

Commentary on Husserl's *Ideas I*

Edited by
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Dermot Moran

Noetic moments, noematic correlates, and the stratified whole that is the *Erlebnis*

Section III, chapter 3, Noesis and noema

We shall continue to look around further in the sphere of consciousness and attempt to become familiar with the noetic-noematic structures in the chief modes of consciousness.

In the actual demonstration we shall assure ourselves at the same time, step-by-step, of the *thoroughgoing* trenchancy of the fundamental correlation between noesis and noema [*der durchgängigen Geltung der fundamentalen Korrelation zwischen Noesis und Noema*].

- *Ideen* 181/211

In the sphere of essence there are no contingencies [*gibt es keine Zufälle*]; everything is linked by eidetic connections [*Wesensbeziehungen*], thus, in particular, noesis and noema.

- *Ideen* 186/216

The chapter on “Noesis and Noema” (*Ideen* §§ 87–96), Chapter Three of Section Three of *Ideas*, a Section that has the overall title “On the Method and Problems of Pure Phenomenology,” lies at the center of the entire book. This third chapter aims to illustrate the phenomenological method applied to the close analysis of intentional experience. Here Husserl identifies various eidetic (essential) laws and conceptual distinctions that can be discovered by phenomenological analysis, in particular giving a first account of noesis and noema, but also discussing the intentional nature of judgments and even makes some remarks concerning the phenomenology of attention. It is in this chapter also that Husserl speaks for the first time of a “correlation” (*Korrelation* § 90) between noesis and noema. The concept of this essential correlation is initially introduced only tentatively (§ 91), as something whose complete validity still needs to be ascertained. Furthermore, although he focuses primarily on the analysis of perception and imagination (fantasy), he moves on to the noesis-noema structure in judgment and willing, extending his analysis to the “widest spheres of intentionality” (§ 91).

Husserl is emphatic in this chapter that his phenomenological investigations are merely initial explorations (see § 96), “purely introductory meditations” (*emporeleitende Meditationen*, *Ideen* 192/223). *Ideas* stands at the “portal to phenomenology” (*Eingangstor*, *Ideen* 161/187–88; “entry portal”, *Eingangspforte*, *Ideen* 52/61). As he frequently proclaims:

Here, in the context of our meditations that merely lead up to phenomenology, the task cannot be to expound its components systematically (*Ideen* 192/223)

There is, furthermore no ideal route—no “royal road” (*Königsweg*, *Ideen* 193/223)—into phenomenology. Each set of problems has to be tackled in its own way. The current exploration is provisional; Husserl likens himself to an explorer mapping out a new territory (§ 96). A systematic exposition is a long way off and Husserl is not even sure what will remain of his current claims which are tentative at best. It is important then to see this chapter as an initial, exploratory effort to tackle the noematic-noetic structure of intentionality.

Husserl is also empathic that it is decisive to give a faithful description of everything that is given and to exclude “all interpretations that transcend the given” (§ 92). In particular, he is worried that our very use of certain words to name things, e.g. the “psychical” (*das Psychische*) already misleads. Even the term “phenomenology” is now familiar as a term whereas the “matter” (*die Sache*) it intends to pick out is not understood. Husserl will seek to introduce a new language. All the old terms “sense”, “meaning”, “intention” are loaded with ambiguities such that one must be very distrustful of ordinary and even scientific language:

Yet transferences among them have encumbered all these words with so many equivocations—and not least with the sort that stem from gliding over into these correlative layers, which science is supposed to keep rigorously and systemically separate—that the greatest precaution is in order in relation to them. (*Ideen* 191/222)

Words can mask or distort the phenomenological findings. Yet he seems not to want to abandon language altogether but rather to develop wider senses that are phenomenologically vindicated through evidential seeing:

Our new terms and the accompanying analyses of examples certainly serve us better for the generalities we are considering. (*Ideen* 191/222)

Husserl then is not proposing an unambiguous ideal language such as developed in the Vienna Circle by Rudolf Carnap and others, rather he wants as far as possible to have terms that can be clarified intuitively although the manner

of this intuitive evidence is also a matter of dispute. Husserl struggles both to invent new terms and to fix the meanings of others. He is not very successful and some of his attempts, e.g. “hyletic data”, “matter”, “hyle”, “content”, and the wonderful technical term “stuff” (*Stoff*), have led to only greater confusion and disagreement among his readers. In this chapter, the term “noema” is given an initial outline.

The central focus is on the key phenomenological concept that Husserl took over from Brentano, namely intentionality: the fundamental fact that all conscious experiences, e.g. perceptions, thoughts and feelings, are *about* something or *directed towards* something. Husserl begins by saying that everyone understands in general terms what is meant by the expression “consciousness of something” (*Bewusstsein von Etwas*) but elucidating its phenomenological character is a great challenge. He also complains that the phenomenological approach, with its peculiar internal or immanent mode of approaching conscious experiences, has not yet been properly understood. Therefore, in this chapter, Husserl proposes to elucidate intentionality in a radically new way, couched in the new language of noesis and noema (the term “noema” receives its first published airing in this chapter), thereby offering a major advance over his earlier treatment of the topic in the *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901), especially the Fifth Investigation. In the last paragraph of the chapter, *Ideas* § 96, Husserl says that he wants to work out “in general the difference between noesis (i.e., the concretely complete intentional experience, designated with the emphasis on its noetic components) and noema because apprehending and mastering this difference are of the greatest import for phenomenology” (*Ideen* 192/222).

In this chapter also, Husserl continues to document the a priori essential, structural features of conscious experiences (*Erlebnisse*), as understood from within the phenomenological perspective, i.e., from within the *epoché*, and excluding all knowledge drawn from psychology, logic or ontology. According to Husserl, the *epoché* or what he also, in the Introduction to *Ideas*, calls the “method of phenomenological reductions” allows access to experiences in their pure form, “in phenomenological purity” (*in phänomenologischer Reinheit*, *Ideen* 187/217).¹ The reduced experience is still a concrete entity that includes or embodies a noetic act (all acts are or embody noeses) that has its own noetic content to which there corresponds what Husserl calls “noematic content” or, in short, the “noema” (*noematischen Gehalt ... Noema*, *Ideen* 174/203). Husserl as-

¹ I agree with Sebastian Luft in his contribution that Husserl does not firmly distinguish between the *epoché* and the phenomenological reduction in the text of *Ideas*. His main concern is to bracket or suspend the “general thesis” that pervades experience in the natural attitude.

