

## AN APPROACH TO HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

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The peculiar character of Husserlian phenomenology lies not in its content but in the way the latter is attained. Whatever its sense, an account is phenomenological in the Husserlian sense if, and only if, it is produced "phenomenologically." Mere acquaintance with the doctrines of Husserlian phenomenologists is therefore not acquaintance with Husserlian phenomenology as such. To be acquainted with an account as phenomenological in the Husserlian sense, one must also know Husserlian phenomenological method.

The theory of this method is itself phenomenological in the Husserlian sense – and this indicates that Husserlian phenomenological method, in some form, is prior to Husserlian phenomenological methodology as well as to the rest of Husserlian phenomenological theory. Nevertheless, methodological knowledge is an instrument for improving method deliberately; and improved method leads to improved theory in general and improved methodology in particular. In view of these facts, there is a reason for making Husserlian phenomenological method the central theme of an essay addressed partly to non-phenomenologists, and there is also a reason for not beginning such an essay with an exposition of Husserlian phenomenological methodology in its more developed form. The latter can be understood only after the method in its rudimentary form, and certain results of rudimentary method, have been grasped.

To be sure, an adequate understanding of any purposely employed method includes an understanding of what the one using the method sets up as the thing to be actualized by its means. The goal of Husserlian

phenomenological activity is always knowledge, but the initial conception of knowledge – like the initial method and the theory of method – undergoes a change, because of cognitional results actually attained. There is, therefore, an analogous reason for not attempting to state the specifically Husserlian phenomenological ideal of knowledge at the beginning of the present essay.

## I

The fundamental methodological principle of Husserlian phenomenology may, I think, be initially formulated as follows: *No opinion is to be accepted as philosophical knowledge unless it is seen to be adequately established by observation of what is seen as itself given "in person." Any belief seen to be incompatible with what is seen to be itself given is to be rejected. Toward opinions that fall in neither class – whether they be one's own or another's – one is to adopt an "official" philosophical attitude of neutrality.*

When this principle is first presented, or adopted either implicitly in practice or explicitly as a maxim, its sense derives not only from an already acquired familiarity with the difference between awareness of something as itself given and awareness of something as not itself given, but also from accepted traditional theories. Perhaps the most striking instance of this difference, and surely the instance most emphasized by current traditions, is the difference between sensuously perceiving a thing and being aware of a thing – otherwise, e.g., in remembering or expecting it, or in sensuously perceiving or imagining something *else* as depicting or as symbolizing it. Obviously, the sense of the principle also derives at first from a like familiarity with the difference between an opinion that merely formulates what one grasps as itself given and an opinion that goes beyond, or conflicts with, what one grasps as actually given "in person." And here too the accepted tradition plays its role.

But vague familiarity and traditional concepts do not provide the principle with such clarity and definiteness as are necessary if it is to be applied to all opinions with certainty and precision. It might be expected that this defect should be remedied by contriving a set of defining postulates or rules of procedure. The principle itself demands, however, that traditional and habitual opinions about self-givenness and the other matters referred to in it be tested and, if necessary, corrected by *original observation*.

## II

Something like the Husserlian phenomenologist's fundamental maxim, as initially stated, would probably be acknowledged by empiricists, at least qua empiricists. But empiricism imposes a restriction. The empiricist, as such, accepts a belief as philosophical knowledge only when it is somehow

known to be adequately established by observation of *individual* affairs. Indeed, some empiricists given the maxim an even more restrictive interpretation, in accordance with which they refuse to accept "the perception of the operations of our own minds within us" as a form of observation by which genuine knowledge may be established. To them, only opinions known to be adequately established on the basis of "sensation" of sensuous perceiving are officially acceptable, "scientific" knowledge.

The Husserlian phenomenologist asserts that any empiristic restriction of his fundamental principle leads one to ignore or "officially" reject matters of which one is in fact aware as themselves given "in person," matters that are "data" in the very sense that spatio-temporally individuated matters (including those sensuously perceived) are data. He contends, furthermore, that this assertion of his can be verified according to the above-stated methodological principle, and that therefore any statement to the effect that only individual things are observable (as themselves given) is a statement observably *incompatible* with what is itself given – a stated opinion that must be rejected in accordance with his fundamental principle. Such opinions, far from being based on original observation, not only go beyond but actually conflict with observable data.

