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## ON THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL RELATION BETWEEN INTENTIONALITY AND TRANSCENDENT WORLD

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The aim of this article is to examine the relation between intentional object and object as transcendency. The author wants to show that, notwithstanding the great theoretical importance of Husserl's analysis of intentional objectness, some essential aspects of conscious experience remain unclear, and the traditional philosophical subject-object opposition is not resolved by Husserl, but is only substituted with the new one. The essay is divided into four parts.

In the first part of this article, Husserl's critiques of the epistemological theory of signs is explicated, from which one of the basic theses of Husserlian phenomenology arises.

In the second part, the author investigates the relation between the intentional correlate of consciousness and transcendent reality in Husserl's philosophy and discovers its lack of conceptual exhaustiveness.

The third part is dedicated to the analysis of the problem of transcendency in the context of Husserlian intersubjective doctrine.

In the last part of the article, the author sums up the results of the investigation.

*Key words:* intentionality, transcendency, hyle, sense data, noema, subject-object problem, intersubjectivity, perceptual field.

**Introduction.** Husserl's criticism of the epistemological conception of signs serves as a demarcation line of a kind between phenomenology and speculative metaphysics. Its particular case is the theory of images (*Bildertheorie*), whose inconsistency Husserl reveals in the second book of *Logical Investigations* [4, p. 421–426].

Husserl points out the following fundamental epistemological mistakes of this theory. The latter claims: "Outside' is, or is, at least, under circumstances, the thing itself; in consciousness is as its deputy an image" [4, s. 421]. It is obvious that the object-original is implied here as independent or alien to consciousness. On which grounds do we cross the boundaries of the "image" given only in consciousness, Husserl asks, and what in principle underlies in the distinction between the image and the original? The answer is the act that implies something as a copy of the implied prototype. Naturally, this implied connection, according to the above-mentioned premise, cannot have an objective status<sup>1</sup>, as far as the act possesses merely the "image" of the reality, yet not the reality itself.

"Transcendent" object can be understood in a dual sense – as being given to consciousness immediately (phenomenally) in a perception or in an act based on a perception<sup>2</sup>. Both entities have in common that they correlate with consciousness and are, in fact, intentional objects that however descriptively differ to a certain extent. In other words, whereas in the first case we should talk about the phenomenal fact of the conscious constituting of an intentional object, that fact is not to be further reduced, the second case, in contrast, presents a complex act that "turns a blind eye" on its own constitutive role.

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<sup>1</sup> Is not a "real predicate" (reales Prädikat), in Husserl's words.

<sup>2</sup> When, for instance, I make a judgement based on something perceived regarding its secondary nature comparatively to the implied transcendent original.

Strictly speaking, the theory of images, according to Husserl, rests on the mistake when “one in general makes an inherent (*reellen*) difference between the “simply immanent”, or “intentional”, objects, on the one side, and the “real” and “transcendent” objects, which possibly correspond to them <...> everyone must acknowledge it: *that the intentional object of presentation is the same as its real and, if necessary, its external object, and that it is absurd to differentiate between the two*. The transcendent object would not at all be *object of this presentation*, if it were not *its intentional* object <...> at the same time, it does not matter if this object exists, is it fictitious or absurd” [4, p. 424–425]. Following Husserl, beyond the immediately given there is no point in seeking the concealed being of its true essence. Moreover, one should always keep in mind the constant intentional nature of an object; its non-intentional existence is completely meaningless. The latter, in Husserl’s words, however, “does not, of course, rule out that <...> the difference is made between the simply object that is intended each time and the object *how* it is intended during this (in what sense of comprehension (*Auffassungssinn*) and, if applicable, in what “fullness” of presentation), and that to the latter title belong its own analyses and descriptions” [4, p. 425].

Within the framework of our investigation of great importance is the fact that out of the phenomenological criticism of the theory of signs arises the speculative postulate about the essential correlation of consciousness and the world. In the following parts of this investigation we will try to shake this conviction.

**Intentional object and transcendent reality.** Firstly, it should be clarified that the notions “noema” and “object” are not synonymous in Husserl’s philosophy. Only by virtue of sense invested in it does noema put consciousness in relation to an object. In the context of this relation, we will be interested in the question of transcendence, or objectivity.

