Apodicticity and Transcendental Phenomenology

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Abstract

This paper deals with the concept and meaning of apodicticity or apodictic self-evidence from a phenomenological point of view. The foremost aim of phenomenology is to return to original intuitions, that is, to bring everything to original intuitive givenness and to provide an intuitive basis for philosophical theories. Phenomenology gives a broad interpretation of the concept of intuition. The notion of apodicticity for Husserl is closely related to this conception of self-givenness of objects in intuition. This paper deals partly with the Husserlian concept of apodicticity and also tries to discover the opportunities and possibilities of apodictic self-evidence in phenomenological philosophy, in its own right, as a phenomenological analysis of the concept. Furthermore, this paper will also set out to address how and to what extent phenomenology can transgress, in an apodictic manner, the immediate sphere of the present and hence gain insights through subjective consciousness about the fields of other minds, historicity, worldhood and psychology.

Keywords: apodicticity, phenomenology; Husserl; reflexion; intersubjectivity

I. Introduction

This paper investigates the nature of apodicticity and the apodictic possibilities of phenomenological philosophy. The problem of apodicticity or self-evidence was central for phenomenology since its first “break through” with Husserl’s Logical Investigations (Husserl 1970: 165, 1976a: 168). The phenomenological reflexion must possess the character of apodictic self-evidence. If the phenomenological position-taking is performed correctly then the insights gained by it in a way must be incorrigible. Incorrigibility is an essential feature of apodicticity: we call apodictic those insights whose future validity is supposed to be unshakable. According to Husserl, there must be recognition of this sort in order to make cognition as such possible.
On the other hand, if we look over the history of the phenomenological movement then it will be seen that all the most prominent phenomenologists formulated their own particular phenomenologies, in some fundamental points at odds with Husserl as well as with other phenomenologists. This situation was described by Paul Ricoeur, who held that the history of phenomenology was the history of its own heresies (Ricoeur 1987: 9). This is in accordance with Husserl’s claim that phenomenology could never become a *tekhnē* without the distortion of its essence (cf. Husserl, 1970: 198-199; 1976a: 202). Notwithstanding, it is also evident that this is not what Husserl had in mind when he spoke about the infinitely open horizon of phenomenological philosophy.1 He explicitly enounced that by this he meant a co-operation and co-working of philosophers as an endless process (cf. eg. Husserl 1976a: 439). Phenomenology for Husserl is a system, but a living, historical system in constant formation. Ultimately, this system relates to ultimate truths, but in the historical life of phenomenology these truths are constantly being illuminated anew. To say that every philosopher has her or his own truth is just the same as to say that there is no truth at all.

What can be said about truth and apodicticity after the heretical divergencies of the phenomenological movement? Phenomenology is about truth and reason (Sokolowski 2000: 4). Every philosopher claims that they are right and that they speak the truth. However, if philosophers don’t presuppose a sort of truth, there is no reason at all for argument or criticism. Philosophers have claimed to occupy a favourable position for reflexion, from which they can gain some necessarily true insights (necessary even if those insights concern contingency). Philosophers, such as Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas, in many cases (mainly concerning the factual nature of human existence) are right to argue with Husserl. Indeed, many of his statements about the transcendental substructure of subjectivity (to which he claimed apodicticity) are far from being apodictically self-evident. In most cases, however, they simply misunderstand or misread Husserl because each has their own vision of phenomenology.

In the present article I will examine Husserl’s mature notion of apodicticity. I will try to give some indication about how this notion comes to the fore at some crucial points in phenomenology, such as the structures of consciousness and the problem of intersubjectivity. In much of his research, Husserl does not want to claim an apodictic validity to his statements but rather tries to indicate a sphere of apodicticity, and tries to find or explore some ways to approach this sphere of apodictic truth. I
will argue for the view that there are some fundamental, apodictical truths, such truths that, regarding the core of their meaning or sense, cannot be modalized. These truths on the one hand concern our own nature as human beings: they are about intersubjectivity, historicity or facticity. On the other hand, these truths do not exist over and beyond time and history: they have a special temporal embedment. They gain new meaning through the activity of phenomenal generation, without losing the essential core of their original meaning.

II. Apodicticity

Apodicticity concerns the character of our insights; it is the highest level of self-evidence. Apodicticity means that there is a group of insights that mutually belong together which will not be corrupted or overwritten by future scientific discoveries. Apodictic insights are “necessary, indubitable and infallible” (Palermo 1978:70). According to Husserl, the contrary or the non-being of an apodictic truth cannot even be imagined (Husserl 1999: 15-16; 1973b: 56). Obviously the core of this problem is the problem of truth itself, namely the problem of whether we are able to reach non-relative or absolute truths.

Husserl in the Logical Investigations delineated his concept of self-evidence in the context of his anti-psychologist polemic.2 Psychologistic interpretations of self-evidence, such as those of Ziegler, Mill, Sigwart, Wundt,3 treated this phenomenon as a peculiar feeling of certainty, as a subjective state of mind. On the contrary, Husserl defined self-evidence as the experience of truth (Husserl 1968/I: 190). For Husserl, self-evidence is not merely a feeling, it is an intimate connection with truth. Heffernan emphasizes four principle definitions that Husserl gave in the Sixth Logical Investigation concerning the notion of evidence in conjunction with truth (Heffernan 1999: 84-85).

