HUSSERL'S SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE THEORY OF TRUTH

Those who are familiar with Edmund Husserl's writings know only too well the difficulty of his diction and style, the subtlety of his almost—if not quite—illusory distinctions, and the highly involved character of his complicated analyses. The appearance of an adequate, though hardly brilliant, translation into English of his main work, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologische Philosophie*, has not led (as might possibly have been hoped) to a marked increase of interest among English-speaking philosophers in one of the most influential and challenging thinkers of recent years in Germany. This fact may be broadly explained by reference to the circumstance that Husserl's characteristic formulation of, and approach to, his problem lie far from the beaten path of current discussion outside of his native land and so exhibit a superficial irrelevance that acts as a hindrance to the further dissemination of his philosophy. In view of this state of affairs the task is undertaken in this paper to present a sympathetic and honest exposition of his views, in order to reach in the end a just critical estimate of the significance of his phenomenology for the theory of truth.

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(1) The Basic Ideas of Phenomenology.— Edmund Husserl's principal interest, if we may judge by his writ-

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1 Separately printed from *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*, I (1913). English translation under the title *Ideas* by W. R. Boyce Gibson. The German version will be designated *Ideen* for the sake of brevity. Frequent italics omitted in quoting from Husserl's writings will not be otherwise indicated.
ings, has always concerned the discovery of a method capable of raising the quality of philosophical truth to a level comparable with that of the exact sciences and of thus supplying philosophy with an abiding content, which will at the same time afford the ultimate ground of certainty in the sciences. The gradual development of such a method and its application to certain typical philosophical problems has occupied roughly the whole period of his literary activity. The first clear statement of the new method and program is found in the justly celebrated article, *Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*, for there he strives to establish the possibility of a strictly scientific philosophy that shall contain a definite content in the way of established doctrine, that grows (as the sciences seem to grow) piece by piece through the coöperative effort of students working more or less independently. If the phenomenological method can accomplish what is claimed for it in this respect, then it does indeed mark a turning-point in the history of philosophical thought. Instead of a conflict of systems expressive of the character and idiosyncrasies of the individual philosopher and his times, philosophy will have become like a science in having a fixed and certain content, which is guaranteed by the rigor of its method. Vanished will be the necessity of defending philosophy (as Husserl feels himself compelled to do) against the emasculating relativism of "naturalism" and "historicism," for the employment of the phenomenological method will create a presuppositionless philosophy, which is as exact as an exact science, precisely because it rests upon an absolutely certain and *a priori* foundation of knowledge. This foundation is discovered in a field of "absolute beginnings," of absolutely indubitable starting-points of knowledge, the

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propositions of which attain the scientific ideal of "vérités valable une fois pour toutes et pour tous." The cardinal feature of the phenomenological method is thus the "phénoménologique or transcendental reduction," by means of which the field of a priori foundations of knowledge is laid bare, and phenomenology consists in the systematic investigation and description of the field of phenomena revealed by the reduction.

(a) The phenomenological reduction is the first of the three features of Husserl's doctrine that will be singled out as basic. It is perhaps the most original and the most fundamental idea in his whole philosophy, which can but remain largely incomprehensible with respect both to method and to content unless a clear understanding be formed of that significant shift of attitude, the reduction being an indispensable preliminary to every excursion into the field of phenomenology.

By the phenomenological reduction is understood, at the very least, the practicing of the "phénoménologique Epoche," the change of attitude that is marked by the suspending of judgment with respect to transcendent objects generally, so that an infinite field of immanent and, therefore, indubitable and absolute consciousness is disclosed. Phenomenology is the reflective description of the essences and essential connections and structures of pure transcendental consciousness discoverable in this field. Though the reduction to pure immanence "brackets" the transcendent, what is bracketed remains in a sense what it was, for it is not annihilated or negated. The transcendent is represented within the brackets by a nexus of meanings and posited meanings, which are legitimate objects of phenomenological study. The advantage derived from the reduction seems to lie primarily in the fact that the validity and existence

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of the objects there disclosed is not postulated in the naturalistic sense. No use is made of propositions, however well established, that are derived from the sciences, for it is precisely the validity of any knowledge of objects that needs to be justified. Husserl thus avoids the construction of epistemological theories that take their character from physical or psychological science. Phenomenology is pre-scientific, in the sense that it claims to provide the logical ground of all scientific knowledge. This is done in no degree by metaphysical construction or by arguing from above, for towards nothing is Husserl more unsympathetic than towards Systembildung by mere inference. Observation and description are the handmaids of phenomenology, while dialectic is anathema.

The scientist, like the man in the street, lives in a natural world of existential objects, which is ever "there," "present to our hand." The general thesis, or assumption, —"'The' world is as fact-world always there"—is tacitly or explicitly adopted by one living in the natural attitude. This thesis is "suspended," "disconnected," "put out of action" by the methodological device of the phenomenological reduction. In a sense the world remains what it always was for us; but placed in brackets, it possesses altered significance. Scientific propositions, existential judgments, well-attested beliefs all enjoy the same respect as before, for we neither sophistically deny nor sceptically negate them; we only make no use of them as foundations for the construction of theories, unless they too have fallen into the brackets of suspended judgment. The Epoche destroys no beliefs; it simply disregards them.

Husserl suggests that Descartes, after limiting himself by the method of doubt to the realm of consciousness, stood on the threshold of phenomenology but failed to reach it because of not seeing that the realm of conscious phe-
nomena, in addition to being indubitably present, possesses intrinsic characters and structures which make manifest the transcendental conditions of the constitution of objects of consciousness. Not existential things and events nor any transcendent objects form the subject matter of phenomenology, but *phenomena* of pure consciousness, that are rendered accessible to description in virtue of the reduction. Husserl's method is thus empirical in the very special sense that it is devoted to description of phenomenal experience as contrasted with natural experience—a contrast separating it from scientific method by an enormous gulf. It is also distinguished from mathematical method, to which it is allied by exclusive interest in essence, for it proceeds descriptively and not inferentially. 4

(b) Phenomenology having been described as the reflective description of the essences and essential connections (eidetic relations) and structures of pure consciousness discoverable in the field rendered accessible by the reduction, it becomes important to describe more closely what Husserl understands by essence (or *eidos*), as the second of the three ideas which are basic to phenomenology.

In the first instance, essence is *what* an individual is, and it is capable of being realized in any number of individuals. An individual object is not a mere "this-there" (*Dies-da*) but a "this" plus its "what"; so it is always essentially possible to turn from the apprehension of the individual to the apprehension of its what, *i. e.*, its essence. Essence, thus, is the object of essential intuition, which in its immediacy is analogous to, though not identical with, perception, since the latter always has individuals as its objects. Knowledge of essence, furthermore, does not imply knowledge of fact, although the former knowledge

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4 *Ideas*, sections 27 ff. and 135.
arises only from insight into essences somehow exemplified in individual situations—situations, indeed, which need not even be "primordially given" (e.g., in the mode of perception) but may be remembered or simply fancied. Husserl goes further still by ascribing to fancy, because of its spontaneity, methodological superiority over plodding perception in matters concerning the eidetic. Whereas knowledge of essence warrants no statement regarding fact, essence, nevertheless, serves as an unassailable norm for empirical existence. The rationalistic faith is thus reaffirmed that knowledge of possibilities is prior to that of actualities.⁵

