

EDMUND HUSSERL

# THE IDEA OF PHENOMENOLOGY

*Translated by*

WILLIAM P. ALSTON

AND

GEORGE NAKHNIKIAN

*Introduction by*

GEORGE NAKHNIKIAN



THE HAGUE

MARTINUS NIJHOFF

1964

*Time - p. 5, p. 8-9 (Sond), p. 34, 52-3, 56  
p. 37 - Howl. Plus - what is important to understand  
the phenomenological identity of objects  
in the givenness of objects  
→ with it*

# THE IDEA OF PHENOMENOLOGY

cf. Husserl's *Phänomenologie*  
*metaphysique*

## THE TRAIN OF THOUGHTS IN THE LECTURES

<3>

*Natural thinking* in science and everyday life is untroubled by the difficulties concerning the possibility of cognition. *Philosophical thinking* is circumscribed by one's position toward the problems concerning the possibility of cognition. The perplexities in which reflection about the possibility of a cognition that 'gets at' the things themselves becomes entangled: How can we be sure that cognition accords with things as they exist in themselves, that it "gets at them"? What do things in themselves care about our ways of thinking and the logical rules governing them? These are laws of how we think; they are psychological laws — Biologism, psychological laws as laws of adaptation.

Absurdity: to begin with, when we think naturally about cognition and fit it and its achievements into the natural ways of thinking which pertains to the sciences we arrive at theories that are appealing at first. But they end in contradiction or absurdity — Inclination to open scepticism.

Even this attempt to look at these problems scientifically we can call "theory of knowledge." At any rate what emerges is the idea of a theory of knowledge as a science which solves the above-mentioned difficulties, gives us an ultimate, clear, therefore inherently consistent insight into the essence of cognition and the possibility of its achievements. The critique of cognition in this sense is the condition of the possibility of a metaphysics.

The *method* of the critique of cognition is the phenomenological method, phenomenology as the general doctrine of essences, within which the science of the essence of cognition finds its place.

What sort of method is this? How can a science of cognition be established if cognition in general, what cognizing means and can accomplish, is questioned? What method can here reach the goal?

<4> A. The First Step in the Phenomenological Orientation

1) Right away we become dubious whether such a science is at all possible. If it questions all cognition, every cognition chosen as a starting point is questioned. How then can it ever begin?

This, however, is only a specious difficulty. In "being called into question," cognition is neither *disavored* nor regarded as in every sense doubtful. The question is about some accomplishments imputed to cognition, whereas in fact it is even an open question whether the difficulties pertain to all possible types of cognition. At any rate, if the theory of knowledge is to concern itself with the possibility of cognition it must have cognitions of the possibilities of cognition which, as such, are beyond question; indeed, cognitions in the fullest sense, cognitions about which absolutely no doubt of their having reached their objects is possible. If we are uncertain or unclear as to how it is possible for cognition to reach its object, and if we are inclined to doubt that such a thing is possible, we must, first of all, have before us indubitable examples of cognitions or possible cognitions which really reach, or would reach, their respective objects. At the outset we must not take anything as a cognition just because it seems to be one; otherwise we would have no possible, or what comes to the same thing, no sensible objective.

Here the *Cartesian method of doubt* provides a starting point. Without doubt there is *cogitatio*, there is, namely, the mental process during the [subject's] undergoing it and in a simple reflection upon it. The seeing, direct grasping and having of the *cogitatio* is already a cognition. The *cogitationes* are the first absolute data.

2) What follows naturally is our *first question in the theory of knowledge*: What distinguishes the certainty in these examples from the uncertainty in other instances of alleged cognition? Why is there in certain cases a tendency toward scepticism and toward asking the sceptical question: How can cognition reach a being, and why is there not this doubt and this difficulty in connection with the *cogitationes*?

<5> People answer at first — that is indeed the answer ready at hand — in terms of the pair of concepts or words *immanence* and *transcendence*. The "seeing" cognition of the *cogitatio* is immanent.

The cognition belonging to the objective sciences, the natural sciences and the sciences of culture (*Geisteswissenschaften*) and on closer inspection also the mathematical sciences, is transcendent. Involved in the objective sciences is the *doubtfulness of transcendence*, the question: How can cognition reach beyond itself? How can it reach a being that is not to be found within the confines of consciousness? There is not this difficulty with the "seeing" cognition of the *cogitatio*.<sup>1</sup>

3) Next, one is inclined to interpret, as if this were obvious, immanence as genuine immanence (*reelle Immanenz*)<sup>2</sup> and even perhaps to interpret it psychologically, as *immanence in something real* (*reale Immanenz*): the object of cognition too, is within the cognitive process as a real actuality, or in the [stream of] ego-consciousness of which the mental process is a part. That the cognitive act can hit upon and find its object in the same [stream of] consciousness and within the same real here and now, that is what is taken for granted. The neophyte will say, at this point, that the immanent is in me, the transcendent outside of me.

On a closer view, however, *genuine immanence* (*reelle Immanenz*) differs from *immanence in the sense of self-givenness as constituted in evidence* (*Evidenz*). The genuinely immanent (*reelle Immanenz*) is taken as the indubitable just on account of the fact that it presents nothing else, "points" to nothing "outside" itself for what is here intended is fully and adequately given in itself. Any self-givenness other than that of the genuinely immanent (*reelle Immanenz*) is not yet in view.

4) So for the moment no distinction is made. The first step toward clarity now is this: the genuinely immanent (*reelle Immanenz*), or what would here mean the same, the adequately self-given, is beyond question. I may make use of it. That which is transcendent (not genuinely immanent) I may not use. Therefore,

<sup>1</sup> Tr. note: we have rendered Husserl's word *sicheren* as "see," the point of the double quotes being that this use of "see" is broader than simply seeing with one's eyes.

<sup>2</sup> Tr. note: *reelle Immanenz* has no straightforward translation. The distinction Husserl has in mind is the immanence of universals (essences) vs. the (*reelle*) immanence of mental occurrences and their contents, e.g., *cogitationes*, their contents; also, psychological occurrences such as toothaches. Everything (*reelle*) immanent is existentially mind-dependent. Essences, on the other hand, are neither mental occurrences nor contents. They are intentionally in-existent objects of cognitive acts, specifically of "seeings," but they are not ingredients of such acts. Their immanence is simply their givenness to "seeings."

I must accomplish a *phenomenological reduction*. I must exclude all that is *transcendently* posited.

Why? [Because] if I am in the dark as to how cognition can reach that which is transcendent, not given in itself but "intended as being outside," / no cognition or science of the transcendent can help to dispel the darkness. What I want is *clarity*. I want to understand *the possibility* of that reaching. But this, if we examine its sense, signifies: I want to come face to face with the essence of the possibility of that reaching. I want to make it given to me in an act of "seeing." A "seeing" cannot be demonstrated. The blind man who wishes to see cannot be made to see by means of scientific proofs. Physical and physiological theories about colors give no "seeing" (*schauende*) clarity about the meaning of color as those with eyesight have it. If, therefore, the critique of cognition is a science, as it doubtless is in the light of these considerations, a science which is to clarify all species and forms of cognition, *it can make no use of any science of the natural sort*. It cannot tie itself to the conclusions that any natural science has reached about what is. For it they remain in question. As far as the critique of cognition is concerned, all the sciences are only *phenomena of science*. Every one of that sort signifies a defective *metábas* (foundation). This comes about only by way of a mistaken but often seductive *shifting between problems*: between explaining cognition as a fact of nature in psychological and scientific terms and elucidating cognition in terms of its essential capabilities to accomplish its task. Accordingly, if we are to avoid this confusion and remain constantly mindful of the meaning of the question concerning these capabilities, we need *phenomenological reduction*.

This means: everything transcendent (that which is not given to me immanently) is to be assigned the index zero, i.e., its existence, its validity is not to be assumed as such, except at most as *the phenomenon of a claim to validity*. I am to treat all sciences only as phenomena, hence not as systems of valid truths, not as premises, not even as hypotheses for me to reach truth with. This applies to the whole of psychology and the whole of natural science. Meanwhile, the proper *meaning of our principle* is in the constant challenge to stay with the objects as they are in question *here* in the critique of cognition and not to confuse the problems

here with quite different ones. The elucidation of the ways in which cognition is possible does not depend upon the ways of objective science. / To bring knowledge to evident self-giveness <7> and to seek to view the nature of its accomplishment does not mean to deduce, to make inductions, to calculate, etc. It is not the same as eliciting, with reasons, novel things from things already given or purportedly given.

## B. The Second Level of the Phenomenological Orientation

We now need a *new stratum of considerations* in order to achieve a higher level of clarity about the nature of phenomenological research and its problems.

1) First, the Cartesian *cogitatio* already requires the phenomenological reduction. The psychological phenomenon in psychological apperception and objectification is not a truly absolute datum. The truly absolute datum is the *pure phenomenon*, that which is reduced. The mentally active ego, the object, man in time, the thing among things, etc., are not absolute data; hence man's mental activity as his activity is no absolute datum either. *We abandon finally the standpoint of psychology, even of descriptive psychology*. And so what is also *reduced* is the question which initially drove us: no longer how can I, this man, contact in my mental processes something existing in itself, perhaps out there, beyond me; but we now replace this hitherto ambiguous question, unstable and complex, because of its transcendent burden, with the *pure basic question*: How can the pure phenomenon of cognition reach something which is not immanent to it? How can the absolute self-giveness of cognition reach something not self-given and how is this reaching to be understood?