First, “truth” is “the complete correspondence of the meant and given as such” (Husserl 1968/II:2: 122-123), and “evidence” is the “experience” of this “truth.” Second, “truth” is “the idea that belongs to the form of the act, the idea of absolute adequation as such” and “evidence” is the “unity of coincidence” between “the epistemic essences” of the real “acts of evidence” involved. Third, “truth” is the “given object in the manner of the meant one, as verifying,” and “evidence” is the corresponding “experience of verification.” Fourth, “truth” is the “correctness of the intention...e.g., correctness of the judgment... as being adequate to the true object,” and “evidence” is the “relationship” between the empty intention and the given
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states of affairs (Husserl 1968/II/2: 123).

It is easy to see that Husserl brought to the concept of evidence an intimate relation with the concept of truth. Evidence, either being a specific character of consciousness or that of judgment, is our relationship with truth itself, that is, with an objective state of affairs. In Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* evidence is principally a mode of consciousness with which we access with reality. Husserl tried to conceptualize this particular event (our accessing reality) by claiming that with and through evidence we live through truth or objectivity itself.

The psychologists’ (such as, Siegart, Höfler, Wundt, Elsenhans and Ziehen) counter-attack chiefly focuses on the term “experience” (*Erlebnis*) in Husserl’s definitions (cf. Heffernan 1999: 99-120). These critics assert that Husserl can’t escape from the psychologism he attacks: he can’t avoid defining evidence in terms of a psychic state. After the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl changes his emphasis and maintains that self-evidence is the transition from empty intentions to fulfilled ones. This is a process in the sense of a fulfillment. It is the (absolute) ‘self-givenness’ of the object (itself), so that it is the mode of the givenness of an object, that is, something that belongs to the form of our acts.

When one speaks about apodicticity, one tends to think of mathematics and logic. Surprisingly enough, when speaking about apodictic self-evidence Husserl rarely takes his examples from the above-mentioned two spheres: most of his examples are from the field of perception. ‘I am seeing an apple’—this is apodictic evidence. Perhaps I might be mistaken that there is an apple in reality, independent from my perception, but I cannot be wrong in maintaining that ‘I am seeing an apple.’ The seeing (perceiving) is a *cogitatio*, the apple (the perceived) is its *cogitatum*. The apple can only be given as an identity in manifolds. It can only be given through several sides, aspects and profiles; perceptually it cannot be given otherwise. According to Sokolowski, “These statements are apodictic” (Sokolowski 2000: 17-21, 57).

Husserl was a realist throughout his whole career. Consciousness is conscious of the thing itself, the perception brings us to the perceived. In *Logical Investigations*, Husserl harshly criticizes representationalist theories of consciousness (Husserl 1968/II/1: 421-425). That is to say, how can I know that I’m seeing a real apple and not just a hallucination of an apple? That is, how can I know whether my perception is a veridic one? According to Husserl, one knows this from the context of the experience. The fabric of experience articulates the norms of harmonization and disharmonization or frustration. The harmony of our experience indicates
that we face reality itself and not just our own phantasmagoria. (See also Sokolowski 2000: 14-15).

How are these norms of harmonization and disharmonization revealed? We could reflect on the life of experience and the act of reflexion shows us these norms. Husserl’s so-called ‘transcendental turn’ tries to carry out a more reflexive phenomenological approach. This is in no way a turn away from things themselves, as many of his followers thought. On the contrary, it is a turning from the things themselves towards their several possible modes of givenness. We can intuit the ways in which the things themselves are given to us. The real question in this context is how one can tell whether the result of the reflexion is apodictic?

In the natural attitude (that is to say, in our life before and outside philosophy) we do not perceive only individual things. Fibres of generality run through the fabric of experience. Alongside the things we also perceive entire states of affairs. Husserl called this categorial intuition. Our experience is articulated by formal categories. According to Marion’s reading, for Husserl perception as such is fundamentally categorial (Marion 1998: 12-14). First and principally we perceive everything under certain general and formal categories. Before I can see this concrete house, I see a house (Heidegger 1979: 90-91). But here we must separate two different matters: Husserl spoke about categorial intuition and the seeing of essences (Wesensschau). Both of these capabilities belong to the fundamental structure of experience.

The essences appear as the general form of the things. In # Logical Investigations they appear as ideal kinds or species (cf. Husserl 1968/II/1: Investigation 2). We can see the colour red as such. These entities belong to the sphere of a material ontology, whereas the entities of the categorial intuition belong to a formal ontology. According to Ideas, the formal ontology is more fundamental than the material ones (Husserl 1976b: 26). The entities of formal ontology constitute no region at all, but have all the material regions under them. Necessary features characterize these forms of essences, both the material and categorial (“empty”) ones. The way of grasping the essences is also called eidetic intuition. The judgments that are passed upon eidetic intuition could be characterized by their “universality, necessity, apodicticity” (Husserl 1976b: 19).

A special procedure is required to arrive at such pure ideal essences (or eide). We should imagine a certain thing and try to change some of its properties. The features that cannot be altered in this way belong to the essential structure of the same thing. Husserl calls this method free imaginative or eidetic variations (Husserl 1973a §87: 340-348; 1939: 410-
420). As categorial and eidetic intuition belong to the ground-structure of experience, eidetic or imaginative variations do not indicate a specifically phenomenological method either, but are parts of our natural life and belong to the natural attitude itself (cf. Sokolowski 2000: 179-181). We imagine ourselves in different situations and consider what might happen under certain conditions; in our everyday life we make imaginative variations all the time.

**Apodicticity in Phenomenological Reflexion**

The so-called transcendental turn of phenomenology redirected the philosophical gaze from the things to their modes of givenness. In the phenomenological attitude we make attempts to seize the structures of pure (or transcendental) consciousness. These structures are nothing other than the ways that things can be given at all. The insights concerning these structures set forth the specific manner in which the things must necessarily appear to any conscious being. The phenomenology of these structures is the eidetics of the pure consciousness (or the eidetical science, the science of the *eido* of pure consciousness).