Because of the apparent similarity between the views of Santayana and Husserl regarding essences a brief comparison will cast further light on Husserl’s position. It is true that both thinkers start with a species of quasi-Cartesian doubt; they reach, however, vastly different positions at the very outset. The transcendental reduction (which, by the way, is not a genuine doubt but a refusal to posit or form judgments about realities of every kind) lays bare for Husserl an infinite field of absolute cognitions and thus delivers into his hands the means of overcoming scepticism. Santayana, on the other hand, arrives by means of "empirical" and "transcendental" criticism at a scepticism of the present moment, which alone of all types of scepticism he considers not logically contemptible. In view of this difference in starting-point it is not surprising that Husserl and Santayana attain very dissimilar conceptions of essence. Husserl’s central insistence is that it is always in principle possible to enhance and clarify knowledge of an essence by painstaking analysis of its intrinsic characters and by tracing out the necessary relations which it has to other essences in virtue of

⁵ Ideas, sections 2, 3, 4, 70, 75.
its being just the essence that it is. In contrast to this, Santayana views the aloofness and inviolable self-identity of essences as such that not only are they related only by exclusion but even analysis of an essence is impossible, since analysis leads simply to intuition of other essences rather than to more perfect acquaintance with the given essence. Thus intuition, according to Santayana, reveals now this, now that, essence in purity and isolation, each being precisely itself, no more and no less. The field which phenomenology describes, on the other hand, consists of phenomena exemplifying essences and not of sheer essences as such; and intuition, conceived as a mode of cognition which apprehends the essences of phenomena, is regarded by Husserl as important just because it renders systematic descriptions of essences and their interrelations possible. And since they enter into systematic relations, essences on Husserl’s view tend to exhibit more perfectly the character of true universals than do essences conceived as Santayana conceives them. Husserl, therefore, never has to face some of the curious puzzles which Santayana prepares for himself by assigning to essences both isolation in an ineffable realm and communion with matter in the realm of substantial existence.

(c) The third basic idea of phenomenology is the concept of the intentionality of consciousness, which, as the fundamental structure and essence of consciousness, is defined as that characteristic of consciousness in virtue of which it is consciousness of something. We have to do here not merely with a general correlation of perceiving with the perceived, remembering with the remembered, and so forth; on the contrary, intentionality is a title covering a realm of specific and detailed correlations between “types of possible consciousness, and the modifications, fusions, syntheses which essentially belong to them,” and,
as the other member of the correlation, the types of possible objects. Whatever its type, "the intentional object as such is what it is as the intentional object of a consciousness that is articulated thus or thus, and is the consciousness of it." In other words, Husserl finds that the intentional object is functionally dependent upon certain articulations of experiencing consciousness; in his phrase, the object is transcendentally constituted for consciousness in and through certain synthetic functions of unifying apprehension. Since phenomenology is primarily concerned with tracing the indicated correlations in detail for every type of consciousness and every type of object, Husserl rightly holds that the functional problems of the "constituting of objectivities of consciousness" are the central problems of phenomenology.

After the transcendental reduction has suspended the positing of every kind of transcendent, what remains to be studied from the point of view of function is the total situation, consciousness-of-something, where the something may be any object of possible consciousness, provided that it is taken in the immediacy in which it is given as the intentional correlate of conscious formations of a certain describable type. The description of any type of consciousness leads inevitably to the description along essential lines of its intentional correlate precisely as it lies immanent in consciousness. At the same time, Husserl observes, it is evident to unprejudiced insight that experience and its intentional correlate enter into the total situation, consciousness-of-something, in wholly different ways. The phases and aspects of experiencing consciousness are real (reell) or proper (eigen) components of the

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6 Ideas, section 98, p. 287.
7 Ideas, sections 86, pp. 251 ff. The authorized translation has been slightly altered in the quoted phrase.
stream of consciousness. On the other hand, that of which we are conscious is intentionally related to and functionally dependent upon consciousness as consciousness-of; but the former is not really (really) constitutive of the latter. In a sense, therefore, it transcends the real phase of consciousness, though remaining within the sphere of phenomenological immanence. Husserl designates the real components of consciousness, the constitutive phases of consciousness-of, by the term “noesis”; the term “noema” he applies to that as such of which we are aware. The function of meaning is noetic; the “meant as such” is noematic. Though correlated, noesis and noema differ in kind. Nothing, therefore, which is observable in the noema just as it is given can be considered a real (i.e., subjectively existing) component of consciousness. As a consequence of this refinement of terms, the functional problems may be redefined as the problems of the noetic-noematic structures of transcendental consciousness.

For the sake of simplicity, the most central features of the general doctrine of intentionality have been stated without comment. This is but an opening wedge, and elucidation by more detailed considerations is needed for a full understanding of Husserl’s position. Let it be remarked first of all that the identification of the essence of consciousness with intentionality provides consciousness with that self-transcendence that is required to avoid the puerile question concerning the possibility of an object’s being both “in” and “out” of consciousness. Consciousness would not be consciousness unless it intended an object, unless (to hazard a metaphor) it reached out beyond its own proper constituents to something beyond. Consciousness, qua consciousness-of refers necessarily to something other than itself, qua consciousness-of.

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8 *Ideas*, sections 87-96.
Although it may make its own act the intentional object of another act, it is dealing then explicitly with what is its own and is not mistaking subjective states for objective affairs. The concept of the intentionality of consciousness contributes also to the development of a further type of transcendence not unrelated to the first. "Every cogito, in so far as consciousness, is, in a very broad sense, 'signification' of the thing which it intends, but that 'signification' exceeds at every instant that which, at the same instant, is given as 'explicitly intended.'"9 This means that the object of knowledge overreaches itself in some manner, and it opens the way in principle for an intelligible explanation of the growth of knowledge.

The way is also opened for intentional analyses such as Husserl undertakes, for these consist primarily in the disclosure of what is implicated in intentions of various kinds. It is now time to consider certain analyses of this sort.

(2) Analyses of Certain Intentional Structures. —
Three topics pertinent to our interests will be considered: (a) the hyletic and animating phases of consciousness, (b) noesis and noema, and (c) noetic and noematic dimensions of characterization.

(a) Husserl finds that the concrete noetic phase of consciousness contains two distinguishable strata, the "sensible hyle" and the "intentional morphe," pure matter and pure form. Of these, the latter is designated as the noesis proper; while the former functions as the non-intentional bearer of intentionality, the material, sensible phase of the real stream of consciousness. The noema is, in the first instance, the intentional object constituted by the "animating," "meaning-bestowing" phase (noesis) on the basis of the fleeting sensuous stuff, the hyletic data. It is at this

9 Méditations Cartésiennes, p. 40.
point that Husserl departs from the teachings of Brentano, who, according to Husserl, failed to reach the concept of the material stratum of consciousness in its distinction from the objective, so-called physical objects, such as color and the like.

In this way Husserl sides with those who recognize a triadic relation of meaning rather than a dyadic one. In addition to act and object, he finds a mediating content. But the precise sense of this mediation is one which has not always been clearly grasped. For example, Professor C. W. Morris seems to labor under a misapprehension when he voices the following criticism: "Normally, colors, for instance, are 'seen' as parts of the object pole. It is only a sophisticated theory which (rightly or wrongly) attributes them to the subject pole. How can it be seen phenomenologically that colors are subjective?" ¹⁰ However much this interpretation may seem to be supported by such passages as that at the bottom of page 120 (section 36) of Ideas, there is good ground for questioning it. Not only does Husserl nowhere (not even in the passage just referred to) declare that the color or other quality of an object is subjective or that they do not "normally" appear as belonging to the object pole, but he states expressly that they appear as objective. He says, for example, "The colour of the thing seen is not in principle a real phase of the consciousness of colour; it appears, but even while it is appearing the appearance can and must be continually changing, as experience shows. The same colour appears 'in' continuously varying patterns of perspective colour-variations. Similarly for every sensory quality and likewise for every spatial shape!" ¹¹ Thus we may answer Professor Morris' rhetorical question in the negative, as he seems

¹⁰ *Six Theories of Mind*, University of Chicago Press, 1932, p. 180 note.
¹¹ *Ideas*, section 41, pp. 130-131.
to expect—but with our own reasons for the negation. In short, Husserl is studying the transcendental conditions of the appearance of color as belonging to the object pole.