sumes we can move further through an eidetic reduction to consider the experience in its generality. In this chapter Husserl employs the phenomenological *epoché* and the concept of “bracketing” or “parenthesis” (*Einklammerung*, *Ideen* § 88, § 94). Thus Husserl writes:

Not to be overlooked thereby is the phenomenological reduction [*die phänomenologische Reduktion*] that requires us ‘to bracket’ [*‘einzuklammern’*] [the actual process of] making the judgment, insofar we want to obtain just the pure noema of the experience of judgment. (*Ideen* 187/217)

It is clear, then, that the chapter is explicitly written from *within the phenomenological perspective*. Husserl here distinguishes the “phenomenological attitude” from both the “natural attitude” and the “psychological attitude” (an equally valid attitude that picks out the noema in its own way). In the phenomenological attitude there is, as he says repeatedly, an “exclusion” or “switching off” (*Ausschaltung*) in operation and the application of “brackets” (*Klammer*, *Ideen* § 88). This switching off should be understood in the manner in which an electrician will first power-off a device and unplug it before investigating it further. It must be disabled. Bracketing, on the other hand, is a metaphor drawn from mathematics. One can carry what is in brackets from one operation to another without altering its internal structure. This bracketing is explicitly an exclusion of “actuality” (*Wirklichkeit*, *Ideen* § 30), of what he calls “this thetic actuality” (*Ideen* 176/204), an exclusion of the “thing in nature” (§ 89), of the “entire physical and psychic world” (§ 88). We shall discuss further below the “general thesis” that is being excluded.

The investigation in this chapter, then, takes place in an explicitly *transcendental* register, with Husserl referring at the outset to the “uniqueness of the transcendental attitude” (§ 87). This means that Husserl wants to consider experiences in their mode of givenness (*Gegebenheitsweise*, i.e. the manner they are displayed to the experiencing subject) purified of everything “transcendent”, as he puts. In fact, the *transcendental* nature of phenomenology had already been made explicit in *Ideas* at the end of the preceding § 86, where he says that the purely eidetic attitude proceeding in immanence with all transcendences excluded deserves the name “transcendental phenomenology” (*Ideen* 170–171/198). The opening section § 87 of Chapter Three offers an excursus on the difficulties of securing the “phenomenological attitude” (*die phänomenologische Einstellung*), which is here identified with “the transcendental attitude” (*die transzendente Einstellung*, *Ideen* 172/200). The chapter begins with a discussion of “the most difficult of problems”, whose sense (*Sinn*) is hidden, and how difficult it is to approach *experiences* from the right phenomenological attitude in order

to yield an “eidetic finding”. Many of Husserl’s earlier students at Göttingen, who had considered phenomenology to be a form of realism, were deeply dismayed by Husserl’s apparent embrace of transcendental idealism in *Ideas*. But Husserl in fact had been using the language of transcendental philosophy in his lectures from 1907, although it appears for the first time in print in *Ideas* (1913) and will be thenceforth a permanent stance of the mature Husserl.

Husserl begins by invoking “what is distinctive about intentional experience in terms of its generality” (*Die Eigentümlichkeit des intentionalen Erlebnisses*, *Ideen* 172/200). But he is impatient with simply invoking intentionality as if the mere reference to the idea of relatedness to an object gave any special insight into consciousness. He acknowledges that intentionality has been discussed in philosophy since the Middle Ages but genuine advances have not been made. The scholastic distinction between “immanent” or “intentional” object and the “actual” object, for instance, Husserl maintains, does pick out something essential, but this needs to be phenomenologically clarified (§ 90). Husserl, therefore, proposes a fresh start, promising exacting and painstaking new investigations.

As mentioned above, this chapter marks Husserl’s first use of the term “noema” (German: *Noema*)—plural “noemata”—in print in his published work, although the term did appear briefly earlier in his 1906/7 lectures, *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge* (see Husserl 2008, p. 126 n. 2) and his more extensive 1908 lectures on *Theory of Meaning* (*Vorlesungen über Bedeutungslehre*) where he speaks of the “meant as such” (Husserl 1987, p. 217). The term ‘noema’ is taken from the Greek and means ‘that which is thought’. Husserl uses it very broadly to mean whatever is the object of a conscious act (this could be a perceptual thing or quality or even a state-of-affairs, e.g. *that it is raining now*) in so far as it is apprehended as correlated with that act (see Bernet 1990). The Greek term ‘noesis’ means ‘the act of thinking’ and again Husserl uses it very broadly (he often speaks of “noetics” as the theoretical exploration of cognitive acts) to include not just acts of judgment and cognition but all conscious acts including perceivings, rememberings, and so on. In this chapter of *Ideas* he explains that noesis is to be understood as “the concretely complete intentional experience, designated with the emphasis on its noetic components” (*Ideen* 192/222). The noesis, then, is the lived experience (*Erlebnis*) taken as a whole but understood in terms of its “noetic” nature, e.g. it is taken as a *perceiving*, a *remembering*, a *hoping*, a *doubting*, and so on. In *Ideas* § 92, Husserl will speak, for instance, of a “noesis of perception” or a “noesis of remembering” and of what happens in the transition from one state to the other. Elsewhere in *Ideas* (§§ 33, 34) Husserl will use the Cartesian term *cogitatio* (Latin, “a thought”) as equivalent.

Husserl will also draw attention to the crucial distinction between noesis and noema and their correlation in his Foreword to the Second Edition on the *Logical Investigations* (also published in 1913), where he states that the First Edition did not sufficiently distinguish between the noetic and noematic dimensions of what he there ambiguously calls “meaning”:

As a further defect of this Investigation [he is referring to the First Investigation], only understood and corrected at the end of the volume, we must note that it has no regard to the distinction and parallelism between the ‘noetic’ and the ‘noematic’: the fundamental role of this distinction in *all* fields of consciousness is first fully laid bare in the *Ideas*, but comes through in many individual arguments in the last Investigation of the old work. For this reason, the essential ambiguity of ‘meaning’ [*Bedeutung*] as an Idea is not emphasized. The noetic concept of meaning is one-sidedly stressed, though in many important passages the noematic concept is principally dealt with. (Husserl 2001a, p. 7).