Sensuous perceivedness, to consider it first, is indeed contrasted, as a form of "original self-giveness," with, e.g., the "meantness" of a physical thing as represented by a (perceived, remembered, or imagined) picture or symbol, or even as directly meant in a clear recollecting of a physical thing itself as past-perceived. More than that, it is (in a quite precise sense) the "basis" for all other types of givenness. Still it is, in itself, only that manner of original self-giveness *peculiar* to individual objects of a certain kind, e.g., to individual physical things, their individual shapes, individual colors, etc., and to their individual durations and changes in worldly space-time. One can be, and often is, aware of things of *other* kinds as themselves given – in other manners, to be sure, but "given" in precisely the same sense.

The Husserlian phenomenologist finds not only that non-sensible things and their determinations may be themselves given and grasped but also that the self-giveness of a self-given thing may be itself given and seized upon – moreover, that the generic similarity of the specific sorts of self-giveness peculiar respectively to sensuous data and data of other kinds is likewise something that may be itself given and observed. Thus, when he speaks of them all as "data," as "given," or even as "seen" or "perceived," he is – at least in his own opinion – indulging in no mere metaphors.

In short, the fundamental maxim of Husserlian phenomenology requires that empiristic restrictions be rejected because they conflict with or lead one to ignore strictly self-given, observable, and – as we shall see – intersubjectively verifiable "matters themselves." It is not perchance in the name of an alleged but unobservable Absolute nor even in the name of

alleged necessary conditions for the possibility of experience or knowledge, conditions that allegedly cannot themselves be experienced "data," that the Husserlian phenomenologist rejects empiricism. Rather is it solely in the name of matters whose self-givenness the empiricist overlooks or resolves officially to ignore.

Although Husserlian phenomenology differs thus from empiricism, it differs more profoundly from any philosophy that first sets up formal definitions and postulates, or material hypotheses, and proceeds by a method of formal deduction – supplemented perhaps by material interpretation and "verification" – more or less according to the example of an incompletely understood mathematics or mathematico-empirical physics. To take conceptual stuff already on hand and fashion a cloak of theory for things *in absentia*, then call them in for a partial fitting – that is at best only a way to botch together another ingenious misfit to hang away with how many others in the lumber-room of history. The matters judged about must themselves be present from the start, and throughout the entire theorizing process they must never be out of sight. They must be observed and explicated in their self-given intrinsic sense; and judgments must be produced that derive their entire content immediately and continuously from them.

In their communicative function, Husserlian phenomenological statements are intended to help the person addressed to bring to self-givenness for himself, to seize upon, explicate, and compare the very matters in question, to attach to the words a signification deriving solely from his own observations, and to see the statements as evidently confirmed (or cancelled) by the matters themselves. Whatever verbal definitions or deductive arguments may be contained in a Husserlian phenomenological discourse are quite ancillary to this purpose – or out of place. Statements that are strictly phenomenological in the Husserlian sense are to be used as guides for observation, much as one might use a previous observer's description of a landscape as an aid in distinguishing its features while all the time it lies before one's eyes. In other words, their purpose is to assist the reader to knowledge that fulfills the Husserlian phenomenologist's own criterion. Assistance is useful not only because some observations are intrinsically difficult but also because prejudices are likely to induce one to overlook or explain away what is actually there to be seen. The Husserlian phenomenologist's appeal to "immediate" inspection is not made on the assumption that a Husserlian phenomenological proposition need only be understood for its truth to become evident forthwith. The truth of an opinion is seen "immediately" only when its coincidence with a given fact, as judged on the basis of the very matters entering into it, is seen. And often it is a long and hard road to a position from which one *can* see the truth of an opinion – "immediately."