The distinction which Husserl discovers between the two strata of the stream of consciousness, the noetic and hyletic, raises a question concerning their relations to one another and to the noema. The nature of the first relation has been indicated in saying that the sensuous details that function as the bearer of intentionality are “informed,” are “animated,” are “synthetically apprehended” by the noetic phase which gives the specific aspect of intentionality to consciousness and so constitutes the essential nature of the conscious life. Consciousness is not a bundle of meaningless materials, a collection of psychical states, of unmeaning contents that could never become more meaningful through aggregation; but it “is just consciousness ‘of’ something; it is its essential nature to conceal ‘meaning’ (Sinn) within itself, the quintessence of ‘soul’, so to speak, of ‘mind,’ of ‘reason.’” It is within this setting, and only there, that we may speak of hyletic data, for only in that case do the hyletic materials function in the constituting of objects; that is to say, according to the teleological concept of function, hyletic materials play a part in “making ‘synthetic unity’ possible.” The strict concept of function, nevertheless, seems grounded in the essence of the noesis and its continuous synthesis, which brings into being the consciousness-of-something.¹²

(b) The presentation of the nature and function of the hyle can be further clarified only by developing the relationships involved in the whole situation, consciousness-of-something, and especially the relation between noesis and noema. It has already been remarked that Husserl regards noesis and noema as belonging to “totally different dimen-

¹² Ideas, section 86.
sions” of experience, a point to which we now recur. The noema, the meant as such, which remains within the brackets of the reduction, is not a psychical state, not a part of the real (reell) “stream of phenomenological being” (conscious existence). It is, on the other hand, something that stands over against experience “as in principle other, irreal, transcendent”; it is “that which is ‘transcendently constituted’ ‘on the basis’ of the material experiences ‘by means of’ the noetic functions.” The noema belongs no more to the experience side of consciousness than does the “real” object which is noematically represented within brackets, for that which appears is never identically the same as the appearing of it. Husserl finds, however, a correlation such that what appears “can only then appear as objectively determined just as it appears in the perception when the hyletic phases . . . are just these and no others.” While other hyletic phases would form the ground of the animating apprehension of other objectivities, the hyletic phases do not unambiguously determine the appearing object, for the animating phases themselves harbor essential differences that modify the objectivity. The noema, therefore, has no existence except as the intentional object of constituting noetic manifolds; its being consists in its being perceived, not, however, in such a way that the noema is a real (reell) phase of consciousness. The noema, as a meaning, exists only as something meant, not as something self-subsistent. Intentionality is not a relation between two events in the objective world. It is rather, Husserl holds, a relation immanent in transcendentally reduced consciousness. Meaning, in other words, is strictly mind-dependent and in no sense a characteristic of things in themselves.14

13 Ideen, p. 204. My translation.
14 Ideas, sections 97-98.
An illustration, borrowed from Husserl, will make this situation more clear.\textsuperscript{15} Suppose I perceive “this flowering tree,” a perceptual object. If I now carry through the reduction to pure immanence, the flowering tree remains that which is meant as such; but, unlike the real tree, it cannot burn down or submit to any of the physical alterations of which the real tree is susceptible. The meaning, this tree, is phenomenologically given, whether or not a tree corresponds to it in the one real world, as \textit{omnitudo realitatis}. Furthermore, Husserl’s phenomenological insight discloses that the appearing tree (the noema of the tree) is correlated with a noetic manifold of continuous synthesizing apprehension on the ground of hyletic manifolds, that function as the continuous perspectival variations (\textit{Abschattungen}) of the noematic object which, despite all discontinuity of apprehension, are united by a single thread of meaning. In Husserl’s phrase, the object “\textit{schat-tet sich ab},” while the experience “\textit{schattet sich nicht ab.}” In the stream of pure conscious experience the abiding unitary object is constituted as a unity of meaning. Generalized, every object has its typical mode of appearance; a perceptual object, for example, appears necessarily in perspectives and cannot, in so far as it is a perceptual object, appear in any other conceivable way. It is just the noetic manifold of a certain type that constitutes the consciousness of a noematic object of a certain type. From this there follows directly a sort of phenomenological idealism that stresses the subject as the transcendental ground of objectivity in such a way as to present a reformulation of the epistemological argument for idealism.\textsuperscript{16} With this phase of the doctrine, however, we are not directly concerned.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ideas}, sections 88-89.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Cf. \textit{Méditations Cartésiennes}, pp. 22-23, 52-53.
\end{itemize}
(c) The relation of concrete noesis and noema has, up to this point, been characterized but partially. One parallelism only has been exhibited; namely, that between the meaning-bestowing phase of the noesis and the noematic object, the meant object as such. This is the parallelism between "the unity of the noematically 'intended' object" and "the constituting formations of consciousness." Husserl observes, however, that the intentional object functions only as the nucleus of the "full" noema and is describable always in terms such as "thing," "figure," and the like, which, being wholly objective, have no subjective reference. As such, the nucleus submits to description in identical terms, however else it may also be characterized in the full noema. But the full noema, like the full noesis, is complex in certain typical ways that are open to description.

With respect to the further dimensions of characterization, another parallelism between noesis and noema is discovered by Husserl, and this has vital significance in his total view as the parallelism between noetic and noematic characters. We must at all times be aware of a noematic nucleus, and it must "function as the passing bearer" of noematic characters which, for their part, belong to "radically different genera." The noematic object not only appears but appears characterized in certain ways. It must be so characterized, because we are dealing here (as everywhere in phenomenology), so Husserl insists, with essential and, therefore, not merely accidental connections. "The situation then is this, that at all times and of necessity we are aware of a noematic nucleus, a 'noema of the object', that must be characterized somehow, and indeed by differences, alternative and mutually exclusive, selected from each genus."\(^1\)

In illustration of this principle, two genera of char-

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\(^{1}\) Ideas, section 102, p. 296.
acterization will be mentioned as indispensable to a discussion of the phenomenology of reason. The first of these has to do with the mode of givenness of the noematic object. Manifestly, the object must be given somehow; it must be perceived or imagined or otherwise presented, but it cannot be given in two of these ways at once. These characterizations, furthermore, are understood by Husserl to be noematic as well as noetic, in conformity with the essential correlation between noesis and noema. The nucleus presents itself as selfsame, Husserl holds, in all modes of givenness; yet it is a selfsame clothed differently in each case. For example, it is a remembered or fancied object; but the object, as nucleus, possesses the same objective predicates, whatever be its modes of givenness. Too much stress cannot be laid on the point that we are following the author here in what is chiefly a noematic description. Nothing is being said directly concerning the noetic phases of experience; on the contrary, these remarks concern especially the "ways in which that of which we are conscious is itself and as such given." The noematic mode of givenness is a character of the noema, not of the noesis, and it is, above all, not merely a subjective state.

This is but a particular expression of Husserl's general observation: "The noematic 'objects' . . . are unities of which we have evident awareness in experience, but which yet transcend experience. But if this is so, the characters which stand out on them as we consciously apprehend them, and . . . are grasped as their unifying features, cannot possibly be regarded as real (reelle) phases of experience."18 And this all follows from Husserl's insistence on faithful description, on making theory conform to fact, on standing by what is given just as it is given. Emphasis on this point, however, ought not to be permitted to impair

18 *Ideas*, section 102, p. 295.
recognition of the noetic-noematic parallelism that stands in question. To the noematic characters of givenness there corresponds on the noetic side a correlative character which belongs to the specific meaning-giving phase.