The full noema has its internal structure. It is comprised of a concrete noematic core and the modifying moments that meet the character of implying (the character of perception, recollection, phantasy, desire, claim, negation, doubt, conviction etc. – *A.W.*). In addition, the core may remain identical during variations in the character of implying, and it may modify itself (for instance, through the receiving and apprehension of the new sensual content – *A.W.*). However, these core modifications will not touch another identity, namely the identity of an object. To be clear, in general form, noematic core may be understood as a certain state of affairs (which takes the form of “*S e p*” – *A.W.*), whereas the object – as the center (or the core inside of a noematic core; subject in judgment – *A.W.*) of predications (in the broadest sense, including, so to say, pre-predicative “predication” as an explication in a simple perception – *A.W.*). Therefore, in each intentional experience we must differentiate the noetic moment, noematic component that corresponds to it and the object, to which the noetic sight is directed through the noema.

Now let us try to define what relation, according to Husserl, bears the intentional object to the real (“transcendent” or “external”) object, and if intentional identity matches real identity, and to what extent it is correct to raise the question about the reality of identical object.

Without any doubt, the statement about the realness of the transcendent (in relation to consciousness – *A.W.*) being lacks ground. For Husserl, reality is possible only as *the phenomenon of reality* [5, p. 71], more precisely, as the modus of consciousness in which constituted sense is fulfilled<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, although this fulfillment achieved in an empirical way actualizes itself with obviousness, this obviousness has assertoric rather than apodictic character that is inherent in the insight of eidetic (*Wesensschauung*) (specifically, the logical principles, mathematical axioms, judgments about the world in general etc. – *A.W.*) rather than of empiric-factual states of affairs. We can

<sup>3</sup> In this way, the problem of reality becomes in Husserl’s phenomenology the problem of the consciousness of reality. This agrees fully with Husserl’s postulate about the essential correlativity of consciousness and the world, to which we have already paid a little attention above.

make true statements respecting any real individual being only in individual terms (for instance, “this I perceive” rather than “I perceive this thing,” since the sense inherent in the notion “thing” is not derived from this concrete perception – A.W.). Nonetheless, although the statements about individual empirical experience are not themselves apodictic, they may serve as a ground for apodictic conclusions, such as, for example, “all things are spatiotemporal” and “all things given in perception are in shades, only one-sided, hence only inadequately.” This means that a thing is genuinely perceived not as a material transcendence, but only as “a defined in its sort of essence system of endless processes of continuous appearing (*Erscheinens*), or, as field of these processes, an a priori defined *continuum of appearances* (*Erscheinungen*) with different although defined dimensions, throughout reigned by firm essential lawfulness” [5, p. 331]. It becomes clear from the character of the aforementioned speculations that, for Husserl, the question of the possibility of the independent and uninterrupted being of transcendency in the sense of real thing has in principle a negative answer.

At the very same time, under Husserl’s understanding of the matter, an important question remains unanswered. For if an object is the fundament of its appearances (noemata, or apprehended sensual data – A.W.) and we interpret it in Husserl’s way, namely as an ideal system of the continuum of appearances, then what makes sensual data (as well as corresponding noematic contents – A.W.) organized exactly this way and, no less important, essentially independent from the noematic function of consciousness remains unclear; in other words, what makes them “given” to consciousness rather than “created” by consciousness. Since it is obvious that object in the Husserlian-Kantian sense, in the sense of noumenon<sup>4</sup>, cannot be itself the source of an organized noematic diversity, but only a product of the mental grasp of this *pre-given* temporal diversity into atemporal unity; object resembles rather a reconstruction of an appearance rather than an original product of conscious creation. This important question is not only left without an answer in Husserl’s philosophy, but, evidently, is not even raised by him.