At the same time the concept of *genuine immanence* (*reellen Immanenz*) is reduced. It no longer signifies immanence in something real (*reale Immanenz*), the immanence in human consciousness and in the real (*realen*) psychic phenomenon.

2) Once we have the "seen" phenomena, it seems that we already have a phenomenology, a science of these phenomena.

But as soon as we begin there, we notice a certain constriction. / <8> The field of absolute phenomena — taken one at a time — does not seem to be enough to fulfill our intentions. What good are

single "seings" to us, no matter how securely they bring our *cogitations* to self-giveness? At first it seems beyond question that on the basis of these "seings" we can undertake logical operations, can compare, contrast, subsume under concepts, predicate, although, as appears later, behind these operations stand new objectivities. But even if what here seems beyond question were taken for granted and considered no further, we could not understand how we could here arrive at universally valid findings of the sort we need.

But one thing seems to help us along: *eidetic abstraction*. It yields inspectable universals, species, essences, and so it seems to provide the redeeming idea: for do we not seek "seeing" clarity about the essence of cognition? Cognition belongs to the sphere of *cogitationes*. Accordingly, we must through "seeing" bring its universal objects into the consciousness of the universal. Thus it becomes possible to have a doctrine about the essence of cognition.

We take this step in agreement with a tenet of Descartes's concerning *clear and distinct perceptions*. The "existence" of the *cogitatio* is guaranteed by its absolute self-giveness, by its givenness in *pure evidence* (*Evidenz*). Whenever we have pure evidence (*Evidenz*), the pure viewing and grasping of something objective directly and in itself, we have the same guarantees, the same certainties.

This step gave us a new objectivity as absolutely given, i.e., the *objectivity of essences*; and as to begin with the logical acts which find expression in assertions based upon what is intuited remain unnoticed, so now we get the field of *assertions about essences*, viz., of what is generally the case as given in pure "seeing." That is to say at first undifferentiated from the individually given universal objects.

3) Yet do we now have everything; do we have the fully delineated phenomenology and the clear self-evidence to put us in the position of having what we need for the critique of cognition? / And are we clear about the issues to be resolved?

No, the step we took leads us further. It makes clear to us in the first place that *genuine (veell) immanence* (and the same is true of transcendence) is but a special case of the *broader concept of immanence as such*. No longer is it a commonplace and taken on face value that the *absolutely given* and the *genuinely immanent*

Given vs. immanent  
 phenomenon vs. appearance

are one and the same. For that which is universal is absolutely given but is not *genuinely immanent*. *The act of cognizing the universal is something singular*. At any given time, it is a moment in the stream of consciousness. *The universal itself*, which is given in evidence (*Evidenz*) within the stream of consciousness is nothing singular but just a universal, and in the genuine (*veellen*) sense it is transcendent.

Consequently, the idea of *phenomenological reduction* acquires a more immediate and more profound determination and a clearer meaning. It means not the exclusion of the genuinely transcendent (perhaps even in some psychologico-empirical sense), but the exclusion of the transcendent as such as something to be accepted as existent, i.e., everything that is not evident givenness in its true sense, that is not absolutely given to pure "seeing." But, of course, everything of what we said remains. Inductive or deductive scientific conclusions or facets, etc., from hypotheses, facts, axioms, remain excluded and are allowed only as "phenomena"; and the same with all reference to any "knowing" and "cognition": inquiry must concern itself always with *pure "seeing"* and, therefore, not with the genuinely immanent. It is inquiry within the sphere of pure evidence, inquiry into essences. We also said that its field is the *a priori within absolute self-giveness*.

Thus the field is now characterized. It is a field of absolute cognitions, within which the ego and the world and God and the mathematical manifolds and whatever else may be a scientifically objective matter are held in abeyance, cognitions which are, therefore, also not dependent on these matters, which are valid in their own right, whether we are sceptics with regard to the others or not. All that remains as it is. The root of the matter, however, is to *grasp the meaning of the absolutely given, the absolute clarity of the given*, which / excludes every meaningful doubt, in a *<10> word, to grasp the absolutely "seeing" evidence which gets hold of itself*. To a certain extent in the discovery of all this lies the historical significance of the Cartesian method of doubt. But for Descartes to discover and to abandon were the same. We do nothing but clearly formulate and develop consistently what was always implicit in this age-old project. We part company in this connection with *psychologistic interpretations of evidence in terms of feelings*.

Henry

### C. The Third Level of the Phenomenological Orientation

Once more we need a new level of considerations, to give us greater clarity about the meaning of phenomenology and to develop further its problems.

How far does self-giveness reach? Is it contained in the givenness of the *cogitatio* and in the ideations which grasp it in its generality? Our phenomenological sphere, the sphere of absolute clarity, of immanence in the true sense, reaches no farther than self-giveness reaches.

We are once again led somewhat deeper, and in depths lie the obscurities; and in the obscurities lie the problems.

Everything seemed at first simple and hardly requiring hard work. The prejudice about immanence as genuine immanence, as if the latter were what mattered, one may cast off, and yet one remains at first wedded to genuine immanence, at least in a certain sense. It seems, at first, that in "seeing" essences we have only to grasp in its generality the genuinely immanent in the *cogitationes*; and to establish the connections rooted in essences. This, too, seems an easy matter. We reflect; we look back at our own acts; we appraise their genuine contents, as they are, only under phenomenological reduction. This appears to be the sole difficulty. And now, of course, there is nothing further than to lift that which is "seen" into consciousness of universality.

The matter, however, becomes less cozy when we take a closer look at the data. First, the *cogitationes*, which / we regard as simple data and in no way mysterious, hide all sorts of transcendencies.

If we look closer and notice how in the mental process, say of [perceiving] a sound, even after phenomenological reduction, *appearance, and that which appears stand in contrast*, and this in the midst of pure givenness, hence in the midst of true immanence, then we are taken aback. Perhaps the sound lasts. We have there the patently given unity of the sound and its duration with its temporal phases, the present and the past. On the other hand, when we reflect, the phenomenon of enduring sound, itself a temporal phenomenon, has its own now-phase and past phases. And if one picks out a now-phase of the phenomenon there is not

only the objective now of the sound itself, but the now of the sound is but a point in the duration of a sound.

Detailed analyses will be given in the course of our special tasks. The above suggestion is enough to call attention to a new point: that the phenomenon of sound perception, even as evident and reduced, demands within the immanent a distinction between *appearance and that which appears*. We thus have two absolute data, the givenness of the appearing and the givenness of the object; and the object within this immanence is not immanent in the sense of genuine immanence; it is not a concrete part (*Stück*) of the appearance, i.e., the past phases of the enduring sound are now still objective and yet they are not genuinely contained in the present moment of the appearance. Therefore, we also find in the case of the phenomenon of perception what we found in the case of consciousness of universals, namely, that it is a consciousness which constitutes something self-given which is not contained within what is occurring [in the world] and is not at all found as *cogitatio*.

At the lowest level of reflection, the naive level, at first it seems as if evidence were a matter of simple "seeing," a mental inspection without a character of its own, always one and the same and in itself undifferentiated: the "seeing" just "sees" the things (*Sachen*), / the things are simply there and in the truly evident "seeing" they are there in consciousness, and "seeing" is simply to "see" them. Or, to use our previous simile: a direct grasping or taking or pointing to something that simply is and is there. All difference is thus in the things that exist in themselves and have their differences through themselves.

And now how different the "seeing" of things shows itself to be on closer analysis. Even if we retain under the heading of attention the notion of an undifferentiated and in itself not further describable "seeing," it is, nevertheless, apparent that it really makes no sense at all to talk about things which are "simply there" and just need to be "seen." On the contrary, this "simply being there" consists of certain mental processes of specific and changing structure, such as perception, imagination, memory, predication, etc., and in them the things are not contained as in a hull or vessel. Instead, the things come to be *constituted* in these mental processes, although in reality they are

not at all to be found in them. For "things to be given" is for them to be *exhibited* (represented) as so and so in such phenomena. And this is not to say that the things once more exist in themselves and "send their representatives into consciousness." This sort of thing cannot occur to us within the sphere of phenomenological reduction. Instead, the things are and are given in appearance and in virtue of the appearance itself; though they are, ~~or are taken as~~, individually separable from the appearance, they are essentially inseparable from it insofar as the single appearance (the consciousness of the given) is not in question.

Thus this marvelous correlation between the *phenomenon of cognition* and the *object of cognition* reveals itself everywhere. Now let us notice that the task of phenomenology, or rather the area of its tasks and inquiries, is no such trivial things as merely looking, merely opening one's eyes. Already in the first and simplest cases, in the lowest forms of cognition, the greatest difficulties confront pure analysis and the inspection of essences. It is easy to talk of correlation in general but it is very difficult to clarify the way in which an object of cognition *constitutes* itself in cognition. / And the task is just this: within the framework of pure evidence (*Evidenz*) or self-givenness to trace all forms of givenness and all correlations and to conduct an elucidatory analysis. Of course, to do this we need to take account not only of single acts but also of their complexities, of the consistency or inconsistency of their connections and of the intentions (*Teleologien*) apparent in them. These connections are not conglomerations but distinctively connected and as it were congruent unities, and unities of cognition, which, as unities of cognition have also their unitary objective correlates. Thus they belong themselves to the *cognitive acts*, their types are cognitive types, their native forms are forms of thought and forms of intuition (the word not here to be taken in its Kantian sense).