## III

Not all empiricists would restrict the sphere of philosophically acceptable self-givenness to what is given sensuously. Locke spoke, as a matter of course, about perceiving such "actions of our own minds" as "perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, [and] willing." He did not consider it incumbent on him to vindicate the existence of "reflection," "that notice which the mind takes of its own operations and the manner of them." In recent years, however, it has become important to defend the view that such mental processes as Locke enumerated are indeed perceptually self-given and that processes of reflecting, in which these "actions" are perceived, are themselves given reflectively.

Locke apparently thought of reflection only as a perceptual process, in our terminology a process in which one is aware of something as itself given "in person." But not every awareness of something as one's own mental process is an awareness of it as thus perceptually given. For example, one may not only perceive but also remember, expect, or phantasy something as one's own mental process. The Husserlian phenomenologist, imitating Husserl's terminology, applies the name "reflection" to any awareness of something as one's own mental process or as a determination thereof. He accordingly speaks not only of reflective perceiving but of reflective expecting, judging, etc., just as he speaks of non-reflective or "straightforward" perceiving, expecting, etc. Reflective and straightforward perceivings are both called "perceivings" because the original self-givenness of a mental process seized upon reflectively is, as such, observably like the original self-givenness of a thing seized upon straightforwardly, though their specific manners of original self-givenness are observably different.

But those who imitate Husserl's usage do not restrict the name "reflection" to awareness of one's mental processes and their really immanent determinations. The name, as they employ it, also covers awareness of something *as* an object of one's mental life. Usually one is busied with things not *as* objects of one's mental life but only as things. If a thing is itself given, one is usually busied with it not *as* something given but as having certain thing-determinations. As I look about, I see physical things, their shapes, colors, etc., and usually occupy myself – cognitively, aesthetically, practically – with physical things only as having physical thing-determinations, not as things believed in, seen, liked, etc. Sometimes, however, one does pay attention to things *as* believed, *as* things given, *as* liked – in brief, *as* intended to in one's awareness of them. And this paying of attention to the usually ignored status of things *as* intended to is contrasted terminologically as "reflection" with one's usual "straightforward" paying attention only to things.

*The deliberate application of the fundamental principle of Husserlian*

*phenomenological method requires paying attention not to things simpliciter but to things as intended to* and, more particularly, to their self-givenness or non-self-givenness. That is to say, it requires reflective rather than straightforward observation. To be sure, one can and frequently does establish one's beliefs by straightforward observation of what is itself given, without making its givenness one's theme. But straightforward observation, even when it does not in fact go beyond what is itself given, is not "phenomenological" in a Husserlian sense of the word. The exclusively reflective character of all Husserlian phenomenological inquiry deserves emphasis, if only because, according to a perhaps more common usage, pure straightforward descriptions (without construction or explanation) are also called "phenomenological." There is an important difference, however, between simply describing a thing and describing in the sense that a thing is intended to as having – between ascribing to an (in fact presented) thing certain (in fact presented) thing-determinations and saying that a thing is presented as having certain determinations that are also presented. Husserl sometimes expressed the difference by saying, in effect, that straightforward description is description of things *per se* whereas his phenomenological description is description of *intentional objects*. Once the difference itself has been grasped, this convenient manner of speaking should not be misleading. It is apt to mislead, however, if one fails to see that the terms "thing *per se*" (or "thing *simpliciter*") and "intentional object" are names for one and the same thing, only paid attention to in different manners. In the straightforward attitude one ignores the thing's being intended to, being believed in (or believed), etc., being paid attention to, etc., and lives in one's intending to, one's believing in (or believing) the thing *per se*; in the reflective attitude one pays attention to *the same thing's* being intended to.

No matter how one may be busied straightforwardly – believing, doubting, denying; liking or fearing; perceiving, phantasying, willing – no matter what the object of one's concern is meant as being – a stone, an atom, an adjective, an angel, space or time, or even the world itself as a concrete whole – always one can adopt a reflective attitude and concern oneself with the thing *as* what one is, or was, busied with straightforwardly, *as* what remains intended to in this manner or that, as having such and such thing-determinations. When one does so, one is attending the "intentional object," the same thing qua object of one's mental process.