One must distinguish (and Husserl rightly does – A.W.), above all, between thing as a regional essence (the idea of thing in general – A.W.) and thing as an individual essence (this particular thing that I have in front of me in the sensual perception – A.W.). Whereas the former is abstracted from the concrete characteristics of the concrete representative of the region “thing” (from the concrete measure of extension in space and time; from the concrete material qualities such as color, form, texture etc. – A.W.) and contains these characteristics also in the form of ideal components (i.e., “extension” and “materiality” are meant formally as “extension in general,” “materiality in general” – A.W. [5, p. 347–348]), the thing in the sense of a concrete perceived individual, as sure as it has the eidetic side (this is co-implied ideal background due to the inevitable associative binding with past experience – A.W.), is also inseparable from its material feature. In other words, it is insufficient to characterize a concrete perceived thing as an idea or an ideal system of the continuum of appearances – the continuum of appearances itself is also its essentially inherent attribute<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, what raises an important question is namely the basis of

<sup>4</sup> Certainly, the thing as Husserl’s ideal constituent of consciousness is not identical to Kant’s noumenal thing. The latter as hypostatized transcendent being and real cause of the sensual experience of consciousness is completely unacceptable for Husserl. However, Husserl never gets over the dualism of subjectivity and the thing-in-itself, but only replaces it with the dualism of appearance and its infinite horizon [10, p. 13].

<sup>5</sup> Whereas Husserl points out repeatedly the essentiality of the material side of a thing [5, p. 332], his speculations always, ultimately, fall in the tideway of idealism: “Like the physical thing, so each property belonging to the eidetic content, and, above all, each constitutive “form”, is an idea; and this holds from the regional universality all the way down to the lowest particularity” [5, p. 347]; or: “[A]n actual object of a world and, all the more, a world itself is an infinite idea that relates to infinities of unanimous with one another experiences – *an idea that is a correlate to an idea of a perfect experiential evidence*, a complete synthesis of possible experiences” [4, p. 97]; and also: “*All real entities are ‘unities of sense’*” [5, p. 120].

the objective (that is, independent mainly from the noetic characteristics – A.W.) organization of the material component (to be more precise, the stream of sensual data – A.W.) of an individual thing. It is clear that in this case the material organization rather than the ideal is primary, since, the character of this continuum would also noticeably change with the alteration of the implied system of the continuum of appearances; although it does not happen – if I instead of one sensual irritant (which, say for clarity's sake, is afflicting me – A.W.) would imagine entirely another (which, for instance, may cause relish – A.W.), the former does not have to suddenly stop its irritation. Only in particular cases, as during the observation of optical illusions (for instance, the famous Rubin's vase – A.W.), a substantial change in meaning is possible as a result of the variation of the manner of the apprehension of a sensual content, however, the objective identity of (at least the *type* or the *token* of – A.W.) the sensual material remains here also beyond any doubt<sup>6</sup>.

If we, like Husserl, state that real-concrete being cannot be observed absolutely in a vivid perception, i.e., from each side, then in any particular phase of a sensual perception only this aspect (side) of a material thing is truly given, is genuinely embodied<sup>7</sup>, while its other aspects truly do not exist. Nonetheless, the fact that sensual matter that founds the content of this aspect of a thing is what it is has to be determined by the totality of the material, not the ideal, content of a thing; existence of one truly-real aspect suggests the existence of all truly-real complex of aspects. The statement about the true existence of only one complex of the material components of a thing suggests the statement about the groundlessness of the true existence, and so-existence, of this component. To put it differently, this means that sense data given exactly this way is not founded in anything or appears out of nowhere but simply exists.

The analysis of Husserl's concept of the "field" of sensual perception leads us to the similar conclusion. In *Ideen I* Husserl introduces this concept in the context of explanation of the difference between spatial thing and mental process. An important difference between mental process and spatiotemporal being, for Husserl, is the fundamental givenness of the former: that is, even if a mental process is not grasped reflectively, it is still here, in the field of the reachable present [5, p. 95–96]. Contrastingly, the field of sensual perception<sup>8</sup>, which contains grasped actualities along with non-actualities (co-given in the sensual background – A.W.), has to have the boundary of the reachable present, which means that there is always an emptily implied sphere of the transcendent world, a sphere not being embodied in any way. Therefore, whereas mental processes, as far as they belong to the present of consciousness, are fundamentally apprehensible, things, by Husserl's account, do not essentially possess such a property. Taking in the experiences of other subjectivities does not change anything significantly, which is what we will demonstrate in the next part of this article.

