

Speculative foundations of phenomenology

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Abstract This essay tries to account for a certain “speculative turn” in contemporary philosophy (Q. Meillassoux, G. Harman, M. Gabriel, etc.) *from a phenomenological point of view*. A first objective of it will consist in exposing the link between, on the one hand, the methodological sense of Husserl’s *concrete* phenomenological analyses (concerning, for example, *time* and *intersubjective* structure of transcendental subjectivity,) and on the other hand, the *consequences* that follow from the grounding of phenomenology as first philosophy. This will allow a largely underestimated research angle to be opened up, one that I call a “constructive phenomenology,” that constitutes an essential and original figure of *transcendental* philosophy in general. A second objective will then consist in the attempt to sketch the foundation of knowledge *as knowledge*, the core of a “phenomenological metaphysics.” Whereas the first part will remain within a Husserlian framework, the second will develop some elements of a “speculative transcendentalism” in a phenomenological perspective.

Keywords Speculative turn · Phenomenology · Husserl · Meillassoux · Metaphysics · Transcendental philosophy

The aim of the following reflections is to contribute to founding phenomenology as *first philosophy*, or at least to provide the conceptual components to justify this expression. This project must first identify the sense of phenomenology as first

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philosophy, that is, it will be a matter of exposing the fundamental methodological basis that allows us to account for this characterization of phenomenology as “first philosophy.” Moreover, if Husserl supplied all of the “ingredients” for carrying out this task, particularly in the great introductions to phenomenology in the 1920s, he nevertheless did not explicate the decisive link between, on the one hand, the methodological sense of his *concrete* phenomenological analyses (notably, for example, with respect to *time* and to the *intersubjective* structure of transcendental subjectivity,) and on the other hand, the *consequences* (here again, *methodological* ones) that follow from the grounding of phenomenology as first philosophy. A primary objective of this study will consist in exposing this link. This—such is the thesis that in our view follows from the most important works of Husserl’s genetic phenomenology—will allow a largely underestimated research angle to be opened up, one that we call a “constructive phenomenology.” (Incidentally, we see in this angle an essential and original figure of *transcendental* philosophy in general.) A second objective will then consist in the attempt to sketch the foundation of knowledge *as knowledge*, the core of a “phenomenological metaphysics.” Whereas the first part will remain within a Husserlian framework, the second will proceed resolutely beyond the horizon of the work of the founding father of phenomenology.

In §63 of *Ideen I*, at the start of the *Methodische Vorerwägungen* for “pure phenomenology, Husserl writes “that the claim of this ‘pure phenomenology’ consists in nothing less than the fact of *being a first philosophy*—and that it is *obliged* to be one.”¹ The first question to be asked, then, is to know in what sense Husserl understands this notion. In the 1920s, he first determines the sense and the content of this notion in varying ways, and then inquires into the manner in which one should in fact conceive of phenomenology as first philosophy.

In the London Lectures—one of the best introductions to phenomenology we have from Husserl—Husserl relates transcendental phenomenology and method in a general way: “Transcendental phenomenology has (...) the result that it is the necessary science of method and ‘first’ philosophy.”² (The entire problem here is to know what this ‘and’ means—about which Fichte incidentally once said that it is the least understood and least explicated word in philosophical terminology.) However, in the first part of *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl defines first philosophy as the closed discipline the lays out the final, supreme idea of the *beginning*, a discipline that precedes all other philosophical disciplines and that methodologically and theoretically founds them (first lecture): first philosophy is thus understood by Husserl as “a *universal methodology* that *legitimizes* itself absolutely” (my emphasis).³ And in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* article, Husserl calls eidetic phenomenology, as “science of a possible transcendental subjectivity in general,” first philosophy (and, in Volume II of *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl, in a correlative way, calls “first philosophy a science of transcendental subjectivity”).⁴ He also dubs

¹ Husserl (1950, p. 151).

² Husserl (1981, pp. 67–74).

³ Husserl (1956, p. 13).

⁴ Husserl (1959, p. 4 sq. and p. 32).

the empirical philosophy of the *factual*, or even the science of the universe of *facta* that determines the Husserlian sense of ‘metaphysics,’ “second philosophy.” He still stresses the *methodological* role of first philosophy there: “First philosophy is the universe of method for second philosophy and it relates to itself in its methodological justification (*Begründung*).”⁵

The *methodological* function of phenomenology understood as first philosophy thus appears very clearly in these different quotations. But what exactly *motivates* this method? Husserl replies to this question very explicitly in the second part of *Erste Philosophie*. A fundamental principle is expressed in phenomenology that has already guided every previous philosophy (that sought to establish itself as a science); this principle has been formulated explicitly for the first time in Kantian transcendental philosophy. Which principle is this? It is the principle, “the most general” one, of an “*absolute legitimation (absolute Rechtfertigung)*” that can be obtained only along the path of a “*transcendental knowledge of self (transzendente Selbsterkenntnis)*” as “originary source” of all knowing, a principle that founds phenomenology precisely as “first philosophy,” as “science of transcendental subjectivity.” The central term of this characterization—beyond the expression “transcendental subjectivity”—is that of “*legitimation (Rechtfertigung)*” (and it is thus in this way that the *Kantian* transcendental heritage in fact remains in Husserlian phenomenology). But what *founds* this legitimation?

We know that this “science of transcendental subjectivity in general” is carried out on two “planes” or “levels” (*Stufen*), which are clearly presented in the *Second Cartesian Meditation*: first, through descriptive phenomenological analysis of the “empire of transcendental experience of self” and, thereafter, by proceeding to a “*critique* of transcendental experience and of transcendental knowing in general.”⁶ As Husserl notes elsewhere, the first level is that of a certain “naivety,”⁷ a “transcendental naivety,”⁸ one could say, in which—although the phenomenologist holds firmly to the phenomenological *epochè* and reduction—the question of the apodictic principles of the reach of descriptive analyses is not yet asked, a question that the *critique* which characterizes the second level is supposed then to answer.

Moreover, the following problem arises. How does the intentional analysis that aims to account for the sense of phenomena by resorting to the “workings” [*effectuations*] or “operations” (*Leistungen*) of transcendental subjectivity supply the *legitimation* of knowledge that is nonetheless asserted? What thus justifies phenomenological analysis in terms of noetic-noematic correlation? To state it very directly (in the terms used, for example, by G. Deleuze in the “Fourteenth Series” of *Logic of Sense*⁹), how does the “doubling” of the real in subjective modes of consciousness and their objective correlates ensure this constitution of sense?

