



Does the Husserl/Heidegger Feud Rest on a Mistake? An Essay on Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology

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Preface: Ten Theses in Memory of Gian-Carlo Rota¹

1. Husserl and Heidegger are incompatible but inseparable. Hence it is necessary to rethink phenomenology from the ground up.
2. Phenomenology's primary topic is neither consciousness nor being, but meaning. Both Husserl and Heidegger approached this issue in light of "a traditional idea of philosophy."
3. The strength of Heidegger's position is that it avoids the absurd proliferation of egos and self-mundanizations of Husserl's position; the strength of Husserl's position is that it avoids the bathos of Heidegger's. The latter arises from mixing levels of predication: for instance, Heidegger's talk about "German" Dasein. Husserl had good reason to be alarmed at this sort of thing.
4. One should always read Heidegger's explicit criticism of Husserl against the background of his implicit dependence on him. For instance, Heidegger's rejection of Husserl's "theoretism" conceals his dependence on Husserl's idea that phenomenology is not a theory but reflective clarification. One should always read Husserl's explicit criticism of Heidegger against the background of his own megalomania: since Heidegger refused to be Husserl's disciple, he could only be "anti-scientific," "anthropological," not a phenomenologist at all.
5. Heidegger's "being-in-the-world" is not *in* the world in Husserl's sense; Husserl's "transcendental subject" is not a *subject* in Heidegger's sense. Many misunderstandings between the two philosophers flow from failure to recognize these points.
6. If our concept of subjectivity is derived from the psychology that developed on the basis of modern philosophy, then there is no good reason to associate what Husserl calls "modes of appearance" or "modes of givenness" with

subjectivity. The non-criteriological presence-*to*-self that characterizes the first-person stance is just as much the non-criteriological presence-*of*-world. The priority of subjectivity is ethical.

7. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* project collapsed over the question of whether psychological phenomenology was already transcendental. But even if phenomenological psychology is possible, the phenomenological *reduction* does not pass through it. Husserl muddied the water by introducing the detour of an abstraction, parallel to the one supposedly employed by physics, that would prescind from the physical in order to yield the “purely psychic.” Even if such an abstraction is possible, it has nothing to do with phenomenology, which is not attained through any sort of abstraction.

8. If one were really to carry out a parallel abstraction of the sort Husserl suggests – one in which the psychic is taken as enclosed upon itself in the way the physical is taken as devoid of all “subjectivity” – one could no longer recognize intentionality. For intentionality, or being-directed-toward-X, cannot be described without appeal to X. The abstraction in question would no more allow us to appeal to X in describing the field of study than we can appeal to “my perception of X” when describing X as the object of physics. Intentionality is not the mark of the *mental* if the mental is attained through this sort of parallel abstraction.

9. The phenomenological reduction is already transcendental; there is no “worldly” horizon left to bracket after everything posited by the ego is bracketed. Husserl cannot see this because he does not take himself at his own word: instead of bracketing *all* transcendencies, he reduces only to the level of the “purely psychological” – not because there is any phenomenological reason to do so, but because he is fascinated with his idea of a parallel abstraction. Heidegger’s claim – that the questions Husserl raises about constitution at this level are already “transcendental questions” – is not a relapse into psychologism, since what the phenomenological reduction leaves us with has nothing to do with psychology.

10. Husserl’s idiom of “subjectivity” is in certain ways preferable to Heidegger’s idiom of “being,” since it makes clear that modernity made a contribution to philosophy. Only someone wholly infatuated with the chimera of “the Greeks” will think that Heidegger actually recovers something hidden and forgotten when he turns phenomenology toward “being.” Without Husserl’s analyses of subjectivity Heidegger would have gotten nowhere, since the Greeks never got as far as the phenomenological notion of *Sinn*. Nevertheless, to grasp the transcendental dimension radically, as Husserl desired, the *psychological concepts* in which Husserl phrased his insights must be criticized. Subjectivity is not “psychological” and is no more attained through psychology than through physics or sociology.

1. The Problem

If philosophical grounds alone are considered, and not personal ones, the feud between Husserl and Heidegger can be seen to rest on a mistake. Both were great philosophers and phenomenologists – Husserl the incomparably greater pioneer, Heidegger the more subtle thinker. Heeding Husserl’s own distinction,² one might say that Husserl was the better phenomenologist, Heidegger the better philosopher. However, since the feud between them concerns phenomenological philosophy, appeal to this distinction can’t resolve it. Nor do avowals of who was greater, or who betrayed whom, prove very helpful. This paper aims neither to defend Heidegger’s character nor to establish Husserl’s orthodoxy: the shameful aspect of the first is partly a response to the overbearing quality of the second. What is at stake is some understanding of what transcendental philosophy should be.

Husserl’s philosophy produced, as Maurice Natanson noted, “what can only be called a proliferation of egos.”³ That we must admit *some* sort of distinction – that “my transcendental ego is . . . clearly ‘different’ from my natural human ego, and yet is anything but some kind of second something separate from it”⁴ – results, Husserl tells us, from attending with “unerring seriousness” to the “thematic meaning of the transcendental mode of inquiry.”⁵ This is necessary in order to avoid “transcendental psychologism,” the fundamental equivocation that has plagued modern philosophy from the beginning.⁶ It was presumably in his collaboration with Heidegger on the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article that Husserl first sensed that Heidegger lacked the requisite unerring seriousness. Certainly, by 1931 Husserl had no doubt that Heidegger’s was no transcendental philosophy but a “philosophical anthropology,” which “alleges that the true foundation of philosophy lies in human being alone.”⁷