Husserl is here claiming that the notions of noesis and noema actually were first treated (though not under those names) in *Logical Investigations*. Furthermore, he believes that most of the attention there went on the noetic side. Husserl wants to clarify how the notion of noema differs from the notion of meaning understood “as an idea” or simply as an ideal sense. *Ideas* § 94 echoes this passage in the Foreword of the *Logical Investigations* and refers to the Fifth Logical Investigation § 21, where the difference between the “intentional essence” and “epistemic essence” (*das erkenntnismässige Wesen*) of an intentional act is discussed.² This distinction is an attempt to show that there is more to the intentional structure of the act that epistemology or logic acknowledges. Husserl now thinks the earlier discussion was primarily noetic whereas a noematic interpretation is also required.

In this chapter of *Ideas* Husserl offers a surgeon-like dissecting of the phenomenologically reduced intentional “experience” (*Erlebnis*), that is, the experience as considered abstracted from all assumptions concerning its actuality in the world as a real psychic episode interacting with physical entities. He says that he wants to “conduct phenomenological discriminations [*Ausscheidungen*] and clarifications [*Klärungen*], by means of which, too, the sense of the problems

to be solved here can first be made intelligible” (*Ideen* 193/223). In this regard, Husserl begins with a fundamental distinction between the “components proper” of the mental process and the “intentional correlates”, between *genuine components* of intentional experiences understood as temporal events and their *intentional correlates*, i.e. the objects the experiences aim at in some way. This reiterates a distinction already made in the Fifth Logical Investigation § 16 between what he calls there the “real (*reelle*) or phenomenological” and the “intentional” parts. His example there was illuminating. In an act of speaking, the spoken sound has its real components and abstract parts that can be descriptively analyzed—quite distinct from the physical sound vibrations, parts of the ear and so on (Husserl 2001b, p. 112). But distinct from these “real” parts are also the ideal parts—the identical meaning that is communicated by the sounds. In the Second Edition Husserl is clearer that besides these “real” components there are also “intentional components” including the intentional quality, matter, the intentional object, intentional essence, and so on, parts that can be identified in phenomenological rather than psychological analysis. He now calls these latter parts “phenomenological” (whereas in the First Edition he called the “real” parts “phenomenological”) and he refers to the present chapter in *Ideas* for clarification (see the footnote in the Second Edition, Husserl 2001b, p. 354 n. 24).

Every experience has parts or components in several different senses. Following the analysis of the Third Logical Investigation § 2 there are “independent” or “dependent” (literally: “non-independent”) parts. Independent real parts are also called “pieces” (*Stücke*). The head of a horse, for example, is a real part that can be detached from the horse (as in *The Godfather* movie) and will continue to exist as an independent object. The color of the horse, however, is not detachable from the colored surface, although it can be separated in thought and considered as distinct. This is therefore a “dependent” or “non-self-standing” part (*Ideas* § 88), something that can be distinguished as opposed to being separated from the whole and presented separately on its own.

Every conscious experience can be thought of as a “real” psychic event in the world, one that takes place primarily in worldly time, with its own specific temporal phases. On the other hand, an intentional experience aims at or is about something, and that thing (the intentional object, in Husserl’s language) is not a real part of the intending act. I see the apple tree in an act of seeing, and not just the side that I currently apprehend. But the apple tree is “outside” of the experience and moreover has the “sense” of being an external or “transcendent” thing. An apple tree is an enduring spatio-temporal physical thing in the world. It is through focusing on precisely the intentional parts of the experience that I can gain knowledge both of the essential or necessary features of the act

2 In the Findlay translation of the *Logical Investigations*, “epistemic essence” is translated somewhat misleadingly as “semantic essence” (see Husserl 2001b, p. 123). Husserl thinks of the intentional essence as the combination of act quality and matter in the act, whereas the epistemic act includes reference to the intended object and is responsible for the “meaning” of the experience. Even the quality and matter do not exhaust the intentional essence. Husserl’s discussion in the *Logical Investigations* is most complicated and he himself was dissatisfied with it and regards the noesis and noema terminology as a step forward in clarification. For further discussion of the epistemic essence, see John J. Drummond’s contribution to this volume.

(e.g. what belongs to perception as such) and the essential features of an intentional object (e.g. a perceived spatial object reveals itself in profiles). As Husserl writes:

... the intentional experience is consciousness of something [*Bewusstsein von etwas*], and it is so, according to its essence [*Wesen*] (e.g., as memory, as judgment, as will, and so forth). Hence, we can ask what essentially is to be said on the side of this 'of something.' (*Ideen* 174/202)

Among the most important contributions will be Husserl's recognition of key problems, including the 'manner of being of the noema, the way it "lies" in experience, the way one is supposed to be "conscious" of it' (*Ideen* 192/222).

In general, in this chapter, it should be noted that despite his mention of the intentional act or noesis, Husserl is primarily oriented towards the object side of the experience, namely, to the noema. He deliberately postpones discussion of the noesis to the chapters following. Furthermore, there is almost nothing in this chapter about the ego or "I" that somehow "lives in" and across the flow of *Erlebnisse*. (Husserl had already briefly discussed how the pure ego—which is itself without content—lives in the interwoven stream of experience at *Ideen* § 80) He does, however, make some remarks concerning "attention" (*Aufmerksamkeit*, § 92) in regard to intentional experience and the "radiating focus" (*Blickstrahl*) of the ego, about which we will have more to say later in our discussion.

Finally, it is in this chapter (§ 88) that Husserl makes use of his example—one of the few concrete examples in the whole of *Ideen*—of the perception of the blossoming apple tree in the garden that is often taken as paradigmatic for the understanding of the noema in general. Husserl's discussion of the apple tree has been interpreted in different ways. He seems to distinguish the "tree in actuality" (*Baum der Wirklichkeit*, see § 97), "the tree simply, the thing in nature" (*Der Baum schlechthin, das Ding in der Natur, Ideen* 176/205) and the noema "tree". He compounds this by saying (at § 89) that the actual tree can burn up whereas the sense (*Sinn*) "tree" cannot. This has led to an understanding of the noema as a kind of ideal entity (a Fregean sense which is an abstract ideal object which acts to determine the reference of a thought) whose only relation to the actuality is that the latter instantiates it.³ Husserl does think that the ideal sense (*Sinn*) is

³ The classic discussion of noema as a Fregean sense (*Sinn*) is to be found in Føllesdal 1990. There is now a huge literature on this topic, see *inter alia* Smith/McIntyre 1982; McIntyre 1987; Welton 1987; Sokolowski 1987; Drummond 1990; and especially the essays in Drummond/Embree 1992. See also John Drummond's contribution in this volume.

one component of the noema, the "noematic core", which guarantees sameness of reference across different thoughts of the same entity, but this identical sense is not identical with the noema as a whole. It is at best one layer (*Schicht*) of the noema. We shall examine Husserl's somewhat ambiguous statements about the noema further in this paper.