⁵ Husserl (1968, p. 298 sq.).

⁶ Husserl (1973, p. 68).

⁷ Husserl (1974, p. 280). Cf. also the important Supplement XXIX of *Husserliana VIII*.

⁸ Husserl (1959, p. 170).

⁹ See on this matter Schnell (2004a, p. 40 sq.).

First of all, the legitimation sought must be realized in a pure *evidence*. Second, “the evidence which we have must (in its turn) be *legitimated* for us as evidence.”¹⁰ Only when the *two* moments of this characterization are taken into account is the designation of *transcendental* phenomenology justified for Husserl. We now proceed to the clarification of these two moments.

Phenomenology will recognize as *valid* (*gültig*), that is as *being* and as being *thus*, only that which, in fact, presents itself to the eyes of the phenomenologist in an *intuitive evidence* (this is the most striking sign of the *Cartesian* heritage in Husserlian phenomenology). We know that the famed §24 of *Ideen I* formulates it explicitly: the “principle of all principles” is the “originary presentive intuition” which constitutes the “legitimizing source of cognition.” “Originary presentive” means that, in this intuition, the “thing” is given of itself and on the basis of itself “such as it is” *in* itself—this is precisely the sense of its “*selbstgebend* (self-presentive)” character. *But this evidence cannot at all be a simple “sentiment”* that would accompany this giving and this presence of the thing. In fact, as we have already recalled above, intuitive evidence must in its turn be *legitimated*!

How may intuitive evidence be legitimated? Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology—and this *absolutely essential* point will govern our analyses to come—proceeds here in *two stages*, situating itself upon *two* different levels—which do not coincide exactly with the two levels mentioned in the *Second Cartesian Meditation* but which instead well clarify its sense. First of all, it is a matter of giving oneself over, thus, in a quasi-“naïve” evidence, to the experience (which is not that of a worldly psychical state, but which reveals eidetic structures) that the *ego* has of itself in a constant *concordance*. All the descriptive analyses of the “immanent” sphere of consciousness belong to this first level. This “quasi-naivety,” that one plainly must not confuse with the “naivety” of the natural attitude, is explained by the fact that it takes place precisely without any *critique*¹¹ (in the sense in which Kant had already understood the “critique of knowledge” as a *transcendental* investigation). *And this transcendental critique, in the Husserlian sense, is precisely the task from which the second level of phenomenological research must absolve itself by moving on to “dismantling reductions (Abbaureduktionen)”* and to “phenomenological constructions” that concern the “pre-phenomenal” or “pre-immanent” sphere of consciousness (this is what the *Second Cartesian Meditation* does not stress in a sufficiently explicit way). But how accede to these two “spheres?” And how do they show themselves phenomenologically?

To clarify the sense of the two spheres of transcendental subjectivity, we now insist once again upon the idea that intentional analysis, in so far as it proceeds to a “description of essences (*Wesensdeskription*), begins with a “naïve” description (first level) which subsequently issues in a “theory and critique of phenomenological reason (critique of the phenomenologizing Self)”¹² (second level), and is completed by “superior descriptions”¹³ in which all naivety definitively must be put

¹⁰ Husserl (1959, p. 33).

¹¹ On this notion of “critique,” see Schnell (2008, p. 69 sq.).

¹² Husserl (1959, p. 478).

¹³ Husserl (1959, p. 478).

aside. Two “transcendental spheres” correspond to these two levels—the one that thus constitutes immanent¹⁴ being (first level), and the one that comprises any constitutive phenomenon that stems from the pre-immanent sphere of consciousness (second level).

What fundamentally characterizes Husserlian transcendentalism at the first level of intentional analysis is the exposure of the *intentional implications* that are implicitly contained in every intentional relation. Even if the analysis always first of all concerns the characteristics of *actual* intentional lived experiences, aiming at the object in its concrete presence, it must be stressed that *every actuality implies its potentialities*: every presence signifies the *co-presence* of horizontalities that are equally given, even if they are not explicitly aimed at, and every perception refers to other perceptions that are not actualized, but are implicated in the past (*habitus* and sedimentations) and anticipated in the future. These horizontalities are “*excessive*” in relation to actual presence: what is co-present always and in an essential way surpasses what is given actually to consciousness. These co-present horizons are not “empty possibilities,” they are neither pure hypotheses, nor fictions, but they pre-delineate possibilities that are already realized and that are to be realized, possibilities, moreover, that essentially characterize the affective *ego*. Husserl thus calls these possibilities “potentialities (*Potentialitäten*),” which are always potentialities of the *ego*’s “I can” and “I do.” *Every intentional relation always implies a horizon of such potentialities*. Moreover, this horizon forms a structural unity with the temporal horizon, since potentialities are linked to present actualities by expectations and recollections, and by the “protentions” and “retentions” of the originary process (*Urprozess*) that awaken these expectations and recollections.

To this we must add that the object of consciousness does not enter, in its identity, into consciousness from outside it, but that it is *contained* in consciousness “*as sense (Sinn)*,” that is, as “intentional operation of the synthesis of consciousness.”¹⁵ This intentional object is never represented as something *definitively given*; on the contrary, it can be clarified only due to the explicitation of horizons that are actual, potential and always open, and which stem from *transcendental subjectivity*. Horizontal intentionality is effectively an essential factor in the sense constitution of the intentional object, for its sense is never totally grasped, but is only grasped in an “implicit” way—which thus requires its explicitation in *other* intentional experiences.

Through this quick review of well-known points, we thus see that in the immanent sphere of transcendental consciousness, Husserl enriches the field with a simple *description* (which takes account only of what is present in a direct and immediate way to the eyes of the phenomenologist) of an analysis—a transcendental one—that reveals the *intentional implications* that must be *explicitated* in the analysis of the *sense* of intentional operations. But is this sufficient truly to legitimate what is so explicitated?

¹⁴ Husserl (1959, p. 488).

¹⁵ Husserl (1973, p. 80).