And yet, it is exceedingly difficult to pin down really good evidence of Heidegger’s apostasy. First, there is the fact that he, no less than Husserl, is able to distinguish his position from philosophical anthropology. Then there is the fact, as Husserl recalled, that Heidegger “steadily denied that he would abandon my transcendental phenomenology”⁸ – a denial that is disingenuous only if the emphasis is placed squarely on the “my,” for Heidegger did indeed defend transcendental phenomenology against the Munich realists, Rickert, Scheler, and others.⁹ The evidence most frequently adduced, however, is the claim that Heidegger either rejected, or failed to understand, the transcendental reduction. As I will argue below, there is perhaps a sense in which he rejects the transcendental reduction as *Husserl* understands it. But if so, then this is not equivalent to rejecting transcendental phenomenology.¹⁰ Perhaps, then, Heidegger misunderstood it because he lacked unerring seriousness about what is at stake in philosophy? No doubt Husserl thought so, but then the philo-

sophical task cannot simply be to determine whether Heidegger remained true to Husserl's teachings. Rather, we must independently determine what the "matter" of transcendental phenomenology *is*, to see whether either Husserl or Heidegger were actually unerringly serious about it. No doubt this task exceeds the bounds of the present article,¹¹ but an important start can be made by focusing on a single question: Given that both Husserl and Heidegger recognize "the necessity of the return to consciousness" for any transcendental philosophy, what does this mean for each?

2. Attaining the Field of Transcendental Phenomenology

On Husserl's view, the "transcendental" is "an entirely new dimension of scientific inquiry" that was first glimpsed in Descartes' reflections.¹² Precisely because of its novelty, it is "hard to put into words and concepts: the old, traditional concepts, alien as they are to the essence of the new dimension, cannot grasp it." Thus "the modern epoch in philosophy represents a constant effort to penetrate into this new dimension and to arrive at the right concepts, the right ways of asking questions, and the right methods."¹³ In order not to beg the question, I will take the term "phenomenology" to denote the "right way of asking questions, and the right method" for approaching the transcendental dimension. What phenomenology is, therefore, must be understood from that dimension itself. From this perspective *neither* Husserl *nor* Heidegger has proprietary claim on the "right concepts" for talking about the transcendental, since each approaches it in terms of "a traditional idea of philosophy," though in each case a different idea.¹⁴ It may be that keeping phenomenology free from such entanglements is impossible, especially if one wants to show how the transcendental dimension has something to do with philosophy. But this *is* the source of the feud between Husserl and Heidegger.

Despite the fact that it is "entirely new," Husserl held that the transcendental dimension could be understood as a continuation of the philosophy of subjectivity, while Heidegger thought it could be understood as a continuation of the philosophy of being. The moderns versus the ancients; epistemology versus ontology. Though Husserl's phenomenology can be read as a way of retrieving insights of Aristotelian realism,¹⁵ and though Heidegger's phenomenology can be read as deepening Kant's critical idealism,¹⁶ the fact remains that Husserl prefers the language of the moderns and Heidegger the language of the ancients. There is no need to banish either from the philosophical lexicon, but neither suffices to capture the novel *Sache* of phenomenology that emerges as the transcendental dimension. In my view, the best term for that — one that belongs neither to ancient nor to modern philosophy — is *meaning* (*Sinn*). Naturally, this carries its own baggage, but I invoke it here merely to indicate

a framework for my arguments about where Husserl and Heidegger go wrong. Let us begin with Heidegger.

Thomas Sheehan points out that Heidegger “began reading Husserl by mistake.” He turned to Husserl because he believed that the latter, a student of Brentano, could help him with his Brentano-inspired question about the “unified meaning of being.”¹⁷ This beginning meant that in many respects the being-question, and not the phenomenological demands of the new transcendental dimension itself, came to govern Heidegger’s talk about phenomenology. Thus when Heidegger wants to characterize transcendental phenomenology in Draft B of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article, he refers to its “return to consciousness” as “in the service of the guiding philosophical problematic, namely, the question about the being of entities.”¹⁸ But while that is certainly the question in service to which Heidegger viewed phenomenology, he insinuates that being must be the theme of phenomenology *simpliciter*, insofar as it is philosophy at all. His argument runs something like this: Philosophy is supposed to be a science. Since the totality of entities is exhaustively distributed among the positive sciences, there appears to be “no field of research left over for philosophy.” Philosophy’s theme must therefore be entirely unique, beyond the reach of positive science. While philosophy does investigate entities, it does not, as positive science does, seek to “determine this or that entity” but rather to “understand entities *as* entities.”¹⁹

Now this is an excellent way to characterize the difference between positive science and philosophy, but what does it mean? In particular, is understanding entities as entities equivalent, as Heidegger claims, to understanding them “with regard to their being”? What does the term “being” add here, apart from a reference back to the Greek question of the *on he on*? Heidegger himself notes that the Greek inquiry into being was already a “turning of the gaze away from entities and onto consciousness,” but that the necessity for this turning was never sufficiently understood. Indeed, the “*insight* into the *necessity* of the return to consciousness” is precisely what distinguishes phenomenology.²⁰ But then is it still necessary to identify the “specific character of that which has been sought for” in philosophy as “being”? Or, if one insists on using the term, won’t it gain any sense it has from the phenomenological stance itself? Thus, while there is no real objection to invoking “being” as Heidegger does, nothing compels us to do so either. In thematizing the entity *as* entity, what is at stake is not some mysterious “being” but the *as* itself: meaning, intelligibility. It is because philosophical investigation of entities is interested in the “as” as such that it must have recourse to consciousness, not because it thematizes being – unless being is understood, phenomenologically, as meaning.