It now remains to trace step by step the data in all their modifications, those that are, properly speaking, data and those that are not, the simple and the compounded ones, those that so to say are constituted at once and those that essentially are built up stepwise, those that are absolutely valid and those that in the process of cognition acquire givenness and validity in an unlimited progression.

We finally arrive in this way at an understanding of how the transcendent real object can be met (can be known in its nature) in the cognitive act as that which one primarily means by it, and how the sense of this meaning is filled out step by step in a developing cognitive context (if only it has the proper forms which belong to the constitution of the object of experience). We then understand how the object of experience is progressively constituted, and how this manner of being constituted is prescribed. We understand that such a stepwise constitution is required by the very essence of the experienced object.

Along this path one approaches the methodological forms which determine all the sciences and are constitutive of all scientifically given objects, and so also the elucidation of the theory of science and with it implicitly the elucidation of all the sciences; however, only implicitly, i.e., it is only once this enormous work of elucidation has been accomplished that the critique of cognition will be fit to become / a critique of the specialized sciences and thereby to evaluate them metaphysically.

These then are the problems of givenness, the problems of the *constitution of objects of all sorts within cognition*. The phenomenology of cognition is the science of cognitive phenomena in two senses. On the one hand it has to do with cognitions as appearances, presentations, acts of consciousness in which this or that object is presented, is an object of consciousness, passively or actively. On the other hand, the phenomenology of cognition has to do with these objects as presenting themselves in this manner. The word "phenomenon" is ambiguous in virtue of the essential correlation between *appearance and that which appears*. *Phainomenon* (phenomenon) in its proper sense means that which appears, and yet it is by preference used for the appearing itself, for the subjective phenomenon (if one may use this expression which is apt to be misunderstood in the vulgar psychological sense).

In reflection, the *cogitatio*, the appearing itself, becomes an object, and this encourages the rise of ambiguity. Finally, we need not repeat once more that in speaking about investigating the objects and modes of cognition, we always mean investigation into essences, which, in the sphere of the absolutely given, exhibits in a general way the ultimate meaning, the possibility, the

essence of the objectivity of cognition and of the cognition of objects.

It goes without saying that the *general phenomenology of reason* has to solve also the parallel problems of the correlation between *valuing* and the *things valued*, etc. If the word "phenomenology" were used so broadly as to cover the analysis of everything self-given, the incoherent data would become coherent: analyzing sense-given entities according to their various kinds, etc. — the common element is then in the methodology of the analysis of essences within the sphere of immediate evidence.

2 aspects  
 1. the way  
 2. the way  
 3. the way  
 4. the way  
 5. the way  
 6. the way  
 7. the way  
 8. the way  
 9. the way  
 10. the way  
 11. the way  
 12. the way  
 13. the way  
 14. the way  
 15. the way  
 16. the way  
 17. the way  
 18. the way  
 19. the way  
 20. the way  
 21. the way  
 22. the way  
 23. the way  
 24. the way  
 25. the way  
 26. the way  
 27. the way  
 28. the way  
 29. the way  
 30. the way  
 31. the way  
 32. the way  
 33. the way  
 34. the way  
 35. the way  
 36. the way  
 37. the way  
 38. the way  
 39. the way  
 40. the way  
 41. the way  
 42. the way  
 43. the way  
 44. the way  
 45. the way  
 46. the way  
 47. the way  
 48. the way  
 49. the way  
 50. the way  
 51. the way  
 52. the way  
 53. the way  
 54. the way  
 55. the way  
 56. the way  
 57. the way  
 58. the way  
 59. the way  
 60. the way  
 61. the way  
 62. the way  
 63. the way  
 64. the way  
 65. the way  
 66. the way  
 67. the way  
 68. the way  
 69. the way  
 70. the way  
 71. the way  
 72. the way  
 73. the way  
 74. the way  
 75. the way  
 76. the way  
 77. the way  
 78. the way  
 79. the way  
 80. the way  
 81. the way  
 82. the way  
 83. the way  
 84. the way  
 85. the way  
 86. the way  
 87. the way  
 88. the way  
 89. the way  
 90. the way  
 91. the way  
 92. the way  
 93. the way  
 94. the way  
 95. the way  
 96. the way  
 97. the way  
 98. the way  
 99. the way  
 100. the way

LECTURE I

[THE NATURAL ATTITUDE IN THINKING AND SCIENCE OF THE NATURAL SORT. THE PHILOSOPHIC (REFLECTIVE) ATTITUDE IN THINKING. THE CONTRADICTIONS OF REFLECTION ON COGNITION, WHEN ONE REFLECTS IN THE NATURAL ATTITUDE, THE DUAL TASK OF TRUE CRITICISM OF COGNITION. TRUE CRITICISM OF COGNITION AS PHENOMENOLOGY OF COGNITION. THE NEW DIMENSION BELONGING TO PHILOSOPHY; ITS PECULIAR METHOD IN CONTRAST TO SCIENCE.]

In earlier lectures I distinguished between *science of the natural* <17> *sort* and *philosophic science*. The former originates from the natural, the latter from the philosophic attitude of mind.

The *natural attitude of mind* is as yet unconcerned with the critique of cognition. Whether in the act of intuiting or in the act of thinking, in the natural mode of reflection we are turned to the objects as they are given to us each time and as a matter of course, even though they are given in different ways and in different modes of being, according to the source and level of our cognition. In perception, for instance, a thing stands before our eyes as a matter of course. It is there, among other things, living or lifeless, animate or inanimate. It is, in short, within a world of which part is perceived, as are the individual things themselves, and of which part is contextually supplied by memory from whence it spreads out into the indeterminate and the unknown.

Our judgments relate to this world. We make (sometimes singular, sometimes universal) judgments about things, their relations, their changes, about the conditions which functionally determine their changes and about the laws of their variations. We find an expression for what immediate experience presents. Then line with our experiential motives we draw inferences from the directly experienced (perceived and remembered) to what is not experienced. We generalize, and then apply again general knowledge to particular cases or deduce analytically new generalizations from general knowledge. Isolated cognitions do not simply follow each other in the manner of mere succession. They enter into logical relations with each other, they follow from one another, they "cohere" with one another, they support one another, thereby strengthening their logical power.

*cf. Husserl's 'Introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit' and 'The Idea of Philosophy'*

On the other hand, they also clash and contradict one another. They do not agree with one another, they are falsified by *assumed* cognition, / and their claim to be cognition is discredited. Perhaps the contradictions arise in the sphere that belongs to laws governing the pure predicational form: we have equivocated, we have inferred fallaciously, we have miscounted or mis-computed. In these cases we restore formal consistency. We resolve the equivocation and the like.

Or the contradictions disturb our expectation of connections based on past experience: empirical evidence conflicts with empirical evidence. Where do we look for help? We now weigh the reasons for different possible ways of deciding or providing an explanation. The weaker must give way to the stronger, and the stronger, in turn, are of value as long as they will stand up, i.e., as long as they in turn do not have to come into a similar logical conflict with new cognitional motives introduced by a broader sphere of cognition.

Thus, natural knowledge makes strides. It progressively takes possession of a reality at first existing for us as a matter of course and as something to be investigated further as regards its extent and content, its elements, its relations and laws. Thus the various sciences of the natural sort (*naturlichen Wissenschaften*) come into being and flourish, the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*) as the sciences of physics and psychology, the sciences of culture (*Geisteswissenschaften*) and, on the other side, the mathematical sciences, the sciences of numbers, classes, relations, etc. The latter sciences deal not with actual but rather with ideal objects; they deal with what is valid *per se*, and for the rest with what are from the first unquestionable possibilities.

In every step of natural cognition pertaining to the sciences of the natural sort, difficulties arise and are resolved, either by *pure logic* or by appeal to *facts*, on the basis of motives or reasons which lie in the things themselves and which, as it were, come from things in the form of *requirements* that they themselves make on our thinking.

Now let us contrast the natural *mode* (or *habitus*) of reflection with the *philosophical*.

With the awakening of reflection about the relation of cognition to its object, abysmal difficulties arise / Cognition, the

*when reality that is intended by the natural is analyzed, it is incomprehensible, into doubt, but what is needed is an analysis of its own possibilities.*

thing most taken for granted in natural thinking, suddenly emerges as a mystery. But I must be more exact. What is taken for granted in natural thinking is the possibility of cognition. Constantly busy producing results, advancing from discovery to discovery in newer and newer branches of science, natural thinking finds no occasion to raise the question of the possibility of cognition as such. To be sure, as with everything else in the world, *cognition*, too, will appear as a problem in a certain manner, becoming an object of natural investigation. Cognition is a fact in nature. It is the experience of a cognizing organic being. It is a psychological fact. As any psychological fact, it can be described according to its kinds and internal connections, and its genetic relations can be investigated. On the other hand cognition is essentially *cognition of what objectively is*; and it is cognition through the *meaning* which is intrinsic to it; by virtue of this meaning it is related to what objectively is. Natural thinking is also already active in this relating. It investigates in their *formal* generality the *a priori* connections of meanings and postulated meanings and the *a priori* principles which belong to objectivity *as such*; there comes into being a *pure grammar* and at higher stages a pure logic (a whole complex of disciplines owing to its different possible delimitations), and there arises once more a normative and practical logic in the form of an art of thinking, and, especially, of scientific thinking. So far, we are still in the realm of *natural* thinking.