If the transcendental phenomenological reduction that leads us, as we have seen, to transcendental subjectivity and to its intentional life, indeed constitutes the “fundamental method of phenomenology,”¹⁶ these methodological considerations nevertheless are not reducible to the “discovery” or the “baring” (*Freilegung*) of the *ego*’s field of experience, with its intentional implications. For this term, *Freilegung*, actually refers implicitly to fundamental aspects of the phenomenological method of which Husserl was fully aware only during the 1920s, and especially towards the end of that decade. More precisely, it means that, if phenomenology’s *descriptive* analysis (in the sense, of course, of an *eidetic* description) remains useful and necessary for characterizing the “real” ingredients of “immanent” consciousness, it nonetheless proves insufficient when—as an *ultimately* legitimating *transcendental* undertaking advocates—it is a matter of descending to the levels that ultimately constitute these immanent phenomena. In fact, this field of experience of the *ego* is not *only* given, present, such that a description *suffices* to extract from it the structural moments (even were they to be given in intentional implications). Rather, it requires the additional work of setting aside the obstacles that conceal it, or at the least, that impede understanding of its constitutive role—“*deconstructive*” work (which is in no way Derridean—in his work manuscripts of the same period, Husserl rather speaks on this subject of a “dismantling reduction” (*Abbaureduktion*)”¹⁷), to which there will correspond, on this same, ultimate constitutive level, a positive side: the side of a *construction*¹⁸ that is neither speculative, nor metaphysical, but *phenomenological* (and that Husserl *explicitly* mentions in paragraphs 59 and 64 of the *Fifth Meditations*, paragraphs which work out some decisive aspects of the method of transcendental phenomenology¹⁹). The entire problem is to clearly understand, with respect to this very ultimate constitutive level, the status of this methodological procedure: it is neither a matter of a simple empirical description, nor of a systematizing speculation, nor even of a search for the «conditions of possibility» for experience: this phenomenological construction rather puts into play an experience of a *new kind*—which is nothing other than a “*transcendental* experience” (a *contradictio in adiecto* for an orthodox Kantian, of course). The field of experience of the *ego* is in fact a *transcendental* field of experience. This does not (merely) mean, as the early German idealists understood it, that there is an effective experience of the transcendental, but first and foremost that the experience of which the phenomenologist speaks itself possesses a (or several) «transcendental structure(s).”²⁰

¹⁶ Husserl (1973, p. 61).

¹⁷ The “primordial reduction,” which Husserl develops in §44 of the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation*, is a good example of such an *Abbaureduktion*. Cf. on this matter Husserl (2006, p. 394 sq.).

¹⁸ On this matter, Husserl speaks of a “complementary *constructive* part (*konstruktives Ergänzungsstück*)” of the phenomenological method in Husserl (1959, p. 139).

¹⁹ Cf. *infra*.

²⁰ The phenomenological method is thus characterized, in a general way, by the *époque* and the reduction (that is, the *reduction* to transcendental subjectivity), by the intentional analysis of the immanent sphere of consciousness, and finally, by a certain number of “dismantling reductions (*Abbaureduktionen*),” as well as “phenomenological *constructions*,” at the level of the “pre-immanent sphere of consciousness. These constructions are not the same for all ontological regions studied, and thus are

But how is it that this second methodological level (beneath the “naïve” descriptive experience of the immanent sphere of transcendental consciousness) gives rise to “phenomenological constructions?” Husserl first maintains, negatively, that the intentional analyses of the immanent sphere of consciousness are legitimated by the fact that it is *impossible* that what is given in an evident way in these descriptive analyses—and all that these analyses reveal must in fact satisfy the demand of evidence—*should not be* (and neither could there be any doubt about this). Husserl calls this property the “adequate” or “apodictic” character of evidence.²¹ But the fact that apodicticity is *not* an *unshakable* factor already follows from the simple fact that there are modes of originary givenness that present as an *inadequate* evidence (the clearest example of this is the perception of a transcendent object). Is this point not already a first plain sign of an assault on the legitimacy of descriptive analyses, which is asserted despite this, since they always rest upon precisely this *apodictic evidence*?

We may thus ask this same question once again: *has the question of the legitimacy of all knowledge truly received a satisfactory and definitive answer in the “self-mediation” (Selbstbesinnung) of transcendental subjectivity*—which reveals its constitutive operations in their relation to respective objective correlates (with all the intentional implications, horizons, etc. that this puts into play)? And, more precisely, does Husserl therewith refute all those—numerous as they are—who reproach him for having simply *duplicated* the real in a “transcendental” structure?

In a 1923 text (Supplement XXIX of *Husserliana VIII*), we find this decisive remark:

I said that universal “description” is the first task for the [constitution] of the science of pure subjectivity. The description must be scientific, that is, it must meet the demand to be prepared for – thus apt for – the ultimate task of legitimation. But if we ask the general question of knowing *how such a descriptive knowledge is possible* [...], we already operate, in this question, with concepts that are taken from description [...]. The possibility of the knowledge of being is presupposed—and it is this possibility that it is a matter of legitimating.²²

On the subject of the question of the adequate character of that which is given in intentional analysis, Husserl had already noted in the London Lectures that “the concept of legitimation had undergone” “a shift” in the descriptive eidetic analyses.²³ But in this 1922 text, this was only to emphasize the *abandonment* (mentioned above) of adequate evidence as the norm of all authentic scientificity. Following the *Bernauer Manuscripts* (1917/1918), *another* reason—only made explicit at the end of the 1920s—nonetheless justifies this “shift”: namely, the

Footnote 20 continued

distinguished from each other on the basis of the specific “guiding lines” for each region under consideration.

²¹ Husserl (1959, p. 35).

²² Husserl (1959, p. 477) (my emphasis).

²³ Husserl (2002, p. 337).

reason that precisely led to the establishment of *phenomenological construction*. The point emerges clearly in the following excerpt from the important *Supplement X* of *Husserliana VIII*, in which Husserl once again considers the inadequate character of finite experience:

[...] *finite* experience, that is the experience that we can effectively complete, is *inadequate*. But mustn't the possible being of the world first of all be thought *as possibility*, even were it as the possibility of an infinitude of experience, of an experience [that] in its style, in its form [would be] *constructible (konstruierbar)*,²⁴ in such a way that the true being of the world, of the world intended in a presuppositional way, first becomes evident *as possibility?*²⁵

Two things are to be emphasized here. First, the quasi-naïvety that gives the constitutive phenomena of the appearing in a concrete and direct experience must be raised (thanks to eidetic variation) to the sphere of *possibilities*. And, second—this is what is of particular importance to us here—this elevation to a sphere of the possible is not limited to a simple eidetic *description*, but the *essence of the experience* requires a form of *phenomenological construction*.²⁶ This excerpt from Section 59 of the *Fifth Cartesian Meditation* confirms the point for us:

[...] all that is natural, all that is given directly beforehand, is *re-constructed (wiederaufgebaut)* in a new originality and [...] is not simply interpreted afterwards like something thenceforth definitive.²⁷

We have here an explicit testimony to the fundamental role that phenomenological construction—or *reconstruction*—plays in the *method* of transcendental phenomenology. The “*wieder*” (“re-,” “anew”) here lends an important specification. What the phenomenologist constructs is not constructed *ex nihilo*, so here it is not a matter of a metaphysical construction “by simple concepts”—the “return to the things themselves” advocated by Husserl forbids this from the start—hence the “re-”; rather, it is truly *constructed*,²⁸ and not described as something simply pre-given. The construction precisely follows what is to be constructed according to its essential necessity. What in fact properly characterizes phenomenological construction²⁹ is that it does not construct, in a speculative way, a *constructum*

²⁴ My emphasis.