But here the feud begins, for Husserl claims that Heidegger does not take this “necessity of the return to consciousness” with unerring seriousness. He leaves it only half accomplished – attaining not to transcendental, but only to

psychological or anthropological subjectivity. This is to “fall back into that naivete the overcoming of which has . . . been the whole meaning of modernity.”²¹ Heidegger, naturally, rejects this charge and does so, moreover, not by rejecting but by *insisting* on the reduction. In so insisting, Heidegger claims that *menschliches Dasein* – human being – is the site of the transcendental, that the latter is a “wondrous existential possibility” of Dasein.²² Is this the obvious relapse into transcendental psychologism Husserl held it to be? Only if what Heidegger means by “menschliches Dasein” fits the description of what Husserl delineates as “psychological subjectivity” – which in crucial respects it does not. The reason Husserl cannot see this lies in the distortion he introduces by characterizing the transcendental as a dimension of *subjectivity*. By itself, appeal to “subjectivity” no more distorts the transcendental than appeal to “being” does. But when combined with the idea that subjectivity, though radically distinct from the psychological, nevertheless supposedly stands in a most “remarkable relation” to it,²³ a serious distortion does emerge, as can be seen from Husserl’s attempt to motivate the reduction through the idea of a pure phenomenological psychology.

3. The Way Through Phenomenological Psychology

For Husserl, the real motivation for the reduction (and the real priority of subjectivity in the sense of the irreducibly first-person perspective) is ethical: “every genuine beginning of philosophy springs from meditation, from the experience of solitary self-reflection” because “an autonomous philosophy” is “the solitary and radical self-responsibility of the one who is philosophizing.”²⁴ To define phenomenology is precisely to specify what it means to engage in such autonomous, radically self-responsible “solitary self-reflection.” The reduction is supposed to make this meaning explicit. What, then, do I find when I reflect in this way? What belongs to the experience of such a solitary self-reflection? Throughout his life Husserl answered this question with categories and concepts borrowed from psychology, and the feud with Heidegger is the price paid for this linguistic practice.

Take, for instance, the way Husserl introduces phenomenology in Draft A. Through the “phenomenological attitude” one wants to attain the transcendental dimension, radically distinct from all psychology. The key to this attitude lies in a certain change of focus: whereas ordinary “experience” is generally turned toward its “objects” – toward the perceived in perception, the imagined in imagination, and so on – as phenomenologists we “direct our gaze instead toward the manifoldly changing ‘subjective ways’ in which” the objects “‘appear,’ the ways they are consciously known.”²⁵ Radical philosophical self-reflection, then, attends to the manifold of “appearances” in which objects are given. But what is the argument for the claim that in turning to the

way things appear I am somehow turning away from the object toward something subjective? Husserl himself puts the term “subjective ways” and “appear” in scare quotes, and for good reason: to the extent that phenomenological reflection is not introspection, my reflection on modes of givenness is not a turn away from the object and so not a turn toward the subjective in the sense of something psychologically (i.e., *reell*) immanent. There is perhaps a sense in which *some* notion of “subjectivity” is appropriate here. William McKenna, for instance, distinguishes between a reflection on how objects come to be “on hand” (*vorhanden*) and a reflection on how they come to be taken as “actual” (*wirklich*), arguing that the specifically epistemological concern with the latter motivates Husserl’s turn to *transcendental* phenomenology.²⁶ But if we agree to call this second sort of reflection a reflection on “subjectivity” – perhaps because it is concerned with the “appearance/reality” distinction – this concept of subjectivity will be determined exclusively through the epistemological problem (the normative question of *validity*) and not by anything that could be said to be the domain-specific province of psychology as opposed, say, to sociology, anthropology, or linguistics. The notion of subjectivity here simply marks the epistemic gap between “holding for true” and “being true,” and any attempt to define it by way of an idea of psychological subjectivity will be grossly misleading. Quite simply: if from the transcendental dimension at which Husserl ultimately arrives, the “appearances” are not subjective in the psychological sense, then the transcendental dimension cannot be attained by passing through the psychological. The whole strategy Husserl adopts in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article is not only a detour; it is a dead-end,²⁷ and Heidegger saw this. So why does Husserl pursue it?

A hint of the reason is found in Draft B. There Husserl reminds us that “one may . . . follow transcendental rather than psychological interests and take up, from the very beginning, the transcendental reduction” (SP 132), just as he had done in *Ideen I*. As we learn from the *Krisis*, Husserl felt that this “Cartesian Way” to the transcendental dimension was too abrupt, that it gave the impression that phenomenology had to do with a transcendental ego “apparently empty of content.”²⁸ Now it is crucial to note that this impression is *mistaken*: the transcendental reduction as it emerges from the Cartesian Way does not in fact “lose” the world. Husserl merely wanted to find a *pedagogically* more perspicuous introduction to transcendental phenomenology, and so in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article he proposes an intermediary stage. Before attaining a genuine transcendental reflection on the “latently functioning life of consciousness” and its syntheses,²⁹ he will present this very same life as, according to him, it would appear from the standpoint of a “psychological interest.” What is curious about this move – and what yields the problems to be examined below – is that the supposed “pure phenomenological psychology” does not arise from a genuinely *psychological* interest at all. First, the idea did not exist in contemporary psychology or anywhere else;

second, it was projected to serve a purely pedagogical interest of Husserl's own;³⁰ and third, it was "the final fruit of a methodologically new development of transcendental philosophy" – namely, phenomenology itself.³¹ This means that pure phenomenological psychology is an unholy hybrid of insights and motives culled from transcendental philosophy, on the one hand, and elements that accrue to it from a purely conjectural association with positive science, on the other.