However, the correlation between cognition as mental process, its referent (*Bedeutung*) and what objectively is, which has just been touched upon in order to contrast the psychology of cognition with pure logic and ontology, is the source of the deepest and most difficult problems. Taken collectively, they are the problem of the possibility of cognition.

Cognition in all of its manifestations is a psychic act; it is the cognition of a cognizing subject. The objects cognized stand over and against the cognition. But how can we be certain of the correspondence between cognition and the object cognized?

How can knowledge transcend itself and reach its object reliably? The unproblematic manner in which the object of cognition is given to natural thought to be cognized now becomes an enigma. In perception the perceived thing is believed to be directly

*could be problematic*  
*is not a personalistic account*  
*de metaphysical*

given. Before my perceiving eyes stands the thing. I see it, and I grasp it. Yet the perceiving is simply a mental act of mine, of the perceiving subject. Likewise, memory and expectation are subjective processes, and so are all thought processes built upon them and through which we come to posit that something really is the case and to determine any *truth* about what is. How do I, the cognizing subject, know if I can ever really know, that there exist not only my own mental processes, these acts of cognizing, but also that which they apprehend? How can I ever know that there is anything at all which could be set over against cognition as its object?

Shall I say: only phenomena are truly given to the cognizing subject, he never does and never can break out of the circle of his own mental processes, so that in truth he could only say: I exist, and all that is not-I is mere phenomenon dissolving into phenomenal connections? Am I then to become a solipsist? This is a hard requirement. Shall I, with Hume, reduce all transcendent objectivity to fictions lending themselves to psychological explanation but to no rational justification? But this, too, is a hard requirement. Does not Hume's psychology, along with any psychology, transcend the sphere of immanence? By working with such concepts as habit, human nature, sense-organ, stimulus and the like, is it not working with transcendent existences (and transcendent by its own avowal), while its aim is to degrade to the status of fictions everything that transcends actual "impressions" and "ideas"?

But what is the use of invoking the specter of contradictions <21> when logic itself is in question and becomes problematic. Indeed, the real meaning of logical lawfulness which natural thinking would not dream of questioning, now becomes *problematic* and *dubious*. Thoughts of a biological order intrude. We are reminded of the modern theory of evolution, according to which man has evolved in the struggle for existence and by natural selection, and with him his intellect too has evolved naturally and along with his intellect all of its characteristic forms, particularly the logical forms. Accordingly, is it not the case that the logical forms and laws express the accidental peculiarity of the human species, which could have been different and which will be different in the course of future evolution? Cognition is, after all, only

*human cognition*, bound up with *human intellectual forms*, and unfit to reach the very nature of things, to reach the things in themselves.

But at once another piece of absurdity arises. Can the cognitions by which such a view operates and the possibilities which it ponders make any sense themselves if the laws of logic are given over to such relativism? Does not the truth that there is this and that possibility implicitly presuppose the absolute validity of the principle of non-contradiction, according to which any given truth excludes its contradictory?

These examples should suffice. The possibility of cognition has become enigmatic throughout. If we immerse ourselves in the sciences of the natural sort, we find everything clear and comprehensible, to the extent to which they have developed into exact sciences. We are certain that we are in possession of objective truth, based upon reliable methods of reaching (objective) reality. But whenever we reflect, we fall into errors and confusions. We become entangled in patent difficulties and even self-contradictions. We are in constant danger of becoming sceptics, or still worse, we are in danger of falling into any one of a number of scepticisms all of which have, sad to say, one and the same characteristic: absurdity.

The playground of these unclear and inconsistent theories as well as the endless quarrels associated with them / is the *theory <22> of knowledge*, and *metaphysics* which is bound up with it historically and in subject matter. The task of the theory of knowledge or the critique of theoretical reason is, first of all, a critical one. It must brand the well-nigh inevitable mistakes which ordinary reflection makes about the relation of cognition, its meaning and its object, thereby refuting the concealed as well as the unconcealed sceptical theories concerning the essence of cognition by demonstrating their absurdity.

Furthermore, the positive task of the theory of knowledge is to solve the problems of the relations among cognition, its meaning and its object by inquiring into the essence of cognition. Among these, there is the problem of explicating the essential meaning of being a cognizable object or, what comes to the same thing, of being an object at all: of the meaning which is prescribed (for being an object at all) by the correlation *a priori* (or essential

correlation) between cognition and being an object of cognition. And this naturally applies also to all basic forms of being an object which are predetermined by the nature of cognition. (To the ontological, the apophantic<sup>1</sup> as well as the metaphysical forms.)

Precisely by solving these problems the theory of knowledge qualifies as the critique of cognition, more exactly, as the *critique of natural cognition* in all the sciences of a natural sort. It puts us, in other words, in a position to interpret in an accurate and definitive way the teachings of these sciences about what exists. For the confusions of the theory of knowledge into which we are led by natural (pre-epistemological) reflection on the possibility of cognition (on the possibility of cognition's reaching its object) involve not just false views about the essence of cognition, but also self-contradictory, and, therefore, fundamentally misleading *interpretations* of the being that is cognized in the sciences of the natural sort. So, one and the same science is interpreted in materialistic, spiritualistic, dualistic, psychomomistic, positivistic and many other ways, depending upon what interpretation is thought to be the necessary consequence of those pre-epistemological reflections. Only with epistemological reflection do we arrive at the distinction between / the sciences of a natural sort and philosophy. Epistemological reflection first brings to light that the sciences of a natural sort are not yet the ultimate science of being. We need a science of being in the absolute sense. This science, which we call *metaphysics*, grows out of a "critique" of natural cognition in the individual sciences. It is based on what is learned in the general critique of cognition about the essence of cognition and what it is to be an object of cognition of one basic type or other, i.e., in accordance with the different fundamental correlations between cognizing and being an object of cognition.

If then we disregard any metaphysical purpose of the critique of cognition and confine ourselves purely to the task of *clarifying the essence of cognition and of being an object of cognition*, then this will be *phenomenology of cognition and of being an object of cognition* and will be the first and principal part of phenomenology as a whole.

Phenomenology: this denotes a science, a system of scientific

<sup>1</sup> Tr. note: In Husserl the word "apophantic" refers to predicative judgments or to the theory of such judgments.

disciplines. But it also and above all denotes a method and an attitude of mind, the specifically *philosophical attitude* of mind, the specifically *philosophical method*.

In contemporary philosophy, insofar as it claims to be a serious science, it has become almost a commonplace that there can be only one method for achieving cognition in all the sciences as well as in philosophy. This conviction accords wholly with the great philosophical traditions of the seventeenth century, which also thought that philosophy's salvation lay wholly in its taking as a model of method the exact sciences, and above all, mathematics and mathematical natural science. This putting philosophy methodologically on a par with the other sciences goes hand in hand with treating them alike with respect to subject matter.

It is still the prevailing opinion that philosophy and, more specifically, ontology and the general theory of knowledge not only relate to all the other sciences, but also that they can be grounded upon the conclusions of those other sciences: / in the same way in which sciences are built upon one another, and the conclusions of one of them can serve as premises for the others. I am reminded of the favorite ploy of basing the theory of knowledge on the psychology of cognition and biology. In our day, reactions against these fatal prejudices are multiplying. And prejudices they are.

In the sphere of ordinary inquiry one science can readily build upon another, and the one can serve the other as a model of method even though to a limited extent determined by the nature of the areas of inquiry in question. *But philosophy lies in a wholly new dimension.* It needs an *entirely new point of departure* and an entirely new method distinguishing it in principle from any "natural" science. This is why the logical procedures that give the sciences of a natural sort unity have a unitary character in principle in spite of the special methods which change from one science to another: while the methodological procedures of philosophy have by contrast and in principle a new unity. This is also why *pure* philosophy, within the whole of the critique of cognition and the "critical" disciplines generally, must disregard, and must refrain from using, the intellectual achievements of the sciences of a natural sort and of scientifically undisciplined natural wisdom and knowledge.

To anticipate, this doctrine, the grounds for which will be given in more detail in the sequel, is recommended by the following considerations.

In the sceptical mood which critical reflection about cognition necessarily begets (I mean the reflection that comes first, the one that comes before the scientific critique of cognition and which takes place on the natural level of thought) every science of the natural sort and every method characteristic of such a science ceases to count as something we properly possess. For cognition's reaching its object has become enigmatic and dubious as far as its meaning and possibility are concerned, and exact cognition becomes thereby no less enigmatic than inexact, <25> scientific knowledge no / less than the pre-scientific. The possibility of cognition becomes questionable, more precisely, how it can possibly reach an objectivity which, after all, is in itself whatever it is. Behind this lies the following: What is in question is what cognition can accomplish, the meaning of its claim to validity and correctness, the meaning of the distinction between valid real and merely apparent cognition; on the other hand, also the meaning of being an object which exists and exists as what it is whether it is cognized or not and which as an object is an object of possible cognition, in principle cognizable, even if in fact it has never been and never will be cognized, but is in principle perceptible, imaginable, determinable by predicates in a possible judgment, etc.

