

<https://doi.org/10.21638/2226-5260-2020-9-1-143-161>

## NEO-HUSSERLIAN MEDITATIONS: EXTENDING INTENTIONALITY TO THE OBJECTIVE REALM IN FIRST PHENOMENOLOGY

ADAM LOVASZ

Doctoral Student.  
Eötvös Lóránd University.  
1088 Budapest, Hungary.  
E-mail: adam.lovasz629@yahoo.com

I seek here to return to the original spirit of Edmund Husserl’s “radicalism.” To be radical means to be both rooted in a tradition and to retrace a path back to one’s roots. According to the position I advocate, phenomenology may be reconceived of as an enterprise in realism. Through a creative rereading of one of phenomenology’s founding texts, Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations*, I suggest that phenomenology can indeed provide us with a semantics applicable to realist ontologies, provided we excise phenomenological concepts from their subjectivist framework, providing a new structure with which to analyze reality. Specifically, Husserl’s eidetic Apriori may be reconceived as denoting the inherent dynamism of existents. Movement would be the basis of manifestation, a universal category unconditioned in itself. That which appears need not be synonymous with all that which is given to experience. The *eidōs* is the manifold of coiled movements awaiting manifestation, whilst the *a priori* is movement in itself. Following Graham Harman’s lead, I expand the scope of the Husserlian idea of intentionality, reconceptualizing it as the directionality pertaining to any process whatsoever. Following Jaakko Hintikka, I take the *cogito* to be nothing other than performativity in its emergent state. Several different phenomenal horizons can connect to the same type of intentionality. The nonlinear nature of temporality means that even radically distant horizons are capable of sharing in the same intentionality. Once reenvisioned as a “genuine universal ontology” (this is Husserl’s expression), phenomenological semantics can be extended to include any and all types of existents. First phenomenology need not maintain the primacy of perception or subjectivity.

*Key words:* *eidōs*, Graham Harman, Edmund Husserl, intentionality, phenomenology, realism, speculative realism.

© ADAM LOVASZ, 2020

# НЕОГУССЕРЛИАНСКИЕ МЕДИТАЦИИ: РАСПОСТРАНЯЯ ИНТЕНЦИОНАЛЬНОСТЬ НА ОБЛАСТЬ ОБЪЕКТОВ В ПЕРВОЙ ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГИИ

АДАМ ЛОВАШ

Докторант.

Университет Лоранда Этвеша.

1088 Будапешт, Венгрия.

E-mail: adam.lovasz629@yahoo.com

В статье предпринята попытка вернуться к исходному духу «радикализма» Эдмунда Гуссерля. Быть радикальным — значит быть укорененным в традиции, но, в то же время, возвращаться по пройденному пути обратно, вплоть до своих корней. Согласно позиции, которую я отстаиваю, феноменологию можно переосмыслить как обоснование реализма. Исходя из новаторского прочтения одного из основополагающих феноменологических текстов, а именно «Картезианских Медитаций» Гуссерля, я обосновываю предположение, согласно которому феноменология действительно может обеспечить нас семантикой, применимой к реалистическим онтологиям при условии, что мы освободим феноменологические понятия от их субъективистского контекста и тем самым получим новую структуру для анализа реальности. В частности, эйдетическое априори Гуссерля может быть переосмыслено в качестве выражения внутреннего динамизма существующих вещей. Движение оказывается основанием явления, универсальной категорией, которая сама по себе ничем не обусловлена. Являющееся необязательно равнозначно всему тому, что дано в опыте. *Эйдос* представляет собой многообразие свернутых движений, ожидающих манифестации, в то время как *a priori* является движением самим по себе. Следуя Грэму Харману, я расширяю границы применения гуссерлевского понятия интенциональности, переопределяя его как направленность, присущую любому процессу вообще. Следуя Якко Хинтикке, я понимаю *cogito* как перформативность в ее эмерджентном состоянии. Несколько различных горизонтов могут соединяться в рамках интенциональности одного и того же типа. Нелинейная структура темпоральности означает, что даже радикально различающиеся горизонты могут принадлежать одной и той же интенциональности. Будучи пересмотрена как «исходная универсальная онтология», если пользоваться выражением самого Гуссерля, феноменологическая семантика может быть расширена таким образом, что она будет включать в себя все типы сущего. Первая феноменология не должна отстаивать первичность восприятия или субъективности.

*Ключевые слова:* эйдос, Грэм Харман, Эдмунд Гуссерль, интенциональность, феноменология, реализм, спекулятивный реализм.

## INTRODUCTION

Are there legitimate realist usages for phenomenology? Does phenomenology, outside of the phenomenological tradition proper, have a future? In this essay, I introduce some preliminary considerations that may possibly provide some clues pertaining to the resolution of these two intimately interrelated questions. Specifically, the

goal here is the uncovering of a pathway leading back to the original radicalism of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology. In particular, Husserl's 1931 *Cartesian Meditations*, based on his 1929 Sorbonne lectures, will be of special interest. *Cartesian Meditations* is arguably one of the most important texts in phenomenology, as it served to introduce Husserl's ideas in France through Emmanuel Levinas' translation (Moran, 2000, 320). During the course of this investigation, I propose that, instead of adhering to supposed phenomenological dogmas, precepts or rules of phenomenological inquiry, we rather abandon what we think we know about what phenomenology is and how the rich and varied semantics of this tradition ought to be used. Specifically, I choose radical *epoche* as my point of departure, a bracketing to be applied to Husserlian phenomenology as such. This *epoche* is an echo of Husserl's own treatment of Cartesianism in *Cartesian Meditations*. Husserl chooses Descartes as a point of departure precisely because of the radical skepticism of Cartesian philosophy. In his search for a regulative idea, Descartes is led to abandon belief in an external world in favor of a reduction that leaves nothing intact apart from the *cogito*. What Husserl proposes at the outset of *Cartesian Meditations* is a thoroughgoing reworking, a "radical development of Cartesian motifs" coupled with a rejection of "nearly all the well-known doctrinal content of the Cartesian philosophy" (Husserl, 1960, 1). We may take this methodological position as the starting point in our own "Neo-Husserlian" meditations. Nearly all of the doctrinal content of Husserlian phenomenology must be abandoned. Yet this project could potentially yield some very interesting fruits indeed: a realist application of phenomenological semantics.