<sup>6</sup> See on this an elaborate argumentation in Kenneth Williford's article headlined *Husserl's hyletic data and phenomenal consciousness*. Particularly, taking Rubin's Vase and the Checker-Shadow Illusion as examples here, he writes, "When you shift from vase to face, phenomenal white remains phenomenal white, and phenomenal black remains phenomenal black. From shift to shift, there will be degrees of similarity ranging from the type identity of token hyletic components to their generic similarity. In some shifts (e.g., in "revealing" the Checker-Shadow Illusion), for whatever reason, the type identity of hyletic components ends up being precluded while generic similarity is still possible. Hyletic data tokens are tokens of definite, determinate, repeatable characters. And their similarities and differences as such are not a product of animation, though, in some cases, that this or that type of hyletic token is instantiated may well be partly (but only partly) a function of how the tokens are animated" [12].

<sup>7</sup> An aspect is *Wahrhaft-sein* ("true being") as *endliche Gegebenheit* ("finite givenness"), more precisely as *abgeschlossenes Erlebnis* ("complete mental process"), as opposed to the true being as an idea as a noematic correlate of a mental process [5, p. 332].

<sup>8</sup> In *Ideen I* cited here Husserl writes about *Blickfeld*, "sight-field", although, certainly, one should generally talk about *Simmesfeld*, i.e., "sensual field" [5, p. 95].

If we, however, assure that the field of an external perception must have – if one just thinks of it logically – the limit of sensual reach, then we have to clarify also how the former can transcend the latter, in other words, how new sensual data can emerge out of nothing. A phenomenologist that takes as a starting point the thesis of the correlativeness of consciousness and the world must be particularly baffled by the fact as to how experiences with non-overlapping sensual fields form into a rigorous system of appearances corresponding with each other continually (past, presence, future) and hierarchically (micro-, macro-, mega-world).

This thesis of the non-phenomenal (or trans-phenomenal, in Sartre's words – A.W.) grounds of the being as a real entity points out that – we are trying to avoid metaphysical treatment as much as possible – there is the fact of the existence of the signs that attest to the being beyond correlation with consciousness and, particularly, that the being of an object in correlation with consciousness, according to these signs, retains its continuousness also beyond correlation; we are talking, obviously, about being beyond the direct correlation, for the indirect correlation always takes place – ego, so to say, finds out that something happened “behind its back,” otherwise, the question about the transcendency would not have ever occurred to it. Thus, the phenomenological critique of the theory of signs, along with the statement of its lack of coherency, should also acknowledge the presence of some significant grounds for its emergence.

The previous inspection leaves us, therefore, with an essential epistemological question: How should one explain the striking independence and systematic organization of appearances that are constituted out of the sensual stream, pre-organized and uncontrolled by consciousness (that is, to the utmost devoid of the characteristics of the spontaneity of consciousness – A.W.)? Through the substitution of a material thing by the noumenon as a spontaneous product of syntheses of consciousness, Husserl avoids raising and solving this problem. That even Husserl's concept of intersubjectivity, through which he explicates the grounds of constituting of the objective world in general, does not give the solution to the problem in question, we will demonstrate in the next part of this article.

**Transcendence and Intersubjectivity.** For Husserl, a sensual thing, as we have just ascertained, is the being, the essential characteristic of which is phenomenal one-sidedness, for its givenness is determined by the certain position of my body that is not able to be physically in several spatiotemporal positions, moreover, – a condition that should be met to gain all possible nuances of this thing – in all of them at the same time [7; 8; 10]. One could surmise that a fragment of reality unreachable for my sensual sight can be compensated by the sensual experience of other subjectivities. However, the two fundamental moments get in the way.

First, communication as a way of compensating a thing's concealed material aspects is not a realistic way since such operation would require an infinite number of Others, an infinite quantity of communications and, finally, the same unreachable multitude of acts of perception responsible for which I would now shift on the Others.