²⁵ Husserl (1959, p. 390).

²⁶ See also Husserl (1959, p. 435). On this notion of “phenomenological construction,” cf. Schnell (2004a, p. 33 sq.), Schnell (2004b, pp. 9–14, 202 sq., 250 sq., 255 sq.), and especially Schnell (2007, p. 66 sq.).

²⁷ Husserl (1973, p. 165).

²⁸ At the very end of *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl writes: “Therefore a consequentially progressing phenomenology constructs a priori (yet with a strictly intuited essential necessity and universality), on the one hand, the forms of conceivable worlds and, on the other hand, conceivable worlds themselves, within the limits set by all conceivable forms of being and by their system of levels,” Husserl (1960, p. 154).

²⁹ It is notable that this “constructive” move is not announced or worked out as such by Husserl – and the notion of “phenomenological construction” is found in his works only in the texts from the 1930s, directly inspired by his interviews with Fink. To our knowledge, this notion is used for the first time by

(for example, with an aim to demonstrating a principle in a metaphysical system), but it strictly limits itself to the very constraints of the phenomena.³⁰ More precisely, phenomenological construction is a “pro-ject”³¹ that constructs the transcendental (in the phenomenological sense) conditions of that which is required and imposed by the phenomena themselves. Two things above all characterize phenomenological construction. On the one hand, we would stress, it discovers—in *constructing*—the *necessity* of that which is to be constructed and of the laws governing this construction.³² On the other hand, phenomenological construction imposes nothing upon that which is; it is, rather, *commanded, required* by the phenomena themselves. It is proper to genetic phenomenology—in any case, according to the reading of it proposed here (we return to this point below)—only to reveal the *genesis* of a factuality, that is, the genesis of phenomena that appear in the immanent sphere of consciousness. Let us probe these two points more deeply.

To understand the role and status of phenomenological construction, these two questions must be answered: (1) *What* does phenomenological construction construct? (2) *On what basis* does it construct what it constructs—assuming that it is not a pure fictional speculation?³³

(1) As we have seen, one must move to a phenomenological construction each time that the *descriptive* intentional analysis reaches a limit—“each time” means: not simply in the context of reconstituting a part or a segment of the “history” of the transcendental subjectivity that would not have been accessible to the reflexive phenomenological Self.³⁴ This limit is not a simple blockage that a richer or more complex experience could overcome thanks to a subsequent experience. On the contrary, the limit of descriptive analysis that will give rise to the need to move to a phenomenological construction has a *definitive* character. It is all of the blind spots of descriptive analysis in general that set this limit.

Of what does this limit to descriptive analysis consist more precisely? We know that intentional analysis seeks to reveal the workings [*effectuations*] of transcendental subjectivity insofar as the latter constitutes the sense of what appears to

Footnote 29 continued

Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit*. A deeper development of the notion can be found in Heidegger’s 1929 summer semester course, in which he works out his conception of a “construction” on the basis of Fichte’s *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre* (1794/95) (see Heidegger (1997)).

³⁰ A very illuminating example of this is the construction at work in the association that characterizes the constitution of the Other. When Husserl says that the appearance of a foreign body “awakens,” in a reproductive way (thus, starting from myself), a world of appearing that resembles my own, he is referring to the *experience* of the necessity of constructing a structure on which basis alone the lived experience in question (in this case, that of the appearance of a foreign *Leib*) becomes comprehensible (and here it is in no way a matter of a *psychological* experience).

³¹ Cf. Schnell (2004a, p. 34).

³² Cf. § 63 of Husserl (1974).

³³ We cannot appeal to Husserlian accounts to answer these two questions; rather, we must reconstitute what must necessarily be thought, in order to make this “implicit operational concept” explicit. On the notion of the “implicit operational concept,” cf. Schnell (2004b, p. 255).

³⁴ The analyses to come below exceed the nevertheless limited framework of Heideggerian reflections [cf. Heidegger (1927, §63, p. 310 sq. and §72, p. 375 sq.)] and Finkian thought (cf. the *Sixth Cartesian Meditation*) on the subject of phenomenological construction.

consciousness. Such an analysis does not simply perform an “inventory” of acts of consciousness, but it offers a *genesis of factuality* (this is in fact one of the deep meanings³⁵ of “genetic phenomenology”³⁶). This “factuality,” these *facta*, must not be confused with what Husserl calls “*Urtatsachen* (originary facts)”: these latter—objects of “metaphysics” *par excellence*—evade all genetization, all possible phenomenological construction (constructive phenomenology thus “being located” in the interval “between” descriptive phenomenology and metaphysics). Contrary to *Urtatsachen*, “*facta*”³⁷—precisely these givens of the immanent sphere of consciousness, which a *descriptive* constitutive analysis is unable to explain—are the “deposits” of a genetic doing that the phenomenologist must “re”-d0. Phenomenological construction is thus the reconstruction of this doing that, from the genetic point of view, precedes every factual “deposit.”

Let us note in passing that this way of posing the problem recalls the Fichteian approach to a “genetic construction” (in *The Science of Knowing of 1804*³⁸). But there is an important difference between these two. Fichte introduces the idea of a “genesis” following his critique of Kant’s approach that proceeds, according to him, by means of “*post factum* syntheses” (*positing* a unity of two disjunct terms without “deducing” it, that is, without constructing it genetically). Moreover, Husserl’s genetic constructions are not those of a “pure knowing,”³⁹ but neither are they equivalent to a “*post factum* synthesis;” for, far from leaving the terms to be synthesized as they are (as is the case in Kant’s thought), *Husserl’s genetic constructions first reveal the phenomenological sense of the terms*—this is what we had in mind above when we held that phenomenological construction discovers the necessity of what is to be constructed only *in realizing this construction*.⁴⁰

We could formulate this same state of affairs in another way. In effect, from this angle Husserlian phenomenology converges on a truth that in fact was first discovered by Kant, transposing it all the while, to be sure, onto the plane of

³⁵ Let us in fact emphasize that this does not mean that *every* genesis (in the phenomenological sense of the term) proceeds by means of (phenomenological) constructions, but that constructive phenomenology constitutes *one* part (among others) of genetic phenomenology.