The parallelism under discussion finds a second important illustration in groups of characters wholly different from, yet linked with, those previously considered. The correlation here intended is that between the noetic, doxic (belief) characters and the noematic, ontical (being) characters. To a certain basic form of doxic character and its possible modifications there correspond in the appearing object a certain basic form (Urform) of ontical character and its modifications, as noematic correlates of the noetic characters. The basic form of belief is belief simpliciter, certitude of belief, or with reference to its possible modalization, the protodoxa (Urdoxa), or primary belief (Urglaube). Real (wirkliches) being simpliciter constitutes the noematic correlate. Certain belief can pass over into suggestion, presumption, question, or doubt, etc., which are the several doxic modalities; and, correlatively, Certain-Being, as the root-form of Being, will adopt the ontical modalities as follows: the “possible,” the “probable,” the “questionable,” the “doubtful,” etc., respectively. In the technical usage which Husserl makes of “modality” it implies intentional reference to the corresponding un-modalized root-form, of which the modalities are “modifications.” Taking an example from the ontical modalities, it may be said that “The ‘possible’ states in itself just as much as ‘being possible’ . . .” Similarly, the doxic modalities have an intentional back-reference to the protodoxa. Thus the root-forms occupy a wholly distinctive position in their respective series; and, although considerations of convenience lead Husserl to speak of modalities as a series including the root-form, he emphatically rejects the view
according to which certainty is a modality coördinate with supposal and the rest of the belief modalities. Similar considerations hold, of course, for ontical modalities.

The significance of the intentional reference of modality to unmodalized root-form appears in a further observation that it is always essentially possible for us, for example, when living in the attitude of presumption, to look towards what is probable and also to look "towards the probability itself and as such, that is, towards the noematic object in the character which the presumption-noesis has given it." In the latter case, the object with its meaning and probability-character is given as being simpliciter and, therefore, is correlative to unmodified belief-consciousness, the protodoxa. In thus accepting, in principle, Kant's teaching that judgments of probability are not themselves probable, Husserl lays down a significant part of the foundation of his theory of truth.19

(3) Two Concepts of Object. — Thusfar the situation is this. In the field of pure immanence disclosed by the phenomenological reduction the correlation of noesis and noema is seen to be the fundamental structure of what we may call the meaning situation. The noetic phase of consciousness comprises two layers, the hyletic and the animating noetic phase, which together serve to constitute for consciousness the irreal noematic phase. In more ordinary language, mind means (intends), by means of sensory data, an object. Mind means, the content is meaningful, and the object is meant. But this analysis must undergo expansion on two sides in order more adequately to stress the bi-polar nature of consciousness. On the one side, there is the pure, transcendental ego as an indwelling form of unity; and, on the other side, there is the object sim-

19 On the whole discussion of doxic and ontical modalities see Ideas, sections 103-105.
pliciter, the unmodified object. Neither of these is normally present in propria persona to the glance of the phenomenologist. The pure ego is the unitary point of reference from which all actual and potential cogitationes radiate. The object, like Kant's transcendental object, is a pure $X$, the determinable subject of possible noematic predicates.

However questionable the concept of the pure ego may be, it is to receive only this passing notice. For present purposes, the concept of the object is the one which demands further elucidation. This is especially the case in view of the discovery that the objective reference of experience must be carefully distinguished from consciousness-of-something. Husserl finds such a distinction necessitated by the observation that the latter phrase covers the whole thoroughgoing correlation between full noesis and full noema, whereas the former phrase "points to a most inward phase of the noema." This phase is not the nucleus, as might be supposed; the glance of the pure ego "passes through" the nucleus to the objective upon which it is directed; but it is the midpoint of the nucleus, and it functions as the bearer of the "noematic peculiarities belonging to the nucleus," i.e., "the noematically modified properties of the 'meant as such.'" In this way the noema itself is seen to be provided with a content (its meaning) through which it refers to an object. And this holds good, Husserl notes, for every noema whatsoever.

The distinction drawn between content and object of the noema Husserl elucidates as that between the noematic objective predicates of the object-nucleus and that of which they are predicates—a distinction, be it noted, which falls within that phase of the noema that previously was designated as the nucleus, the "meant objective just as it is meant." That the nucleus, as has been said, submits to description in wholly objective terms (such as thing,
figure, cause, rough, hard, etc.) is a circumstance that suffices to mark off a wholly dependable content within every noema. The content consists exclusively of predicates and is, therefore, inconceivable without, though distinguishable from, the bearer of the predicates. The latter self-evidently exhibits itself to intuition as a self-identical, unitary object distinct from its predicates. The object, consequently, must be understood as a pure unity, "the pure X in abstraction from all predicates." In virtue of this unity, consciously grasped as self-identical, the varied manifold of nuclei "close up together in an identical unity," whether the apprehension of the same object is continuous in time or not. 

The deep obscurity of the notion of object has thus been brought to view; for two objects, or two meanings of the term, must be held apart: (1) the "object simpliciter" (Ge genstand schlechthin) as the determinable subject of its possible predicates, and (2) "the object in the mode of its determination" (Ge genstand im Wie), the object, that is to say, as characterized in the present noema by the noematic content, not exclusive of possible horizons of indeterminacy. Henceforth the term meaning (Sinn) will be reserved, in conformity with Husserl's subsequent usage, for this "modal object," the pure X together with its determining content.

(4) The Significance of these Analyses.—There are in the structures of transcendental consciousness as envisaged by Husserl certain points of general significance for any analysis of the situation in which meanings are descriptively present. I do not here refer to the emphasis on the synthetic character of the constituted objectivity or to the general analysis into act, content, object. Attention is

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20 Ideas, sections 129-131.
directed rather to the ambiguous character of the terms content and object. Unless the meaning of Husserl’s discussion has been misapprehended, the concept of content as sense datum and also the concept of content as that which means receive due recognition. There is no talk of the objective existence of sense data, either as physical or as psychological entities. Aside from the circumstance that phenomenology makes no determinations of reality or fact, Husserl vigorously rejects the view that hyletic data are psychological existences which can stand as signs of other existences, such as physical things. Not only is he dealing with a functional conception of sense data as bearers of intentionality, but he repeatedly argues against any kind of representational theory of perception, any theory such as has, in the past, been associated frequently with the conception of sense data as psychical states. Since sign-consciousness, Husserl argues, has its own typical structures, it is plain nonsense to identify it with types of consciousness where the glance of the ego passes through the hyle to the meant objectivity itself. In the consciousness of signs we are aware of something and of the reference this something has to something else. But in perception or recollection, for example, we are never directly aware of hyletic data as something signifying an object; we are aware, Husserl points out, of the object itself, and, therefore, cannot be supposed to have a sign-consciousness.

Consciousness, as has been asserted, is found by Husserl to possess a content of a quite different character from the hyle. We are aware of the content of the noema and, through that content, of the object simpliciter. There is as yet no problem of validity, of intending a real object as it really is; nevertheless, especially in the case of perceptual

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21 *Ideas*, section 43.
objects (things), the object *simpliciter* abides for consciousness as a selfsame thing through a series of variously changing determinations. Thus the meaning of the object which we have in mind commonly changes; whereas the object remains consciously the same. The noematic determinations themselves are unities over against noetic multiplicities; so that the ultimate unity of the object of consciousness is mediated by two levels of multiplicities, which the doctrine of sensa, for example, seems to ignore in one way or another. Husserl's teaching on this point, though not without difficulties, constitutes, in conjunction with his concept of the object *simpliciter*, a contribution to the problem of the appearing of objects that deserves notice.