To set this chapter in context, Chapter Three follows on from two earlier chapters in the Third Section. Section Three Chapter One (§§ 63–75) reviews the phenomenological method, the self-suspension (§ 63) of the phenomenologist's natural attitude and the adoption of pure description of whatever is given in immanence (§ 65), the nature of intuition, clarification the degrees of givenness (*Gegebenheit* § 67), vagueness and clarity (§ 68), the nature of intuitions of essence (*Wesensschau; Wesensintuition* § 67), the notion of free fantasy variation (§ 70), the nature of the 'eidetic sciences' (§ 72), and the difference between exact and morphological essences, exact and inexact description. Chapter Two (§§ 76–86), entitled "Universal Structures of Pure Consciousness", develops further the concept of pure phenomenological reflection, the differences between such reflection and psychological introspection (§ 79), the nature of the pure ego (§ 80), time and time-consciousness (§ 81), the nature of horizons (§ 82) on mental processes, intentionality (§ 84), *hyle* and *morphé* (§ 85), and the nature of "function" (in relation to a brief discussion of one of Husserl's former teachers, the descriptive psychologist Carl Stumpf, 1848–1936). Both these chapters cover many of the main themes of the phenomenological method and there is a degree of repetition and moving in "zig-zag", as is Husserl's wont, going backwards and forwards over the same areas but uncovering new insights. The introduction of the noesis-noema structure in Chapter Three, however, opens up an entirely new way of doing phenomenology, one that will be retained by the mature Husserl in his later works. Husserl's new terminology is meant to clarify and belong exclusively within the phenomenological sphere. For this reason, the noesis-noema correlation cannot be simply taken as equivalent to the act-object or psychic-physical distinction in Brentano's analysis of intentionality. Indeed Husserl himself says that what he trying to get at is not what is available "in the natural attitude" (*in die natürlichen Einstellung, Ideen* 175/203).

Chapter Three on "Noesis and Noema" is, therefore, in many respects, a revolutionary chapter. Although it is interwoven with the other themes being investigated in the book, and in fact, in several places explicitly refers back to the *Logical Investigations*, which Husserl was revising at the same time, the chapter has a stand-alone quality and presents in condensed form many of the themes of *Ideen* overall. There is an explicit and important rethinking of intentionality as discussed in the *Logical Investigations*, with reference, in particular, to the Fifth Investigation (especially § 16). The chapter does refer back to the earlier dis-

cussion of intentionality in Section Three Chapter Two, where he discusses intentionality as “the main theme [*Hauptthema*] of phenomenology” (*Ideen* 161/187). His earlier “eidetic analysis” of *Ideas* Section Two concerning cogitation as act has now to be revisited.

Husserl emphasizes at this stage that it is not at all clear how phenomenological investigations align with ontological or other investigations of consciousness. It is not a case of “simply” performing the phenomenological reduction. Perhaps even more than in the case of perception, as he discusses later in the chapter, the case of judgment requires one to sharply distinguish between the *psychological* process of judging and judging considered in its essence, where normally one focuses on the judgment itself, i.e. what is judged which is a universal:

Those of a psychologistic bent will take exception here throughout; they are already disinclined to distinguish between judging as an empirical experience [*Urteilen als empirischem Erlebnis*] and judgment as an ‘idea,’ as an essence [*Urteil als ‘Idee,’ als Wesen*]. For us this distinction no longer requires any justification (*Ideen* 187/217)

Husserl is here expressing his agreement with the anti-psychologistic views of Bolzano and Frege. As Husserl had insisted already in the *Prolegomena* to the *Logical Investigations*, logic is not in any way interested in the psychological process but only in the judgment understood as a proposition, a statement. But now Husserl wants to move beyond both psychology and logic. He even allows himself a rare biographical remark right at the outset in *Ideas* § 87:

In fact (if I may be allowed a judgment based on my own experience), it is a long and thorny path that leads from purely logical insights, from insights into the theory of meaning, from ontological and noetic insights, likewise from the usual normative and psychological epistemology to the apprehension of immanently-psychological [*immanent-psychologischen*] and then phenomenological givennesses [*phänomenologischen Gegebenheiten*] in the genuine sense, and leads finally to all the essential connections [*Wesenszusammenhängen*] that render transcendental relations [*transzendentalen Beziehungen*] intelligible to us a priori. (*Ideen* 172–73/201)

As the last sentence here makes clear Husserl wants to uncover a priori essential relations and connections, which as we have seen, he now also designates as “transcendental” relations. As he puts it, at the beginning of § 92, he has identified

... remarkable changes in consciousness [*Bewusstseinswandlungen*] that crisscross [*kreuzen*] with all other kinds of intentional occurrences, and thus make up a completely universal

structure of consciousness [*eine ganz allgemeine Bewußtseinsstruktur*], a structure with its own dimension. (*Ideen* 182/211)

Husserl now wants more precisely to investigate the essential structure of intentional experiences, including the key forms—perception, willing, emoting, valuing or judging—experiences delineated in essence, or as Husserl says ‘as an ‘Idea’ (*als Idee*, *Ideen* 187/217) or ‘as *eidos*’ (*Ideen* 187/217).

While the term “noema” is new in *Ideas*, Husserl had already been using the term ‘noetic’ from much earlier. The term “noetic” occurs already in the *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 2001a, § 32), for instance, and there is a longer discussion of “noetics” as a science of cognitive acts in the 1906/07 lectures on *Logic and the Theory of Knowledge* (Husserl 2008, §§ 25–33). In *Ideas* § 94 Husserl also speaks of “normative, logical noetics” which is consistent with what he says in 1907. However, what exactly is meant by noetics is not entirely clear, but Husserl is insistent that a phenomenological approach will look at the whole noetic/noematic complex rather than solely at the noetic operations and ideal senses with which logic is concerned.