The method of imaginative variations does not seem very difficult. The situation is much more complicated if we wish to perform eidetic operations (the philosophical operations, such as free imaginative variations, that aim to grasp the *eidos* or essential form) in the very abstract regions of pure consciousness. What could assure the success of eidetic apprehension (the philosophical seizing of essence) that is directed toward the ground-structures of transcendental subjectivity? Sokolowski advises two protective measures in order to avoid the possible mistakes of eidetic apprehension. We should discuss the results of eidetic grasping with other phenomenologists, which functions as an intersubjective control against the excess of imagination. We ought also to orient ourselves to see “the impossibility of the thing’s being without the feature” in question (Sokolowski 2000: 183-184).

The so-called objects of phenomenological reflexions are objects of a particular sort: they are the structures of subjectivity in general as well as our own subjectivity. Husserl operates with a wider sense of perception (wider than mere sensuous perception) when he speaks about the perceiving of these objects. This kind of perception is analogous, but by no means identical, with the way mathematicians ‘see’ their objects. They could be given in a straightforward way too, like mathematical objects: ‘straightforward’ in the sense that we just see them, and they are present to us in the flesh, in
person. Their apodicticity consists in this manner of straightforwardness. We can be mistaken in taking an insight to be apodictic when it actually is not apodictic at all. The late Husserl stresses the necessity of philosophizing in community. Other phenomenologists can then correct their failures. This way of communal philosophizing indicates a to-and-fro movement between the phenomenologist’s primordial sphere of subjectivity and the sphere of alien subjectivity that belongs to his or her fellow phenomenologist. But these corrections presuppose from beginning to end the original ground of apodicticity. In some of his research manuscripts, Husserl tends to allow the possibility of modalizing apodicticity. But he insists that some fundamental, apodictical truths have an essential core of meaning or sense that cannot be altered. Moreover, apodictical truths in phenomenology are not merely formal statements, rather they make up a complex web and have a layered meaning. They are embedded into the context of other apodictical truths and, in correlation with the historical context, the meaning of these truths get a new elucidation without the essential modification of their original sense.

In the second half of the twentieth century, relativist and scepticist streams of philosophy were revitalized partly inside phenomenology and by phenomenology. One major objection against the cognitive capability of reflexion (that is to say, our cognitive capability to come to know a thing through reflexion), raised by these philosophies, was that reflexion always alters the reflected. As such, we cannot have strict knowledge about the object of reflexion and therefore cannot have any form of strict (philosophical) knowledge at all. This objection must be refuted as being abstract and having no contact with the things themselves. We make reflexions in everyday life: we consider things; we meditate on things; we recall the events of the past. These are all reflexions in the naivety of the natural attitude. The norms of rightness and falsity of these reflexions are articulated by the context of experience. The same holds for philosophical reflexion; it is the proper life of experience that grants the norms of accordance and discordance of reflexion.

Jean-Luc Marion (1998) made the objection that the Husserlian way of phenomenological reflexion cannot objectify such non-objective phenomena such as friendship and love without the radical alteration of their very essence. But we have a pre-given meaning of these phenomena in the natural attitude already. We live through (erleben) them in the way of being-in (In-sein). We can reflect on this being-in. In this reflexion, those non-objective phenomena give themselves in the double movement of self-giving and self-withdrawal. We can reflect on the manner in which reflexion
alters these phenomena. The norms of the correctness and falsity for these iterated reflexions, like above, are given by the context of experience in the phenomenological attitude.

The apodicticity of self-giving is indicated by the straightforward manner of appearing. According to Husserl, this straightforwardness is not merely tautological. The purely formal way of straightforward self-giving could be called formal \emph{a priori}. Husserl claims that we are able to read off from a phenomenon certain necessary structural features that are not involved in the narrow concept of the thing in question. He says that this material \emph{a priori} is the essential core of phenomenology. In \emph{Logical Investigation} he writes that those statements like “There is no overlord without vassals” must be distinguished with regard to their \emph{a priori} status from statements of the type: “There is no colour without extended surface” (cf. Husserl 1968/II/1: 253). He even had in mind a systematical ontology of the material \emph{a priori} (cf. op.cit, 256).

Concerning the structures of subjectivity, we can point to the phenomenological analysis of phantasy as an example of this material \emph{a priori}. Husserl asserts that phantasy is a quasi-intuition that involves an entire quasi-world with quasi-contents with their particular quasi-temporality (Husserl 1973a/1939: §39). This “quasi-” prefix means that as well as in the case of perception we can also speak in an analogous manner about temporality, spatiality, worldhood, sensuous content] etc., in the case of phantasy or imagination too. But in its own way this spatiality, this temporality, etc. of the imagination is radically different than that of the perception. These quasi-modes are not involved in the narrow sense of phantasy, but could be read off from the imaginative operations. In the same manner, in a cautious step-by-step advancing movement, we could build out a systematical ontology of material \emph{a priori} of pure or transcendental consciousness.