#### *THE UNFOLDING OF THE APRIORI, CONCEIVED OF AS PURE EXPLICATION*

First off, a vitally important methodological question must be asked. Is this experiment even legitimate? The approach to a renewed phenomenology, or at least, a refreshed usage of recycled phenomenological semantics, demands the reassembly of elements whose constitutions proves indissoluble enough to compose something akin to a solvent, or fluid state, without completely disintegrating into incoherence. The primal form, so to speak, of phenomenology can be summarized in a single concept: self-responsibility. It is the responsibility of the meditator to strive for absolute self-responsibility, otherwise we as "first philosophers" could not hope to begin again. The truth of radicalness resides in making "that radicalness true for the first time by enhancing it to the last degree" (Husserl, 1960, 6). Hence we discover in the Introduction to Husserl's *Meditations* two fundamental concepts that shall be of immense as-

sistance to our own investigation: radicalness and enhancement. These two elements would seem here to form a bond. The radical element corresponds to that which is first. Initiating any project corresponds to putting down roots: the Late Latin phrase *radicalis* corresponds to “of or having roots”<sup>1</sup>. Phenomenology would, according to this view, constitute a return to an origin. But which origin would this be? What is the origin of? And whose origin are we talking about here? Husserl suggests at the outset that we must return to the ego, albeit one extended beyond the empirical self in both space and time. His ego is a transcendental one, an ubiquitous affectivity without any determinate borders<sup>2</sup>. The ego as flux is not a human being, neither is it any individual lifeform in particular. One could say that it is the boundlessness of life in general. But another concept would seem to contradict the desire for rootedness we have uncovered here: enhancement. Husserl seeks to enhance Cartesianism “to the last degree.” Here is a true contradiction in terms. In North American youth slang, we find a—radically—different definition of radicalness: being “radical,” in this latter sense means being “at the limits of control”<sup>3</sup>. The enhancement of phenomenology is indissolubly connected with an inner tension latent within its own self-definition. It is abundantly clear even from the Introduction, not to speak of the rest of the text, that Husserl is attempting to square the circle: those radicals who commence first philosophy through their meditations are working on a supposedly “rational grounding” of what is intended to become a future science (Husserl, 1960, 4). But the achievement of grounding first philosophy necessitates a complete ungrounding, an overthrow of all existing forms of knowledge.

Husserl’s chemical mixture constantly threatens to overflow. Its volatility is paradoxically commensurate with its groundedness. To become rerooted, Husserlian sci-

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/radical>

<sup>2</sup> Husserl is quite unequivocal on this point. The transcendental ego is all-encompassing, being a universal form-of-forms. It contains the entirety of the world within itself, in the sense of constituting a solipsistic entirety:

“The *universe of subjective processes*, which are the ‘really inherent’ consciousness-constituents of the transcendental ego, is a universe of compossibilities only in the universal *unity-form of the flux*, in which all particulars have their respective places as processes that flow within it” (Husserl, 1960, 75). There is only an ego, but this ego contains all, which means nothing is really lost even if we accept a solipsistic reading of Husserlian phenomenology. The flows are still present, in spite of their being posited as being internal to an ego. As Dermot Moran notes, in this view Husserl was profoundly influenced by the American psychologist and philosopher William James: As Husserl admitted, James played a formative role in his own thinking on the nature of consciousness as a living seamless flux, with contents which are in central focus surrounded by a ‘halo’ of less focused contents” (Moran, 2000, 71).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/radical>

ence must uproot everything. Each rerooting is also a rerouting. Radical philosophy is a paradoxical exercise in “overthrowing all science” (Husserl, 1960, 7). Every form of knowledge must fall victim to an all-encompassing, infinitely emptying *epoche* or bracketing. If the composition can be proven solvent, first philosophy shall not be exposed as something fundamentally bankrupt, insolvent, too volatile for usage. Our nascent system could easily give birth to unviable seeds, confining entire strands of thought to passive intuitions or a catastrophic logocentric enclosure. Phenomenology itself is not immune to the *epoche*. If we are to be consistent, and true to the spirit of *Cartesian Meditations*, then radical doubt must be extended to Husserl’s own propositions as well. The radicalness of Husserlian uprooting provides a guarantee against full closure, for its reflexivity allows for a mirroring of phenomenology’s operations. Specifically, what I am suggesting is that we take seriously Husserl’s injunction to not adopt the content, but rather the spirit of Cartesianism (Husserl, 1960, 6). Following in the footsteps of Husserl, let us forget, or even completely abandon the content of phenomenology and rather embrace the double-sided radicalness of first phenomenology. This is not to suggest that we are the first in this nor, for that matter, that Husserl was the first phenomenologist in a temporal-historical sense<sup>4</sup>. Being “first” is a qualitative term, a designation pertaining to the space of intuitive duration. That which is initial is a qualitative value and not a quantity. Quantities lack value, for value pertains to differentials (everything becomes somewhat similar once subjected to the count). All ideas and concepts may be found at the outset in “a state of indeterminate fluid generality” (Husserl, 1960, 8). How exactly a realistically utilized phenomenological semantics will even look like cannot be forecasted or predicted with any degree of certainty. This is entire essay is a thought experiment, a highly specific sequence whose outcome is, however, for the moment, open to infinite contestation. I can have no fixed idea about what I am attempting to achieve at this initial juncture. Even “reality” as such must be conceived of as an incomplete idea. In his commentary upon *Cartesian Meditations*, David Smith notes that all evidence is “ ‘imperfect,’ or incomplete: it does not, and cannot, give us the entirety of the object” (Smith, 2003, 172). Thought cannot exhaust the entirety of any object whatsoever. Conveniently, this affords us with an opportunity to forget phenomenology’s anthropocentrism and mind-centrism. Certain phrases and concepts selected from Husserl’s *Meditations* may be reutilized in a manner that differs in content from the original construct.