³⁶ And when this factuality can no longer be genetized—and *only* then, that is, when the construction would no longer be phenomenological, but speculative—we leave phenomenology (in the strict sense) and enter metaphysics.

³⁷ Actually, one must distinguish three sorts of “*facta*,” which correspond respectively to the three *fundamental* regions or domains of phenomenology: first, “originary facts” or “absolutes” that originate in (phenomenological) metaphysics; then, “facts” in the most broad and general sense of the term, which are treated in *descriptive* phenomenology; and, finally, the highly particular “*facta*” (which both constitute a limit to the descriptive undertaking and are nevertheless genetically “constructible”) that are thus the object of *constructive* phenomenology. Phenomenology may be characterized as a kind of philosophizing that gives accounts of these different types of *facta* using methodological procedures specific to each type.

³⁸ Fichte (2005).

³⁹ Let us recall that this “pure knowing” designates, for Fichte, not the knowing of any particular object, but the knowing that stems from the fact that *a knowing is a knowing*—thus, not any particular *content* of the knowing, but purely *formal* knowing. However, the phenomenon of such a “pure knowing” is nowhere to be found in Husserl’s works.

⁴⁰ For further details on the difference between Husserl’s constructive method and Fichte’s genetic method, see Schnell (2010) (second part, chapter I).

phenomenological experience. This truth concerns the *antinomic* structure of reason. We know that in the “Transcendental Dialectic” of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant exposed antinomies that are due to the profoundly “contradictory” nature of reason. But Husserlian intentional analysis encounters paradoxes, or even aporias, in turn. To return to our two examples, we may ask the following questions: Is time “subjective” or “objective?” Is intersubjectivity constituted in and by an irreducible subjectivity, or, inversely, is subjectivity intrinsically intersubjective? What characterizes these phenomenological “paradoxes” or “aporias” is that they do not stem from the structure—contradictory or not—of *reason*, but from a limit of *experience* insofar as one attempts to give an account of it, precisely by means of a *descriptive* analysis. Moreover, what is decisive is that this limit is not definitively unsurpassable, but precisely that it can be overcome by means of phenomenological construction. And it is this construction that will also *legitimate* intentional analysis in a definitive way (by leaving the domain of simple description, of course).

(2) But *to be legitimate and legitimated*, such a construction could not construct “from nothing.” Upon what is phenomenological construction based, then? We see that the *factum* already delimits the field of construction: time is *either* objective or subjective, or prior to the subjective/objective split; subjectivity is *either* irreducible or structured in an intersubjective way, etc. But the question arises of how to know what determines the construction to construct one rather than another of these *facta*, since phenomenological construction must plainly remain faithful to the supreme demand of *attestability*. On the subject of the “definitive truth” and the “world,” Husserl writes in the second part of *Erste Philosophie*:

[...] the definitive truth, the world as definitively true, is an *idea* – this means: on the one hand, that it is of course absolutely inconceivable that it be the object of an adequate perception; but, on the other hand, *it is not in the slightest a fictum or an arbitrary ideal. On the contrary, it is a motivated ideal in the (Gestalt) figure of the universal flow of experience and – as long as this figure is given – an ideal that must necessarily be posited and not rejected; a pole that must be intuited (herauszuschauend) and [...] to which all the relativities of empirical truth relate in a valid way.*⁴¹

Phenomenological construction constructs both the *factum* and its conditions of possibility—namely, *that very thing that makes it possible, which “possibilizes (ermöglicht)” it*. Or, in other words, as we expressed it above, in constructing, phenomenological construction follows the necessity of that which is to be constructed. However, in order for this to be possible, phenomenological construction must, far from being reduced to a purely conceptual, intellectual construction, possess a *specific intuitivity*.⁴² This intuitivity (in the excerpt just cited, Husserl mentions a certain “*Heraus-schaubarkeit*”) is not an intellectual intuition, it is not the “the mind’s eye,” but it is itself instituted and founded upon the phenomenologist’s “history” insofar as this history flows from—to the extent that

⁴¹ Husserl (1959, p. 48) (my emphasis).

⁴² On the idea—a Finkian one, for that matter—of a “constructive intuition,” see *Manuscript Z-IV*, p. 94ab, in the Archives Eugen Fink at Freiburg, and the final chapter of Schnell (2010).

the phenomenologist relives and reactualizes it—the history of philosophy in general. Thus, the intuitivity that characterizes phenomenological construction specifically is itself susceptible to being genetically reconstituted with respect to its ultimate “layers” or “strata.”

Let us add one final remark on the subject of phenomenological method. The course taken by Husserl—and this point is *essential*—is a “zigzag”⁴³ one. What is the meaning of this? One can understand the origins only from the result, that is, from a “retrospective” or a “reversed regard” (*Rückschau*) that considers *the entire development*; but, on the other hand, one can understand the development as the “development of meaning (*Sinnesentwicklung*)” only starting from *origins*. Husserl certainly mentions this irreducibly circular⁴⁴ “zigzag” course (in the *Krisis*), in the context of a reflection on the origin of “spirit (*Geist*)” and the modern sciences (with their own characteristic methodological style). But, actually, this zigzag course applies in the same manner—and this is decisive—to every sense constitution (*Sinneskonstitution*) in general. We would like to defend the idea that this course applies nowhere more than in the pre-immanent sphere of consciousness, where the phenomenologist ceaselessly “oscillates” between that which is to be constructed and construction properly termed. This means that *phenomenological construction is ineluctably dependent upon the “analytic coordinates” of the phenomenon*—whence the “zigzag” sense of this course, whence also a certain hazard, or even a “floating,” which the “constructive phenomenologist” risks. This floating *legitimizes* phenomenological construction as much as it also *renders it fragile*—a risk that the phenomenologist takes when he or she goes beyond a simply descriptive approach, but that he or she is also *required* to take, precisely if he or she wishes to account for the ultimate and fully legitimated sense of the phenomena of the immanent sphere of transcendental consciousness.

