic undertone: "Man verstand zwar also seine Worte nicht mehr, trotzdem sie ihm genug klar, klarer als früher, vorgekommen waren, vielleicht infolge der Gewöhnung des Ohres" (KKA VI/1, p. 131–132). And it ends with his attempt to touch his sister whose music so touched him:

> Er war entschlossen, bis zur Schwester vorzudringen, sie am Rock zu zupfen, und ihr dadurch anzudeuten, sie möge doch mit ihrer Violine in sein Zimmer kommen, denn niemand lohnte hier das Spiel so, wie er es lohnen wollte. Er wollte sie nicht mehr aus seinem Zimmer lassen, wenigstens nicht, solange er lebte.　　(KKA VI/1, p. 185–186)

What links these two incidents, which function in more than one way as bookends for the text, is that each revolves around Gregor's efforts to make himself understood not merely as a living being but as a member of the social community. Such a community should in principle consist of like-minded beings with the capacity to discern the intentions and motivations of another based on the movement of their musculature, be it the musculature of the mouth and throat that produces speech or that of the legs that carry one forward in space.[17] In the

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16 Margot Norris likewise emphasizes Gregor's experience of his own body within the context of Gregor's metamorphosis from an exploited clerk with little metaphorical backbone to an insect that literally has no spine (Norris 2010, p. 21).

17 "Die Verwandlung" places peculiar emphasis on Gregor's mouth. We learn of his surprise as he tries to chew food and discovers that he does not have any teeth in his mouth. We are also told about the extraordinary effort he makes to lock his door with his mouth since he no

vocabulary of phenomenology members of this community should have the ability to "appresent," that is, to make present to themselves that the other has an ego or psychic life, even though that life is never empirically manifest. For Husserl, the ability to see the other not simply as an animated body but as an "Ichsubjekt" (*Hua* VI, p. 175) distinguishes human beings from animals, who live but do not take part in a social sphere.

Animals, in short, are animated beings, who are in possession of a soul, as are humans, themselves living creatures. Both humans and animals are characterized by their psycho-physical constitution; both display the unity of body and soul in their animated bodies [*beseelte Leiber*] in contrast to things, which are defined exclusively by their extension in space as material bodies [*Körper*]. In this context it is worth noting – and in keeping with the possible allusions to Descartes's *Meditations* in Kafka's text – that Gregor's sister is described in the final sentence specifically as a *res extensa*; indeed the final word of the text is 'extended': "Und es war [den Eltern] wie eine Bestätigung ihrer neuen Träume und guten Absichten, als am Ziele ihrer Fahrt die Tochter [. . .] ihren jungen Körper *dehnte*" (KKA VI/1, p. 200, emphasis added). Yet humans are not only living organisms, according to Husserl. They are also thinking beings, and here his philosophy must go through the most strenuous contortions to make the claim that the transcendental ego can also serve as the basis for the personal ego and social subject.

Husserl was not the first thinker to observe that the subjectivity of another can never be represented as an object and still remain subjectivity; consciousness objectified is not consciousness lived, which is why the term "Erlebnis" holds such importance for him. Our minds operate in a continuous stream (the so-called "Erlebnisstrom"), which we can reflect on but never bring to a halt. Consider the stream of associations that run through Gregor's head in the following sentences chosen almost at random from the text:

> Und er sah zur Weckuhr hinüber, die auf dem Kasten tickte. "Himmlischer Vater!", dachte er. Es war halb sieben Uhr, und die Zeiger gingen ruhig vorwärts, es war sogar halb vorüber, es näherten sich schon dreiviertel. Sollte der Wecker nicht geläutet haben?
>
> (KKA VI/1, p. 118)

The combination of seeing, hearing, wondering, trying to retrieve from memory, and so on in this passage offers some hints as to why the subjectivity of another can never be turned into an object and still remain subjectivity. This impasse, however, brings to the fore the problem of how I can ever be sure

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longer has any hands. His mouth becomes a tool for numerous mechanical functions once it is no longer used for speech.

there are other egos like me. Husserl proposes that I come to know the other through a reciprocal relation, but the relation does not in any way challenge my status as a pure ego or monad that exists for itself. The other does not construct me as a subject, interpolate me into the social order, or embed me in a symbolic system. On the contrary I constitute myself as a social being in recognizing the other as another ego. This operation will distinguish Gregor from his family.