Problems with this hybrid become immediately apparent when one contrasts Husserl's starting point in *Ideen I* – namely, everyday experience in the natural (that is, personalistic) attitude – with his starting point in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article – namely, the naturalistic attitude belonging to the scientific study of animals. The entire question of whether the transcendental can be considered a "wondrous existential possibility" of the "human being" hinges on this decision to begin with "animal being" as the object of "anthropology or zoology,"³² for now the topic is entangled with the structure of these sciences themselves. Zoology treats the animal as a "psycho-physical unity;" hence any understanding of the animal will, according to Husserl, presuppose the more fundamental sciences from which zoology draws its principles. On the one hand, the animal can be considered in light of a "systematically abstractive focus of experience upon that factor in them that is purely 'res extensa'"; that is, a "reduction to the purely physical" that "brings us into the self-contained nexus of physical nature."³³ This nexus is self-contained because it "excludes all extra-physical predications of reality."³⁴ As Husserl informs us in *Ideen II*, this includes all value-predicates, as well as all so-called secondary qualities and, in general, all acts of consciousness, intentional acts. On the other hand Husserl assumes that the animal can be considered (or ought to be able to be considered) in light of a parallel abstraction which would coincide with the "surplus" left out by the physicalistic abstraction³⁵ – that is, with the *psychic* – a surplus that would be similarly self-contained in principle, no matter what the factual psycho-physical dependencies turned out to be. If the space for a "pure psychology" is thus clearly marked out from the *naturalistic* attitude, the crucial question remains: would the psychic, as what is left out by the physicalistic abstraction, coincide with the terrain of *intentionality* and the constitution of meaning? If it does not, then a pure psychology cannot provide access to transcendental phenomenology since it will not in fact have the same "content" as the latter; nor will the transcendental field be anything "subjective" in the relevant sense.

Husserl tries to suggest that it would so coincide by indentifying the self-containedness of the psychic in the naturalistic sense with the self-containedness established by the phenomenological reduction. Here he *begins* from the phenomenon of intentionality: all consciousness is consciousness of something, and the object of this "directedness toward" is already bound up with consciousness in a certain way. "After all," writes Husserl, "it is quite impossible

to describe an intentional experience . . . without at the same time describing the object of that consciousness as such.”³⁶ In what sense, then, do we have something self-contained here? In what sense is consciousness a “self-contained field of being”? Husserl’s great discovery was that the *meaning* of experience could be investigated independently of my commitments to judgments asserting the existence of what showed up in it – and so independently of all modalities of explanation (such as naturalistic, that is, causal, explanation) that, in their very sense, presuppose the existence of their *explanandum* and *explanans*. The phenomenological reduction simply makes this explicit: in carrying it out I “inhibit *every* co-accomplishment of objective positing produced in unreflective consciousness, and therewith *every* judgmental drawing-in of the world as it ‘exists’ . . . straightforwardly.”³⁷ Having done so, all worldly positing has been set aside: the reduction is the *universal* inhibition of naturalism that allows me to focus on the meaning structure of experience which, as Husserl rightly claims, is in *this* sense completely self-contained.

But this is by no means the same self-containedness that would be achieved in a pure psychology of the sort Husserl initially proposed. Pure psychology was supposed to yield a self-contained field of the “subjective” in the sense of what is “left over” after the physicalistic abstraction. But there are at least two reasons why the reduction cannot be said to track such a “parallel abstraction.” First, what it brackets – basically, the doxic positing of the world – is not equivalent to what the physicalistic abstraction leaves standing, namely *res extensa*. To focus on my “house experience” independently of my commitment to the judgment that the house exists is by no means the same as to abstract from its character as physical reality – that is, from its extendedness, place in the causal nexus, etc. All of that remains very much a part of the phenomenon of the house under the reduction. One might suppose, then, that the purely psychical is to be understood roughly as what Husserl calls the “phantom” in *Ideen II*. But in fact, under the relevant abstraction we would not have so much as a phantom. This (and here we find the second reason why the reduction does not track the abstraction supposedly parallel to the physicalistic abstraction) is because the parallel abstraction, emerging from the naturalistic attitude, could yield nothing but more “nature,” and intentionality is not a natural relation. This was Husserl’s whole point in opposing the “naturalization of consciousness.” Whether from the side of the reduction or from that of the parallel abstraction, the claim that the transcendental dimension can be attained by way of pure psychology is untenable. Let us explore these reasons more fully.

4. Critique of the Way from Psychology

The reduction leaves us with a self-contained field of intentionality, but under no circumstances can this be identified with “pure subjectivity” in the sense

of what is left out of account in the physicalistic abstraction. Let us designate as “appearance” that from which the physicalistic abstraction prescind. In this sense appearances are supposed to stand to the thing as the subjective to the objective; appearances belong to the thing only in relation to the psyche, though not otherwise to the thing itself. The square shape of the cube face belongs to the thing, while its rhomboid appearances belong to it only in relation to a psyche; hence they are subjective. Now let us assume that the reduction yields the self-contained space of modes of appearance, as Husserl says. This will still not get us the “purely psychical,” since *both* the subjective *and* the objective in the physicalistic sense will belong to the space of appearance. The genuine shape of the face of a cube – the square – is the identity in its various modes of appearing, but it itself is nothing apart from such appearances. It is the way the thing appears from a certain optimal point of view, but it makes no sense to think that the cube-face “itself” could be identified with any one of its rule-governed profiles.³⁸ The square shape is no more objective in the physicalistic sense than are the rhomboid appearances; or better, the rhomboid appearances are no less objective. They all constitute what it means to be a cube; they are the cube itself. Certainly, profiles are not parts (in the sense of “pieces”), but from the transcendental-phenomenological perspective they do belong to the thing (as its “moments”) and are not at all subjective in the psychological sense.³⁹ Admittedly, I here argue from within transcendental idealism, but *so does Husserl* when he talks about the supposedly psychological syntheses at issue. My point is only that one cannot get there by way of the pedagogical detour through pure psychology. This just isn’t psychological terrain.