However, it is impossible to see how working with presuppositions which are taken from natural cognition, no matter how "exactly founded" they are in it, can help us to resolve the misgivings which arise in the critique of cognition, to find the answers to its problems. If the meaning and value of natural cognition as such together with all of its methodological presuppositions and all of its exact foundations have become problematic, then this strikes at every proposition which natural cognition presupposes in its starting-point and at every allegedly exact method of giving a foundation. Neither the most exact mathematics nor mathematical natural science has here the slightest advantage over any actual or alleged cognition through ordinary experience. It is then clear that there can be no such talk as that philosophy (which begins in the critique of cognition and which,

whatever else it is, is rooted in the critique of cognition) has to model itself after the exact sciences methodologically (or even as regards subject matter!), or that it has to adopt as a standard their methodology, or that it is philosophy's task to implement and to complete the work done in the exact sciences according to a single method, in principle the same for all the sciences. In contradistinction to all natural cognition, philosophy lies, I repeat, within a new dimension; and what corresponds to this new dimension, even if, as the phrase suggests, it is essentially connected with the old dimensions, is a new and radically new method which / is set over against the "natural" method. He who denies <26> this has failed to understand entirely the whole of the level at which the characteristic problem of the critique of cognition lies, and with this he has failed to understand what philosophy really wants to do and should do, and what gives it its own character and authority vis-a-vis the whole of natural cognition and science of the natural sort.

2 sources of exist. part. - natural etc.  
1) normal life - Cartesian - as before.  
2) disturbance with relationships as before.  
- relation between sub- & becomes a problem.  
- pos. this as 'part of cognition' - in part on both levels.  
- this foundation in terms of part. in judgment, not in the sense that the other relations are cognized but rather that the other relations, to the extent that they are 'known', are now also problems etc. - for they are now 'objects'!

[THE BEGINNING OF THE CRITIQUE OF COGNITION; TREATING AS QUESTIONABLE EVERY (CLAIM TO) KNOWING, REACHING THE GROUND OF ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY IN PURSUANCE OF DESCARTES'S METHOD OF DOUBT. THE SPHERE OF THE THINGS THAT ARE ABSOLUTELY GIVEN. REVIEW AND AMPLIFICATION: REPUTATION OF THE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF A CRITIQUE OF COGNITION, THE RIDDLE OF NATURAL COGNITION; TRANSCENDENCE. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO CONCEPTS OF IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE. THE INITIAL PROBLEM OF THE CRITIQUE OF COGNITION: THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDENT COGNITION: THE PRINCIPLE OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL REDUCTION.]

<29> At the outset of the critique of cognition the entire world of nature, physical and psychological, as well as one's own human self together with all the sciences which have to do with these objective matters, are *put in question*. Their being, their validity are left up in the air.

Now the question is: How can the *critique of cognition get under way*? The critique of cognition is the attempt of cognition to find a scientific understanding of itself and to establish objectively what cognition is in its essence, what is the meaning of the relation to an object which is implicit in the claim to cognition and what its objective validity or the reaching of its object comes to if it is to be cognition in the true sense. Although the *ἐποχή*,<sup>1</sup> which the critique of cognition must employ, begins with the doubt of all cognition, its own included, it cannot remain in such doubt nor can it refuse to take as valid everything given, including that which it brings to light itself. If it must presuppose nothing as *already given*, then it must begin with some cognition which it does not take unexamined from elsewhere but rather gives to itself, which it itself posits as primal.

This primal cognition must contain nothing of the unclarity and the doubt which otherwise give to cognition the character of the enigmatic and problematic so that we are finally in the embarrassing position of having to say that cognition as such is a problem, something incomprehensible, in need of elucidation and dubious in its claims. Or, to speak differently: If we are not allowed to take anything as already given because our lack of clarity about cognition implies that we cannot understand what

<sup>1</sup> Tr. note: *epoche*, the excluding of transcendences posited by the "natural attitude."

it could mean for something to be *known in itself yet in the context of cognition*, then it must after all be possible to make evident something which we have to acknowledge as absolutely given and indubitable; / insofar, that is, as it is given with such complete clarity that every question about it will and must find an immediate answer.

And now we recall the Cartesian doubt. Reflecting on the multifarious possibilities of error and deception, I might reach such a degree of sceptical despair that I finally say: Nothing is certain, everything is doubtful. But it is at once evident that not everything is doubtful, for while I am judging that everything is doubtful, it is indubitable that I am so judging; and it would be absurd to want to persist in a universal doubt. And in every case of a definite doubt, it is indubitably certain that I have this doubt. And likewise with every *cogitatio*. Howsoever I perceive, imagine, judge, infer, howsoever these acts may be certain or uncertain, whether or not they have objects that exist as far as the perceiving itself is concerned, it is absolutely clear and certain that I am perceiving this or that, and as far as the judgment is concerned that I am judging of this or that, etc.

Descartes introduced these considerations for other purposes. But with suitable modifications, we can use them here.

If we inquire into the essence of cognition, then whatever status it and our doubts about its reaching the object may have one thing is clear: that cognition itself is a name for a manifold sphere of being which can be given to us absolutely, and which can be given absolutely each time in the particular case. The thought processes which I really perform are given to me insofar as I *reflect* upon them, receive them and set them up in a *pure "seeing"*. I can speak vaguely about cognition, perception, imagination, experience, judgment, inference, etc.; but then, when I reflect, all that is given, and absolutely given at that, is this phenomenon of vaguely "talking about and intending cognition, experience, judgment, etc." Even this phenomenon of vagueness is one of those that comes under the heading of cognition in the broadest sense. I can, however, have an actual perception and inspect it. I can, moreover, represent to myself in imagination or memory a perception and survey it as so given to imagination. In that case I am no longer / vacuously talking <31>

about perception or having a vague intension or idea of it. Instead, perception itself stands open to my inspection as actually or imaginatively given to me. And the same is true of every intellectual process, of every form of thinking and cognizing.

I have here put on the same level the "seeing" [act of] reflective perception and [the "seeing" act of reflective] imagination. If one followed the Cartesian view, one would have to emphasize perception first; it would in some measure correspond to the so-called inner perception of traditional epistemology, though this is an ambivalent concept.

*Every intellectual process and indeed every mental process whatever, while being enacted, can be made the object of a pure "seeing" and understanding, and is something absolutely given in this "seeing."* It is given as something that is, that is here and now, and whose being cannot be sensibly doubted. To be sure, I can wonder what sort of being this is and how this mode of being is related to other modes. It is true I can wonder what givenness means *here*, and reflecting further I can "see" the "seeing" itself in which this givenness, or this mode of being, is constituted. But all the same I am now working on an absolute foundation: namely, this perception is, and remains as long as it lasts, something absolute, something here and now, something that in itself is what it is, something by which I can measure as by an ultimate standard what being and being given can mean and here must mean, at least, obviously, as far as the sort of being and being given is concerned which a "here and now" exemplifies. And that goes for all specific ways of thinking, whenever they are given. All of these, however, can also be data in imagination; they can "as it were" stand before our eyes and yet not stand before them as actualities, as actually accomplished perceptions, judgments, etc.; even then, they are, in a certain sense, data. They are there *open to intuition*. We talk about them not in just vague hints and empty intention. We inspect them, and while inspecting them we can observe their essence, their constitution, their intrinsic character, and we can make our speech conform in a pure measure to what is "seen" in its full clarity. But this requires to <32> be supplemented / by a discussion of the concept and cognition of essences.

For the moment we keep it firmly in mind that a sphere of

the absolutely given can be indicated at the outset; and this is just the sphere we need if it is to be possible to aim at a theory of knowledge. Indeed, lack of clarity with regard to the meaning or essence of cognition requires a science of cognition, a science whose sole end is to clarify the essential nature of cognition. It is not to explain cognition as a psychological fact; it is not to inquire into the natural causes and laws of the development and occurrence of cognitions. Such inquiry is the task of a science of the natural sort, of a psychology which deals with the mental processes of persons who are undergoing them. Rather, the task of the critique of cognition is to clarify, to cast light upon, the essence of cognition and the legitimacy of its claim to validity that belongs to its essence; and what else can this mean but to make the essence of cognition directly self-given.

*Recapitulation and Amplification.* In its constantly successful progress in the various sciences, cognition of the natural sort is altogether self-assured that it reaches the object and has no cause to worry about the possibility of cognition and about the meaning of cognized objectivity. But as soon as we begin to reflect on the correlation between cognition and reality (and eventually also on the ideal meanings on the one hand and, on the other, on the objects of cognition) there arise difficulties, absurdities, inconsistent yet seemingly well-founded theories which drive one to the admission that the possibility of cognition as far as its reaching the object is concerned is an enigma.