B

(1) *Reason, Reality, Self-Evidence.*—The details that have thus far attracted our attention, though they may seem excessively tedious, have, nevertheless, furnished the groundwork upon which the problem dealt with in the phenomenology of reason can be stated and adequately grasped. The phenomenological solution of the problem will consist in the description of the noetic-noematic structures involved in rational consciousness, in consciousness of a real (*wirklich*) object as distinguished from an object that is "merely meant." The necessary correlation of the essence noesis with the essence noema brings it about that noeses articulated in such and such a way constitute *eo ipso* the consciousness of a noematic object determined in certain ways. Yet the question of validity remains: "Is the object itself real?" "Could it not," Husserl asks, "be unreal whilst the various . . . posited meanings (determining the object) fulfilled their function according to the measures of consciousness?" Is the X, of which we are necessarily aware as the same, really the same? Or, "when is the noemati-
cally 'meant' identity of the X 'real identity' . . . instead of being 'merely' meant . . .?

Husserl's reply consists in analyses of the way in which real objects are consciously constituted in respect of both noesis and noema. In other words, he seeks to exhibit the conditions under which the character of truly or really Being attaches to the noema. A real object is one upon which it is possible to pass a favorable "verdict of reason," for whatever truly or really is is susceptible of rational proof (Ausweisung). The phenomenology of reason seeks to disclose the essential conditions under which rational proof is possible.

In analyses which have already been considered, Husserl points out that the specific meaning-giving phase of the noesis necessarily possesses a doxic or belief character of one kind or another; while, correlativey, the nucleus of the noema possesses a corresponding ontical character, a character of Being. Both of these characters are referred to as "positional" or "thetic" when it seems desirable to stress the object-positing function of doxic consciousness. But belief may be, he finds, either rational or not; correlativey, being may be either real or not. The phenomenology of reason obviously hinges on the characters distinguishing rational belief and real being from their respective opposites, on the discovery of an essential relation between rationality and its proper ground. A brief answer is not far to seek. In order that belief may be rational, or, in Husserl's technical language, in order that a specific character of rationality should belong essentially to the character of positionality (the belief-character), the positing must be "grounded not merely in meaning generally, but in a filled-out primordial dator (originär gebendem) meaning." To say that the rational character "belongs" to the positional character is to say that they are

22 Ideas, section 135, pp. 377-378.
essentially and indissolubly connected, because positing is essentially (not merely in fact) motivated by the primordial dator meaning.

The relation of rationality to primordial dator meaning becomes clear only after we have seen what is involved in primordial givenness, one of the modes of givenness which have already received a word of explanation. Primordial givenness is that mode in which an object is apprehended by some kind of direct mental vision (insight or self-evidence). Positing with insight differs from blind positing as perception differs from non-perceptual representations, such as recollection and imagination. And just as it is irrational for, let us say, the natural man to posit natural objects except on the original ground of perceptual experience in which the objects in question are brought to primordial givenness; so it is irrational with respect to every type of positional experience to posit its intentional object as real except when the positing is motivated by the primordially given object itself. When the object itself is given in primordial intuition, its positing is necessarily rational, and, conversely, the character of rationality is essentially incompatible with blind positing, i.e., positing without insight.

The character of primordial givenness manifests itself in the noema as a state of being "embodied," the state of being primordially filled-out with intuitional content. The meaning is not merely meant, empty of intuitional content; it is sensuously (or, in general, intuitionally) specified: and this not by way of, let us say, imagination, but primordially. The character of "embodiment" cannot, being noematic, be supposed to be noetic or merely subjective. It is a feature standing out unmistakably upon the noema as consciously presented and serving as the essential motive of rational positing; i.e., in Husserl's phrase, "the mean-
ing stamped with this character now functions as the foundation of the noematic character of positionality, or, which here means the same thing, the ontical character.”

Curious terminology and the extraordinary complexity of the analysis need not obscure the fact that we here are occupied with the claim that positing is rational when and only when it is self-evident positing. It ought to be equally clear also that self-evidence signifies for Husserl nothing so little as a mystical *index veri*, a voice “from a better world” calling, “Here is the truth!” It is not any kind of feeling or appendage externally attached to a positing act; on the contrary, it is, Husserl declares, “an entirely distinctive occurrence” consisting basically in “the unity of a rational positing with that which essentially motivates it”; *i. e.*, a primordial dator meaning in the mode of intuitional saturation. It is, as we are elsewhere told, “a quite special mode of positing... which belongs to (*i. e.*, is essentially motivated by) eidetically determined essences constitutive of the noema.” The recent *Méditations Cartésiennes* describes self-evidence somewhat less technically as “the experience of a being and its mode of being”; “our mental glance,” Husserl says, “reaches the object itself.”

While there is no self-evidence apart from positional experiences in which what is posited acquires primordial givenness, Husserl notes that there is more than one kind of self-evidence. It may, in the less perfect form, be the “assertoric” and “inadequate” vision of the transcendent individual, which cannot be adequately given in finite consciousness. In the other instance, it may rest on “apodeictic” and “adequate” insight into adequately given imma-

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23 *Ideas*, section 136, is especially pertinent to the discussion of rationality and primordial givenness.

24 *Ideas*, section 136, p. 381; section 145, p. 400; *Méditations Cartésiennes*, p. 10.
nent essences and essential connections. The latter type of vision Husserl understands, of course, to be self-evidence, or insight, in the usual strict sense, defined by him as "a positional doxic and also adequate dator consciousness which 'excludes Otherness.'" It is an error in principle, he holds, to demand strict self-evidence where only assertoric self-evidence is possible. The kind of self-evidence possible in any given case is determined by the kind of object in question, for the essence of the object prefigures the kind of possible filling-out and givenness of which it is intrinsically capable and governs, therefore, the manner in which objects subordinate to the essence may be brought to full determinacy and adequate givenness.\textsuperscript{25}

Speaking generally, there corresponds to the two types of self-evidence two types of Being, Husserl notes, not both of which can be brought to adequate givenness in finite consciousness. Immanent Being (i.e., primarily, essential Being in the sphere of pure consciousness) can be adequately given in finite consciousness, for in this case the primordially filled-out meaning "coalesces" with the real object. On the other hand, there is transcendent Being, which cannot be adequately given in finite consciousness, since its adequate givenness (the complete determination of the determinable $X$) would essentially involve the synthesis of an infinite series of noemata, as readily appears from a consideration of the familiar example of the flowering tree. Despite this, however, Husserl discovers that an Idea (Idee) of it can be adequately given in finite consciousness as "an a priori rule for the well-ordered infinities of inadequate experiences." The essential possibility of this he grounds in the allegation that the Idea of infinity is not itself infinite, and that the insight

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ideas}, sections 137, 138, 142, especially p. 396.
that this infinity cannot be given implies the intuitive given-ness of the Idea of that infinity. 26

Husserl’s phenomenology of reason culminates, therefore, in the crowning insight that “to every object ‘that truly is’ there intrinsically corresponds . . . the idea of a possible consciousness in which the object itself can be grasped in a primordial and also perfectly adequate way. Conversely, when this possibility is guaranteed, the object is eo ipso ‘that which truly is.’” It follows that the whole of the phenomenology of reason can be summed up in the dictum: “The Eidos True-Being is correlatively equivalent to the Eidos Adequately-given-Being and Being that can be posited as self-evident.” 27

(2) The Definition of Truth.—It now remains only to present a formal definition of truth in phenomenological terms and to explain certain of its implications more fully, though all that is essential to the question has already been stated. One or two further complications in theory will be presented at the proper time in connection with certain critical remarks.