In this section I have tried to demonstrate that phenomenological reflexion and imaginative variations as a fundamental phenomenological operation can successfully overcome the difficulties concerning reflexion that are raised by traditional and more contemporary scepticism. These sceptical considerations turn out to be groundless, as we do not have grounds or reason to be doubtful about the result of reflexion, as the norms of success or failure of reflexion are granted by the wider context itself. We have good reason at least to allow for the possibility of a system of material (that is, not merely tautological) \emph{a priori} through the method of phenomenological philosophy.
The Region of Primordiality

Perhaps the most misunderstood and misinterpreted parts of Husserl’s work were his considerations about the notions of the transcendental ego and the transcendental subjectivity. The most common objection to these concepts was that they amount to a lapsing back into the old marsh of Cartesian ego-metaphysics. Almost all of his more important students shared this misunderstanding, even the most talented ones, such as Heidegger. The 64§ of *Being and Time*, “Care and Selfhood,” directly attacks Kant’s notion of pure ego, but the real target of that section is Husserl and his concept of the transcendental ego. In this subsection I will try to show that there is a fundamental difference between Husserl’s idea of transcendental subjectivity and the traditional conceptions of ego (mind, soul, consciousness, etc), including its contemporary treatments in the Neo-Kantian schools during Husserl’s own time. I will attempt to make it clear that the transcendental ego is nothing other than the philosopher’s own self, but regarded from the viewpoint of transcendental reduction.

The aim of the phenomenological reduction is to lead our philosophical gaze back to the realm of natural attitude to the reign of transcendental phenomena, that is, to the primordial region [“Urregion”] of transcendental subjectivity (Husserl, 1976b: pp.158-159). Husserl operates with several different terms in order to characterize this procedure, terms which are partly synonymous and partly strongly interrelated. He speaks about bracketing or suspension of the general thesis of the natural attitude (that there is a constantly existing world), the *epoikē* concerning the being-valid of the beings and the world as such. This bracketing by no means involves a denial of the being of the world, neither is it a doubt about the being of the world (cf. Sokolowski 2000: 54-55). It places us in a neutral position from which we are able to focus our attention on the mode of appearing of things, that is to say the phenomenality of the phenomena.

Merleau-Ponty asserts that this bracketing of the world cannot be carried through completely. We are always involved in the world, even in the phenomenological attitude. But this objection fails to see the sense of the reduction, which consists only in changing the direction of attention. In this attitude we face phenomena that can present us their phenomenality in a more determinate and clearer way. We call the region that belongs to this attitude *transcendental*, because it is the transcendental precondition for the world of the natural attitude. Hence the subjectivity that operates in this sphere is called *transcendental subjectivity*. In a way, this subjectivity is separated from the world, but this does not mean that it is a metaphysical
or otherworldly subjectivity. We don’t deny the being of things, but try to understand how it is possible, from a subjective point of view, to experience the being of things and the world. Transcendental phenomenology attempts to clarify the subjective genesis of the being-valid of the world.

According to Marion, the Husserlian concept of consciousness can be brought back to the Cartesian notion of substance. Husserl conceives the being of consciousness in terms of substantiality (Marion 1998: 55, 82). Indeed, Husserl’s own wording is sometimes very misleading. He speaks about the “annihilation of the world” (Husserl 1976b: §49). He claims that the transcendental ego could survive even the destruction of the world as such (Husserl 1973b: 45). These and other similar enunciations could readily suggest the concept of a substantial, metaphysical ego, in the very sense of traditional metaphysics. Nonetheless, if we have a closer look at Husserl’s account of transcendental consciousness, even the most superficial glance will show us that this notion has nothing in common with the Cartesian tradition of ego-metaphysics.

Despite competing interpretations, Husserl’s conception of consciousness is not a metaphysically-committed one, that is to say, it does make any special metaphysical claim concerning the being of the ego. It is fundamentally an epistemological concept; this philosophy of consciousness could only be called an ontology in a radically new sense: as an ontology of experience. In the transcendental attitude we say nothing about the metaphysical status of this subjectivity. Husserl calls it ‘absolute consciousness’ also, but this absoluteness means nothing more than that it is the original sphere of philosophical reflexion. This sphere has none of the attributes of the Cartesian substance and it is in no way something like a metaphysical region.

The sphere of transcendental subjectivity is an open space, a field in which the phenomena can show their phenomenality. It is not entirely transparent, as it is the region of both passivity as well as of activity. In the region of transcendental subjectivity the phenomenologist finds herself or himself from the very beginning in play, specifically in the play of self-giving and withdrawal. The ego of the philosopher also takes part in this play: according to Husserl, the ego to some degree slips aside from the reflexion. For this reason he distinguishes between the reflecting latent self and the reflected patent self (cf. Husserl 1959: 86-92, especially p. 90).

Those who criticize the concept of transcendental ego as being some substantial, worldless metaphysical entity miss the meaning of phenomenological reduction, not to speak of by-passing Husserl’s own restraints. In the second book of *Ideas*, he emphasized that this ego has
a body and has a world. With phenomenological reduction we reduce the ego of the philosopher as well. Phenomenological reduction is nothing more than philosophical reflection, performed in accordance with the methodological prescriptions of phenomenology. The reduced ego finds itself in the play of subjectivity and objectivity. She is the constituting agent and she is constituted at the same time. She is the self-objectification of transcendental subjectivity as a bodily, worldly self and she is the source of every meaning and objectification therein.

There is a fundamental ambiguity in the way in which Husserl speaks about the transcendental ego. The transcendental ego is on the one hand an infinite, open realm of forms, which is itself an essential form too (Husserl 1973b: 108). On the other hand she is the constant flow of her experiences: she is the functioning of transcendental subjectivity (“she lives, but she has no subsistence,” “es lebt, aber es hat kein Dasein” [Husserl 1973c: 83]). The transcendental ego is wholly fluid, there is nothing substantial in it. The eidetic structures of the ego grant the laws and rules of the playing fields of transcendental subjectivity. How does it happen that the transcendental ego finds itself in a world as an embodied, mundane empirical subject? This question refers to the problem of self-objectivation: how can we find a way from the transcendental ego to the worldly, empirical person? The problem of self-objectivation gives rise to a special field of transcendental problematics: how is the being-validity of the empirical, mundane person generated in the terrain of transcendental subjectivity?