However, the notion that Husserl himself in effect put phenomenological constructions to use does not win unanimous consent. Whatever the case may be, on this issue we can retain—for the purpose of presenting a phenomenological metaphysics below—the following points:

Ultimate philosophical legitimation cannot be supplied by *intuition* alone. It is on this point that “orthodox” phenomenology (cf. *supra*) and “constructive” phenomenology part ways. Granted, *ideally* (in the Kantian sense of the idea), intuitive givenness is a necessary *horizon* that must not be lost from view. However, as we have just seen in detail, phenomenological practice shows that intuition sometimes encounters limits *prior to* a possible legitimation. Phenomenological construction develops models—assuming a “constructive intuition”⁴⁵—that are projected in an intellectual way and that must never be stripped of their intuitive character (which intuitivity can at times only be presented *after the fact*), but that necessarily occupy a domain *whose intuitive character must first be made manifest*. Therefore, by opening the *intellective and intuitive* conditions of possibility for an ultimate legitimation of knowledge *at the same time*, phenomenological construction joins a projecting that

⁴³ See §6 of the *Introduction* to volume II of the *Logical Investigations*, as well as the *Krisis*, §91.

⁴⁴ Richir (1992, p. 11).

⁴⁵ Cf. *supra*.

flows from the understanding with an intuitive seeing. And to the extent that this also specifically concerns intuitive character, phenomenological construction is neither a metaphysical construction nor a speculative construction.

As for the *intellective* conditions of possibility for ultimate legitimation, one must recall once again that the *necessity* of the construction appears only *in the construction itself*: hence, phenomenological construction does not proceed according to rules given in advance or presupposed, but these rules can be apprehended only in the construction and due to the construction. Phenomenological construction⁴⁶ henceforth shows itself to be a *genetic* (in the Fichtean sense of the term) construction: in itself, what is to be constructed is not “nothing,” but it is engendered only for one who achieves this construction. It is not thereby any less *necessary*, for it alone provides the required ultimate legitimation.

In the foregoing pages, the question of “*ultimate legitimation*” has arisen a number of times—and this for good reason (even within the context of Husserlian phenomenology!), if transcendental idealism (in all its guises) effectively aims to realize this ultimate legitimation of knowledge. At this juncture, it is a matter of showing that this ultimate legitimation can be conceived only as an *auto-founding of knowledge*. Our thesis will thus consist in an effort to show that this auto-founding can be revealed in the making-itself-image of the “phenomenon” understood as an “image” (which requires extending of the signification of the concept of “phenomenon”). In effect, this amounts to an *extension* of the concept of phenomenon because this “phenomenon” is *unique*—and, hence, constructive phenomenology encounters an “originary phenomenon”⁴⁷ opposed, at the deepest level of knowledge, to the *multiplicity* of the phenomena *to be described*. For us, this “originary phenomenon” is thus a differentiated (in the sense of the “event”⁴⁸ in the later Heidegger) “*singulare tantum*.”⁴⁹ For reasons offered below, we call it “image.”

Phenomenology in general, and constructive phenomenology in particular, is a *transcendental idealism*.⁵⁰ This means, following the Kantian definition of transcendental knowledge, that it concerns “our way of knowing” objects to the extent that this way “must be possible *a priori*.” The solution to this problem, proposed by Kant, consists in the idea, as we know, that transcendental knowledge includes *a priori* elements that (in the context of a transcendental aesthetic and analytic) constitute the *a priori* forms of sensibility and understanding. But this

⁴⁶ Detailed exposition of an example of such a phenomenological construction is not possible here. For this, we refer readers to Schnell (2007), where the author employs phenomenological constructions in the domains of *time*, *intersubjectivity* and the intentionality of *drives* and *instincts*.

⁴⁷ This usage of the concept of “originary phenomenon” has nothing in common with the concept of “*Urphänomen*,” which we find in Husserl’s later works. However, it bears some affinity with what Schelling terms “originary essence (*Urwesen*),” in the *Weltalter*, or, further, with what Robert Alexander calls “*ogkorythme*,” in his remarkable works on M. Richir.

⁴⁸ Heidegger (1957, p. 25).

⁴⁹ We will see below in what sense this “*differentiated*” character is to be understood.

⁵⁰ Husserl clearly states: “Only someone who misunderstands either the deepest sense of intentional method, or that of transcendental reduction, or perhaps both, can attempt to separate phenomenology from transcendental idealism,” (Husserl 1981, p. 86).

founding of transcendental idealism is not sufficient. The fact of having succeeded in exposing these *elements* of knowledge certainly constitutes a very important first step. But for this also to guarantee a convincing *legitimation* of knowledge, it is not enough to appeal to—with respect to what is supposed to found knowledge *as* knowledge (that is, *aprioricity*)—*a priori* forms; for one thereby simply explains knowledge, which is necessarily *a priori*, by means of *a priori* elements. This sort of appeal to two instances *of the same nature* does not yet yield a *founding* of knowledge. It is here that constructive phenomenology comes into play.⁵¹

Phenomenology concerns phenomena. Nothing justifies the notion that what founds *all* knowledge *as* knowledge could not in its turn be thematized as a “phenomenon.” Of course, it is a matter here of a particular phenomenon, and this is so for two reasons: on the one hand, it is not linked to a determinate object, but characterizes all knowledge *as* knowledge—thus it is effectively a *unique* phenomenon; and on the other hand, it is never given in a thematic and explicit way—thus it is an “*inapparent*” phenomenon. Let us now try to craft for ourselves an *image* of this “originary phenomenon.”

The present task is thus effectively to try to provide the required legitimation of knowledge. It should be stressed that in the context of a constructive phenomenology, such a legitimation must always at the same time clarify phenomenality as phenomenality. The constructive phenomenology that follows seeks this *duality in one*.⁵²

Knowledge should (“*soll*”) be. Ultimate legitimation must be produced, Kant insists: transcendental knowledge handles our way of knowing insofar as it “*should (soll)*” be possible (*a priori*). The transcendental question of the conditions of possibility for knowing, of their possibilization, is thus strictly linked to this “*Soll*” (which is not an abstract must-be).⁵³ The⁵⁴ phenomenological construction of the “originary phenomenon” as *image*⁵⁵ that is required here must first sketch a concept of this founding of knowledge that is still absolutely empty. This means that this founding is first presented as projected into a “simple image (“*Ab-bild*”) (a simple “copy” of what *is to be projected*). Moreover, this *doubling* that results from the

⁵¹ In Schnell (2009) we set out the hypothesis that the founding and legitimation of the *a priori* character of knowledge in Fichte and Schelling amounts to the exposure of “premises” that—according to a famous letter of January 6, 1795, addressed to Hegel by Schelling—were alleged to be lacking in Kantian transcendental philosophy. The Fichtean analysis of the “*Soll*” (that is, of “categorical hypotheticity”) and of the “auto-objectivation of the Self” in the various “epochs” of the “pragmatic history of self-consciousness,” in Schelling’s *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (1800), are in each case, on the proposed reading, a legitimation of knowledge in the context of the authors’ understanding of transcendental idealism.