As indicated previously, the process by which I apprehend another as a subject is called appresentation: the inner life of the other accompanies my experience of its physical being. When this happens, the corporeal movements of the other assume for me the status of signs:

> So bildet sich allmählich ein System von Anzeichen aus, und es ist schließlich wirklich eine Analogie zwischen dem Zeichensystem des "Ausdrucks" seelischer Vorkommnisse [. . .] und dem Zeichensystem der Sprache für den Ausdruck von Gedanken.
>
> (*Hua* IV, p. 166)

For all its seeming self-evidence, the analogy between the gestures of the body and the signs of language articulated in this passage ignores an important difference, which Husserl will underscore elsewhere in the volume but ignores here for the sake of his analogy. To assume that the body is an expression of psychic life requires some justification, especially given that the psyche does not exist in space and has no extension, as Husserl reminds us on more than one occasion. If the body nonetheless serves as a vehicle for the psyche, enabling it to be discerned and read, it is because the two are wedded to each other in a way that becomes apparent only through the experience of the other. The other, one could say, allows me to experience myself.

It enables me to locate myself in time and space. Through the other I am able to acquire a here-and-now that functions as the zero point of orientation for all my intentional experiences. Husserl does not shy away from making this point. What is curious – at least for readers of phenomenology in a post-Freudian age – is that it is not the gaze of the other that situates me. As noted earlier, the ego cannot be an object and still remain an ego that carries out freely or of its own accord a stream of mental operations. Rather the other provides me with an occasion to regard myself from the vantage point of the other erected almost exclusively for the purpose of this self-examination. Husserl intimates as much in the following passage from *Ideen II*:

> Erst mit der Einfühlung und mit der beständigen Richtung der Erfahrungsbetrachtung auf das mit dem fremden Leib appräsentierte [. . .] Seelenleben konstituiert sich die abgeschlossene Einheit Mensch, und *diese übertrage ich im weiteren auf mich selbst*.
>
> (*Hua* IV, p. 167, emphasis added)

As is evident from this quote, Husserl calls the process by which I adopt the vantage point of another empathy and it is among the most problematic concepts in his work, chiefly because it does not help me overcome but instead reinforces my isolation.

No one seems to have been more aware of this than Kafka, who in "Die Verwandlung" shows that to adopt the vantage point of another is hardly to bridge a divide. One need only think of Gregor's failed effort to appease his father when the latter finds him outside his room:

> Und so flüchtete er sich zur Tür seines Zimmers und drückte sich an sie, damit der Vater beim Eintritt vom Vorzimmer her gleich sehen könne, daß Gregor die beste Absicht habe, sofort in sein Zimmer zurückzukehren.　　　　　　　　　　　　(KKA VI/1, p. 168)

Needless to say, Gregor fails in the attempt to anticipate how his father will see him, since his father's psyche is nothing but a projection of his own intentionality. For Husserl, in empathizing with another ego, I adopt his position and in so doing learn that his "here" is my "there" and vice versa.[18] This insight, as he would have it, is the prerequisite for the creation of an objective world. Via the experience of the other, I encounter myself as an embodied being that stands not only at the center of its own universe, but also as a member of a common sphere. In this sphere, I can make myself understood to others and others to me because we recognize each other as like-minded subjects thanks to our similarly organized bodies, that is, bodies with a gestural language that would appear to be the same.

It is clear that Gregor is excluded from this community and that the text in large part turns on the increasing brutality of the family as Gregor comes more and more to resemble household dirt. In his last appearance in the living room, he tells us that he is "staubbedeckt" and carries with him "Fäden, Haar, Speiseüberreste," having long since abandoned any grooming or care of the self. In this condition, and with a rotting apple on his back, he exemplifies the definition of *Ungeziefer* given in Grimms' Dictionary:

> [D]er begriff wurzelt im heidnischen opferwesen [. . .] durch das präfix un wird nun das zum opfer nicht geeignete bezeichnet, das unreine, verdorbene, aasige fleisch, unkraut, unbrauchbare früchte, unrath sowohl wie das zu opferzwecken nicht geeignete thier.
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(*Deutsches Wörterbuch*, vol. 24, column 943)

Gregor becomes, like the rotting vegetables and food scraps he eats, waste – a matter so polluted that it cannot serve as a sacrificial offering to expiate

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18 For further discussion of these points, see *Hua* I, pp. 145–149; *Hua* IV, pp. 131–134.

communal sins. His ungroomed and withered body comes to figure as a "brauner Fleck" (KKA VI/1, 1 166), which is how he previously described himself in a scarcely veiled allusion to the doctrine of original sin and the stain associated with it. In this capacity, he puts the idea of community to the test. The brutality of the family toward Gregor reveals the brutality of an ethical system that identifies the person by way of her corporeal form. In such a system, any physical element that does not fit within this established frame can only return as vermin or dirt, that is, as a terrifying creature or an inconsequential speck. It is no accident that as soon as Gregor dies, he is swept up with a broom and discarded with the trash, which signals his final transformation from a feared creature to an ignored object.