Husserl’s definition of truth is, at first glance, somewhat mystifying: “Truth is manifestly the correlate of the perfect rational character of the protodoxa, the believing certainty. The expressions: ‘A protodoxic posited meaning (Satz). . . . is true,’ and ‘The character of perfect rationality attaches to the corresponding belief and judgment,’ are equivalent correlates. We are not referring here, of course, to any fact of experience or to any individual judger, although it is eidetically taken for granted that truth can be actually given only where there is an actual consciousness of the self-evident . . .” 28

26 Ideas, sections 143-144.
27 Ideas, section 142, p. 395; section 144, p. 398.
28 Ideas, section 139, pp. 388.
To this may be added the further remark (connecting the concept of truth more intimately with previous discussion of the relation of protodoxa and doxic modalities) that, although protodoxic self-evidence is lacking with respect to the content of meaning, \( S \text{ is } P \), one of the doxic modalities may, nevertheless, be self-evident. Thus arises a sort of modal self-evidence essentially equivalent to and correlated with a protodoxic self-evidence of altered meaning (e.g., that \( S \text{ is } P \) is presumable).

Truth is thus a noematic character correlated with the noetic character of rationality attaching to the protodoxa. Truth, in other words, is predicatable of the posited meaning (\textit{Satz}, proposition); rationality is predicatable of the belief-character of the noesis; reality is predicatable of the object referred to by noesis and noema alike. In no sense whatever does Husserl contend that a meaning is true because, and only because, we are psychologically compelled to believe it,—because, that is to say, it is posited on the ground of that primordial givenness which essentially motivates rational positing in general. A mere meaning is not posited (e.g., when in brackets, in “neutrality” consciousness of “as-if” positing) and is hence neither valid nor the contrary; but a meaning, when posited, falls under the jurisdiction of reason and is subject to “verdicts of reason,” judgments passed upon it by reason. The determination of truth rests, therefore, on the intrinsic nature of reason and its essential and necessary motivation by what is logically entitled to motivate it.

C

(1) Self-Evidence, the Crucial Concept.—The phenomenology of reason raises a number of questions; it is, perhaps, laden with difficulties; but to catalogue and discuss all of them would be clearly unprofitable, if not impos-
sible. Instead of exhaustive criticism of details, the focusing of attention upon the main points will be my aim. Husserl's main contention is the following: We know or judge or posit rationally, so far as we know, judge, or posit what is intuitively self-evident; while what is intuitively self-evident is, in the intrinsic nature of the case, that which really and truly is. The focal point of this contention is manifestly the concept of self-evidence. At any rate the situation appears thus to me. My critical remarks, therefore, will be directed primarily to Husserl's doctrine of self-evidence.

A side remark by way of elucidation: "Self-evidence" is only an approximate translation of "Evidenz," and this in two respects. In the first place, Evidenz, Einsicht, and Intuition are frequently used interchangeably by Husserl. Evidenz, as evidential vision, then, characterizes the noesis rather than, as in English usage, the noema. This circumstance appears even more clearly in Logische Untersuchungen, which was written prior to the development of some of the minute distinctions laid down in Ideas. "Evidenz," Husserl writes, "is, rather, nothing else than the 'experience' (Erlebnis) of truth." "It is," he adds, "a consciousness of primordial givenness." 29 In the words of Ideas, it is "the unity of a rational positing with that which essentially motivates it" (i. e., that which is primordially given in the mode of the "embodied"). Despite all this, Husserl uses the word Evidenz, with full cognizance of ambiguity, as pertaining also to the neomiac posited meaning. In the second place, not all instances of Evidenz can be correctly rendered self-evidence, which connotes an apodeictic character, for Husserl's term applies also to assertoric and even to "mediate" Evidenz.

29 Logische Untersuchungen, Halle, Max Niemeyer, 2 vol., 1900-1901, I, p. 190.
In many ways it seems desirable to use the words *evidence* and *evident* to translate the equivalent German words in their wider signification and to reserve *self-evidence* and *self-evident* for the strict usage, connoting the inconceivability of the opposite. For the communication of the more precise meaning Husserl tends to reserve the word *Einsicht*.

(2) *The Aims and Achievements of the Doctrine of Self-Evidence.*—In appealing to intuition, self-evidence, insight, Husserl expresses one of the profoundest motives governing the more recent trends in philosophy. Just as G. E. Moore and William James revolted against the scepticism implicit in Bradley’s position, Husserl turns his back upon the enticements of the relativism of a philosophy based on psychology or dependent upon historical accident. He has no sympathy for the sublime but appalling coherence theory, which places truth always just beyond our grasp, and he is too competent a thinker to be deluded by the spurious simplicity of a naive theory of correspondence. His antipathy for “Psychologism” found expression, as every one knows, in the first volume of *Logische Untersuchungen*, but its fruits are stored in *Ideen*, especially in the concept of the transcendental, as contrasted with the psychological, subjectivity (the latter, as with Kant, falling within the sphere of the former), and in the warning that the eidetic must not be treated psychologically, and again in the refusal to identify essences and concepts (on the ground that concepts, being products of the psychological process of *Begriffsbildung*, now exist, now do not, whereas essences are non-temporal, remaining what they are apart from *de facto* constructions).[^30] Historicism also is rendered impotent, for theories condi-

[^30]: *Ideas*, section 22.
tioned by historical accidents have the ground cut from beneath them by the transcendental reduction, which restricts investigation to the field of pure immanence. In this way Husserl eludes the difficulties attending a naturalistic theory of knowledge which sets about the solution of problems stated in terms of a situation which science seems to validate. A theory of knowledge worth its salt must exercise a radical *Epoche*, since the foundations of science itself stand in question.

The greatest achievement of this theory of self-evidence appears at a more profound point. If a position has no "rational weight," how does a combination of positions acquire it? If experience as such has no *Evidenz* whatsoever, whence comes it? Is not the appeal to experience on the part both of Dewey and of Bosanquet an appeal to what is "primordially given"? This is precisely the point where Husserl's chief merit appears, for nobody has so vigorously defended the primordially given, or the immediate vision of it as the ultimate source of all rational authority—a matter which more than one theory has uncritically assumed. To see the justice of this one need only recall the repeated recourse of the idealist to experience, the radical empiricism of James, the denotative method of *Experience and Nature*, the curiously ingenious, though misguided, attempt of Russell to deduce the existence of the external world from "hard data." Few have seen as clearly as Husserl just what they were about, and I should hesitate to refuse acquiescence in his assertion that "we *(i. e., the phenomenologists)* are the true *(echte)* positivists," by which is meant nothing so little as a positivism that identifies experience and empirical perception. Husserl's positivism rests on an explicit extension of the concept of perception to cover all types of *primordial dator vision*. Such an extension is important, because it recog-
nizes the fact that ultimate rational authority resides, not in perception of such otiose entities as sense-data, but in the perception of the individual object (as "the datum of individual or empirical intuition") and in the insight into pure essences and essential connections (as data of essential intuition). Husserl tempers his empiricism with rationalism and his rationalism with empiricism. Or, perhaps, it were better to say that his position, though rationalistic on the whole, cuts across both empiricism and rationalism and eludes some of the difficulties of each.

It is not uncommon for those seeking to discredit Husserl's doctrine to point with unconcealed amusement to the limited nature of such self-evident truths as "Red is not green," "2 plus 1 equals 1 plus 2," as evidence of the barrenness of his conception of a priori and apodeictic self-evidence. Even Bosanquet has allowed himself to be led into that byway without once seeing that the whole of phenomenology consists of such direct insights. Instead of appealing to such trivialities as those mentioned, in order to illustrate Husserl's doctrine of self-evident truth, a more just picture is drawn by choosing from the pages of Ideas almost any random statement expressing eidetic relations. "The Eidos True-Being is correlatively equivalent to the Eidos Adequately-given-Being" is an outstanding example of what Husserl regards as self-evident truth. Another is the distinction between noesis and noema, as well as all the ramifications of their complex correlativity. It thus appears that, while repudiation of phenomenology in its entirety is not inconceivable, nothing short of that can justify the dismissal of intuition and Evidenz with a smile.