These questions imply the most difficult problems of phenomenology: the problems of generativity and intersubjectivity. As we have seen, the ultimate source of apodictical evidence is the original intuitive givenness of a thing. In Husserl’s opinion the immediate sphere of apodicticity is the living present and its own sphere of primordiality. How can we exceed this narrow sphere in an apodictic manner towards the sphere of other egos? In the following sections I will address these problems.

III. Transcendental Intersubjectivity

Husserl separates the philosophical apodicticity of higher dignity (that is, theoretical self-evidence of a more fundamental kind; self-evidence with the character of ultimate founding) from the non-philosophical forms of apodicticity, such as mathematical insights. He remarks that the two sorts of apodicticity should by no means be confused with each other (Husserl 1976a: 72). It is philosophical apodicticity that makes any other non-philosophical apodicticity possible. The original region of this apodicticity is the proper
sphere of the philosophizing ego, the sphere of transcendental subjectivity with regard to the living present. There are some fundamental apodictic features that characterize this sphere of primordiality, for example there is no stream of experience without an experiencing ego; consciousness is always somebody’s consciousness. There are no memories, pains, fancies, thoughts and so on, without somebody to whom they belong.

This experiencing, philosophizing ego, accidentally my ego, can very well slip into the background (so it could be athematic or unnoticed). The background is the favoured dwelling-place of this ego: most of the time it is unnoticed or unseen. But to overlook this ego in favour of a so-called non-subjective, non-egological phenomenology is to fail to see a fundamental givenness; that is, in the phenomenological attitude I am the one who performs phenomenological reflexions. We can let our ego fade into the background of the phenomenological horizon and concentrate only on the phenomena that appear on this horizon. However, if we deny its existence then we make an elementary misconception in the phenomenological respect, in that, we overlook the fact that there is no horizon without the perspective of a viewer. *Ego sum, ego cogito:* these are apodictic insights. To say that the other is known with a greater certainty than my own self is a fundamental error in the region of transcendental subjectivity. It is the most difficult task of transcendental phenomenology to access the subjectivity of the other in an apodictic manner. This task means that we must go beyond our own sphere of primordiality and reach into an alien one.

The key to transcendental intersubjectivity is the phenomenological analysis of the way in which the transcendental ego constitutes itself as an intersubjective being. Others are in my sphere of primordiality just as I am in others’. We are “closed into” the others – as Husserl put it (Husserl 1976a: 258). From the beginning there is an interwovenness between myself and the others. From an epistemological view-point the transcendental subjectivity constitutes intersubjectivity. From the ontological point of view the transcendental subjectivity springs from intersubjectivity. But at the beginning, as a transcendental ego, we find ourselves in the so-called epistemological view-point. In my opinion, in order to get through to the ontology of intersubjectivity there remains three major phenomenological issues to analyse: the problems of meaning, empathy and drive-intentionality.
The Intersubjective Constitution of Meaning

Communication is involved in the structure of meaning as such. The possibility of communication indicates an intersubjective community of others. In and via meaning we claim a universal validity of meaningfulness, a universal understandability. Meaning, at the same time, refers to the meant object and to the other person, who is the recipient or listener of the speech-act. The essential structure of meaning involves the being of the other. Sartre rightly realized that meaning for Husserl has an intersubjective character:

When Husserl in his *Cartesian Meditations* and *Formal and Transcendental Logic* attempts to refute solipsism, he believes that he can succeed by showing that a referral to the Other is the indispensable condition for the constitution of the world. Without going into the details of this theory, we shall limit ourselves to indicating his general position. For Husserl the world as it is revealed to consciousness is inter-monadic. The Other is present in it not only as a particular concrete and empirical appearance but as a permanent condition of its unity and its richness. Whether I consider this table or this tree or this bare wall in solitude or with companions, the Other is always there as a layer of constitutive meanings which belong to the very object which I consider; in short, he is the veritable guarantee of the object’s objectivity (Sartre 1969: 233)

The things we are speaking about are things in the common world, are the things of a public, social life. But Sartre mistakenly claimed that this relationship for Husserl was merely a relation via cognition. The language which expresses meaning is not only theoretical, scientific language, but also the language of everyday speech.

According to Sokolowski meaning is also out there in the world. Meaning consists in a special way of referring to the world (cf. Sokolowski 2000: 92-102). Meanings are on the ‘surface’ of the world. Husserl held meanings to be ideal entities. How does the ideality of meanings relate to their being in the world? To say that meanings belong or relate to the ideal form of the world is in no way to naturalise them, a claim against which Husserl struggled. It is true to say that Husserl’s account of meaning remained Platonic, in a manner, until the end of his life, but it is also important to recognise that this Platonic character was by no means a metaphysical one. He rejected metaphysical Platonism several times (see e.g., Husserl 1968/II/1: 123). The Platonic character of meaning consists in its universal identity through the manifolds of appearances. But this universal identity does not imply that meaning exists separately and independently from the
web of other meanings, from the body of language and, ultimately, from the life-world out of which it emerged.