---

<sup>4</sup> Among other more famous usages, the word “phenomenology” was used by theologian Friedrich Christoph Oetinger to describe divine relations otherwise inaccessible to human consciousness or rational reflection. The “phenomenological” would thus denote the sphere of speculative knowledge (Auberlen, 1847).

Turning to the *First Meditation*, we see an emphasis upon “expression.” Husserl states in no uncertain terms that “expression as such has its own comparatively good or bad way of fitting what is meant or itself given; and therefore it has its own evidence or non-evidence” (Husserl, 1960, 11). The overthrow of knowledge, phenomenology included, gives us *carte blanche* to interpret any of Husserl’s statements in any manner, with the sole proviso that we achieve some kind of philosophical fluid whose combustibility allows for manipulation and pragmatic reapplication. Expression has its own givenness, and each form of expression has its own form of evidence or non-evidence. The world is full of different forms of expression, each given in a manner that fits with its own functions. Microparticles coated with unique binding specificities, say, a layer of graphene that transforms particles into components of a communicating superconductive surface, give expression to evidences of communicativity on a nano-scale level (Di Bernardo et al., 2017, 1–9). Throughout existence, there are countless types of manifestation. Achievement of an active synthesis means the activation of first philosophy as a self-assembling system, whose components can be enmeshed among various sciences promiscuously and freely. Rerooting is a skewing of first phenomenology’s intentionality.

What we must prove is that phenomenology, or at least phenomenologically oriented semantics, can operate in a manner which takes the multiple modes of existence seriously. Indeed, at the end of *Meditations*, Husserl himself does mention the possibility, albeit in a fairly obscure manner, of an “all-embracing apriori phenomenology” (Husserl, 1960, 155). The goal here is to expand the idea of intentionality beyond the scope of Husserl’s idea of what phenomenology ought to be. In experimental philosophy, there are no “oughts.” What else could an “Apriori” be, if not the actual unfolding of some fact, an absolute unfolding that correlates with a certain mode of analysis? The attempt of Husserlian phenomenology to found itself exclusively upon the mental operations of a transcendental consciousness depends entirely upon an original delimitation, but this does not exclude the possibility of there existing an infinite variety of other delimitations, positions and latent genetic concepts within the structure of phenomenology. In order to understand what an Apriori is, we must first grasp the meaning of the eidetic. An *eidōs*, according to Husserl’s definition of the term, is a “universal” that is “unconditioned”, a “universal not conditioned by any fact” (Husserl, 1960, 71). Differently put, the *eidōs* is a science fiction produced by first phenomenology as concept-factory. The eidetic is that which precedes concepts, a positionality whose sense can only be intuited, but never conceptualized. Problem-delimitations are created by eidetic means, extending themselves in a variety of materialities. The universal Apriori is the initial innumerable produced by *eidōs*, and as such, must



precede the advent of other elements within the system, conceived of as a series producing ever larger and more complex structures. Invoking a non-equilibrium state, formation reroutes the original positionality into unconditional proliferation. Belying its own name, the Apriori can only instantiate its own operations by coming second in relation to the unconditional universality. Defining the universality of the Apriori, conceived of as the actualized unfolding of form internal to *eidōs*, remains an inscrutable project, as this initiation can only arrive after the unconditioned has been emplaced. “The universal Apriori,” we are told by Husserl himself, persists as “an eidetic form, which contains an infinity of forms, an infinity of apriori types of actualities and potentialities of life” (Husserl, 1960, 74). Let us imagine somebody with access to the original typescript of *Cartesian Meditations*, a person irritated, say, by its excessive attention to the life of consciousness, or even, the vitalistic attachment to the concept of life exhibited here. What if this person were to have rewritten the sentence, erasing the latter phrase: “of life?”

The innumerable that is *eidōs* need not pertain to any particular being or aggregate of beings. Husserl already paints with a broad brush when he connects actualities and potentialities, already vague categories in themselves, with “life”. True, this life should be that of the transcendental ego—but, following Husserl’s own injunction to follow the spirit and not the letter of Descartes, let us abandon any attachment to both life and ego (the life of the ego included) and define the universal Apriori in the following manner, befitting a neo-Husserlian system of recycled phenomenological semantics: *the universal Apriori, in as much as it is truly infinite, must constitute an infinite unfolding of actualities and their correlative potentialities*. The actual unfolding will remain challenging. However, the pleasures attendant upon the realization of the most complex and radical rerouting of first phenomenology outweigh the costs. Equating the Apriori with explication exhibits difficulties, but only insofar as we persist in erroneously associating unconditionedness with the lack of movement. Being unconditioned is a far from original mode of givenness. Rather, it is the commencement of a new explication, a procurement of this particular activity on the part of first phenomenologists. Determinations, within their Apriori state, are called “noematic.” These are emplaced within a state of absolute freedom, a negative freedom denoting the absence of higher structures or organizational principles. In the Apriori state, the *noema* could stand for anything, being an original dynamic mode whose every condition can be considered true, accepted at face value, because it is prior to the introduction of value into first phenomenology (Husserl, 1960, 36). Jacques Derrida relates the Husserlian *noema* to the realm of actualized, auto-positional materiality. A “real nonappurtenance to any region at all, even to the archi-region, this anarchy of the

noema is the root and very possibility of objectivity and of meaning” (Derrida, 2005, 204). Hence, objectivity is already internal to phenomenology. There is no way of escaping the object. Smith is entirely correct in pointing out that “the reality of anything worldly would noematically correspond to nothing short of an absolute, adequate, infinite consciousness of it” (Smith, 2003, 173). Because such a perception is impossible, each and every object must be conceived of as constituting an inexhaustible infinity, a thing that recedes from access. Pure explication is the movement preceding conditioning. Given prior to givenness, the *noema*, characterized by Derrida as the anarchic precursor to every passive and active synthesis, is the basis of true values. Innumberability pertains to movement prior to its advent as being, prior even to the eminently logistical procurement of every activity. Movement without activity: such would be the emptied *noema*, the innumberable infinity prior to a reduced, truncated, particularized and actual phenomenology. The universality of this moment, deeply embedded within Husserlian meditation, is a direct consequence of the object’s unboundedness. If only Husserl had stayed true to his own intentionality, and kept his promise of handing his readers a truly, authentically universal phenomenology! The objective realm would then have been preserved, without falling prey to subjectivism.