Indeed, Bosanquent's theory of insight, which by his own confession he owes in part to Husserl, has important points in common with Husserl's theory, as one readily
learns from Bosanquet's informative little book entitled *Implication and Linear Inference.* There insight is described as "the vision of implication in the system of experience," where implication is understood to be any relation (including causality) by which elements of a system are mutually connected. Husserl, to be sure, minimizes or ignores the presence of system to as great an extent as Bosanquet emphasizes it. But short of reference to an inclusive system, the two authors' descriptions of intuition agree remarkably, especially when we take into account the stress Husserl puts on essential relations. The source of necessity of such relations is different in each case; for Husserl discovers it in the intrinsic nature of the related essences, while Bosanquet finds it in the nature of the concrete system which determines the relation of its parts. The result is: Bosanquet, and not Husserl (as we shall see), is in a position to explain how intuitions can conflict with one another.

(3) *The Kinds of Self-Evidence.*—It has been seen that Husserl recognizes a distinction between two principal kinds of vision (seeing and insight) and a corresponding distinction between two kinds of *Evidenz* (that which is assertoric and inadequate and that which is apodeictic and adequate). But an adequate treatment must take other distinctions into account, which presuppose further elucidation of the Husserlian concept of essence.

Essences as objects which can be consciously posited, fall, like individual objects, into two classes of being, transcendent and immanent: "on the one side essences of the formations of consciousness itself, on the other essences of individual events which transcend consciousness, es-

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31 P. 160, and *passim.*
sences therefore of that which only ‘declares’ itself in for-
mations of consciousness . . .” 32

Recognition of this distinction supplies the foundation
for distinguishing assertoric from apodeictic evidence and
adequate from inadequate evidence. The former oppo-
sition is grounded in the distinction between individual ob-
jects (that, qua individual, can essentially be otherwise)
and essences (as eternally selfsame). The latter opposition
is grounded in the distinction between transcendent and
immanent objects. These lines of opposition, Husserl sug-
gests, can cross so as to allow not only the two combina-
tions previously touched upon, but also two others: viz.,
apodeictic but inadequate insight into transcendent es-
sences and adequate, assertoric vision of immanent particu-
larities. There are thus four principal kinds of primordial
dator intuition instead of the two previously distinguished.
The distinction between adequate and inadequate evidence
shall alone be drawn under our critical observation. And
the mention of but two types of these is justified by the
fact that the outstanding type of inadequate vision is asser-
toric, and that of adequate insight is apodeictic. Let us,
therefore, first consider assertoric, inadequate evidence
and then apodeictic, adequate self-evidence. In the language
of traditional philosophy, Husserl’s views on truths of fact
and truths of reason will be discussed.

(4) Doctrine of Assertoric, Inadequate Evidence De-
fended.—To quarrel with Husserl’s general analysis of
“seeing” (perceiving in the usual restricted sense) seems
idle. This is the case, because unbiased analysis and de-
scription of the perceptual situation disclose precisely
those central characteristics which Husserl recognizes
under the titles “primordial givenness” and “inadequate

177-178.
and assertoric givenness.” The inadequate givenness of primordial dator objects means that the object as such intrinsically includes within itself horizons of indeterminacy, which are in principle capable of intuitive filling-out in the further course of primordial experience. It belongs to the essence of this type of object to be incompletely or inadequately given and subject to further primordial determination. Such determination, when it occurs, either confirms (enhances the rational weight of) or cancels the previous positing (diminishes its rational weight); or it may, in extreme cases, cause the unity of the object to “explode,” as Husserl says, in a variety of conflicting appearances. Assertoric seeing, then, is always subject to confirmation through further instances of assertoric seeing, and the primordial givenness of the object is never adequate. This means nothing so little as it means that the primordial givenness has no rational weight whatsoever. One instance of seeing may conflict with another, but the conflict has cognitive consequences just because each instance as such is an ultimate ground of legitimacy for reason. To suppose that one instance of seeing could not conflict with another when both are primordial would be, Husserl observes, as absurd as to suppose that conflicting forces are not forces at all.33 Confirmation of this may be found in the actual procedure of the scientist, however innocent of phenomenological presuppositions. For is not Husserl asserting that for perceptual objects (or transcendent individuals generally) observation furnishes the court of final appeal? Yet not mere observation. For without insight into conflict of observations, how can one seeing be corrected by another?

The mere repetition of observations will never complete the givenness of a transcendent object; there is no

ultimate adequation of intellect and thing in this way. Adequation is essentially, in this case, an Idea or ideal of reason, which, being grounded in the primordial vision of essences of the object, functions as the anticipatory filling-out of the meaning of the perceptual object, or, in general, of the transcendent object. A transcendent object is adequately given only as Idea. This means that, while such objects are never as such adequately given, they do not need to be so given to insure their reality.

Some may see a difficulty in this. In the case of transcendent objects, it will be said, the perceived object cannot itself be adequately given and cannot, therefore, be real in terms of the correlation of “adequately-given-being” and “true-being.” On the contrary, that which, on Husserl’s showing, is adequately given is an essential rule grounded in the essence of the object and determining well-ordered infinities of inadequate appearances. But the consciousness of this rule or Idea is structurally quite distinct from the consciousness of the transcendent object. Thus Husserl must be charged with securing the reality of transcendent objects by means of the subterfuge of introducing an immanent object (rule or Idea) as a surrogate for it.34

Whatever force this objection may have, it is not insuperable. For the rule is grounded a priori in the essence of the perceptually warranted object so far as it is primordially given. The rule, posited with insight, affirms the essential correlation of the transcendent object with articulated series of noemata; whereas the primordial dator, though inadequate, vision of the object, which is intuitively filled-out so far as it falls within the perception, affords the required motivation for the positing of

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the transcendent object as real, though not as completed in finite intuitive experience. Despite the inadequacy with which the object as such is given, we are not precluded from affirming "It is real," even though we cannot affirm "The thing is real" in all its determinations.35

(5) Doctrine of Apodeictic, Adequate Self-Evidence Assailed.—The whole scene changes when we turn to apodeictic, adequate Evidenz. Gone are doubts and possibility of doubts; gone is speech about "enhancement" and "diminishment" of rational weight. What is adequately given is intrinsically incapable of having its rationality questioned. For adequation is adequation of intellect and object; an adequately given object is given precisely as it really and truly is. And when we ask whether such self-evidence is ever at hand, we have struck at the very heart of the phenomenological method.

Let it be provisionally granted that adequate givenness is correlated essentially with true being. Then it is necessary to ask, "May that adequate givenness with respect to so-called immanent objects not itself be a "rule" of some sort?" To be sure, it is not precisely the kind of rule which is disclosed in the case of transcendent objects proper. That kind of rule, indeed, it cannot be, for it is grounded *a priori* in the nature of a totally different kind of object, an immanent object, which does not have perspectival variations, as the transcendent object does. Because of the absence of an infinity of perspectives, it may well be inappropriate to speak of a rule at all. But the point is the same in any case. Is not the adequate givenness even of an immanent object in some sense an ideal of reason? Is it not true in some sense to assert that essences themselves are given only inadequately, even within the sphere of phenomenological immanence?