According to *Experience and Judgement* pre-predicative experience, that is to say our experience before explicit logical-judgmental articulation, is already filled with meanings. Experience as experience is made possible only through these meanings. They have their roots in the life-world. The meanings of pre-predicative experience are from the beginning the result of an intersubjective constitution. The analysis of meaning leads back necessarily to the life-world and to an intersubjective co-constitution with others. This intersubjective background is already present in *Logical Investigations* as the problem of communication and everyday speech (Husserl 1968/II/1: *Investigation 1*). The ideality of meanings involves the problem of our one, common world, to which they belong in their ideal form and also the problem of reason, the capacity to articulate universality. From a phenomenological stand-point the norms of understanding and misunderstanding (reason and non-reason) are constituted by the life of experience itself (in a similar manner to the norms of being-validity).

Communication takes place in a community, that is, it involves an intersubjective horizon. Communication expresses the ideal form of the world. We, members of an intermonadic totality, constitute together the pathway to this ideal form of the world. It is right to say that there is a Platonic manner in the way Husserl spoke about meanings (inasmuch he constantly speaks about their ideal, universal and timeless character). To be sure, there is a Platonic aspect about meaning that cannot be eliminated entirely. Meanings cannot be fully expressed in terms of behaviours and dispositions. That is to say, meanings cannot be entirely reduced to (even dynamic) structures of sensibility. Merely seeing (which is only something abstract) is completely different from understanding something *as* something. Even animals have this capacity to understand something *as* something, when they suddenly recognise a situation as dangerous or offering food for example. This *as*-structure in essence transcends every form of sensibility.

The roots of communication lead beyond active constitution. Even our bodily motions, gestures and facial expressions are filled with meanings. They mean something to the other. The deep layer of intersubjective constitution can be found on the level of passive synthesis. We cannot master entirely the genesis of meaning and communicative structures. The two main ways of this passive constitution of intersubjectivity are empathy and drive-intentionality.
The Constitution of Intermonadic Totality through Empathy

The sphere of my own subjective life is also called monadic subjectivity by Husserl. With this term he refers to Leibniz’s concept of the soul, to the Leibnizian monadology. According to Husserl each conscious life can be modeled as a monad. But these monads “have windows,” so there is a real communication and connection between the monads. They make up a universal community, that which Husserl also calls “intermonadic totality” (Husserl 1973c: 193, 609). The communalization of monads is fundamentally performed via empathy.

The Husserlian account of empathy was harshly criticized by Heidegger in Being and Time (cf. mainly Heidegger 1967: §26). Heidegger is unhappy even with the term ‘empathy’ itself. He rejects the claim that the “first ontological bridge” between the “I” and the “other subjects” would be provided by the so-called phenomenon of empathy (op. cit., 124) According to him, empathy as such is only made possible by the existential structure of being-with. The other is involved by my existential structure, therefore the achievement of empathy is made possible. The relationship between the experience of the other and empathy is just the opposite, Heidegger suggests, to what Husserl thought (op. cit., 125). I am able to experience an other as other because I am, as being-here, already a being-with-the-other. Heidegger accuses the Husserlian account of treating the other subjects merely as presence-at-hand on the horizon of the transcendental ego (ibid.). That is to say, Husserl’s account reifies the other.

In Heidegger’s interpretation, my being-here is to be understood essentially as a being-with. The other is disclosed on and through the tools and things of care (op. cit., 117-118). This book or this chair involves in its readiness-to-hand another being-here, an also-being-here. My being as care discloses itself as a being toward the other, as solicitude. The world of being-in-the-world is a world that is shared with the others; it is a world-with. The existential structures of being-in-the-world, being-with and care are strongly interrelated. These structures are to be articulated with existential and not categorial concepts. That is to say, they characterize the being-here, which is essentially different from any presence-at-hand. The “unhappy” concept of “empathy” does not designate an original existential phenomenon, and what is more, it even leads astray the existential analysis of being-here as a being-with (op. cit, 163). If I were not a being-with from the beginning, empathy would not have been possible at all.
We can entirely agree with the essentials of this account, however we must also add that it is in complete accordance with Husserl’s own conception of intersubjectivity. If one wants to contrapose this account of experience of the other with Husserl’s then one fails to see the very sense of the Husserlian notion of empathy. In transcendental phenomenology ‘empathy’ does not refer to an additional, voluntary activity of consciousness, as in the case of sympathy, that would be necessary in order to ‘furnish’ person-like objects with consciousness. The word empathy, in the Husserlian sense, has nothing to do with such cases as when at a funeral we say to the mourner: ‘I can understand your sorrow. I sympathize.’ Empathy, in the context of transcendental phenomenology, is rooted at the level of passive synthesis. It is the functioning of the being-with.

Empathy is not an active performance as if it were necessary to project our inner mental states onto a spatio-temporal object in order to perceive this thing as another person. Empathy is anything but a projection. Through and in empathy the other speaks to me. Empathy is being-with from a transcendental point of view. Husserl analyzes the micro-structure of empathy as a form of passive synthesis, in order to give a first-person reconstruction of the passive construction of intersubjectivity by the consciousness.

Empathy has its roots in the structure of pairing, in a primordial structure of association. (Paaring and Paarung, for Husserl, refer to a synthetic activity of consciousness when I link present elements of experience to past elements). As Husserl uses the word “association,” it has nothing in common with its empirical-psychological usage. “Association” is the a priori “principle of passive genesis,” without which the ego could not be conceived of at all (Husserl 1973b: §39). It makes possible experience as such and also grounds the activities of sense-bestowing. We can associate a thing with another, therefore we can identify a peculiar thing as this peculiar thing. Our experience is articulated by the essential laws of phenomenological association. In the passive operation of associative pairing, I pair my bodily being with another bodily being and by virtue of this structural principle I am able to recognize another embodied subjectivity.