Developing from the discussion of intentional content in the Fifth Logical Investigation, in *Ideas* § 88 Husserl introduces the noema and seeks to identify the “components of the lived experience” (*Erlebniskomponenten*). He begins with a fundamental distinction between the “components proper” and the “intentional correlates” of the experience. This time he speaks of the “real” (*reelle*) components as precisely those “parts and moments” that the *Erlebnis* may be said to have. Husserl uses the term “moment” for a non-independent part. In the First Edition of the *Logical Investigations* (1901) Husserl speaks of the *real* (*reell*) and the *ideal* content, but in the Second Edition of 1913, which he was working on at the same time as he was writing *Ideas*, the distinction is recast as the distinction between *phenomenological* and *intentional* content (Husserl 2001b, § 16). In the First Edition of the *Logical Investigations* Husserl writes:

By the real phenomenological content of an act we mean the sum total of its concrete or abstract parts, in other words, the sum total of the *partial experiences* that really constitute it. (Husserl 2001b, p. 112).

In this Second Edition reformulation, Husserl has moved from considering the ‘real’ psychological state, understood as a psychic occurrence that takes place in time, to a consideration of the reduced state considered in isolation from all reality or actuality. This will enable him to focus on the essential attributes of this experience.

Husserl's overall aim is to provide an a priori essential analysis of the structure of the intentional *experience* (*Erlebnis*). He is seeking to capture at least some of the essential (or eidetic), a priori laws that govern the temporal flow of conscious experiences and account for their ability to intertwine and interweave with one another in the seamless flow of a unified conscious life. Already in § 80 Husserl had noted the "two-sidedness" of an *Erlebnis*—it has a subjective and an objective side. These will now be renamed noesis and noema.

With the doctrine of intentionality of conscious experiences, Husserl is interested in the constitution of objectivity and in the manner in which objects, their properties and contexts (horizons), manifest themselves in the flow and maintain their stability across changing mental states and attitudes. Of course, here he is explicitly operating under the phenomenological reduction and is not interested in psychological information about the "psychic act" [in quotation marks] and also the object in a transcendent sense. He is interested as he says in "objectivity meant as such", the objectivity in quotation marks' (*die "vermeinte Objektivität als solche", die Objektivität in Anführungszeichen*, *Ideen* 185/215). He is interested in "the essential question" (*die Wesensfrage*), namely, what is the "perceived as such"? (*das "Wahrgenommene als solches"*, *Ideen* 176/205). The perceived as such is identified with the noema of the act of perception. Husserl is also interested in the nature of the intentional relation. He will try to separate the intentional relation to an object from the real causal relation.

Throughout this chapter Husserl progressively identifies and specifies a number of the eidetic laws governing the intentionality of conscious lived experiences:

Every intentional experience is noetic, thanks precisely to its inherent noetic moments. (*Ideen* 174/202)

In other words every mental act or state is marked out as what it is—defined essentially—by the noetic side of that state. Something is a perception, a remembering, a fantasizing, and so on, precisely because of this immanent noetic character. This is an ineliminable part of every experience. Secondly, it belongs to the essence of a lived experience "to have a sense" (§ 88). Husserl thus articulates a second eidetic law:

Like perception, every intentional experience has its 'intentional object,' i.e., its objective sense—that is precisely what makes up the fundamental component [*Grundstück*] of intentionality. (*Ideen* 177/206)

He will elaborate other eidetic laws throughout the chapter:

There is no inherent noetic aspect without an inherent noematic aspect specifically pertaining to it—so reads the essential law that is corroborated in every case. (*Ideen* 185/215)

Husserl does subscribe to another eidetic law that he does not articulate here but which was already stressed in the *Logical Investigations*, namely, that each *Erlebnis* has a single if multilayered noema. There is, so to speak, always a single state of affairs aimed at in the intention, perhaps a very complex one, intended by a single and perhaps very complex noesis. The "sense" of an experience is always a unified nexus or complex.

Husserl is clear that the various transformations that go on in consciousness are "never contingent, but instead essentially rule-governed" (§ 91). Furthermore, different kinds of acts have different correlated noemata. The noemata vary structurally with the acts. So a perceptual noema is necessarily different from a memory noema, although the memory noema will in some sense be dependent on the perceptual noema. Husserl writes:

A noematic sense 'inhabits' each of these experiences, and however much this sense may be related in the diverse experiences, indeed, however essentially alike it may be in terms of its core composition [*Kernbestand*], in experiences of different kinds it is a noematic sense of a different kind in each case. (*Ideen* 181/210)

Another eidetic law, always assumed by Husserl and articulated explicitly earlier in *Ideas* (see § 42, for instance, where he says that every experience can seize itself in an inner perception) is that every conscious process can reflect on itself and apprehend its constituent moments. Husserl writes regarding experiences (or cogitations):

The intrinsic possibility of a 'reflective' shift of focus is an essential property of it, and naturally [this is] a shift of focus in the form of a new cogitatio that is directed at it in the manner of simply apprehending it. (*Ideen* 66/77)

Similarly in Section Three Chapter Four Husserl says:

At first place, every experience is so fashioned that it is possible in principle to shift the focus to it and its really obtaining components [*seinen reellen Komponenten*], and likewise in the opposite direction to the noema, e.g. to the seen tree as such. (*Ideen* 198/229)

It is crucial that Husserl thinks it is possible not just for an experience to become, as it were, self-transparent or self-conscious, but also that our direction of attention can be altered at will to traverse the experience from the subjective towards the objective side, e.g. from scrutiny of the act of remembering to the

event remembered. We can also take the attentional focus outside of the experience altogether—as is normal in the natural attitude (introduced at § 27)—and simply focus on the things transcendent to our intuiting of them. Nevertheless, it is the reflective apprehension of experience that allows for the possibility of disciplined phenomenological reflection in the full technical sense that Husserl is promoting.