A new science, the critique of cognition, is called for. Its job is to resolve confusions and to clarify the essence of cognition. Upon the success of this science depends the possibility of a metaphysics, a science of being in the absolute and fundamental sense. But how / can such a science of cognition in general get <33> started? That which a science questions it cannot use as a pre-supposition. But what is in question is the possibility of all cognition in that the critique of cognition regards as problematic the possibility of cognition in general and its capacity to reach the object. Once it is launched, the critique of cognition cannot take any cognition for granted. Nor can it take over anything whatever from pre-scientific cognition. All cognition bears the mark of being questionable.

Without some cognition given at the outset, there is also no

advancement of cognition. The critique of cognition cannot, therefore, begin. There can be no such science at all.

I already suggested that in all this there is an element of truth. In the beginning no cognition can be assumed *without examination*. However, even if the critique of cognition must not take over any antecedent cognition it still can begin by *giving* itself cognition, and naturally cognition which it does not base on, or logically derive from, anything else as this would presuppose some other immediate cognition already given. It must rather base itself on the cognition which is immediately evident and of such a kind that, as absolutely clear and indubitable, it excludes every doubt of its possibility and contains none of the puzzles which had led to all the sceptical confusions. I then pointed to the *Cartesian method of doubt* and to the domain of the absolutely given, viz., of absolute cognition which comes under the heading of evidence (*Evidenz*) of the *cogitatio*. It remained to be shown that the *immanence* of this cognition makes it an appropriate point of departure for the theory of cognition; that, furthermore, *because of this immanence*, it is free of the puzzlement which is the source of all sceptical embarrassment. Finally, it remained to be shown that *immanence is the generally necessary characteristic of all epistemological cognition*, and that it is nonsensical not only at the start but also in general to borrow from the sphere of transcendence, in other words, to try to found the theory of cognition on psychology or on any science whatever of the natural sort.

<34> I may add the following: there is a plausible argument / to the effect that the theory of knowledge cannot get started because it questions cognition as such and hence regards as questionable every cognition with which we might begin. Moreover, it is alleged that if all cognition must be a riddle to the epistemologist, so must any initial cognition with which epistemology itself begins be a riddle. I repeat that this plausible argument is a deception. The deception is due to the vague generality of the wording. Cognition in general "is questioned." Surely, however, it is not denied that there is cognition in general (such denial would lead to contradiction); rather, cognition presents a certain problem, namely, of how it can accomplish a certain task attributed to it, namely, the task of reaching the object: I may even doubt whether this task can be accomplished at all. But doubt as I

may, this doubt is a first step toward canceling itself out because some cognitions can be brought to light which render such doubt groundless. Moreover, if I begin by not understanding cognition at all, then this incomprehension with its indeterminate universality admittedly encompasses every cognition. But that is not to say that every cognition I might run up against in the future has to remain forever incomprehensible. It may be that there is a big puzzle to begin with connected with a particular class of cognitions, those that thrust themselves most immediately to the fore, and that I now reach a general embarrassment and say: cognition as such is a riddle, even though it soon appears that the riddle does not belong to certain other kinds of cognition. And, as we shall see presently, this is indeed the case.

I said that the cognitions with which the critique of cognition must begin must contain nothing doubtful or questionable. They must contain none of that which precipitates epistemological confusion and gives impetus to the critique of cognition. We have to show that this holds true of the sphere of the *cogitatio*. For this we need a more deeply probing reflection, one that will bring us substantial advantages.

If we look closer at what is so enigmatic and what, in the course of subsequent reflection on the possibility of cognition, causes embarrassment, we will find it to be the transcendence of cognition. All cognition of the natural sort, and especially the pre-scientific, is cognition which makes its object transcendent. / It posits objects as existent, claims to reach matters of fact which are not "strictly given to it," are not "immanent" to it.

But on closer view, this *transcendence* is admittedly *ambiguous*. One thing one can mean by transcendence is that the object of cognition is not genuinely (*veell*) contained in the cognitive act so that one would be meaning by "being truly given" or "immanently given" that the object of the cognitive act is genuinely contained in the act: the cognitive act, the *cogitatio*, has genuine abstract parts genuinely constituting it: but the physical thing which it intends or supposedly perceives or remembers, etc., is, not to be found in the *cogitatio* itself, as a mental process; the physical thing is not to be found as a genuine (*veell*) concrete part (*Stück*), not as something which really exists within the *cogitatio*. So the question is: how can the mental process so to speak

transcend itself? *Immanent here means then genuinely (weil) immanent in the cognitive mental process.*

But there is still another transcendence whose opposite is an altogether different immanence, namely, *absolute and clear givenness, self-givenness in the absolute sense.* This givenness, which rules out any meaningful doubt, consists of a simply immediate "seeing" and apprehending of the intended object itself as it is, and it constitutes the precise concept of evidence (*Evidenz*) understood as immediate evidence. All cognition which is not evident, which though it intends or posits something objective yet *does not see it itself*, is transcendent in this second sense. In such cognition we go beyond what at any time is *truly given*, beyond what can be *directly "seen" and apprehended*. At this point we may ask: How can cognition posit something as existing that is not directly and truly given in it?

At first, before we come to a deeper level of critical epistemological reflection, these two kinds of immanence and transcendence run confusedly into each other. It is indeed clear that whoever raises the first question about the possibility of genuine (*weil*) transcendence is at the same time really also raising the second question: namely, how can there be transcendence beyond the realm of evident givenness? In this there is the unspoken supposition that the only actually understandable, unquestionable, absolutely evident givenness is the givenness of *the abstract part genuinely (weil) contained within the cognitive act*, / and this is why anything in the way of a cognized objectivity that is not genuinely (*weil*) contained within that act is regarded as a puzzle and as problematic. We shall soon hear that this is a fatal mistake.

One may now construe transcendence in one sense or the other, or, at first even ambiguously, but transcendence is both the initial and the central problem of the critique of cognition. It is the riddle that stands in the path of cognition of the natural sort and is the incentive for new investigations. One could at the outset designate the solution to this problem as being the task of the critique of cognition. One would thereby delimit the new discipline in a preliminary fashion, instead of generally designating as its theme the problem of the essence of any cognition whatever.

If then the riddle connected with the initial establishment of the discipline lies here, it becomes more definitely clear what must not be claimed as presupposed. Nothing transcendent must be used as a presupposition. If I do not understand how it is possible that cognition reach something transcendent, then I also do not know whether it is possible. The scientific warrant for believing in a transcendent existence is of no help. For every mediated warrant goes back to something immediate, and it is the unmediated which contains the riddle.

Still someone might say: "It is certain that mediated no less than immediate cognition contains the riddle. But it is only the *how* that is puzzling, whereas the *that* is absolutely certain. No sensible man will doubt the existence of the world, and the sceptic in action betrays his own creed." Very well. Then let us answer him with a more powerful and far-reaching argument. For it proves that the theory of cognition has, *neither at the outset nor throughout its course*, any license to fall back upon the content of the sciences of a natural sort which treat their object as transcendent. What is proved is the fundamental thesis that *the theory of knowledge can never be based upon any science of the natural sort, no matter what the more specific nature of that science may be.* Hence we ask: What will our opponent do with his transcendent knowledge? We put freely at his disposal the entire stock of transcendent truths contained in the objective / sciences, and we take it that those truths are not altered by the emergence of the puzzle of how a science of the transcendent is possible. What will he now do with his all-embracing knowledge? How does he think he can go from the "that" to the "how"? That he knows for a fact that cognition of the transcendent is actual guarantees as logically obvious that cognition of the transcendent is possible. But the riddle is, *how* is it possible? Can he solve it even if he presupposes all the sciences, all or any cognition of the transcendent? Consider: What more does he really need? That cognition of the transcendent is possible he takes for granted, even as analytically certain in saying to himself, there is in my case knowledge of the transcendent. What he lacks is obvious. He is unclear about the relation to transcendence. He is unclear about the "reaching the transcendent" which is ascribed to cognition, to knowledge. Where and how can he achieve clarity?

He could do so if the essences of this relation were somehow *given* to him, so that he could "see" it and could directly inspect the unity of cognition and its object, a unity denoted by the locution "reaching the object." He would thereby not only know this unity to be possible, but he would have this possibility clearly before him. The possibility itself counts for him as something transcendent, as a possibility which is known but not of itself given, "seen." He obviously thinks: cognition is a thing apart from its object; cognition is given but the object of cognition is not given; and yet cognition is supposed to relate to the object, to cognize it. How can I understand this possibility? Naturally the reply is: I could understand it only if the relation itself were given as something to be "seen." As long as the object is, and remains, something transcendent, and cognition and its objects are actually separate, then indeed he can see nothing here, and his hopes for reaching a solution, perhaps even by way of falling back on transcendent presuppositions, are patent folly.

<38> However, if he is to be consistent with these views, he should give up his starting point: he should acknowledge that in this case cognition of the transcendent is impossible, and that his pretence to know is mere prejudice. Then the problem is no longer: How is cognition of the transcendent possible? But rather, How do we account for the prejudice which ascribes a transcendent feat to cognition? And this exactly was the path Hume took.