The other is analogically appresented in as much as I do not have original access to the other ego’s own sphere of primordiality. Otherwise that sphere would be simply a part of me. The analogical appresentation does not abolish the otherness of the other, quite the contrary: it confirms the other’s otherness in its utmost radicality. Empathy unfolds itself as a fundamental structure of subjectivity. Through empathy, I can know in
the phenomenological attitude that I am an intersubjective being. The constant working of empathy discloses myself as a member of a monadic community, as a part of an intermonadic totality. That is to say, I have self-consciousness in as much as I understand myself to be always in a community with other people.

**Drive-intentionality as Instinctive Intersubjectivity**

In and through empathy the monadic ego relates to other monadic egos. The higher the levels of intersubjectivity, the more complex the layers of intermonadic totality (such as social institutions, etc.) are constituted through empathy. The transcendental ego, which is a subject in an intermonadic community, is far from being a pure, empty pole of the active and passive ego-acts (as some critics of Husserl have suggested, e.g. Scheler and Heidegger). There are several layers to the subjectivity of the ego. The most basic layer of this subjectivity is the level of the pre-ego, the level of the instinctive I. The level of drive intentionality can be found deep below the passive performances of empathy. The intersubjective nature of transcendental subjectivity is grounded in the instinctive layer of the ego. Drive intentionality, according to Husserl, is a special form of intentionality: it refers to the object-directedness of our instincts and drives (See Lee 1993).

I could have an apodictic insight that I am an intersubjective being, that is, a member of a community which exists independently of me. I could not, however, have an apodictic insight into whether a concrete meeting or a concrete appearance of an other is real or not. The insights concerning particular meetings can never be apodictic, for the same reason as in the case of perception. The constitution of a concrete other person can be put into question as a dream or hallucination. As in the case of perception in general, the norms of falsification or verification are articulated by the life of experience itself. But the frustration of intention toward another person is only possible via our intersubjective nature.

The late Husserl posits that deep below our conscious, intentional life there is a complex and subtle ground of instincts, serving as basis for the former (cf. Smith 2003: 150-151). In his research manuscripts he gives a detailed and extensive account of drives and instincts, chiefly in the C-manuscripts (Husserl 2005). Even our instincts and drives have a sort of directedness, even they could be characterized as intentional. Husserl therefore occasionally speaks about drive-intentionality. This sort of intentionality forms the foundation of the intentional performances of fully
conscious activity. In order to announce this foundational relationship between those two layers (between the fully conscious level and the level of instincts), he refers to this directedness of drives and instincts as “primal” or “proto-intentionality”, “that precedes and makes possible the familiar intentional directedness to objects in the world” (Smith 2003:151). Husserl claims that there are several sorts of instinctive tendencies as sub-structures for the conscious structure-wholes. He even speaks of “transcendental instinct” and “instinctive reason” (Husserl 2005: 260; 1989: 127., cf. Smith 2003: 149-156).

With the level of instincts we are not yet on the level of Being. We are before the constitution of objects; we are on the level, as Husserl puts it, of pre-Being. Nonetheless, even instincts involve an intersubjective relation, a sub-conscious directedness toward the other, a preconstitution of the other. In our instinctive life, we are already linked together in a community of others. The instinctive proto-intentionality toward an other, as it were, provides the bed for the higher-level constitutive achievements of intersubjectivity. According to Husserl, in a life-history there is a concrete, primordial form of the other: it is the mother (Husserl 1973c: 511, 582, 604-605). The child is instinctively directed toward his or her mother. In Husserl’s account the mother-child relationship is the most fundamental of all relationships (cf. Zahavi 2003:113).

Toward a Generative and Constructive Phenomenology

In Eugen Fink’s *Sixth Cartesian Meditations*, he tries to systematize Husserl’s insights concerning the phenomenological method (Fink 1988). Husserl wanted to collaborate with his young assistant, and Fink’s work was to be published in a single volume with Husserl’s own *Cartesian Meditations*. In the end this common project was not accomplished, but Husserl acknowledged the merits of his pupil’s efforts (see Kern 1973: LXIII). However, Husserl voiced his doubts: he thought that Fink exaggerated the difference between the constituting and phenomenologizing ego, and he believed that his student overemphasized the difficulties of transcendental predication.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the importance of Fink’s work is outstanding. He treated in close detail some of the most difficult phenomenological problems, such as the construction of history and intersubjectivity. The problem is as follows: How am I able to gain an original access to my own preterite subjective development in the living present of my normal, ‘matured’ conscious life? How can I acquire the idea
of structural development at all? The generativity and the inner life of the other seems to be far beyond the apodictic range of the standing-flowing living present.

From the standpoint of the living present we can reach the idea of generativity in an apodictic way. In the actual course of experiencing there are not only intentional acts and complexities of acts, but in a way there could also be found sedimented forms of earlier structure-geneses which exist as habitualities (that is, as pre-given patterns for acting, behaving and thinking). The phenomenological analysis of habitualizations could yield the idea of generativity concerning personal life. We could gain apodictic insights into our condensed, generated experience-structures. But we must immediately face the difficult problems of constructing the inner life of others and the generativity of historical life in an apodictic manner.

Through interpreting the behavioural structure of others as expressions of the subjective, we are able to construct their inner lives. By investigating the processes of complexification of these structures of expressions and examining our own sedimented structures of experiential genesis, we have the means in the phenomenological attitude to construct the a priori rules of subjective and intersubjective genesis, without slipping into the exaggerations of a speculative metaphysics. We cannot say anything about the factual process of a historical-social genesis in an a priori manner, nor about the factical how of the other person’s upbringing. But we are capable of speaking about the a priori structures that govern such processes of development, and we are also able to construct in an a priori manner the possibly subjective meaning of an objective expression. Here I am merely adumbrating the lines of a possible direction for a pure, eidetic phenomenology of social life, following Eugen Fink and Edmund Husserl.