⁵² Phenomenological construction is not a universal method, but it of course depends upon what is to be constructed. Consequently, the construction that follows—and that concerns the “originary phenomenon”—is essentially distinct from any construction related to the constitution of what appears in the immanent sphere of transcendental consciousness.

⁵³ This was first established by Fichte; cf. especially *Wissenschaftslehre 1804 (second version)*.

⁵⁴ Readers familiar with Fichte’s later philosophy will recognize in the phenomenological construction we carry out in what follows the attempt to make the Fichtean doctrine of the image bear fruit in an ultimate phenomenological legitimation of knowledge.

⁵⁵ The image (*Bild*) character of the “originary phenomenon” is based in an originary *imaging* (*Bilden*) and, as we will subsequently establish, in its different modes (“*Ab-bilden*,” “*Aus-bilden*,” “*Ein-bilden*”).

“*Soll*,” this opposition between an intended founding and a conceptual “simple image,” needless to say, corresponds to the nature of *consciousness* itself—the only one from which one can and must begin, and which in turn is characterized by the disjunction between the conscious subject and that which is consciously given (that is, by the subject-object structure).

At a second stage, phenomenological construction *reflects* what is projected in this way and puts it into relation with what is to be constructed; this reflection gradually “will fulfill” the simple image, still empty, with a “content” and will do so in a phenomenologically *attestable* way. What results from this reflection? The simple image that is projected is *not* the very principle of the legitimation of knowledge, but only, we insist, a simple image opposed to it. The simple image “is comprehended” in this reflection as a *simple* image. To accede to the principle itself, what was just sketched must be annihilated. Through this, a new image is *formed* (“*aus-bilden*”): not a simple image that is only (and inevitably) *projected*, but an image engendered genetically by the annihilation of what had been posited in a simple image and by the formation (*Aus-bildung*) of the principle itself. But of what does *this new* image consist, if it is not to be purely formal? It consists precisely of the double process of a simultaneous *projecting* and *annihilation*. (Here, the concept of an “*Aus-bildung*” is highly fitting since it negatively expresses an ex-tinction, an ef-facement, and positively expresses a forming). In this new image, we are thus dealing—and in a quasi-paradoxical way—with the annihilation of a first (necessary) imaging. And since this first imaging, in a “simple image,” is nothing other than the expression of the condition of (intentional) consciousness itself (to the extent that it expresses the *correlation* of consciousness), the second image at the same time forms a sort of *pre-intentional* (and “pre-temporal”) “consciousness” which in turn is characterized by this simultaneous positing and annihilation! As we can see, this phenomenological construction thus genetically constitutes the intentional structure itself at the same time. What is entirely particular to this “constitution” is that in it the constituted is not founded in something that would be at its foundation; instead, the latter is itself accessible only through the construction! We will return below to the decisive ontological consequences of this pre-intentional act of a positing and an annihilation (for *reality* will reveal itself to be nothing other than the becoming-conscious of an “endogenous” being).

Still, so far here the phenomenological construction of the principle for the legitimation of knowledge has not yet been completed. The phenomenological “contents” of what is to be constructed has appeared only negatively until this point in a “forming (*Aus-bilden*).” A first sign of a *positive* determination of what is to be phenomenologically constructed is found in the fact that what has been constructed until now does not simply fall into that which *should* originally have been; rather, it refers back to a double pre-subjective “activity” of *positing* and *annihilation* that oppose each other. This activity obviously is not completed “mechanically,” but lets itself be grasped in a still deeper, *interiorizing*, reflection. Every annihilation is an annihilating of something that first was posited, and the former thus depends on the latter. The *Aus-bilden* resulted from the fact that the simple imaging comprehended itself *as such* and thereby annihilated itself. The interiorizing

reflection that must at present be completed goes further: it comprehends itself not only as imaging, but as “*comprehending*.” And this comprehension *as comprehension*, this conceiving *as conceiving*, this reflection *as reflection*, opens an altogether unprecedented field (which, of course, was already heralded in the second stage): not a field of the objectively given, but one of pure possibilization itself.⁵⁶ What ought we to understand by this?

Interiorizing reflection—which completes this phenomenological construction and, which actually can be characterized only improperly as a “reflection,” since in the act of reflection it does not reflect upon something that is inevitably *external*⁵⁷ to the reflecting moment—constitutes the final aspect of this “originary phenomenon.” If one wished to attribute to it an “imaging” character, the concept of “imagination” would doubtless be the most appropriate, which also indicates which faculty (transcendental) is at work here (cf. *infra*). What is expressed in a striking way here is an *interiority*. And this “imagining” is nothing other than a conceiving that conceives itself as conceiving, a reflecting that reflects itself as reflecting.⁵⁸ The legitimation of knowledge that is sought thus culminates in a self-grasping as a possibilizing and phenomenologically constructed self-grasping. As we have seen, this legitimation is not restricted to forms of knowledge that are simply *postulated*, but expresses the fundamental reflexive principle of the possibilization of the comprehension of ...

Let us recapitulate this phenomenological construction of the “originary phenomenon” in a fruitful way. We seek a principle of legitimation of knowledge that must not simply be posited in a factual way (as is the case, for instance, with postulated intuitive evidence), but that must attest phenomenologically and must do so in a permanent reflection that is gradually interiorized. This principle is first presented in a conceptual “image” (a “simple image”) whose exact contents one does not, at first, know. Plus, we do not reflect from the outside on this image, but we let it reflect upon itself before our eyes. In this *first* self-reflection, the image is understood as a *simple image*—which requires its annihilation *as an image*. What then is left? Not *nothing*, but the double activity, just described, of a projecting and an annihilating. In a *second* reflection which is not directed at an activity that aims at an object (even if this activity were, negatively, annihilating, in which case it remains tributary to that which is annihilated, as we have seen), but at the simple, purely interior reflection itself, this reflecting is conceives itself *as reflecting*, this

⁵⁶ In the phenomenological tradition, we first find this idea in Heidegger’s work. Cf. his thought on the subject of “possibilization” in *Being and Time*, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* and *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*. Our more detailed treatment of this topic can be found in the fourth chapter of Schnell (2011).