The same point can be seen from the side of the parallel abstraction itself, as follows: Were one to successfully carry out an abstraction to the purely psychical that would be genuinely parallel to the physicalistic abstraction, one would *not* encounter the phenomenon of intentionality. If there is such a thing as the purely psychical in the naturalistic sense – that is, in the sense in which the principles of a science of the purely psychical could provide one leg of the psycho-physical science of zoology – then it is not intentional. At best it would be “proto-intentional,”⁴⁰ since there are certain conditions that must be satisfied if we are to attribute intentionality to something, and those conditions could not be satisfied were we limited to the purely psychical in the proposed sense. I doubt that I have a completely convincing argument for this claim, but the following considerations should motivate it.

When I operate as a pure physicist – that is, under the physicalistic abstraction – I address myself to the world by means of an object-language from which all reference to the psychical in the sense of qualia, norms, mental acts, and so on, has been banished. If I am to operate in parallel fashion as a pure psychologist, then, I cannot address myself to the world by means of an object-language that makes any reference to the physical in the sense of

“extra-mental” reality. But Husserl himself insists that it is “quite impossible to describe an intentional experience . . . without at the same time describing the object of that consciousness as such.”⁴¹ Thus in those cases – by far the majority – where the “psyche” is directed toward non-psychic objects, the pure psychologist must remain mute since, under the constitutive abstraction, her object-language would lack the terms to describe such objects. Strictly speaking, the pure psyche would include only those non-intentional moments of consciousness – hyletic data, the pre-intentional flow of temporality – that Husserl occasionally mentions. Alternatively, to the extent that one *can* describe intentional experiences, and so can make reference to objects of consciousness, one is not describing anything that could be considered as purely psychical in contrast to the purely physical. No doubt Husserl would object that such an argument absurdly “naturalizes” consciousness by failing to recognize that the purely psychic is intentional from the outset. But beyond the fact that it is rather *Husserl’s* position that naturalizes consciousness in this text, the response begs the question. Since Husserl admits that there are non-intentional aspects of consciousness, it is an open question whether some non-psychological conditions might be required to account for the intentionality that *is* found in consciousness. Thus if one insists on speaking of intentionality as a predicate specifically of consciousness, what is meant by “consciousness” cannot simply be assumed to be equivalent to the “object of psychology.”

Other aspects of intentional experience suggest that it does indeed involve non-psychological conditions. It is not just the object of consciousness that must be invoked; it is also one’s own body, which can hardly be considered purely psychical. I cannot account for perceptual experiences without reference to kinaesthesia, and to the “I can” that is inseparable from embodiment. These accounts can very well be carried out under the phenomenological reduction, if the latter is taken as suspending the doxic commitments that inform my sense of embodiment. But if the reduction is understood as tracking the abstraction that yields the “purely psychical,” then I can make no reference to my body and thus cannot account for the intentionality of perception. A similar argument concerns intersubjectivity. All clear cases of intentionality presuppose a social context, hence a reference to *real* others. But surely, an abstraction to the purely psychical will not allow an appeal to real intersubjectivity, especially given Husserl’s views about the localization of the psyche and the irreducibility of the first-person. But then, intentionality could not be a feature of any such pure subjectivity. It is irrelevant to point out that though these higher level intentionalities might presuppose the body or other subjects, they are founded on a pre-predicative level of intentionality that is purely subjective in a narrow sense. Husserl clearly does not limit phenomenological psychology, achieved by the abstraction to the “purely subjective,” to such an ultimate founding level. In sum, intentionality is *not* the mark of the mental if by “mental” one means that which is the object of

the pure psychology constituted through an abstraction that parallels the abstraction to the purely physical.

5. The Feud Resolved

Where have these arguments gotten us? Husserl talks about “consciousness” and “subjectivity,” but what he really has his eye on is something else – or at any rate, on the basis of the things themselves we should begin to admit that consciousness and subjectivity in Husserl’s sense have nothing to do with what belongs to pure psychology. Naturally it will seem perverse to deny that these notions are not, or are not primarily, matters of psychology, but the point is a crucial one: Husserl’s great insight concerned intentionality, and intentionality has to do with *meaningful* syntheses; *this* is the principle of the phenomenological field’s self-containedness. As Husserl writes: “In general it is valid to say that consciousness as consciousness permits no other manner of linking to another consciousness than such synthesis, such that *every* partitioning down into parts again produces meaning or sense . . . Synthesis of meaning or sense . . . stands generally under quite different categories from those of real synthesis, and real totality.”⁴² But just as Heidegger distorted this insight by approaching it in the ancient idiom of “being,” so Husserl distorted it by adopting the idiom he had grown up with as a student of Brentano. The irony, of course, is that Husserl wanted nothing more than to free the transcendental from psychology, but when Heidegger showed him how to do it, he could not recognize the move.