What would the alternative to such a system be in which even empathy with the other would seem to amount to nothing more than empathy with oneself? The narration of other minds in fiction provides one answer to this dilemma. As Käte Hamburger noted in her landmark study *Die Logik der Dichtung*, the representation of subjectivity in the third person is so typical of the novel that we hardly notice it all (Hamburger 1994, pp. 72–78). Dorrit Cohn expands on this insight: "The special life-likeness of narrative fiction [. . .] depends on what writers and readers know least in life: how another mind thinks, another body feels" (Cohn 1978, pp. 5–6). A case in point for this theory would be the opening line of "Die Verwandlung": "Als Gregor Samsa eines Morgens aus unruhigen Träumen erwachte, *fand er sich* in seinem Bett zu einem ungeheuren Ungeziefer verwandelt" (KKA VI/1, p. 115). The authority with which the narrative portrays Gregor's self-perception would make no sense in any other context save in fiction, where we expect the mental life of characters, human or not, to be rendered transparent.[19] The self-evidence of this practice in fictional narratives is itself an index of the

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19 Both Cohn and Hamburger cite numerous examples of narrated, third-person consciousness in fictional works, including works by Kafka. Cohn points to the following passage from "Das Urteil" as a classic example of "free indirect discourse" or what she calls "narrated monologue," which is closer to the German *erlebte Rede*: "Seine Blicke fielen auf das letzte Stockwerk des an den Steinbruch angrenzenden Hauses. Wie ein Licht aufzuckt, so fuhren die Fensterflügel eines Fensters dort auseinander, ein Mensch, schwach und dünn in der Ferne und Höhe, beugte sich mit einem Ruck weit vor und streckte die Arme noch weiter aus. Wer war es? Ein Freund? Ein guter Mensch? Einer, der teilnahm? Einer, der helfen wollte? War es ein einzelner? Waren es alle? War noch Hilfe?" (cited in Cohn 1978, p. 123) Hamburger, for her part, turns to *Das Schloß* in her analysis of the link between the epic preterite and the narration of inner states: "Und er verglich in Gedanken den Kirchturm der Heimat mit dem Turn dort oben" (cited in Hamburger 1994, p. 75). Whether Kafka's animal stories speak not only "for the animal" but "as the animal," as Margot Norris contends, is subject to question (Norris 2010, p. 19). What they do is narrate consciousness, which, as Husserl insisted, is not

degree to which we take the risk of fiction in daily life. We do so not because fiction is a plausible untruth, but because plausibility is all we have when it comes to other minds. Fiction is the precarious but powerful basis of a community of the presumably like-minded, a community that cannot be substantiated only supposed in a manner that makes life together no more and no less than art in action.

Husserl himself seems to have recognized the degree to which we take a leap of faith, or, rather, a fictional leap when it comes to other minds. In a note written some time between 1932 and 1935, he points to Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* to ask whether the animals in our world also contribute to the constitution of that world as fellow psychic beings:

> Warum nenne ich sie Tiere und unterscheide sie von Menschen? Etwa wegen ihrer typisch ganz anderen Leiblichkeit? Aber sind die Pferdewesen bei Gulliver nicht eigentlich Menschen, und sind unsere Pferde nicht wesentlich verschieden von diesen pferdeleiblichen "Vernunftwesen"? (*Hua* XV, p. 622)[20]

The animals we confront may be fundamentally different than Gulliver's horses and yet Gulliver's horses teach us that what distinguishes humans and animals are not their bodies but their minds. Fiction offers a window into other minds and in so doing expands the lifeworld at once made and shared by variously embodied subjects.

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something empirical like the mind studied in psychology but a transcendental condition for the world to be known, imagined, or experienced.

20 For a lengthier discussion of the role that animals play in Husserl's theory of transcendental intersubjectivity, see Heinämaa (2013), pp. 90–97. As Heinämaa points out, animals belong to our cultural world but do not co-constitute it because they lack language, and more specifically writing, which is necessary for the unfolding of a common sphere that stretches into the past and extends into the future (Heinämaa 2013, pp. 97–98). I am grateful to Sara Heinämaa for drawing my attention to Husserl's comment in his notes on *Gulliver's Travels*.

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