A pure phenomenology relating the original mode of unintentioned communion must posit an “incessant flux,” an abyssal movement characteristic of presence, already coded as eidetic in its nature (Husserl, 1960, 48). Movement is already there at the outset, ever-present, even at the commencement of philosophy as science-fiction. Provided we leave open the issue of phenomenological veracity, we can definitively reorder the priorities of philosophical research, a task that necessitates a thoroughgoing recoding of the phenomenological semantic. Departing from Husserl’s own idea of intentionality, we must persevere in our fidelity to the pure heterogeneity of explication. Intentionality is not a characteristic of consciousness alone. Rather, it means directionality. Graham Harman makes the case that intentionality, once reconsidered in a non-anthropocentric manner, can be conceived of as a descriptive term for the inherent determinateness of objects. Any specificity or directionality which gives objects concreteness is intentional (Harman, 2005, 22–23). Intentionality means nothing more than the specificity of *this* object in particular. Nothing accesses Being in itself; each mode of being accesses a specific, individual, concrete object-in-motion. As Harman states, “the concreteness of intentionality” pertains “to every possible layer of reality, not only to human awareness. To remain concrete does not mean to remain confined within the human sphere” (Harman, 2005, 23). Physical causality too is intentional, for each object effects other objects in a certain direction or manner. Therefore, pure explication, once subjected to a universal ontological usage, would constitute a



feature of each and every object-in-motion. The inability of consciousness to exhaust the infinite singularity of any object, as posited by Husserl, is a preliminary to the generalized mutual inaccessibility of objects which forms an essential core of speculative realism, defined as a philosophy that would take the reality of objects seriously<sup>5</sup>. If we are to come to terms with the challenges and tremendous possibilities latent within the concept of the dynamic *Apriori*, we must first break down the barriers separating us from a genuine understanding of the Husserlian idea of “explication.” If the *Apriori* is an unfolding, that is, a category suitable for inclusion within genetic, that is, dynamic phenomenology (conceived of as a sub-department of first phenomenology), then the truth of its movement and the heterogeneity of constitutional theories in general must be proven. Wherein does the purity of an explication reside? Strangely enough, Husserl suggests that pure explication, while denoting a first movement, the initiation of a process, is infinitely remote from the singular. The initial innumerable is not a singularity, a remote, inaccessible One, but rather a multiplicity whose heterogeneity excludes even the possibility of any enumeration. Pure explication is the intentional, that is, directionally-oriented unfolding of an innumerable manifold. Thus Husserl: “pure explication unfolds, in a concatenation of particular intuitions the object’s very own determinations, the ‘internal’ determinations” (Husserl, 1960, 101). The phrase “intuition” need not bother us: it may easily and unproblematically be replaced with “intentionality.” This latter term, in Husserl’s original usage, describes the directional nature of perception: “the word intentionality signifies nothing else than this fundamental property of consciousness: to be conscious of something” (Husserl, 1960, 33). Extending intentionality to anything whatsoever, we may restate this definition in the following manner: *intentionality describes the directional nature of anything whatsoever*. Every *Apriori*—and there could very well be several—is in a state of flux, prior to

---

<sup>5</sup> Husserlian phenomenology states in no uncertain terms that the meaning of an object can never be filled by perception. There remains a gap between the object in itself and perception. Elsewhere, for instance in *Logical Investigations*, this is stated even more explicitly. Husserl’s example of the blackbird flying through a garden provides Harman with ammunition for his realist rereading of the phenomenological and Continental tradition: “Husserl draws a distinction between simple meaning-intention and direct meaning-fulfillment. I hear my uncle cry out that a blackbird flies in the garden, but am currently so bored and lazy that I take his word for it and never even look. As I reflect on what he says, my attention is directed toward the unseen blackbird, but only in a vague, empty verbal sort of way. By contrast, my uncle seems to encounter the blackbird in its bodily reality by way of direct perception, a far more fulfilling intention than my own. Yet even my uncle only sees the bird from one specific angle, forever failing to grasp all of its features at a single glance. As we pass from me in my lazy state to my uncle in his alert and observant one, there does seem to be some sort of improvement—a closer approach to the blackbird itself” (Harman, 2005, 27). But neither me nor my uncle shall ever actually directly access the movement of the blackbird.

the advent of first phenomenology. Derrida does not err when he equates genesis with movement and structure with static phenomenology: “there are some givens which must be described in terms of structure, and others which must be described in terms of genesis” (Derrida, 2005, 194). The eidetic Apriori establishes itself as a self-assembling constitution of poles and synthetic unities, not yet given but approaching manifestation. Whether an object achieves manifestation or not is dependent upon the energy differentials each materiality manages to extract from the concatenation of potentialities it is surrounded by. Objects prior to manifestation form untapped reservoirs trapped within indeterminacy, but already too heterogeneous to form counted, named subjects of description. They are several, but in a qualitative sense. Prior to manifestation, there is an indeterminate—therefore eidetic—universality. At the transcendental stage, we know next to nothing about the Apriori, aside from the wealth of its inner forms. This is why first phenomenology employs the promise of concretion and definitive intuition. Never can anybody or anything attain direct, unmediated access the reality of the object. But this ideal nonetheless orients phenomenology as a fundamentally agonistic exercise in speculative philosophy. Being realist does not mean committing ourselves to the possibility of exhaustive knowledge pertaining to objects. Knowledge itself is only one type of access. Following Harman, we may speak of interobjective causality in terms of “translation”: “one object translates another in a more or less adequate way, and does so precisely by allowing the object to manifest itself as something more than all of its current effects in our world” (Harman, 2005, 245). Perception is one form of translation among countless other modes of access, which is necessarily transcendental. Husserl even states that empathy is nothing if not an exercise in “transcendental aesthetics” (Husserl, 1960, 146). This idea of transcendental aesthetics is as beautiful evidence as any of the inherent sensuality of philosophical practice. Aesthetics and ontology need not stand in contradiction. The assertion that “styles belong to places and objects no less than to people” (Harman, 2005, 139) is but a continuation of Husserl’s positing of “essential styles” as being characteristic of certain syntheses (Husserl, 1960, 136).