When in Draft A Husserl describes what he calls the “most important psychological-phenomenological syntheses” – such as syntheses of confirmation, identification, and their modalizations – Heidegger writes in the margin: “Transcendental questions!”⁴³ To Husserl this comment indicates that Heidegger has failed to grasp the meaning of the transcendental reduction, for from Husserl’s perspective these syntheses do not yet have transcendental significance, even though the phenomenological reduction has been invoked. Why not? It is because he believes that even if one brackets everything worldly with which the subject being reflected on – oneself! – is concerned, the reflecting philosopher still posits that subject as a worldly entity. Even when one brackets its objects, one takes the field of consciousness as a “real” worldly psychic stream. Why does he hold this view? It has nothing to do with the phenomenological reduction, for on this matter everything is quite clear: the phenomenological reduction brackets *all* worldly commitments, *every* worldly positing. Rather, it is because Husserl imagines that the reduction is carried out not by a philosopher but by a *scientist* in the *naturalistic attitude* – namely, by the putative pure psychologist. Such a psychologist *would* take the psyche as something “within the natural attitude in which the simply present world

is the thematic ground,” since psychology is a “positive science,”⁴⁴ a worldly science, and, like zoology or anthropology, is concerned solely with “man” (*anthropos, homo sapiens*) as a natural kind.

But Heidegger is not and never was such a psychologist; he reflects as a philosopher from the beginning and takes the phenomenological reduction at Husserl’s word. Having never had to struggle – as the early Husserl did – to wrest the transcendental dimension from the clutches of 19th century psychologism, Heidegger was never inclined to see the transcendental as specially related to psychology at all. In working on his revisions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article it never occurred to him to take seriously the pedagogical standpoint Husserl proposes for introducing transcendental phenomenology. This does indeed generate confusions – for Husserl, as well as for us, the contemporary readers of this exchange. But it does not mean that Heidegger misunderstood the transcendental, nor should we remain blind to the fact that it is only if one starts off from within a naturalistic framework – from the standpoint of the natural scientist – that the “instructions” for the reduction will be understood in such a way that consciousness will be “left standing” as an unreduced “bit of the world.” In other words, if one does not start naturalistically there will be no need for a further “transcendental” reduction to get to the transcendental dimension of genuine intentionality. The bracketing of naturalism already does the trick.

Various remarks made by Heidegger in the course of his work on the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article are best seen in light of the fact that he does not begin from the naturalistic standpoint, with its half-hearted reduction, but reflects as a philosopher carrying out the genuine phenomenological reduction. The reduction allows us to see that “the mode of being of human Dasein is totally different from all other entities” since it “harbors within itself the possibility of transcendental constitution.” The “concrete human being” – understood under the reduction of naturalism – can accomplish this without falling victim to the paradox that a “piece” of the world constitutes the whole world precisely because it is *not* a piece of the world: the “human being is never merely present-at-hand, but *eksists*.”⁴⁵ Of course, for Husserl the fact that Heidegger still uses the term “human being” is proof that he has contaminated the transcendental with anthropology. For him, there may be a parallel between transcendental and human subjectivity, but there is also a real distinction. As Dermot Moran drolly remarks after reviewing this issue in his recent book: “This distinction is difficult to understand.”⁴⁶ Heidegger asks: “What is the mode of being of this absolute ego – in what sense is it the *same* as the ever-factual ‘I’; in what sense is it *not* the same?”⁴⁷ On the one hand, Husserl often speaks as though the difference is only in our way of regarding one and the same ego.⁴⁸ On the other hand – to cite Moran again – “one cannot help thinking that perhaps Husserl thought of the transcendental ego as having a life of its own.”⁴⁹

Elsewhere I have argued against such “gnostic” phenomenology,⁵⁰ but I would like to offer a new explanation for why Husserl gets entangled in this morass. It is because he apparently holds the view that the term “human being” can and should be understood *solely* as a natural kind term. Husserl straightaway equates the whole messy business of what it means to say “I, this man,” with how such self-identification would appear to a third-person or taxonomical approach. Thus, when Husserl writes that pure subjectivity is “not to be taken as I, ‘this man’,” and Heidegger comments “but rather as *Menschheit*,”⁵¹ this must sound to Husserl like an incomplete reduction. Why? Because he believes that a theory of the essence (eidos) “man” can only be a regional ontology of the *anthropos*, of *homo sapiens* conceived as the object of natural or social science. (A similar worry is expressed in the margins of *Sein und Zeit*, when Heidegger suggests that Dasein has a certain priority and Husserl asks: “In an eidetically universal question, can an instance have priority? Is that not precisely excluded?”).⁵² For Husserl, there *is* no legitimate sense in which I can still speak of myself as a “human being” after the reduction. Yet behind this view stands nothing but a transparent and unresolved naturalism on Husserl’s part. As the psychologist or anthropologist uses it, the term “human being” names a natural kind. A regional ontology would have to take its contingency into account by allowing that it can be defined only historically, or that it is a “rigid designator” that tracks the evolutionary vagaries of a peculiar strain of DNA. But why should the *philosopher*, concerned with the *phenomenological* question of “who I am,” cede the term to the psychologist or anthropologist from the outset? If one takes the presuppositionlessness of phenomenology seriously, it would make more sense to refer to the natural kind (the topic of third person investigations) as *homo sapiens* or *anthropos* and keep “human being” as the neutral term for the *site* of the philosophical question of what I am.