From this it should be clear that the dual terminology does not indicate an epistemological dualism. Intentional objects are not things somehow "in one's mind," nor are they intermediaries between mental processes and the things themselves. They are the things one's mental processes intend to, the things with which one perhaps deals cognitively, emotionally, volitionally; they include all the things that one correctly means as existing in the real, intersubjectively accessible world. Things *per se*, things

pure and simple, are, on the other hand, not alleged things transcendent of the realm of intentional objects, but these same intentional objects as they are meant straightforwardly, without regarding their being intended to.

Our usual attitudes and mental activities are not reflective, but that does not mean that reflection is practised only by Husserlian phenomenologists. Reflection, and even reflective perceiving, are the occasional practices of everyone, including those whose historically understandable prejudices make them oblivious to reflection and its data as soon as they adopt a theoretical attitude. And from this it follows that reflection, though essential to Husserlian phenomenologizing, is not its sufficient differentia.

#### IV

We have seen that the fundamental principle of Husserlian phenomenological method requires that one's mental processes, as themselves given in reflective perceivings, be acknowledged as genuine data. We have seen also that, to apply that principle, one must regard all things reflectively as intentional objects, i.e., consider them in their status as somehow intended to in one's mental processes. Any thing of which he is aware serves the Husserlian phenomenologist as a clue to the mental processes in which it is intended to. Following this clue, he attempts to bring to clear self-givenness the really immanent determinations of the process and correlatively the manner of givenness – perhaps self-givenness – of the thing *as* intended to in that process. In this attempt he is applying his fundamental principle – and doing so in the only manner that can bring to original self-givenness the matters of which the principle speaks, and thus lead to its original clarification.

So far, we have centered our attention on individual matters: primarily on things intended to as individuals and on individual processes intending to them. But it is to be observed that some things are straightforwardly meant as not being individuals. Indeed, they are not only meant but sometimes themselves given and grasped as such. An individual thing is intended to not merely in its individuality, as having individual parts and standing in individual relationships to other individual things. It is also intended to and may be explicitly seized upon *as* an individual (an instance of that *category*), as an instance of a *specific sort* of individuals, as having parts of *specific sorts*, etc. Furthermore, these “categories” and “specific sorts” may be not only thus cointended to but also directly paid attention to for their own sakes and grasped in their original self-givenness on the basis of a clear perceiving or phantasying of at least possible instances. Thus, e.g., a thing may be intended to and clearly given as a possible, and perhaps an actual, instance of *color in general*, as having a quality that is an individual instance of *brightness in general*, and as standing in an

individual relationship, that is an instance of *similarity in general*, to other individual instances of color. And color, brightness, similarity – these general kinds – may themselves be presented and seized upon. Indeed, it is only on the basis of the original givenness and seizedness of the kind as well as the individual that one can judge “with original insight”: this is an instance of color; this has a brightness; this is similar to that in brightness; this instance of color belongs to this instance of surface; etc. And only when one has thus judged with original insight can one seize upon, as originally self-given, the state of affairs itself: that this is a color, that it is bright, etc. Moreover, general kinds themselves can be judged *about* just as individuals can – they can be identified, distinguished, named, and, in short, “treated” in all the manners necessary to justify one in calling them “things,” despite their non-individuality.

*Straightforward* seizing upon, observing, and judging about generic and specific things that are themselves given are not, however, Husserlian phenomenological activities. The Husserlian phenomenologist as such observes and describes color in general *as* intended to, *as* seized upon, in its manner of being given, etc., not color in general *simpliciter*. And, correlatively, he describes the mental processes in which color in general is variously intended to, seized upon, judged about, etc. He observes that the generic and specific pure “essences” instanced by individuals straightforwardly intended to are, in a strict sense, themselves given; he describes the manner of their straightforward givenness, and the straightforward method of seizing upon them and judging with evidence about them. But he himself, qua Husserlian phenomenologist, practices the observation of only such generic and specific pure essences as are instanced by *reflectively* given individuals, i.e., by his own mental processes and their intentional objects. Reflectively seized upon individual processes of sensuous perceiving provide him with the basis for seizing upon the specific pure essence instanced by any sensuous perceiving as such; processes of visual perceiving function as a basis for seizing upon the more specific pure essence instanced by any visual perceiving; and processes of seizing upon individual things as themselves given, whether sensuously or nonsensuously, function as a basis for seizing upon the generic pure essence instanced by any perceiving. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for reflectively seized upon mental processes of whatever kind. Similarly, the intentional object as such, in its sense for the mental process, in its manner of being given, believed, doubted, valued, etc., is a basis for seizing upon the generic or specific pure essences instanced by any intentional object, any givenness, any objective sense, any intentional object intended to as an individual thing, etc.