How then must we go about solving the intuitive puzzle of integrating lawless, noematic pure explication into our reworking of first phenomenology? While refraining from direct empirical investigations, some considerations extracted from other disciplines may be of help in this regard. After all, in the Conclusion of *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl himself enjoins us to seek after concepts applicable to all sciences. Only in this manner can phenomenology become a “genuine universal ontology” capable of achieving a “systematic unfolding of the *universal logos of all conceivable being*” (Husserl, 1960, 155). Borrowing from other sciences, within the space of radi-

cal phenomenology is not merely tolerated, but actively encouraged, as we, the mediators, commit ourselves to following the master, inasmuch as this following entails a recommencement directed toward an uprooted rootedness. Why affirm this rootedness within uprootedness? From whence does this ethical necessity originate? Robert Magliola sings the praises of a certain emotional commitment to the unimportance of our own subjectivity:

Confronting my *irreducible unimportance* in the 'grand scheme of things,' and in 'the eyes of the world' (human society tends to be very *ocular*), I shall accept and even affirm this my unimportance. When I personally feel sad, and am mired in 'is' and 'is-not,' I shall try to use this stance at least to my advantage, — by ignoring my *subject-hood* and celebrating the *object-world* as it passes to-and-fro before me. (Magliola, 1997, 121)

Deconstruction too has a beautiful side, being a transcendental aesthetics that delivers us to a state of intuitive, yet vulnerable reflection upon the manifold nature of approaches, intentionalities and constitutions. Surfaces are strands composed of unfolded states, branching processes, looped chains, reduced or accentuated flexibilities, bindings residing in synthetic unities. Now we pursue this state, be it a state of calm or an optimum level of material permeability or corporeal flexibility, other times we surrender to the impossibility of ever entirely accessing the all-embracing nexus of mobile clues, affordances, access-points to multiplicities and untapped generative potentials. Every surface is composed of a wealth of resources, all of which can be emplaced within a sequence or, conversely, repositioned within an entirely new system altogether. The sole obstacle is the intensity-threshold of the object's inner connections. This is what determines the success or failure of an explication. As we have stated, following Husserl, the purity of an explication is strictly dependent upon its ability to unfold a set of existents. Pure explication is what confers "self-givenness" (Husserl, 1960, 102–103). Such a delineation, however, presents us with a new quandry: if pure explication as expression only exhibits itself in the form of an intentionally specific objective unfolding (revealing, as it does, a multiplicity of objects and states), then it can only be accessed *a posteriori*. It is only in the aftermath of an unfolding that we can declare with any measure of confidence that the explication we bore witness to genuinely was, in hindsight, a pure explication. Favorably, first phenomenology does not lack the tools needed to resolve this difficulty. One of intuition's roles is none other than to provide meditators with a pragmatics that allows them to enter into the eidetic Apriori, by bending temporality and retroactively emplacing science fictional philosophy in an autopositionality prior to even the purest of explications or expressions. Self-explication, as the synthetic movement responsible for the production of

apodictic veracity, “always goes on,” Husserl informs us (Husserl, 1960, 102). Reality is a ceaseless experimentation with forms, products and surfaces, a delightfullyconstitutive chaos whose features could very well await an adequate world-model for eternity. The moment we believe we have captured the essence of explication, it escapes our clutches, for it is always going on, perpetually entering and exiting. Every single explication partakes of the universality of the mobile, innumerable Apriori (Husserl, 1960, 103). Heterodoxical as it may sound, we assert that Husserlian explication is the originality of objectivity, and this originality pertains to the unfolding of existents, identified under the term “eidetic Apriori.”

### *LINES OF INTENTIONALITY*

Every returning must have at least a preliminary intentionality reaching ahead of it, penetrating into the mists of a distant realm ideally suited for the establishment of a new scientific zone. As we have seen, purified and radicalized first phenomenology contains nothing that would in itself inhibit cross-pollination with other disciplines. Therefore the emerging area of nanotechnology can serve as an entirely legitimate source of inspiration for a genuinely, that is, universally oriented ontological phenomenology. All-encompassing ambitions need not lead to disorientation. However great the danger, the affective excitement afforded by the discovery-process outweighs the risk of semantic pollution. Uncontrolled chain reactions are a danger every chemist knows all too well. Similarly, philosophers too are forever vigilant, guarding their systems against illegitimate usages or, worse, frivolous metaphorizations. But phenomenology, in its radical form, precludes systematic closure. All we need is to prove that its semantics can indeed be utilized in a realist manner. As a review article on nanotechnology explains,

in DNA origami a long single strand of DNA (scaffold) is folded into arbitrary shapes by hundreds of short synthetic oligonucleotides, referred to as staple strands. Each of the staple strands is designed to bind to different places along the scaffold, thereby bringing these otherwise distant points into close proximity. (Tørring et al., 2011, 5636)

Is there not a similar movement underway within our own first phenomenology, a bringing of apparently distant points into ever closer proximity, until they are finally united within the transcendental subject? If anything, the source of inspiration for our own neo-Husserlian meditations is a desire to undergo a complete abandonment, a resignation without measure. To attain everything, the meditator must lose all. Phenomenology is the practice of abstention with regard to the components and

flows of the vital stream (Husserl, 1960, 20). Yet this abstaining is a preliminary move, leading us to a theory of explication that would give room for every synthesis: no expressions may be excluded. Even unimaginable expressions and objects must be contained by an all-encompassing realism. The time of exclusion has ended. As we have seen, intentionality pertains to every single object. As Harman explains, objects always exist nested within other objects. Not only is intentionality interobjective, it is also intraobjective:

...intentionality lies inside of other objects—namely, inside of the relations that I have with the objects of my perception. To repeat: intentional inexistence means to exist on the inside of an object, not to have the object inside of oneself. And whereas the usual model of containment seems to exclude anything other than animal sentience from the title “intentional,” the new model we propose is open to any entity whatsoever. Every object is intentional, because every object enters the inside of its own relations, its own overriding master-objects. (Harman, 2005, 202)

New time, crystallizing itself through self-assembly into new expressions, is an infinitely inspired co-constitution exploding into the interstices of its own master-object, enlivening its surroundings with arbitrary shapes that nonetheless transform chaos into new syntheses. Intentionality spills into a manifold, a formal breadth whose structural characteristics preclude the One. Innumberably heterogeneous, the arbitrariness of the shape takes form—we say this without a shred of irony. Form is always there for the taking, within an object which behaves as an ecology for inner objects. Far from excluding the infinite regress, we must embrace it. Connections are mediated by the levels they traverse, number being nothing, if not a concrete attachment to a being. In this, number is not dissimilar to any sensual aspect or attribute.

You will not find a givenness pertaining to all objectivities. Not even the *cogito* can be brought into adequation with one *cogitatum* in particular. All the more so, as, in relation to the original Cartesian concept of *cogito*, Jaakko Hintikka has shown that the *cogito* is inherently dynamic: “it refers to the ‘performance’ (to the act of thinking) through which the sentence ‘I exist’ may be said to verify itself” (Hintikka, 1962, 17). The *cogito* is a performance, an execution, a self-verification, the very act of self-referential creation. And, in his own way, does Husserl himself not affirm that there pertains an infinity of acts, abundantly peppering the world with their effects? If the *cogito* is dynamism incarnate, truly no thing can be given in its entirety. The *cogito* too is a coil awaiting the advent of its unfolding into a hospitable place of abundance. Everything “means” something, in the sense that all objects refer to other objects. According to Husserl, there is no single perception of a house, but rather a range of

perspectives surrounding, encircling, and even interpenetrating, the house as partially given object. “The house-perception means a house—more precisely, as this individual house—and means it in the fashion peculiar to perception; a house-memory means a house in the fashion peculiar to memory; a house-phantasy, in the fashion peculiar to phantasy [sic],” writes Husserl with a disarming simplicity that nevertheless does not elide the inherent complexity of phenomena (Husserl, 1960, 33). Could we not continue this list in perpetuity? In the same manner that one may speak of a house-perception, we are also capable of describing a house-consistency, a house-solidity, a house-elasticity, a house-breath, a house-uncanniness, or even a house-ruinedness. Houses, after all, must breathe. And if they lose their skins, ruination can easily result. It is not in the least preposterous to extend the dynamism of the *cogito* to include nonliving perceptions and performances, as Harman has done. “Perceiving and non-perceiving,” claims Harman, „must be found in the same entity at different times; they are modes of being rather than types of object [...] objects do not perceive insofar as they exist, as panpsychism proclaims. Instead, they perceive insofar as they relate” (Harman, 2011, 122). Each relation is a kind of perception, in the sense that every relation exposes some sensual aspect of an object. If “I am given, in any case, with an open infinite horizon of still undiscovered internal features of my own,” as Husserl asserts, then this must also pertain in the case of objects (Husserl, 1960, 101). *Objects too are given with open infinite horizons of their own.*

If connection is mediated by the level of being that object *x* has attained, then the *cogito*, conceived of as a synonym for the inherent dynamism of relationality, is defined by its extension. This duality equips us with a way of mapping relations in a new manner, while respecting the mutual autonomy of world-levels. Each present moment includes some measure of a past that cannot be eradicated or erased from its pertinent layers. On this point, Husserl is adamant: “to every perception there always belongs a horizon of the past” (Husserl, 1960, 44). Beyond every recollection, there pertains an infinity of various recollections and potentialities, as well as foreclosed pasts. Besides the fact of dinosaur extinction, for example, we find a range of possible trajectories terrestrial life could have taken. Apart the historical and social accident of momentary hominid dominance on Earth, we can easily envision other forms of intelligent life. A provocative 2018 paper, entitled “The Silurian Hypothesis,” posits just such a viewpoint in the form of the apparently absurd hypothesis that prehuman civilizations could, in theory, have existed upon the face of Earth without leaving behind much empirical evidence of their existence. Their demise would have gone unregistered *a posteriori*. The difficulty of proving or falsifying such a science-fiction stems from the sheer temporal scale of geological phenomena. Furthermore, the



Earth's history is marked by continuous disruptions and periodic calamities. As the authors summarize,

warmings, and disruptions of the nitrogen cycle are ubiquitous. More complex changes in biota, sedimentation and mineralogy are also common. Specifically, compared to the hypothesized Anthropocene signature, almost all changes found so far [...] are of the same sign and comparable magnitude. (Schmidt & Frank, 2018, 7)