This actually corresponds far better to Husserl’s own deepest impulses, impulses he partly sacrificed (but only partly; he didn’t go as far as Fink!) when he tied the predicate “human” to the pedagogical strategy of the psychological parallel abstraction. He thus made himself vulnerable to Heidegger’s charge that “the [notion of the] ‘pure psychic’ has arisen without the slightest regard for the ontology of the whole human being”⁵³ – since indeed in Husserl’s own presentation it arises precisely by treating the human being in terms of a zoological bifurcation. A genuine phenomenological psychology would not be bound to “subjectivity” at all in this zoological sense, but to the transcendental dimension of meaning; in fact, Husserl was already *there* in his concrete analyses. Let us conclude, then, by recalling Thesis Five: When Heidegger claims that transcendental subjectivity is “being-in-the-world,” Husserl understands this to mean that Dasein is an entity in the world in the naturalistic sense – that is, *anthropos* as the object of the worldly sciences of man. But being-in-the-world is no more *in* the world in that sense than is Husserl’s

ambiguously described transcendental subjectivity with its “mundanizing self-apperception,” by which it also, in a manner of speaking, becomes part of the world. Yet when Heidegger implies that Husserl’s transcendental subject is still too Cartesian – that it is “subjective” in the sense that it “loses the world” – he too is mistaken. The charge does hold true of the kind of psyche that emerges from the parallel abstraction, but the transcendental subject is not a “subject” in that sense and cannot, as I have tried to show, be reached by way of it.

Notes

1. A version of this paper was read before the Husserl Circle at Seattle University in June 2000. I would like to thank the organizer, Burt C. Hopkins, for the chance to share this work with a highly informed audience, and that audience itself for its criticism. The “ten theses” were inspired by a paper, “Ten Remarks on Husserl’s Phenomenology,” delivered by Gian-Carlo Rota at the February 1999 meeting of the Husserl Circle at the University of Memphis, organized by Thomas Nenon. Not long after that meeting, on April 19, 1999, Professor Rota, a notable mathematician and phenomenological philosopher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, passed away. Given the views he expressed in his book, *Indiscrete Thoughts*, ed. Fabrizio Palombi (Boston: Birkhäuser, 1997), 93, about the folly of adopting mathematical models in philosophy, it should not be expected that I will try to *prove* my theses in this paper. Instead they provide the framework for my remarks; or rather, they indicate what is at stake.
2. I mean that between “pure phenomenology” and “phenomenological philosophy” as indicated in the 1913 title *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und einer phänomenologischen Philosophie*.
3. Maurice Natanson, *Edmund Husserl: Philosopher of Infinite Tasks* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 79. Eugen Fink, “The Phenomenological Philosophy of Husserl and Contemporary Criticism,” in R.O. Elveton, ed., *The Phenomenology of Husserl*, Second Edition (Seattle: Noesis Press, 2000), 109–110, counts three: “1. The ego which is preoccupied with the world (I, the human being as a unity of acceptances, together with my intramundane life of experience); 2. The transcendental ego for whom the world is pre-given in the flow of the universal apperception and who accepts it; 3. the ‘onlooker’ who performs the *epoché*.” Are these “real” (that is, ontological) distinctions? Fink seems to lean toward an affirmative answer, while Husserl seems to lean toward the negative.
4. Edmund Husserl, “Die Amsterdamer Vorträge,” in *Phänomenologische Psychologie*, Husserliana Volume IX, ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), 342–343; English translation by Richard Palmer in Edmund Husserl, *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology and the Confrontation with Heidegger (1927–1931)*, tr. and ed. Thomas Sheehan and Richard Palmer (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1997), 247–248. Henceforth cited according to the German and English paginations of these editions (e.g., Hua IX 342–343/PTP 247–248).
5. Husserl, “Amsterdamer Vorträge” (Hua IX 336/PTP 242).
6. Edmund Husserl, “Phänomenologie und Anthropologie,” in *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, Husserliana XXVII, ed. Thomas Nenon and Hans Rainer Sepp (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 164–165; English translation “Phenomenology and Anthropology,” by Thomas Sheehan and Richard Palmer, in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology* (PTP 486).

7. Husserl, "Phänomenologie und Anthropologie" (Hua XXVII 164/PTP 485).
8. Edmund Husserl, Letter to Alexander Pfänder (January 6, 1931), in Edmund Husserl, *Briefwechsel* Vol. II, ed. Karl Schuhman in collaboration with Elisabeth Schuhman (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1994), 180–184; English translation by Burt C. Hopkins, in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology* (PTP 481).
9. See, for instance, Martin Heidegger, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, Gesamtausgabe Bd. 20, ed. Petra Jaeger (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1979), 41–46; English translation by Theodore Kisiel, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 32–36. Defenses of "transcendental" phenomenology can be found throughout the volumes of the Gesamtausgabe from between 1919–1929, often in connection with Heidegger's criticisms of *Weltanschauungsphilosophy*.
10. A fuller account can be found in Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning: Paths Toward Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), esp. chs. 9 and 10.
11. A complex attempt to determine the "matter" of phenomenology through the encounter between Husserl and Heidegger is found in Burt C. Hopkins, *Intentionality in Husserl and Heidegger: The Problem of the Original Method and Phenomenon of Phenomenology* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1993). More directly relevant to the present essay is his review of the issue: Burt C. Hopkins, "The Essential Possibility of Phenomenology," *Research in Phenomenology* vol. XXIX (1999), 200–214.
12. Husserl, "Phänomenologie und Anthropologie" (Hua XXVII 168/PTP 488).
13. Husserl, "Phänomenologie und Anthropologie" (Hua XXVII 168/PTP 489).
14. The phrase is from Heidegger's criticism of Husserl in *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* 147 (English translation, 107), but it holds equally of Heidegger himself. As Klaus Held argued: "All indications are that Heidegger's being-question is itself set up on extra-phenomenological grounds, in the first instance by means of an attachment to Aristotle." See Held, "Heidegger and the Principle of Phenomenology," in *Martin Heidegger: Critical Assessments Vol. II: The History of Philosophy*, ed. Christopher Macann (New York: Routledge, 1997), 312.
15. Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
16. Carl-Friedrich Gethmann, *Verstehen und Auslegung: Das Methodenproblem in der Philosophie Martin Heideggers* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1974).
17. Thomas Sheehan, "Husserl and Heidegger: The Making and Unmaking of a Relationship," General Introduction to *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology* (PTP 3–4).
18. The phrase comes from Heidegger's attempt to draft an introduction to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article that he and Husserl were working on together. The German text of this "second draft" of the article is found in *Phänomenologische Psychologie* (Husserliana IX) and the English translation, by Thomas Sheehan, is found in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology*, together with the other three drafts and various supporting materials. Following Sheehan and Palmer, I shall refer to the first draft as "Draft A" and the second as "Draft B." Subsequent references to any draft of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article and supporting material will be given in German and English pagination, e.g., (Hua IX 256/PTP 108).
19. Heidegger, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft B (Hua IX 256/PTP108).
20. Heidegger, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft B (Hua IX 256/PTP108).
21. Husserl, "Phänomenologie und Anthropologie" (Hua XXVII 179/PTP 499).
22. Heidegger, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft B (Hua IX 274–275/PTP 130–131).