The second obstacle that stands in the way is the specifics of the being of an Other that it acquires in Husserl's phenomenological descriptions. The being of an Other is simply reduced in the philosophy of Husserl to “the being for me.” What makes it the product of a real rather than of an intentional constituting for “every sense that any existent has or can have for me – as to its “What” as well as its “It is and is in reality” – is *in* or *from* my intentional life, from its constitutive syntheses, in the systems of unanimous revision (*Bewährung*) it clarifies and uncovers itself” [4, p. 123].

An Other as a concrete independent monad is constituted in acts of my consciousness as an analog of myself as a psychophysical creature, yet as such analog that is provided by such individual characteristics that make it an *alternative* ego opposed to my own. Two of these

characteristics are basic: An Other is always “there,” his / her spatiotemporal position is always non-identical to mine; his / her being is always only partially fulfilled, a certain region of being remains always empty implied. The last feature is, above all, to the credit of appresentation, or the analogous apperception, which, by the way, should not be understood as an independent act but rather as an intrinsic noetic component of the latter. The main function of appresentation, thus, is to bring an Other to vivid presence in the modus of *co-presence* with me, with my psychophysical ego that is, by contrast, directly in the proper sense, *present* to me. A prototype for an Other is still myself: He / She transforms from What to Who by virtue of the associative defining of the features in Him / Her, which I find in my own living subjectivity. It is important to note that, according to Husserl, it is essentially necessary for the constituting of an Other as alien to me in which His or Her modus is the modus of *co-presence*, which means also that His / Her being can be never completely fulfilled. If an Other were constituted entirely in the modus of presentation, His / Her being would merge with mine, His / Her body would become mine. Undoubtedly, Husserl attributes this peculiarity to any Otherness, not just to the live anthropoid Otherness.

A number of Others created by means of such associative analogizing forms a community of monads, members of which are in principle non-isolated one from another. They organically constitute the single objective reality as the horizon of their actual and possible being, which means that *they* are the transcendental core of the world (the transcendental intersubjectivity that “as the transcendental *We* is subjectivity for this world” [4, p. 137]), and not the other way around. The world, hence, although constituted with an involvement of other subjectivities as an independent homogeneous being, confronts my subjectivity not literally, but merely in the sense of immanent transcendency, moreover, ideal transcendency: “More exactly speaking, the objective world as *idea*, as ideal correlate of an intersubjective experience that inherently (*ideell*)<sup>9</sup> can be and is carried out continually unanimously, of an experience intersubjectively communed (*vergemeinschafteten*), essentially relates to the intersubjectivity, constituted itself in the ideality of endless openness and single subjects of which are provided with constitutive systems, corresponding to and coordinated with one another” [4, p. 138].

Therefore, the existence of the intermonadic community does not essentially change anything in the unattainability of the full material content of thing, since intersubjective experience has sense only as the product of empathizing (*Einfühlung*), i.e., the limit of immediate experience as the source of obviousness still lies in my experiencing subjectivity [5, p. 96]. In other words, any perceptual record of the world, obtained through an Other, will have an indirectly appresentative character rather than directly presentative. Husserl, as we have found out, considers this problem to be solved for himself by stating that the thing is the ideal system of appearances that belongs to the more complex system of things, “intersubjective nature.” The latter is a constituent of my consciousness, hence, I can phenomenologically investigate it as an ideality given immediately.

The experience of epistemological (in a broad sense) mistakes, however, demonstrates the possibility of the incommensurability of the spontaneously created system of the stream of appearances and the presentative basis of this system – the actual stream of appearances. It is clear that the experienced world is not a mere ideality in which, in Sartre’s words, the characteristic “transparency” is inherent, as opposed to the “opacity” or “opaque resistance” of the material thing [10, p. 17, 25]. If the whatness of the world were exhausted by the content of the ideally immanent intentional object, it would be in principle impossible to explain the existence

<sup>9</sup> In this passage two notions with the same root are contradistinguished – *ideal* and *ideell*. As in the case of *real* and *reel*, the different suffixes indicate that in the first case the notion addresses the contents non-inherent to consciousness, as we may now say, the transcendencies in immanence, whereas in the second case a phenomenologist addresses the characteristics of a mental process itself, but not its correlate.

itself of the “inadequate essences”, which presuppose empirical counter-examples. Granting consciousness the sole constitutive role, we must acknowledge that its being consists in meaningless self-deception.