On a long enough timescale, nothing differentiates climate change driven by heightened volcanic activity from climate disruptions caused by large-scale “purposive” industrial activity. Their intentionalities, the direction of their manifestation, are, from a geological perspective, completely identical. Our Earth periodically vomits up its own innards, sending terrestrial life into turmoil, unravelling ecosystems. Civilization could very well prove to be yet another one of these chaotic intervals, also known as “hyperthermals,” periods of intense and accelerated overheating of the Earth's atmosphere. The Anthropocene is but one hyperthermal among many, the most severe to date being the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum 56 million years ago<sup>6</sup>. Intentionality reaches out beyond any single *cogito*, promiscuously attaching itself to a range of phenomena. Intentionality extends beyond any single performance. Notice that we do not seek to actively contradict Husserl. Rather, we, as radicals, explicate and extend his fragrant words. We are behaving in the manner of the intentional, which „reaches out beyond the isolated subjective processes” (Husserl, 1960, 48). As the actuality of the mobile cogito, intentionality is constitutive and original in relation to change and variation. Differently put, intentionality is the “adhesive” that binds objects into relations within one another (Harman, 2005, 178). But this recognition also demands an anticipative idea of horizons—a pluripotential temporal background which fleshes out any being-there. Over there, within the speculative horizon, prehuman industrial civilizations could have existed. All the assembled evidence suggests, however, is the similtude of intentionalities among a range of different phenomena. In a way, phenomenologically speaking, industrial civilizations have “existed” prior to us—but solely (to the best of our present day empirical knowledge)—as an intentionality resemblant of our own civilization. The directionality of intensified volcanic activity, to all intents and purposes, really does resemble that of industrial society. But that is all we may posit. Resemblance is a caricature, and not reality as such.

Constitutional theories and, it must be added, ontological semantics, can and ought to be combined. The sole constraint is the type of intentionality in question.

---

<sup>6</sup> The cause of the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum, which spans a mere two-hundred thousand year timespan, is shrouded in mystery to this very day. To date, none of the scientific hypotheses relating to its causes have withstood critical scrutiny (Schmidt & Frank, 2018, 5).

Hence we as meditators must ceaselessly fix our attention upon the directions of the objects in question. Reversing, or rather, complementing Husserl's original position, we can state without equivocation that not only does a "horizon-structure" belong to "every intentionality" (Husserl, 1960, 48), but also that several horizons can correspond to a single type of intentionality. In our example, the hyperthermal-intentionality, tending towards an accelerated overheating, even possible inflammation of the Earth's atmosphere, correlates just as well with prehuman temporal horizons as that of anthropogenic climate change. Accordingly, the notion of "horizon" is an idea which anticipates that of explication or, synonymously, "clarification." In spite of its positive connotations, we cannot but be struck by the double-sidedness of clarification. This word suggests a state of finality, a rational discernment that has brought to fruition, or a representation that has been fulfilled. Yet the actual meaning attributed to the process of clarification by Husserl is a perplexing one: "making clear is always a mode of making evident, of laying a synthetic course from an unclear intending to a corresponding 'prefigurative' intuition" (Husserl, 1960, 59). It is all too simple to miss the self-contradiction latent within the phrase "prefigurative intuition." Rather than uplifting us to a state of rationally accessible critical reflection, clarification presents us with a downward movement. Clarification is a fall, a burrowing underneath figuration. That which clarifies stands in opposition to systematic knowledge, because its final product is... the prefigurative, the element prior to representation. Clarification cannot present us with a representation; its logic is that of the prehistoric, in the final instance, the prehuman. Differences are constituted amongst *cogitos*, peppering their surroundings with effects governed by their own intentionalities, steered in turn by the inner structures of the *cogitatum*s. A connection encountered in eidetic form polarizes in all directions that open to its structurally coded potentialities. Not all can achieve realization, some intentionalities shall remain merely latent, redundant remnants of a time that never did flow out into expression. Besides the horizon of actualized elements, speculation also uncovers a "multiform horizon of unfulfilled anticipations" (Husserl, 1960, 61). Intentionality only pertains inasmuch as it is capable of flowing. The variation of forms is a constitution of differences, always within a time immanent to the non-being of their undirectionality. It is in this latter sense that we must understand Husserl's assertion that without "possibilities," there would be no "fixed and abiding being" (Husserl, 1960, 60). Being is fixed, certainly, but only inasmuch as it abides! The fixity of Being/s is a correlate of its active movement. As long as it is in movement, every being in an apodicticity, an evidence that provides nourishment through clarity. Similarly, the *cogito* is fixed, but solely as a performance whose double-sidedness applies both to its status as "a part of the proposition whose status (indubitability) is at stake," (i.e. Descartes famous *cogito ergo sum*), and its positionality, refer-

ring as it does “to the performance through which the indubitability of this proposition is revealed” (Hintikka, 1962, 26). Husserl structures intentionality precisely in the same manner as Descartes registers the dynamic *cogito* of the *ergo sum*: referring to intentionality constitutes an intentionality in itself. But each intentionality, emplaced the space of first phenomenology, is also an objectivity (Husserl, 1960, 65). Because of its status as cosmic glue, it should come as no surprise to us when Husserl notes that “association” is “a matter of intentionality” (Husserl, 1960, 80). Communion is impossible without some determinate direction or sense of orientation. Connections, as encountered within presupposable systems of any kind, comprise all pure possibility-variants the volatility of which falls within an acceptable range of intensity. There are no entirely solid-phase syntheses within first phenomenology. Rather, static phenomenology is composed of a relatively cooled and hardened strata of passive syntheses.

The manifold, be it a strand of coiled DNA prior to its reformation, or the possible new continent being born at this very moment in Iceland, is filled with passive and active intentionalities, whose outcomes shall be decided by the severity of the intervention at hand. A manifold, indeed, is a but name for an entangled medley of active and passive intentionalities<sup>7</sup> (Husserl, 1960, 98). That is not all, however. By virtue of what magical power or inscrutable causality can a manifold unfold its intentionalities into the bosom of its surrounding world? Levels, as we have stated, are media of communication. Husserl’s monads too are not completely separated from each other. They communicate through apperceptive transfers, mutual giftings of presence (Husserl, 1960, 110). If the *cogito* is a performance, then intentionality is coevolution incarnate. Various directions criss-cross one another, cutting across borders and bodily contours, resulting in a kaleidoscopic hybridization of components. Eidetically, apperception transfers are intentional swappings. The phenomenon of gene-flow relates to spontaneous hybridization of genes amongst different species. Several preconditions are required for such transfers. In the case of *P. canadensis* and *P. glaucus* butterflies, apperceptive gene transfer through unconventionally selective mating is a possibility, because “their ranges meet in a hybrid zone and their flight times overlap” (Stump et al., 2003, 42). Hybridity necessitates the convergence of at least two distinct intentionalities. In the above case, we can identify four lines of intentionality, coalescing within one trading zone. Commerce is intentional communion, the mutually beneficial meeting of at least two lines of intentionality, re-