⁵⁷ If in reflection the reflecting subject *returns to* that which is to be reflected, then the latter is effectively *external*.

⁵⁸ These three aspects of the “originary phenomenon” can be fruitful for the understanding of contemporary aesthetics. In that case, it is a matter of distinguishing between three types of “images” as paradigms of three corresponding aesthetic attitudes (and the forms of artworks that are their correlates): (1) the “phenomenological image:” (example: the work of André Thomkins); (2) the “condensing image:” the artwork insofar as it concentrates or deposits the artist’s creative, vital, erotic, etc. energies (examples: Mallarmé’s *Book*, Bellmer’s “Doll”); (3) the “reflecting image:” the artwork as reflection on the process of creation itself (example: the work of Gérard Esmérian).

conceiving *as* conceiving, this knowing *as* knowing. *Possibilization* is thus nothing other than this reflecting that reflects itself as reflecting, this conceiving that conceives itself as conceiving, this knowing that knows itself as knowing. But how does the founding of phenomenality *as* phenomenality manifest itself here?

The answer is already contained in what has just been laid out. One misapprehends the concept of phenomenization if one grasps it as a phenomenal exteriorization of something that is not given first in a phenomenal way (thus “in itself”). Phenomenalization is not an *exteriorization*; it much rather expresses, to use the Heideggerian language of “On the Origin of the Work of Art,” an “ek-static in-stance (*ausstehendes Innestehen*).”⁵⁹ But this concept can itself lead to confusion, for the “in-” has meaning only if one opposes it to something that is “ex-terior.” For this reason, we prefer the concept of the “endogeneity of being” here. To clarify this notion, we will treat the concept of “reality” in the final section.

Decisive consequences for the status of *reality* in fact follow from what we have established so far.

(1) “Reality” is inseparable from the *reflexive* moment. The “real” is that which remains—the *deposit*—in the annihilation of the “simple image” which has first been sketched. It is the being that remains at the end of the annihilation of the subjective pole of the correlation of consciousness (and which for this reason is pre-intentional!). It is not a dead being-in-itself, but is animated, vivified, by the interiorizing reflection: it is nothing other than the *reflection of reflection*. Better still: it is reflection *as* reflection. In this way, reality “inherits” from and “incarnates” in some way the three fundamental aspects of the “*originary phenomenon*.”

(2) We can thus now draw some conclusions from what the phenomenological *epochè* contains implicitly. What is phenomenologically accessible is not in the slightest way opposed to an exterior and “natural” “real.” Only that which is actually manifested in the phenomenological “attitude,” that is, in the *epochè*, is real. But this means, more precisely, that that which is given “really” is “*immanent*” to consciousness (and in particular to transcendental consciousness). Reality is the immanence of being or of consciousness—for this purpose, we introduce, as we mentioned above, the concept of “endogeneity,” which does not designate a pure immanence, but considers the “ek-stance,” that is, the “transcendent” character of the “real.” Consciousness could never be “late” relative to being, nothing is—as “being”—pre-given or presupposed relative to transcendental consciousness. This point is likely the common denominator in the essential works of recent phenomenological research. One can now likewise grasp the meaning of the double movement—presented above and which characterizes the second type of imaging—in the projecting and annihilating of the “simple image:” if the principle of legitimation of knowledge, which was first required by a “*Soll*,” in fact not only allows itself to be rendered intelligible in the projection, and in the annihilation of the conceptual structures of projecting, but, further, exteriorizes itself “really,” then this implies that the principle is always already “with” us and that access to it is

⁵⁹ Heidegger characterizes the “*Bewahren* (letting-be-true)” (of the work of art) in these terms. Cf. Heidegger (1980, p. 54).

thereby guaranteed for us. This is another way that the endogeneity in the consciousness of every being, and in the consciousness of the principle of every being, is expressed.

(3) In regard to the role of the different faculties of knowing in these results of a phenomenological metaphysics, it must be stressed, and we have already referred to this above, that the (transcendental) *imagination* prevails over all the other faculties. As opposed to Husserlian phenomenology, in constructive phenomenology, the imagination has priority over the faculty of perception. This priority is essentially justified by the *imaginary character of reality*. Reality is not imaginary because one would postulate such a priority, but it is this priority that results from reality's imaginary character. Gnoseological understandings here stem from ontological understandings, and not the reverse. In this sense, constructive phenomenology is obliged to question anew certain settled results of the Kantian "Copernican revolution" and, if need be, to challenge them once again.

The more one descends into the originarily constitutive spheres of phenomena, the more the concept of phenomenon risks losing its simply "intuited" character. If static and descriptive phenomenology—as its name indicates—concerns the appearing giving itself in evidence (and henceforth apprehended in a seeing), this no longer necessarily holds for genetic and constructive phenomenology. For one thing, the "functional" operations of transcendental subjectivity that constitute what shows itself in the immanent sphere of consciousness refer back to a genetic "activity" (which of course does not belong to a free and arbitrary subjectivity). But this holds all the more so for the "originary phenomenon" upon which knowledge itself is founded (or, as one could say equally well, transcendental self-consciousness): in this phenomenon, the ultimate principle of legitimation properly becomes a "phenomenon" that is at the same time the principle of phenomenalization.

Along this way, "constructive phenomenology" does not encounter a "foundation" of the appearing—at least if this should mean that something would be at the foundation of the appearing. In accordance with the genetic character of phenomenological construction, such a "foundation" that would be confirmed as "pre-temporal" is opened up only *in the construction itself*. Nevertheless, is there no foundation of the appearing? The question seems poorly formulated and should rather be asked in the inverse way: what, after all, is the reason for granting the existence of something extra-phenomenal? The goal of these reflections was to ask this question otherwise than against the horizon of a transcendence that is simply *presupposed* (which likewise explains why we introduced the concept of the "endogeneity" of the phenomenal field). And the answer to this question could rest in the exposure of the apparently paradoxical character of the phenomenon: the more the phenomenon *phenomenalizes itself*, the more it *interiorizes itself*. And the more it interiorizes itself, the more *it exposes itself to transcendence*.

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