Considering all the above said, we cannot now unconditionally admit the consistency of Husserl’s theory of intentionality as an answer to the traditional philosophical dualism of consciousness and the objective world; the problem does not dissolve, as Husserl and some of his supporters believe, in their essential correlation<sup>10</sup>.

**Conclusion.** In this article, I tried to prove that Husserl’s theory of intentionality does not fulfill its purpose as the epistemological conception. With its help, Husserl aims to resolve the dualism of consciousness and the objective world though the introduction of the postulate about the essential correlation of experiencing consciousness and the experienced world, claiming by that consciousness to be by birth the consciousness of the world and the world to be, in general, an intentional object of consciousness. Such elegant statement, however, faces serious difficulties. The problem can be formulated like this: The notion “thing” Husserl uses in two basic meanings: as the regional essence and as an individual givenness of a sensual perception – and in both cases, as we have shown, he implies the thing as the ideality. In addition, a concrete thing is the product of the apperception of sense data in a system of the continuum of appearances. However, it is clear that sensations (which also belong to consciousness, for Husserl – *A.W.*) may proceed differently than it was determined by apperception. In other words, the notion of the thing as an ideal system cannot explain the thing as the organized stream of material data, i.e., independent stream of sensations. This suggests two consequences: either the essence of consciousness consists in meaningless self-deception, or we have to acknowledge the possibility of the existence of the world beyond the direct correlation with consciousness (the world, in that case, would be what independently from consciousness organizes sensual data, i.e., their material basis – *A.W.*). Of course, in the second case, a rightful question arises as to the form in which such world exists. Purely material, formless world is inconceivable. Firstly, since only the world constituted in the direct sensual perception provides sufficient grounds for its explication. Secondly, matter and form are essentially inseparable; consciousness, in particular, is the essential form of sensations. To speak of the world as of the formless matter means to imply something that has no sense at all; such matter is nothing, it does not exist.

Sartre rightly names Husserl’s epistemological turn as the substitution of the traditional subject-object dualism with the new one that puts finite actual givenness with its infinite horizon of potentialities into contradictory relation. We simply formulate this new opposition more correctly, namely as the dualism of the ideal intentional object and the material basis of its appearances.

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<sup>10</sup> Sartre, too, once unconditionally accepted Husserl’s view on this matter [11, p. 30]. However, later in *Being and Nothingness* his speculations moves the same way as ours – hyletic data, he says, cannot be explained through the spontaneity of consciousness; and perception cannot be adequately described without an introduction of “the transphenomenality of the being of the phenomenon” [10, p. 23–26].

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## ПРО ФЕНОМЕНОЛОГІЧНИЙ ЗВ'ЯЗОК МІЖ ІНТЕНЦІОНАЛЬНІСТЮ І ТРАНСЦЕНДЕНТНИМ СВІТОМ

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Метою цієї статті є дослідження відношення між інтенційним об'єктом і об'єктом як трансценденцією. Автор прагне показати, що, незважаючи на неабияку теоретичну вагу Гусерлевого аналізу інтенційної предметності, деякі суттєві аспекти свідомого досвіду залишаються в ній поза увагою. Разом із тим, претендуючи на розв'язання традиційного філософського суб'єкт-об'єктного дуалізму за допомогою теорії інтенційності, Гусерль замінює цей дуалізм на новий. Стаття складається з чотирьох частин.

У першій частині статті автор експлікує Гусерлеву критику епістемологічної теорії знаків, з якої виростає одна з найпроблематичніших тез феноменології Гусерля.

У другій частині автор досліджує відношення між інтенційним корелятом свідомості і трансцендентною реальністю у Гусерлевій філософії і викриває її концептуальну неповноту.

Третя частина присвячена аналізу проблеми трансценденції в контексті Гусерлевої доктрини інтерсуб'єктивності.

В останній частині автор резюмує результати дослідження.

*Ключові слова:* інтенційність, трансценденція, гюле, чуттєві дані, ноєма, суб'єкт-об'єктний дуалізм, інтерсуб'єктивність, поле сприйняття.