---

<sup>7</sup> I define the term manifold as denoting a state of condensed, concentrated potentialities situated within a small area or territory. Paradoxically, the manifold may only be accessed in a retroactive manner. It is only after unfolding has taken place that the manifold can be processed as such. Henceforth, its mode of execution is that of hiddenness. One could state explicitly that its mode of being corresponds to what Harman describes as the “hidden execution” of objects.

sulting in an acceleration of adaptation and the largescale xenotransplantation of beneficial traits even amongst varied, widely dispersed populations. Intentional communion, achieved through mutually beneficial trade, results in the creation of new connections. Interactions based upon one another can motivate other activities, uniting distant populations into greater unities. As the entomologists report, much to their surprise, the gene trading zone constructed by the butterflies has resulted in a marvelous commonality: “there is little or no genetic differentiation between the *P. canadensis* populations studied, even populations separated by Lake Michigan and distances in the hundreds of kilometers” (Stump et al., 2003, 47). Intentional communion is capable of defeating incredible obstacles. This is a direct consequence of the co-dependent arising of beings. The most self-sufficient of monads could not manifest its activities in the world without coexistence with a set of entities responsive to its needs, heedful of its merits, and hospitable to its being. Monads exist in themselves as dynamic cogitos and with others, flowing in communion: “something that exists is in intentional communion with something else that exists” (Husserl, 1960, 129). Never is there a lack of relation: always, we uncover new connections within the common manifold. Owing to the power of emulation, trading zones emerge within which objects can swap beneficial attributes. This is not to say that trading zones cannot become damaging enterprises, or infected with rival applications, say viruses that extract value without creating positivities of their own. But these possibilities should not blind us to the fact that every manifestation, however destructive it may seem, must be considered as embodying some primal creativity.

### CONCLUSION

In summary, we must ask the inevitable question: what, if anything, is first phenomenology good for? Have we arrived at an indubitable commonality? Does the communal nature of intentionality solve anything? One tentative conclusion we may draw from this brief foray in the appropriation of radical phenomenological semantics is that each commencement points toward an open plurality, “an open community of monads” whose interactions cannot be reduced to a common time-form or singular dimensionality. Phenomenology teaches, above all else, an unbounded “freedom from prejudice” (Husserl, 1960, 6). The seriousness of this intention to free oneself of prejudice lends an ethical gravity to the phenomenological project, provided that phenomenology has not lost the will, spiritual energy and openness every rerooting requires. Our uprooting, driving us as it has dynamically through various modalities of existence, until we have reached the point of connecting and synthesizing that which formerly was distant. In our meditation, the distance between realism and phenomenology has been bridged through the concept

of unfolding, encapsulated as it is within the dynamic Husserlian concept of the unconditionally universal Apriori. It is the universality of Husserl's Apriori that allows for its borderless applicability. Not unlike the Cartesian *cogito*, reconfigured by Hintikka in the mode of dynamic performativity, the Apriori is conceptualized in terms of ceaseless unfolding. First phenomenology, first in the radical sense of achieving a truly all-encompassing grounding, would be the philosophical science of all-encompassing intentionality. Or, more precisely, a mode of philosophical investigation that, having undergone a fateful deconstruction, shall never again privilege any single intentionality above any other intentionality. Every intentionality is unique, but this individuality in no way implies complete self-sufficiency. The Husserlian concept of "apperceptive transfer" allows for an account of how monads can communicate and co-construct intentional communions or, what we have chosen to call "trading zones," places of concentrated hybridity and accentuated commonality. Every manifestation has an intentionality of its own. First phenomenology, having shed its attachment to mental life, can finally commence remapping reality. Radicalism is a rerooting of oneself within the manifold of the real.

#### REFERENCES

- Auberlen, C. A. (1847). *Die Theosophie Friedrich Christoph Oetingers nach ihren Grundzügen. Ein Beitrag zur Dogmengeschichte und zur Geschichte der Philosophie*. Tübingen: L. Fr. Fues.
- Derrida, J. (2005). *Writing and Difference*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Di Bernardo, A., Millo, O., Barbone, M., Alpern, H., Kalcheim, Y., Sassi, U., ... Robinson, J. W. A. (2017). P-wave Triggered Superconductivity in Single-Layer Graphene on an Electron-Doped Oxide Superconductor. *Nature Communications*, 1–9.
- Harman, G. (2011). *The Quadruple Object*. Winchester/Washington: Zero Books.
- Harman, G. (2005). *Guerrilla Metaphysics. Phenomenology and the Carpentry of Things*. La Salle/Chicago: Open Court.
- Hintikka, J. (1962). Cogito, ergo sum: Inference or Performance? *The Philosophical Review*, 71(1), 3–32.
- Husserl, E. (1960). *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Magliola, R. (1997) *On Deconstructing Life-Worlds. Buddhism, Christianity, Culture*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.
- Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to Phenomenology*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Schmidt, G. A., & Frank, A. (2018). The Silurian Hypothesis: Would It Be Possible to Detect an Industrial Civilization in the Geological Record? *International Journal of Astrobiology*, 18 (2), 1–9.
- Smith, A. D. (2003). *Husserl and the Cartesian Meditations*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Stump, A. D., Sperling, F. A. H., & Scriber, J. M. (2003). Gene Flow Between Great Lakes Region Populations of the Canadian Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly, 'Papilio Canadensis,' Near the Hybrid Zone with *P. glaucus* (Lepidoptera: Papilionidae). *The Great Lakes Entomologist*, 36(1–2), 41–53.
- Tørring, T., Voigt, N. V., Nangreave, J., Yan, H., & Gothelf, K. V. (2011). DNA Origami: a Quantum Leap for Self-Assembly of Complex Structures. *Chemical Society Reviews*, 40(12), 5636–5646.