Let us emphatically reject that approach and let us go on to illustrate the basic idea that the problem of the "how" (how cognition of the transcendent is possible and even more generally, how cognition is possible at all) can never be answered on the basis of a prior knowledge of the transcendent, of prior judgments about it, no matter whence the knowledge or the judgments are borrowed, not even if they are taken from the exact sciences. Here is an illustration: A man born deaf knows that there are sounds, that sounds produce harmonies and that a splendid art depends upon them. But he cannot understand *how* sounds do this, how musical compositions are possible. Such things he cannot *imagine*, i.e., he cannot "see" and in "seeing" grasp the "how" of such things. His knowledge about what exists helps him in no way, and it would be absurd if he were to try to deduce

the *how* of music from his knowledge, thinking that thereby he could achieve clarity about the possibility of music through conclusions drawn from things of which he is cognizant. It will not do to draw conclusions from existences of which one knows but which one cannot "see." "Seeing" does not lend itself to demonstration or deduction. It is patently absurd to try to explain plain possibilities (and unmediated possibilities at that) by drawing logical conclusions from non-intuitive knowledge. Even if I could be wholly certain that there are transcendent worlds, even if I accept the whole content of the sciences of a natural sort, even then I cannot borrow from them. I must never fancy that by relying on transcendent presuppositions and scientific inferences I can arrive where I want to go in the critique of cognition — namely, to assess the possibility of a transcendent objectivity of cognition. And that goes not just for the beginning but for the whole course of the critique of cognition, so long as there still remains the problem of *how cognition is possible*. / And, <39> evidently, that goes not just for the problem of transcendent objectivity but also for the elucidation of every possibility.

If we combine this with the extraordinarily strong inclination to make a transcendently oriented judgment and thus to fall into a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος* [a change into some other kind] in every case where a thought process involves transcendence and a judgment has to be based upon it, then we arrive at a sufficient and complete deduction of the *epistemological principle* that an epistemological *reduction* has to be accomplished in the case of every epistemological inquiry of whatever sort of cognition. That is to say, everything transcendent that is involved must be bracketed, or be assigned the index of indifference, of epistemological nullity, an index which indicates: the existence of all these transcendences, whether I believe in them or not, is not here my concern; this is not the place to make judgments about them; they are entirely irrelevant.

All the basic errors of the theory of knowledge go hand in hand with the above mentioned *μετάβασις*; on the one hand the basic error of psychologism, on the other that of anthropologism and biologism.<sup>1</sup> The *μετάβασις* is so exceedingly dangerous, partly

<sup>1</sup> Tr. note: Husserl's words are *Anthropologismus* and *Biologismus*, clearly coined to parallel *Psychologismus* (Psychologism).

because the proper sense of the problem is never made clear and remains totally lost in it, and partly because even those who have become clear about it find it hard to remain clear and slip easily, as their thinking proceeds, back into the temptations of the natural modes of thought and judgment as well as into the false and seductive conceptions of the problems which grow on their basis.

## LECTURE III

&lt;41&gt;

[THE CARRYING OUT OF THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL REDUCTION: BRACKETING EVERYTHING TRANSCENDENT. THEME OF THE INVESTIGATION: THE PURE PHENOMENON. THE QUESTION OF THE "OBJECTIVE VALIDITY" OF THE ABSOLUTE PHENOMENON. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF LIMITING OURSELVES TO SINGULAR DATA; PHENOMENOLOGICAL COGNITION AS A COGNITION OF ESSENCES. TWO SENSES OF THE CONCEPT OF THE *a priori*.]

By these considerations what the critique of cognition may and may not use has been precisely and adequately determined. What is especially puzzling for such a critique is the possibility of transcendence, but it may never under any conditions exploit for its purposes the actuality of transcendent things. Obviously the sphere of usable objects or of cognitions is limited to those which present themselves as valid, and which can remain free of the marks of epistemological vacuity; but this sphere is not empty. We have indubitably secured the whole realm of *cogitationes*. The existence of the *cogitatio*, more precisely the phenomenon of cognition itself, is beyond question; and it is free from the riddle of transcendence. These existing things are already presupposed in the statement of the problem of cognition. The question as to how transcendent things come into cognition would lose its sense if cognition itself, as well as the transcendent object, were put in question. It is also clear that the *cogitationes* present a sphere of *absolutely immanent data*; it is in this sense that we understand "immanence." In the "seeing" pure phenomena the object is not outside cognition or outside "consciousness," while being given in the sense of the absolute self-giveness of something which is simply "seen."

But here we need assurance through *epistemological reduction*, the methodological essence of which we now want to examine in *concreto* for the first time. We need the reduction at this point in order to prevent the evidence of the existence of the *cogitatio* from being confused with the evidence that *my cogitatio* exists, with the evidence of the *sum cogitans*, and the like. One must guard himself from the fundamental confusion between the *pure phenomenon*, in the sense of phenomenology, and the *psychological phenomenon*, the object of empirical psychology. If I, as a



phenomena, although for purposes of the critique of reason, we are, naturally, interested only in cognitive phenomena. Thus the results set forth below can just as well be applied to all phenomena, as they hold *mutatis mutandis* for all of them.

In our quest for a critique of cognition, we have been led to a beginning, to a stronghold of data which is at our disposal, and it appears that this is what we need above all. If I am to fathom the essence of cognition, then I must, of course, possess cognition in all its questionable forms, as a *datum*, and possess it in such a way that this datum has in itself nothing of the problematic character which other cognitions bring with them, however much they seem to offer us data.

Having assured ourselves of the field of pure cognition, we can now investigate it and start a science of pure phenomena, a *phenomenology*. Is it not obvious that this must be the basis for the solution to the problems which have been agitating us? Thus it is clear that I can only attain insight into the essence of cognition if I look at it myself, and if it itself is given to me to "see," as it really is. I must study it immanently and by pure inspection within the pure phenomenon, within "pure consciousness." To be sure, its transcendence is doubtful; the existence of objects to which it is related insofar as it is transcendent, is not given to me; and questions are raised precisely as to how, in spite of this, they can be postulated, and as to what significance it has and must have if such postulation is to be possible. On the other hand, even if I raise questions about the existence and reaching the object of this relation to transcendent things, still it has something which can be grasped in the pure phenomenon. The relating-itself-to-transcendent-things, whether it is meant in this or that way, is still an inner feature of the phenomenon. It almost seems as if it would depend only on a science of absolute *cogitationes*. Since I have to cancel out any previous acceptance of the intended transcendent objects, where else could I investigate both the *meaning* of this intending-something-beyond, and also, along with this meaning, its possible *validity*, or the meaning of such validity? Where else but the place at which this meaning is unqualifiedly given / and at which in the pure phenomenon of relation, corroboration, justification the meaning of validity, for its part, comes to absolute givenness.

To be sure, we are overtaken here once more by the doubt whether there is not still a surplus which must pass over into action, whether the datum of validity does not carry with it the givenness of the object, which, on the other hand, could not be the givenness of the *cogitatio*, at least insofar as there is really such a thing as valid transcendence. Nevertheless a science of absolute phenomena, understood as *cogitationes*, is the first thing we need, and this has to produce at least a major part of the solution.

Thus, it must be our aim to set up a phenomenology, more specifically a phenomenology of cognitions, construed as a theory of the essence of pure cognitive phenomena. The outlook is favorable. But how is phenomenology to proceed? How is it possible? I am supposed to make assertions, indeed objectively valid assertions; I am supposed to cognize pure phenomena scientifically. *But does all science not lead to the establishing of objects existing in themselves, i.e., to transcendent objects?* What is scientifically established is something which is what it is in itself; it is to be accepted just as existing whether I, in my cognition, postulate it as existing or not. Does not science by its very essence have as its correlate the objectivity of that which is known only in science, and which is scientifically established? And that which is scientifically established is universally valid, is it not? But what is the situation here? We move in the field of pure phenomena. But why do I say *field*? It is more nearly a *Heracleian flux* of phenomena. What assertions can I make about it? Now, while "seeing," I can say: this here: No doubt it is. Perhaps I can further say that this phenomenon includes that one as a part, or is connected to that one; this one spreads over that one, etc.

But obviously there is no "*objective validity*" to these assertions; they have no "*objective meaning*"; they have a merely "*subjective truth*". Now we do not wish to become involved here in an attempt to determine whether there is not a sense in which these assertions have a certain objectivity, even while they can be pronounced "*subjectively*" true. But it is already clear to a fleeting glance that that higher dignity of objectivity, which the prescientific natural / judgment dramatizes, so to speak, and <sup><47></sup> which the considered judgments of the exact sciences bring to an

incomparably higher fulfillment, is altogether lacking here. We shall not attribute any special value to such assertions — that this is here, etc. — which we make on the basis of pure “seeing.”

Moreover we are reminded here of the famous Kantian distinction between *judgments of perceptions* and *judgments of experience*. The relationship is obvious. However, as Kant lacked the concepts of phenomenology and phenomenological reduction, and as he had not been able to completely escape psychologism and anthropologism, he did not arrive at the ultimate significance of the distinction which is necessary here. Naturally with us it is not a question of merely subjectively valid judgments which are limited in their validity to the empirical subject, or even of objective validity in the sense of validity for every subject without restriction. Indeed we have bracketed the empirical subject; and the transcendental apperception, consciousness as such, will soon acquire for us a completely different meaning, one which is not at all mysterious.