Though other egos cannot directly examine my individual mental processes, each of them can examine his own and confirm or refute my statements about the generic pure essence of any mental process, etc. If there is anyone who has anything like what I have and call “perceiving,” it

is *ipso facto* an instance of the genus of which my perceiving is an instance, and he can seize upon that *same* genus on the basis of his processes even as I seize upon it on the basis of mine.

Active seizing upon generic pure essences, whether they be instanced by straightforwardly or by reflectively seized upon individual processes, is at first practiced naively. But when it has been practiced, individual mental processes may be themselves seized upon reflectively and used as a basis for grasping their specific pure essence and, correlatively, the pure essence of the self-givenness peculiar to things seized upon as specific pure essences. On the basis of such an original seizing upon the pure essence of the process and the pure essence of what it accomplishes as an original seizing upon essences, one then may practice it not naively but as a deliberate and critically justified method.

Thus, as deliberately practiced and critically justified, it pre-supposes reflective inquiry. But as a naive "method" it has always been practiced by everyone. To paraphrase Locke's aphorism: God has not been so sparing to men to make them barely able to seize upon individuals and left it to Husserl to make them able to seize upon pure essences. It should be emphasized that, according to the Husserlian phenomenologist, reflection and the observing of pure essences are not his prerogatives but the *de facto* practices even of the narrowest empiricist.

But it would not be correct to say that *all* judgments based on the observation of pure essences exemplified by reflectively given matters are phenomenological in the Husserlian sense. Indeed, it would not be correct to even say, conversely, that *all* judgments that are strictly phenomenological in the Husserlian sense are based on observation of pure essences. The observation of one individual mental life provides a basis not only for seizing upon the generic pure essence it exemplifies but also for making Husserlian phenomenological judgments of existence, most notably, the judgment that this individual mental life itself is not only essentially possible but also exists as an actual instance of mental life. And this turns out to be anything but trivial, since it is the basis for every other Husserlian phenomenological judgment of existence.<sup>2</sup>

## V

The present flux of mental life, as reflectively observed, is not simply a process of being actually busied now with this thing, now with that. The intentional objects of my actual believings, valuings, and willings are singled out from an intentionally objective background that is all the while meant as there, to be paid attention to.

No matter how intendings to things may vary, as I live actually now in perceiving, now in remembering, in judging, liking, willing – straightforwardly or reflectively – always there goes on, at least automatically, a

continuous simple believing-intending to “the world” as the concrete individual nexus in which all particular individuals intended to are intended to as having their actual or possible being. The course of mental life may bring doubting or disbelieving of some previously believed in detail in the objective sense of this world, but the latter as a whole is still simply believed in – only as somehow otherwise, or perhaps otherwise, than was previously believed. If I am busied with matters that have the sense of not being temporally individuated, still the individual world is at least automatically co-intended to and itself given – though incompletely, as having more to it than presents itself – and, by their sense, these non-individual things have their varied types of “ideal” being, essentially in relation to the individual world of individuals, e.g., as pure essences *exemplified* by actual or possible world-individuals, as facts ultimately “about” world-individuals, as cultural affairs ultimately “embodied” in individual physical things or processes in the world. Thus, in a broad sense, they too are all intended to and perchance originally given, as worldly things.

In particular, when I busy myself reflectively with this mental life, it is at least co-intended to, like any individual process to which I pay straightforward attention, as a process in the world; and when I seize upon the pure essence exemplified by this mental life, it is at least automatically intended to as the pure essence exemplified by an individual process possible in the world. Indeed, even when I am not busied with this mental life or its intentional objects as such, but paying attention straightforwardly to “outside” affairs – still there goes on an intending to this intending to the world as an intending itself *in the world*, as an actually existing part of the actually existing individual nexus in which all actually existing particular individuals occur.