In analyzing the structure of perception, Husserl does acknowledge that there is what he calls in *Ideas* § 88 a “real relation” (*ein reales Verhältnis*, *Ideen* 175/204)—presumably a causal relation—between the seeing and the object seen, between the act of perceiving (*die Wahrnehmung*) and the object perceived as such (*das Wahrgenommene als Solche*), but in the “phenomenological attitude” (*Ideen* 176/205) one takes no interest in this real relation. The relation as real is bracketed or excluded: “the real relation that actually obtains between perception and what is perceived is suspended” (*ausgeschaltet*, *Ideen* 175/204). Instead, Husserl attends specifically to “the phenomenologically reduced experiences of perception and enjoyment, just as they fit in the transcendental stream of experience” (*der transzendente Erlebnisstrom*, *Ideen* 175–76/204). A new concept has been introduced here—the “transcendental stream of experience” which has to be grasped “in pure immanence” (in “*reiner Immanenz*”, *Ideen* 175/204). Husserl here means the stream of the experience as experienced in its first-personal way, with its own unique inner temporality, its sense of beginning and ending, its own internal structure and components, and so on, with every reference to the external world stripped away. The natural attitude, Husserl reminds us, has a certain view not only of objects in the natural world but of subjective experiences. *Erlebnisse* as natural events are essentially temporal events; they belong to the stream of experience and can be studied by psychology or possibly even by some kind of neurophysiology. The phenomenological focus, however, is on the individual lived experience (however that is to be defined, since in fact experiences are not sharply differentiated in the flow of consciousness) and the need to abide with it, staying loyal to what it gives precisely in the manner in which it gives itself. With meticulous carefulness one must pay attention to ensure nothing is inserted into the experience other than what is actually contained or lies in [*einlegen*] the essence of it, just exactly as it “lies” [*liegt*] therein (§ 96). Unfortunately, the language of “lying in” is somewhat misleading as it suggests that the objects of experience are embedded in the experiencing. Brentano too had spoken of the “indwelling” (*Einwohnen*) of the intentional content or object in the act, and this had led to an assumption that the intentional object is immanent in the act, whereas Husserl means precisely the opposite.

As we have seen, focusing on the phenomenologically reduced *Erlebnis* involves a disruption of the natural “direction” (*Richtung*) of attention that is usu-

ally toward the intentional object of experience. This leads Husserl in this chapter to offer some remarks on the nature of “attention” (*Aufmerksamkeit*)—a topic to which he devoted many reflections over the years (see Husserl 2005). In the natural attitude, one’s focus is normally outwards towards the transcendent, one’s everyday dealings in the world. Using Husserl’s own example, one attends to the blossoming apple tree (*der blühende Apfelbaum*) and not primarily to one’s perceiving with pleasure, although the observer is basking in the pleasurable viewing. Even in ordinary natural attitude reflection, one can shift attention to the felt qualitative character of the perceiving. I can say that I am looking *dreamily* or *wistfully* or *admiringly* or *questioningly* at the apple tree. So it is not just the object that, as it were, visible in the natural attitude, the mode or manner of perceiving is also manifest. Normally we do not separate these kinds of givenness and our natural attitude can focus back and forward across the experience, which, as we see from § 97, is conceived of as an extended temporal process, a process that takes time. One can enjoy the apple tree in its brilliant blossoming and also, in a shift of focus, savor the enjoyment (perhaps while aware of its fleeting nature). Indeed, even in his discussion of this famous example of seeing the apple tree in the garden, Husserl is also discussing seeing the apple tree in an appreciative way, basking in the vision of the apple tree, as it were. He speaks of “looking with enjoyment” (*wir blicken mit Wohlgefallen*) and of the “perception and the accompanying enjoyment” (*die Wahrnehmung und das begleitende Wohlgefallen*, *Ideen* 175/203).⁴ So, it is not a case of simply looking in a neutral manner—although he does say he wants to remain “for simplicity” with straightforward perceiving. Husserl is deeply aware that all our conscious states are closely intertwined and interwoven and layered with other states. The phenomenological regard will pry the components apart and see how they are interrelated, what depends on what, and so on.

As he deepens the analysis, Husserl notes that the *Erlebnis* is suffused with a natural credence or belief-in-being, what he later will call *Seinsglaube*, that is a component of every intention in the natural attitude. This might be regarded as another eidetic law:

Every experience is characterized by a thesis or natural positing.

The mature Husserl will later speak of “belief in being” (*Seinsglaube*, see, e.g., *Cartesian Meditations* § 8) but this term does not occur in *Ideas*. He speaks here of a specific experience called a “thesis” (*Thesis*, § 31). In the natural attitude, we naïvely put credence in the actuality of our world and our experience in a “general positing” (*Ideen* § 30). The world is always already there in our expe-

⁴ The German term *Wohlgefallen* normally means “satisfaction, pleasure, enjoyment”.

rience (§ 32), there for us, “on hand” (*vorhanden*), it is experienced as “actual” (*wirklich*).⁵ Of course, not all experiences are thetic, but—and Husserl is not yet clear on this—in so far as experiences are formed in the natural attitude, they are suffused with this thetic character. In *Ideas*, furthermore, Husserl had not yet fully articulated the concept of the horizonality of our experience and of the world as a backdrop for all experience, but he does acknowledge that we take for granted an environment that exists for all (§ 29).⁶ This general positing, moreover, does not disappear in the activity of switching to the phenomenological attitude. Nor is it distorted or changed into a different kind of noetic act such as doubting, presupposing or surmising (§ 31). Moreover, the “thesis” is not the judgmental act of positing existence, but a generalized assumption concerning actuality, something that suffuses the natural attitude at all times. This “thesis” remains what it is, but it now gets “modified” or “placed in brackets” and “put out of work”. The thetic character or positing still belongs to the *Erlebnis* as an integral structural feature, but now our conscious noesis does not go down the line of endorsing it, of *living in acceptance*, as Husserl puts it. Husserl is explicit that “the thetic actuality is, indeed, not there for us in the way of a judgment” (*Die thetische Wirklichkeit ist ja urteilsmässig für uns nicht da*, *Ideen* 176/204), repeating what he had said in § 31. In other words, we now deliberately and as a matter of conscious decision, take a stance within the very *Erlebnis* itself—we do not externally sit in judgment on the *Erlebnis*, decide that the perception is in fact a hallucination or illusion, or whatever, we somehow shift focus within the *Erlebnis* itself and take it first as a phenomenon with its own structure and component parts, and also as a token of a type.

After the reduction, we find in the remembering the remembered as such, in expecting the expected as such, in the fictionalizing fantasy the fantasized as such. The key term here is “as such” (*als Solches*). We are moving to the sphere of the necessary and the a priori rather than the sphere of fact. We are uncovering essence.

Husserl’s account of suspending the natural attitude through the “universal” *epoché* is actually more complex than many commentators realize. The “thesis” or “general positing” suffuses the whole natural attitude as we have seen, and it is also as it were a component feature of each experience. It seems that the *epoché* not just suspends the natural attitude but it, as it were, unplugs the be-

lieving-component in the reduced experience. A new form of reflection is brought to bear on the reduced experience. Husserl is not completely clear on the relation between the overall natural attitude (and its general thesis) and the phenomenologically reduced experience which has its internal thesis or credence suspended. It seems that the overall neutralization of the natural attitude has the effect of bracketing (without removing altogether) the belief-in-being of the experience itself.