**Transcendentalizing Psychology**

Husserl, in the 1930s, realized even more radically the limits of the range of personal reflexion. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of phenomenologizing in a community. There is a priori knowledge, there are apodictic insights in reality, but I could be wrong in believing that I obtained truly a priori knowledge, that my insights really are of an apodictic nature. Other phenomenologists can correct my errors and also can reveal the reasons for my errors. In the case of the late Husserl, the charge of ‘armchair philosophy’ is wholly mistaken. We are finite, fallible beings; in the phenomenological attitude we are certainly not able to uncover the
whole *a priori* structure-system of transcendental subjectivity on our own. We are in need of the contribution of other phenomenologists. Moreover, we cannot limit ourselves only to reflexion on our everyday experiences and common knowledge. In a certain way we should also make use of the results of psychology as a positive science.

This is perhaps the most precarious part of the entire process of phenomenologizing. The psychologist questions the human psyche with his empirically evolved methods and techniques. Phenomenology should treat these results as indications of *a priori* structures, but in integrating them into transcendental phenomenology we must also avoid lapsing back into mere psychologism and naturalism. For this reason one could regard these operations of integration to be the most difficult tasks in phenomenology that should be performed with the greatest possible circumspection. The difficulty of this task of phenomenological transformation of psychological investigations is clearly shown by the mistakes and ambiguities of the greatest talents of phenomenological tradition, such as Merleau-Ponty for example. By “mistakes” and “ambiguities” I am referring here to such analyses of the bodily, human life that are intended to be purely phenomenological descriptions, and nevertheless they comprise such statements which cannot claim to be apodictically valid, purely eidetic truth, as later debates about them showed clearly.

The concrete method of phenomenological transformation is determined by the particular psychological matter itself. But the basic formal techniques of phenomenology, such as imaginative variations, provide a firm ground for the transformations in question. To decide whether a psychic structure is of a merely factual nature or is an indication to some *a priori*, the very question is whether we are able to imagine subjectivity without the aforesaid structure. Performing the phenomenological reduction on psychological objects we must dig down deep to the purely formal skeleton of these things in order to unfold the indications of the *a priori*. If they are performed carefully enough to avoid mere naturalism, this procedure would be in complete accordance with the original aims of phenomenology, and in this way we could gain insights concerning the *a priori* structures of concrete subjectivity.

**IV. Conclusion**

The phenomenological project is by no means a mere collection or gathering of apodictic insights. In a way, apodicticity gains its proper sense in a theoretical framework. We have the right to speak about certain alternative
styles of apodicticity in the post-Husserlian phenomenologies. Those phenomenologists (such as Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Lévinas, Sartre, etc.) had their own fundamental insights concerning the nature of Being and experience. In their own way they advanced the project of phenomenology. Even when they exceeded the horizon of phenomenology (as Lévinas did in his phenomenology of the Other, as ethics), this transgression was grounded in the proper movement of phenomenology itself.

These phenomenologists described the horizon of experience and in one way or another they dealt with the phenomena and performed phenomenological descriptions. Even in their critiques of Husserl they claimed that they worked in the same field of philosophy. But there remains a lot to say about apodicticity in the original context of the phenomenology of Husserl. His life-work still remains as the original source of phenomenology. His development of a phenomenological metaphysics of intersubjectivity still calls for continuation. But the divergent strands of the phenomenological movement (and also its hermeneutical embranchments) need to build bridges between the different phenomenologies, in order to sustain the life of philosophical apodicticity (that is, the life of truth) through a real co-operation of phenomenologists.

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(Endnotes)

1 For the theme of phenomenology as an infinitely open horizon see Husserl 1952: 161-162.

2 See Heffernan’s study on Husserl’s notion of evidence for a detailed analyses of how Husserl’s radically anti-psychologist concept of evidence emerged from his contemporary philosophical context (and how Heidegger’s view on truth and evidence related to Husserl’s conception). Heffernan, 1999.

3 Ziegler, 1893; Mill, 1878; Sigwart, 1911; Wundt, 1880/1883, 1893.

4 As regards to community of phenomenologists, Husserl speaks even more and more about the idea of a systematically organized co-operation between philosophers. See Husserl, 1976a; 1993; 2002: 315. As for modalizing apodicticity, Husserl in some places considers the possibility that self-evidence, which appeared earlier to be apodictically certain, later turns out to be doubtful. See Husserl 2008: 207-258, especially. 208-211. What is truly interesting in this context for us is the possibility of modalizing apodicticity through another phenomenologist, through the phenomenological discourse. However hitherto we have only some vague hint by Husserl about this topic.

5 In Being and Time Husserl’s name wasn’t directly mentioned in a negative, critical context, but according to Heidegger the main target of the critical aspect of the book was Husserl. In a letter to Karl Jaspers from the year 1926, he wrote, “If this treatise was written ‘against’ somebody, then it was Husserl, who saw that at once, but he kept himself to the positive from the very beginning”. (Heidegger, letter to Jaspers, 1992: 71).

6 According to this criticism Husserl believed that the phenomenologist is able to unfold the complete a priori structure-system of subjectivity and of being itself, purely by means of reflexion and without the help of others. This would be the very meaning of Heidegger’s accusation that Husserl one-sidedly preferred the theoretical attitude over against the practical one. See Heidegger 1994: 60, 70-72, 81-83, 93.

7 Here I am concretely referring to Iris Young’s criticism of Merleau-Ponty (Iris Young 2005).