The “being in the world” that this mental life always automatically accepts itself as having is a determination that is always at least partially self-given and capable of being seized upon whenever I advert to it. Thus, e.g., causal-functional relationships between straightforwardly perceived changes in this physical organism and reflectively perceived changes in mental processes are continuously given and belong to the familiar, simply believed-in style of the world that is intended to and partially itself given.

However, even in this, its original self-givenness, the sense of this mental life as “in the world” is a sense it has *only by virtue of its essential character as intensitive to the world*. It is, as it were, a necessary *reflex* effect on this mental life produced by its own essential nature as intensitive to the world. Its given status as intensitive to the world is in this way *fundamental* to its given status as in the world to which it is intensitive.

The Husserlian phenomenologist, as I have seen, is always reflectively orientated toward this mental life and toward things to which it is intensitive as things to which it is intensitive. In order to seize upon the above-stated intentional structure clearly, the reflecting Husserlian phenomenologist adopts as

his fixed policy an attitude of neutrality, or self-restraint, vis-à-vis his own continuous believing in, and otherwise taking a position toward particular intra-mundane things intended to and towards the world as a whole.

This means, in the first place, not only that he seizes reflectively upon the believedness, etc., of what he is actually busied with but also that, for purposes of investigation, he "officially" dissociates himself from his actual positions and regards their intentional objects *purely* as "what I believe in," "what I see," etc. In the second place, it means not only that he makes explicit and seizes upon the believedness of the continuously, even if "only tacitly," automatically, believed-in intentionally objective world as a whole, but also that he actively dissociates himself from this fundamental and continuously validated belief. Thus the world and *all* intra-worldly things, in the broadest sense, are regarded purely as "what is believed-in," "what is meant," etc. This fixed policy of dissociation from all believing, valuing, and willing – automatic as well as actional – is then maintained *in his reflective seizing upon mental processes*. That is to say, reflectively he not only makes explicit and seizes upon the continuously believed-in, self-given sense of mental processes as "in the world," but he also regards this sense of these mental processes *purely* as part of "what is believed in," "what is itself given." Thus, e.g., the experienced status of these mental processes as in causal-functional relations with this physical organism, and, more fundamentally, as a process in world space-time, are regarded by the Husserlian phenomenologist purely as "what is experienced."

If I am successful in maintaining this attitude, I *find*, over against the whole world, including this mental life as a process in it, this mental life in its more fundamental status purely as this continuous process of believing in the world and in this believing as itself a process in the world. In its status "apart" from its essentially necessary being in the world, this mental life is, if you will, an "abstraction," but not in the sense of being an abstract *part of the world* that now I merely think of and seize upon "regardless" of everything *else* in the world – perhaps as evidently existing even if nothing else "in the world" exists.

When the Husserlian phenomenologist applies the epithet "transcendental" to this mental life purely as a process of intending to and "having" the world, and speaks of this mental life in its status as *also* in the world as "phenomenal," he must exercise vigilance not to be seduced by the habitual associations of such language, not to mean by the different words something more – or other – than the difference in "status" that is actually itself given and grasped in reflection. In particular he must be careful not to think of "transcendental" mental life as, so to speak, existing in an "other world," or as a realm concretely apart from the world. He must not be misled by the traditional associations of the world "phenomena," as applied by him to himself and this mental life as in the world, and to the whole world and all other intramundane things. He must reject any

suggested contrast of phenomenon with noumenon, with its relegation of the experienced world to the status of an appearance relative to some alleged unexperienced reality.