Furthermore there are continuing “shifts” or “variations” in attention (§ 92), as Husserl calls them, going on which activate or de-activate certain qualities or aspects of the object and presumably also highlight or alter the noetic approaches to the object. One can be perceiving the apple tree, and pay attention to the component memory of the apple tree, the quality of the memory. One can have various further reflective engagements with the experience: is it clear or confused, singular or mixed with other memories, and so on? Obviously, the application of the *epoché* onto an original experience (*Erlebnis*) actually itself involves a new experience that superimposes itself, alters, or modifies, or in some way marks out or indexes, the prior *Erlebnis*, in this case the visual perception of the blossoming tree. The exercise of the phenomenological *epoché*, furthermore, according to Husserl earlier (*Ideen* § 31), involves an act of deliberate willing, a will to resist the pull of the natural attitude. This act of willing is of course a new experience which is now brought to bear on the existing experience, e.g. the perceiving of the apple tree, so that one now sees without any interest in worldly actuality. One is not just seeing-in-credence, as it were, but performing a new act of *attending* to the original seeing, not now in natural reflection but in transcendental reflection, which involves a kind of schooled, hyper-vigilance that brackets all existence assumptions. Husserl’s critics were skeptical that one could really effect such a complete bracketing of actuality, but Husserl himself always insisted it was an absolutely essential part of phenomenological viewing.

Husserl thinks of an *Erlebnis* not as an instantaneous act but rather as one that takes place over a period of time, and in the process, one can become aware of different aspects of our own awareness and start to consciously check them. Thus, Husserl makes clear, the “fixing of attention” is inherent in the *Erlebnis* (§ 92). Husserl seems to think that suspending the thesis or credential component of the experience enables one to scrutinize it better from the point of view of sustained reflection. Consider the case of someone aiming a rifle at a target and looking through the telescopic sights and as they observe the target, they become conscious perhaps that their handgrip is too tight or that their breathing will disrupt the shot, and so they make conscious alterations of bodily stance [not just physical adjustments but possibly “psychic” or mental changes e.g. al-

⁵ As Sebastian Luft has pointed out in his contribution, Husserl does not define the “general thesis” in *Ideas* but it is really the assumption of the actuality of the world that pervades all experiencing in the natural attitude.

⁶ Husserl does discuss the concept of “horizon” in relation to what is “co-given” in experience in *Ideen* § 44. For a useful discussion, see Geniusas 2012.

lowing the mind to empty, consciously relaxing, and so on]. In this case, the act of paying attention and concentration allows for a certain reviewing of component mental acts. Something like this is what the phenomenological *epoché* is supposed to provide. It is, to use another analogy, like the manner in which, in Zen sitting meditation, the meditator proposes to attend to the experience but not engage with it, simply notice it, note it, and pass on. One should avoid deliberately seeking to banish the intruding thought, end the reverie or whatever. One should simply abstain, not be drawn into it, or be drawn to resist it. Husserl, similarly, wants the meditating phenomenologist to disengage the general positing in order to bring the focus completely to the necessary structures in play in the what he calls the “transcendental stream”. This new kind of modified attention that is alert to its own “shifts in attention” as well as to the “parts and components” of the experience, is what will be worked in the rest of Chapter Three.

This reflective modification of the experience in the phenomenological *epoché* is meant to bring both the nature of the noesis and its accompanying noema to light. Moreover, this new modified attending is supposed to bring to light the necessary a priori “correlation” between noesis and noema, Husserl’s new terminology, introduced in this Chapter Three. Husserl has chosen the term “noesis” precisely to avoid necessarily being drawn into evoking familiar psychic episodes that may be picked out linguistically with terms such as ‘seeing’, ‘believing’, ‘hoping’ and so on. It is, I suggest, precisely for the same reason that the “neutrality modification” is introduced as a more general term than any skeptical doubting, putting into suspension, disbelieving, negating and so on, in Chapter Four § 109.

As we said above, Husserl does not concentrate on the noetic dimension of experience in this chapter but he does have some observations that are worth noting. He speaks of the experience “viewed from the noetic side” as containing certain “noeses” that are conditioned by “modes of attentiveness” (*Ideen* 184/213–14). In fact, at § 92, he says that he is concentrating on the intentional layer of perception “for simplicity” but recognizes that noeses have much more complex forms. Most of the focus from then on in the chapter is on “describing the perception in a noematic respect.” In this regard he believes the analysis in the *Logical Investigations* had been too concentrated on the noetic side. As we shall see, various dimensions will be discovered in the intentional experience as analyzed under the *epoché*. The noetic moments in the experience will be distinguished from the “hyletic aspects” (*hyletische Momente*), for instance (see *Ideen* § 98). Husserl sought to clarify the meaning of noesis in an additional supplement collected in Husserl 1976. Thus, in Supplement 51 (written

around 1923), he comments on his use of the phrase “noetical moments” or “noetic aspects” (*Ideen* 191/221)

It was not until page 199 [*Ideen* 199/221] that it is said in passing that ‘Noesis’ means pretty much the ‘complete concrete intentional experience’ while ‘emphasizing its specific noetic moments’. To noesis therefore also belong the hyletic moments in so far as they carry the functions of intentionality, experience meaning-bestowal [*Sinngebung*], help to constitute a concrete noematic sense. But it must be said earlier with appropriate solemnity. I myself came to waver, since earlier noetic and hyletic moments were distinguished. (Husserl 1976, p. 606)

There are a myriad of noeses—distinguishing the various shadings of the “act” part of the experiences—that can sit on top of one another, run parallel with one another, conflict with one another or modify each other in various ways. And much of this will be discussed in the following Chapter Four. However, already in Chapter Three, Husserl recognizes that memories can be accessed within memories (§ 92). One can remember from one memory through to an earlier memory which itself is founded on a perception. Many of the noeses have names in English and other languages, thus we can distinguish (although not perhaps very exactly) wondering, pondering, deliberating, mulling over, musing, ruminating, and so on. But Husserl also thinks he has identified new noetic phases and moments that have never before been identified (e.g. the neutrality modification).