Let us now return to the main theme of our discussion. Phenomenological judgments, if restricted to singular judgments, do not have very much to teach us. But how are judgments, particularly scientifically valid judgments, to be established? And the word *scientific* immediately puts us into an embarrassing position. Does objectivity not carry *transcendence* with it, and along with this also the doubt as to what it is supposed to signify, as to *whether* and how it is possible? Through *epistemological reduction* we exclude transcendent presuppositions, because transcendence is in question with respect to its possible validity and its meaning. But then are the scientific or transcendent conclusions of the theory of knowledge themselves still possible? Is it not obvious that before the possibility of transcendence is established no transcendent result of the theory of knowledge can itself be secure? But if, as it might seem, the epistemological *ἐπιτήρησις* demands that we accept nothing transcendent until we have established its possibility, and if the establishing of the possibility of transcendence itself, as an objective result, requires transcendent postulations, then it seems / that we are faced with the prospect of a circle, which makes phenomenology and the theory of knowledge impossible; and the labor of love in which we have been engaged up to this point will have been in vain.

We cannot, without more ado, despair of the possibility of a phenomenology and of what is obviously bound up with that in this discussion — a critique of cognition. What we need at this point is a further step which will unroll this spurious circle for us. We have already accomplished this in principle, for we distinguished two senses of transcendence and of immanence. After Descartes had established the evidence of the *cogitatio* (or rather of the *cogito ergo sum*, a conception which we have not adopted), he asked, as you will recall: *What is it which assures me of these fundamental data?* The answer is: the *clara et distincta perceptio*.<sup>1</sup> We can carry this further. I need not claim that we already have a purer and deeper grasp of the matter than Descartes, and that thereby we grasp and understand [the concept of] evidence, the *clara et distincta perceptio*, in a more exact sense. With Descartes we can now take the further step (*mutatis mutandis*): to whatever is given through a *clara et distincta perceptio*, as each *cogitatio* is, we may accord an equal validity. To be sure, if we recall the third and fourth Meditations, the proofs of the existence of God, the appeal to the *veracitas dei*,<sup>2</sup> etc., we can expect difficulties. Therefore, be very sceptical, or rather critical.

We have the givenness of the pure *cogitatio* as an absolute possession, but not the givenness of outer things in external perception, although such perception makes a claim to be giving the existence of these things. The transcendence of things requires that we put them in question. We do not understand how perception can reach transcendent objects, but we understand how perception can reach the immanent, provided it is reflective and purely immanent perception which has undergone reduction. But what enables us to understand this? Well, we directly “see,” we directly grasp what we intend in the act of “seeing” and grasping. To have a phenomenon before one’s eyes, which points to something which is not itself given in the phenomenon, and then to doubt whether such an object exists, and if so how it is to be understood that it exists — this is meaningful. But to “see” and to intend absolutely nothing more than what is grasped in “seeing,” and then still / to question and doubt, that is nonsense. Basically what I am saying amounts to this. The “seeing” or

<sup>1</sup> Tr. note: Clear and distinct perception.

<sup>2</sup> Tr. note: The veracity of God.

grasping of what is given, insofar as it is actual "seeing," actual self-giveness in the strictest sense and not another sort of givenness which points to something which is not given — that is an ultimate. That is *absolute self-evidence*: if you are looking for what is not self-evident, what is problematic, or perhaps entirely mysterious, consider the reference to something transcendent, i.e., intention, belief, even a detailed proof of something not given. And it does not help us that even here an absolute datum can be found — the givenness of intention and belief themselves. To be sure, if we only reflect we will find this before us; but what is given here is not what was intended.

But can it be that absolute self-evidence, self-giveness in "seeing," is realized only in particular mental processes and their particular abstract aspects and parts, i.e., only in the "seeing" grasp of the *here and now*? Would there not have to be a "seeing" grasp of other data as absolute data, e.g., universals, in such a way that were a universal to attain self-evident givenness within "seeing," any doubt about it would then be absurd?

How remarkable it would be to limit the *cogitatio* to phenomenologically singular data can be seen from this fact, that the whole doctrine of evidence, which we, following Descartes, have set forth, and which certainly is illuminated with absolute clarity and self-evidence, would lose its value. That is, concerning the case of a *cogitatio* which lies before us as something particular, perhaps a feeling which we are now undergoing, one might say: this is given. But we would by no means dare to put forward the most universal proposition: *the givenness of any reduced phenomenon is an absolute and indubitable givenness.*

But this is only to help you along. In any event, it is illuminating that the possibility of a critique of cognition depends on the demonstration of absolute data which are different from even the reduced *cogitationes*. To view the matter more precisely, in the subject-predicate judgments which we make concerning them, we have already gone beyond them. If we say: this phenomenon of judgment underlies this or that phenomenon of imagination, this / perceptual phenomenon contains this or that aspect, color content, etc., and even if, just for the sake of argument, we make these assertions in the most exact conformity with the givenness of the *cogitatio*, then the logical forms which

we employ, and which are reflected in the linguistic expressions themselves, already go beyond the mere *cogitationes*. A "something more" is involved which does not at all consist of a mere agglomeration of new *cogitationes*. And even if predicational thinking gives rise to new *cogitationes*, which are joined to those concerning which we made the assertions, nevertheless they are not what constitute the predicational facts which are the objective correlates of the assertions.

That cognition, which can bring to *absolute self-giveness* not only particulars, but also *universals, universal objects, and universal states of affairs*, is more easily conceivable, at least for anyone who can assume the position of pure "seeing" and can hold all natural prejudices at arm's length. This cognition is of decisive significance for the possibility of phenomenology. For its special character consists in the fact that it is the analysis of essence and the investigation into essence in the area of pure "seeing" thought and absolute self-giveness. That is necessarily its character; it sets out to be a science and a method which will explain possibilities — possibilities of cognition and possibilities of valuation — and will explain them in terms of their fundamental essence. They are generally questionable possibilities, and investigations of them must take on the character of general investigations of essence. Analysis of essence is *eo ipso* general analysis; cognition of essence in terms of essence, in terms of essential nature, in terms of cognition which is directed to universal objects. It is here that talk of the *a priori* has its legitimate place. For what does *a priori* cognition mean except a cognition which is directed to general essences, and which entirely bases its absolute validity on essence, at least insofar as we exclude the discredited empiricist concept of the *a priori*.

In any event, although this may be the only justifiable concept of the *a priori*, another one can be found if we range under the heading of the *a priori* all concepts which as categories have a principal meaning in a certain sense, and then in addition the essential principles which are based on these concepts.

If we concentrate here on the first concept of the *a priori*, then <51> phenomenology will have to do with the *a priori* in the sphere of origins and of absolute data, with species grasped in general 'seeing,' and with the *a priori* truths which these species render

immediately "seeable." When we engage in the critique of reason, not only the theoretical, but also the practical and any other kind, the chief goal is certainly the *a priori* in the second sense; it is to establish the principal self-given forms and facts and, by means of this self-giveness, to develop, interpret, and evaluate the concepts which come forward with a claim to crucial significance, as well as the principles of logic, ethics, and theory of value.

## LECTURE IV

&lt;53&gt;

[EXTENSION OF THE SPHERE OF INVESTIGATION THROUGH A CONSIDERATION OF INTENTIONALITY. THE SELF-GIVENNESS OF THE UNIVERSAL; THE PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD OF THE ANALYSIS OF ESSENCE. CRITIQUE OF THE INTERPRETATION OF EVIDENCE AS FEELINGS; EVIDENCE AS SELF-GIVENNESS. NO LIMITATION ON THE SPHERE OF GENUINE (*Reell*) IMMANENCE; THE THEME OF ALL SELF-GIVENNESS.]

If we restrict ourselves to the pure phenomenology of cog- <55>  
 nition, then we will be concerned with the *essence of cognition* as revealed in direct "seeing," i.e., with a demonstration of it which is carried out by way of "seeing" in the sphere of phenomenological reduction and self-giveness, and with an analytical distinction between the various sorts of phenomena which are embraced by the very broad term "cognition." Then the question is as to what is essentially contained and grounded in them, from what factors they are built up, what possibilities of combination can be found while remaining purely within their essential natures, and what general interrelations flow from their essences.

And it is not merely concerned with the genuinely (*reell*) immanent, but also with what is *immanent in the intentional sense*. Cognitive mental processes (and this belongs to their essence) have an *intention*, they refer to something, they are related in this or that way to an object. This activity of relating itself to an object belongs to them even if the object itself does not. And what is objective can appear, can have a certain kind of givenness in appearance, even though it is at the same time neither genuinely (*reell*) within the cognitive phenomenon, nor does it exist in any other way as a *cogitatio*. To explain the essence of cognition and the essential connections which belong to it and to bring this to self-giveness, this involves examining both these sides of the matter; it involves investigating this relatedness which belongs to the essence of cognition. And just here lie the puzzles, the mysteries, the problems concerning the ultimate meaning of the objectivity of cognition, including its reaching or failing to reach the object, if it is judgmental cognition and its adequacy, if it is evident cognition, etc.

In any case, the whole investigation into essence, is in fact,