This is not a wholly gratuitous suggestion, introducing merely external criticism of Husserl's position. The most that it does is to emphasize a feature of his thought, which he fails to stress sufficiently; although he does indeed recognize something like the difficulty in question. To the conviction expressed in *Ideas* that perfect clarity is the test of truth he adds the statement in *Formale und Transzendentale Logik* (p. 253) that perfect clarity is an *Idea* (*Idee*), an ideal limit of reason, which one can freely "approach." The point is implicitly granted again in the observation that phenomenology operates with "impure intuitions," *i.e.*, those which are neither fully clear nor fully obscure (empty of intuitive content). The consequence of this Husserl clearly states: "The particular intuitions which minister to the apprehension of the essence may be already sufficiently clear to render possible a completely clear grasp of some essential generality, and yet not so adequate as to satisfy the main intention; there is a lack of clearness as regards the closer definitions of the interwoven essences . . ." Moreover, in the progress of phenomenological analysis Husserl finds that differences come to be recognized in what was at first intuited as undifferentiated unity.\(^36\)

A word will make explicit what is here involved. What is adequately given must be given with intuitive clarity; but what is clear need not be adequate, *i.e.*, satisfy the main intention. In so far as clear, the intuition of essences is apodeictic, but this does not as such fulfill the demands of adequacy. With reference to the question whether adequacy characterizes any actual piece of knowledge, it seems desirable to ask what clarity signifies and to follow out its implications for adequacy.

An intention is clear, or its object is clearly given,

\(^{36}\) *Ideas*, sections 67-69, especially pp. 196-197. *Cf.* section 84, p. 244.
when the object is "self-given." Self-givenness must be distinguished from primordial givenness, for an object can be given as itself in modes other than the primordial. But in the case of essences this is declared not to hold good, since primordial givenness of essences is grounded in fancy-consciousness of the individual as satisfactorily as in perception. However, the clear and primordial givenness of an essence does not exclude aspects given only obscurely. In such a case the essence would be clearly but inadequately given; all doubt would not be excluded. Yet we ask, Does the clearness, the self-givenness, of the essence concern merely the essence itself? Is not essence relative to a context, which in turn plays a significant part in questions of clarity?

An essence, looked at directly, appears self-contained, indifferent to accidents of space and time, unresponsive to other essences and to the peculiarities of the conscious life that apprehends them. But viewed in the concrete setting in which they function, essences appear to be relative, in a large measure, to the setting or context, which includes even the aims and interests of the investigator. What is the essence of consciousness? In terms of the reduction, it is intentionality. In terms of behavioristic assumptions, it is behavior—which is not consciousness at all! Which is the essence par excellence? Even though it represents an attempt to avoid, in principle, all sources of error by being radically devoid of presuppositions, phenomenology presents what amounts to a peculiar point of view from which to study conscious phenomena.\(^{37}\) It delineates what we may provisionally call a subjective context representative of the investigator's choice of attitude. It is precisely within that setting that phenomenological principles possess absolute

validity, for this reduced field of consciousness constitutes a strictly limited range of relevance.

An essence, then, is clear when it fulfills its function in the relevant setting. It is adequately grasped when nothing relevant has been left out of account. In other words, insight into essences and their interconnections is always apodeictic, but adequacy applies only to such insight as grasps essences in an exhaustive sweep of relevancy. The point may be taken also from the side of intention by noting that essential insight is adequate, if only the main intention is fulfilled. The question we ask is whether the intention must conform to the intuitive fulfillment or vice versa. Is the “internal” or the “external” meaning of an idea determinative of its truth? And the answer is that Husserl’s emphasis on the main intention tends to obscure the part played by the primordially given in modifying the main intention itself. This amounts to the claim that Husserl does not sufficiently recognize the “taken” or “postulated” aspect of the main intention, which, to my mind, possesses fixed and definite limits only when these limits are set, in a certain sense, by arbitrary selection.

If such be a true analysis, then the intuition of immanent essences cannot be said to be adequate on the ground of the intuitive filling-out of the essence. There seems to be no possible guarantee that insight grasps its object with perfect self-evidence, if the object alone is concerned in the grasp. These statements make two points. First, it is contended that, since essential insight is apodeictic, all truths (of that character) are absolute, but there is no absolute truth (as the correlate of adequate evidence). Secondly, the worth of self-evidence as a criterion has been questioned—a matter requiring further treatment.

(6) Self-Evidence Not the Sole Criterion of Truth.—Self-evidence is not a satisfactory criterion of truth, and
Husserl himself suggests a supplementary criterion in certain situations.

There is a criticism of the doctrine of self-evidence that has received the sanction of the years—Self-evident to whom? It is felt that the appeal to self-evidence is something beneath the dignity of a gentleman of intellectual affairs, for that criterion, being essentially private and incommunicable, remains suspect. And, it is true, crimes against reason have been committed in its fair name. What presumption can justify the attempt to rehabilitate this crippled criterion? 38

Husserl’s retort to this line of criticism is simple and telling. In reply to Theodor Ziehen, he writes, “We would naturally not deny that the appeal to ‘intuition’ has often meant talking nonsense. The question is only whether this nonsense in the case of an alleged intuition could be discovered in any other way than through real intuition. In the sphere of experience (Erfahrung) also the appeal to experience has involved much traffic in nonsense, and it would be hard if for that reason experience in general were to be set down as ‘bluff’ . . .” 39 “Nobody’s insight—so far as the one and the other are really insights—can conflict with ours.” “For, just as it is taken for granted that nothing is to be seen where nothing is, so not less is it taken for granted that nothing can be seen into as true where no truth is; in other words, there can be no self-evidence.” Such statements speak for themselves. Yet the question remains whether all this “means only that what is experienced as true is also true simpliciter, cannot be false.” 40 In other words, is it not fair to ask whether, bar-

38 J. E. Salomaa’s criticism seems to amount to much the same thing: “In order to be regarded as the ultimate and necessary criterion of truth, self-evidence must itself be self-evident. It, however, is not—at least, not for all thinkers.” (Das Problem der Wahrheit, Helsinki, 1929, p. 99.)
39 Ideas, section 79, p. 230, n.
40 Logische Untersuchungen, I, p. 191.
ring dishonesty, there is any intrinsic feature of "alleged" insight that distinguishes it from "real" insight? If not, how is that distinction made?

Husserl never, I think, produces an answer to such questions, although certain of his statements suggest a possible answer, which represents rather a completion of the theory of insight than a retraction of it. What is correct in that theory and ought to be retained has already been indicated, and no repetition is needed. Insight into the primordially given is, indeed, a necessary condition of consciousness of truth. But—and this is the point—it is not a sufficient condition of the consciousness of truth and stands in need of completing conditions. Analysis of what is involved in some of Husserl's remarks readily discloses the type of completion to be sought. We need only to consider the structures which he discovers when he considers the ways in which meanings are corrected, and we find that "confirmation" is a phenomenon in which the correlates of partial intentions come to be intentionally filled out in primordial givenness so as to "harmonize" with what has already been posited in conformity with the main intention. The absence of such harmony tends to destroy the unity of the meant object. Also, in the case of eidetic insight, alleged intuitions are corrected by real ones. It is idle to deny what Husserl points out, namely, that such correction would be impossible if primordial vision as such possessed no rational weight. On the other hand, however, it appears imperative to insist that the mere possession of rational weight constitutes no sufficient ground for the correction of another insight also possessed of rational weight. The two instances of insight must have a certain relation in terms of which one can function as confirmation (or the reverse) of the other; and we must also have insight into this relation. Husserl recognizes this fact in some meas-
ure, although he fails adequately to stress the relevant system within which correction occurs. The rational weight of an insight is no fixed quantity but is relative to its position within a systematic context. If all insights seem to possess such weight, it is only because insights always refer to systematic relationships. If two insights, as self-enclosed intuitions, conflicted, one would expect that to be an end of the matter, unless their mutual relevance to a third factor in the situation supplied a means of accepting one, in preference to the other, as "real" insight.

The bad word *coherence* has thus far been assiduously avoided. But there can be no doubt that the foregoing analysis requires some such word to designate the kind of test to be expected wherever meanings are to be corrected.

Street Fulton.

McGill University.