A further pitfall, not easily avoided at the outset, is the tendency to think still of the "relationship" of transcendental mental life to the world as analogous to the real relationship of phenomenal mental life to other processes in the world – to think, let us say, of the intentional "relationship" between, on the one hand, a transcendental process of perceiving a physical thing and, on the other hand, the physical thing itself, as analogous to the real relationship between the "same" process, as an event in the world, and the physical thing. The difficulty has its roots in the fact that, in the world, perceiving and perceived are not only "related" as perceiving and perceived but also as realities in space-time, with real spatio-temporal relations. There is some sense in asking how soon after a change takes place in the perceived physical thing a change in the perceiving (as an event in the world) takes place. The question would, however, be absurd if asked concerning the perceiving as transcendental and the thing as phenomenal. The "relationship" of mental life *purely* as intending and things *purely* as intended to is utterly *sui generis*; it has no real analogue. Mental life as in the world not only has this "relationship" to the world but also has real relationships to other things in it, and this is a chief source of the confused strife among the various types of idealism and realism. Only after the peculiar dual status of mental life as pure transcendental intending (to the world) and as phenomenal mental life (in and intensitive to the world) has been clearly seen, can the confusion be dissipated and the historic enigma solved.

The general structure of mental life as itself given in reflection to *one who dissociates himself from his own believing in the world and in the status of mental life as itself in the world* may be said to be the first theme of strictly Husserlian phenomenological inquiry. The "transcendental" possibility of the reflexionally given mental life as a clearly possible instance of the pure essence, transcendental mental life, is, at first, simply accepted as itself given. And this is the *only* "assumption" of Husserlian phenomenology, even at the outset, since the being intended-to, the givenness, etc., of the world qua phenomenon is implicit in the essential nature of transcendental mental life, even though the world intended to is not itself a really immanent part thereof. In analyzing this transcendental mental life as intensitive to the world and the world as something to which this transcendental mental life is essentially intensitive, Husserlian phenomenology is presupposing neither the existence nor the possibility of the world, as every other philosophical inquiry must do, at least tacitly.

Thus, in attempting to carry out the fundamental methodological principle stated at the beginning of this essay, the Husserlian phenomenologist

## AN APPROACH TO HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY

comes upon a self-givenness that, in a clear but not easily expressed sense, is "prior" to every other self-givenness, and is able to discover and verify by direct observation the fundamental presuppositions of all natural inquiry – without involving himself in the otherwise inevitable circularity of assuming their validity as its own basis and as the justification of the method itself.

It is at this point that a genuinely philosophical inquiry can really begin: as a "transcendental phenomenology." As its inquiry progresses, it develops its own peculiar problems and method, in accordance with the gradually discovered nature of "the matters themselves" – always following the maxim that only what is seen to be itself given is to be accepted as genuine knowledge.

### Notes

- 1 Published under the title, "An Approach to Phenomenology," in *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl*, edited by Marvin Farber (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940). What I published here is not a reprint. I have corrected a few orthographical, punctuational, or stylistic errors, I have deleted the translation of two sentences in Husserl's *Ideen* . . ., I. Bd., § 22 – two sentences to which Husserl himself objected, and one sentence of mine; I have appended this footnote and one other new one; I have, above all, altered the terminology again and again, to make it more nearly in accordance with my present (and, I believe, greatly improved) usage. But I have changed neither the essay's structure nor its sense; though today (thirty years later) a few opinions expressed in the essay are opinions to which I no longer adhere unqualifiedly.
- 2 Footnote appended in November, 1970, to the passage beginning: "Indeed, it would not be correct even to say . . .": According to Husserl's *Ideas* . . ., "Introduction" and "Book I," what I wrote in these sentences is terminologically incorrect. Fully expressed, the title of that would be: *Ideen zu einer <rein deskriptiven, rein eidetischen, transzendental.> reinen <oder transzendentalen> Phänomenologie und <zu einer transzendental.> reinen <oder transzendental.> phänomenologischen Philosophie [Ideas Pertaining to a <Purely Descriptive, Purely Eidetic, Transcendentally> Pure <or Transcendental> Phenomenology and <to a Transcendentally> Pure <or Transcendental-> Phenomenological Philosophy]*. None of the judgments of existence referred to in the sentences to which this footnote is appended would belong in a Husserlian phenomenology itself as Husserl conceived such a discipline when he was writing his *Ideas* . . ., "Introduction" and "Book I." Each of them would belong rather in some other philosophical discipline, *founded on such a Husserlian phenomenology*.