23. Husserl, “Phänomenologie und Anthropologie” (Hua XXVII 181/PTP 500).
24. Husserl, “Phänomenologie und Anthropologie” (Hua XXVII 169/PTP 489).
25. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica Article Draft A* (Hua IX 237/PTP 84).
26. William McKenna, *Husserl’s “Introductions” to Phenomenology: Interpretation and Critique* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), 42, 169–175.
27. McKenna, *Husserl’s “Introductions,”* 158, associates the pre-transcendental reflections in *Ideas I* (§§27–55) with a kind of psychological reflection and, though they take place prior to invoking the reduction, he suggests that they *could* become the specific theme of a phenomenological psychology constituted by what he calls a “psychological phenomenological epoche.” But he recognizes that “this does not seem to be the same operation as the one to which Husserl gives the same name” in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article and elsewhere. My argument in this paper concerns only the latter operation. Whether McKenna is correct to think of the pre-transcendental sections of *Ideas I* as particularly “psychological,” and if so, whether the conclusions about the failure of the “Cartesian Way” to the reduction that his intricate and lucid study purports to establish are valid, must remain undiscussed here – as also the issue of whether the “dead end” I find in phenomenological psychology is the same as the one McKenna finds (e.g., *Husserl’s “Introductions,”* 227).
28. Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der Europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*, Husserliana Vol. VI, ed. Walter Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1954), 158; English translation by David Carr, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 155.
29. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft A* (Hua IX 239/PTP 85).
30. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft B* (Hua IX 270/PTP 123): “That very insight led to a pedagogical idea about how to introduce people to phenomenology given all the difficulties related to its unaccustomed transcendental attitude.”
31. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft B* (Hua IX 267/PTP 121).
32. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft A* (Hua IX 240/PTP 87). The same zoological perspective is emphasized again in Draft D – that is, the “Vierte, Letzte Fassung,” in *Phänomenologische Psychologie* (Hua IX 278); English translation, “‘Phenomenology’ *Encyclopaedia Britannica Article*,” by Richard Palmer in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology* (PTP 160). It is interesting to note that already in 1925 Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time* 157 (English translation 113), suggests that Husserl confuses natural with “zoological” self-experience.
33. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft A* (Hua IX 240/PTP 87).
34. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft D* (Hua IX 278/PTP 160).
35. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft A* (Hua IX 241/PTP 88).
36. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft D* (Hua IX 282/PTP 163).
37. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica article Draft D* (Hua IX 282/PTP 163); emphasis mine.
38. The point is a general one, following from the way that what belongs to the “object” and what belongs to the “subject” is established on the basis of changing modes of appearing, by way of normative concepts such as “optimal” and “normal.” See Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie, Zweites Buch*, Husserliana Bd. IV, ed. Marly Biemel (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952), 58–61; English translation by R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 63–66.
39. On the distinction between “parts” and “moments” as applied transcendently, see Robert Sokolowski, *Husserlian Meditations: How Words Present Things* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 8–17 *et pass.*

40. I extrapolate this concept from that of “proto-subjectivity,” introduced by John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 117, to designate the animal *qua* animal’s sensitivity to the environment.
41. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft D (Hua IX 282/PTP 163).
42. Husserl, “Amsterdamer Vorträge” (Hua IX 320/PTP 228).
43. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft A (Hua IX 245/PTP 93).
44. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft D (Hua IX 290/PTP 170).
45. Heidegger, “Anlage I: Sachliche Schwierigkeiten”; English translation “Appendix I: Difficulties with Issues” (Hua IX 602/PTP 138).
46. Dermot Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 175.
47. Heidegger, “Anlage II”; English translation “Appendix II” (Hua IX 602/PTP 139).
48. E.g., Husserl, “Amsterdamer Vorträge” (Hua IX 342/PTP 247–248).
49. Moran, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, 174.
50. Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning*, ch. 13: “Gnostic Phenomenology: Eugen Fink and the Critique of Transcendental Reason.”
51. Husserl, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article Draft A (Hua IX 249/PTP 97).
52. “Husserl’s Marginal Remarks in Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*,” newly edited from the original notes and translated by Thomas Sheehan, in *Psychological and Transcendental Phenomenology* (PTP 277).
53. Heidegger, “Anlage I” (Hua 602/PTP 138).