The notion of what belongs precisely to the noetic is somewhat complex. It is clear that Husserl thinks that the hyletic moments belong to the noetic act rather than to the noema (which of course also contains intended sensuous properties)—and in fact that is consistent with what Brentano says, albeit confusingly, in his *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, when he speaks of “seeing a color” as belonging to the “psychic act” rather than being one of the “physical phenomena”. In the following Chapter Four Husserl will more clearly locate the hyletic moments (the ‘stuff’ moments, the sensed colors) in the noetic side of the experience, whereas the color attributed to the object is located in the noema:

... everything hyletic belongs in the concrete experience as a *really obtaining* integral part [*als reelles Bestandstück*] of it, while what ‘displays’ and ‘profiles’ itself in it as a manifold belongs, by contrast, to the noema. (*Ideen* 196/227)

But even these sensuous “stuffs”, as Husserl inelegantly calls them, are animated or enlivened (*beseelt*) with noetic aspects even while the ego is not turned to them but to the intentional objects. These ‘animating construals’ belong to the really immanent aspect of the noesis. On the other hand the “profiles” or “shad-

ings" (*Abschattungen*) belong to the object side or the noema. They are noematic aspects, indicating aspects of the intentional object.

How do we discover the essential laws that govern how these noeses intertwine? Husserl is very careful to disentangle essentially different acts that may be found together. Thus he is concerned not to allow a kind of fantasy representation to be admitted to the perceptual process. Perception must not be confused with any other kind of representation—otherwise it is representations all the way down—repeats an argument already put forward in *Logical Investigations* and in his 1907 lectures of *Thing and Space* (Husserl 1997). If a perceiving was composed of both a filled intuition of the presented side of the object along with an "empty intending" (*Leermeinen*) of the co-meant but sensuously empty or unfilled other sides of the object, and if this latter *Leermeinen* were interpreted as a fantasy, then we would never be able to grasp the essence of perceiving as such. Fantasy can, of course, become involved but this involves a new imposition onto the original perception, enabled by that perception and founded on it. Because fantasy in turn is considered as a modification of a perceiving, we cannot then explain perceiving as essentially involving a fantasy-component. So the only upshot is that we have to recognize within the act of perception, different entangled noeses—one that presents in sensuous fullness the front-side "profile" or "shading" (*Abschattung*) of the object, and another "re-presentation" or "envisaging" (*Vergegenwärtigung*) that is explicitly not a fantasy, imagining or picturing (which would have its own fantasy colors, etc.). Husserl speaks here explicitly of "modes of indeterminate suggestion and non-intuitive co-presence" (*Modi unbestimmter Andeutung und unanschaulicher Mitgegenwärtigung*, *Ideen* 183/212) that are wrapped up in the experience. These will later be understood as the horizons which necessarily belong to any experience.

With regard to the intentional object of an experience, Husserl recognizes that there can be the same intended object shared across different perceivings, imaginings, etc., of the same thing. But in fact although one has the sense of the object as the same, the phenomenology is more complicated and "noematic correlates are ... essentially different for perception, phantasy, pictorial envisaging, remembering, and so forth" (*Ideen* 181/210). There is a unique and specific sense belonging to each act: "sense of a perception, the sense of a fantasy, the sense of a memory—and that we find as necessarily pertaining to them in correlation to the relevant kinds of noetic experiences" (*Ideen* 181/210). In this chapter, Husserl is not completely clear on the nature of the noema and the manner in which it relates to the identical ideal sense it contains or supports in some way. Husserl speaks of a "noematic core" (*Kern*), that guarantees that is the same object that is being experienced under different noeses. But there is also a "noetic core" (§ 92). The ego's focal ray (*Blickstrahl*) can penetrate several strata

of noetic acts e.g. remembering an earlier act of remembering, but there is—Husserl always insists—something that unifies the experience as a whole.

In the previous chapter § 85, on the "sensuous *hyle*, intensive *morphe*", Husserl had made some remarks on the need for terminology and here the notion of "noesis" (German: *Noese* and 'noeses' in the plural) is introduced to replace words like "moments of consciousness", "awarenesses" (*Bewusstseien*) (*Ideen* 167/194). He writes:

These noeses make up the specific character of 'nous' in the widest sense of the word; leading us back, in terms of all its current actualized forms of life, to cogitations, and then to intentional experiences in general. Hence it encompasses everything that is (and essentially only what is) an *eidetic presupposition of the idea of a norm*. At the same time, it is not unwelcome that the word 'nous' calls to mind one of its pre-eminent meanings, namely precisely 'sense,' although the 'affordance of sense' [*Sinngebung*] that is achieved in the inherent noetic aspects encompasses many sorts of things, and only as a foundation is it an 'affordance of sense' that is connected to the precise concept of sense. (*Ideen* 167/194)

This is in many ways peculiar—Husserl claims that the Greek *nous* (νοῦς) has a connection with 'sense' (*Sinn*) whereas it is more usually understood as 'mind' or 'intellect' and '*noein*' as 'understanding'. In fact, 'nous' or the 'noetic' is now put forward as a more accurate way of identifying the processes which Brentano somewhat misleadingly called 'psychic'. Husserl concludes by saying that "*the stream of phenomenological being [Der Strom der psychologischen Seins] has a material layer and a noetic layer [Schicht]*" (*Ideen* 168/196). He also acknowledges that he had earlier failed to distinguish these two strata clearly.

The noetic is returned to in Part III Chapter 3 in Section 88 where Husserl says that "every intentional experience is noetic thanks precisely to its inherent noetic aspects. It is its essence to contain in itself something like a "sense"... (*Ideen* 174/202). Something noetic is something oriented towards sense (in some meaning of sense: including the sensuous). Husserl is still retaining the language of "noetic aspects" or "moments" and he is suggesting they are best understood as "focal rays" or radiations of the ego. What is somewhat unfortunate is that the notion of noetic aspects is not analyzed in detail at this point. These noeses occur in strata at lower and higher levels. In fact, there is very little further about noesis in this chapter. Husserl is more interested in the components that can be found in the full concrete experience. Sometimes, however, he is interested in the purely noetic components and here especially the so-called "mental focus" (*geistiges Blick*) of the ego is singled out (see § 92).

Husserl is not very happy with mental focus being identified with "attention" since the term is vague in psychological discourse and what is phenomenologically pertinent has not been singled out. "We tend to compare attention with a

light that illuminates things" (*mit einem erhellende Lichte, Ideen* 183/213), he complains. On the other hand, his own account does not seem to get away from this spotlight metaphor. Husserl speaks here of a "phenomenology of attention" (*Phänomenologie der Aufmerksamkeit*, § 92—also invoked earlier in the *Logical Investigations*) and notes that is one of the chief themes of modern psychology but claims that psychology has misunderstood it and not seen it as a "fundamental form of intentional modification". Husserl insists attention is a fundamental and irreducible form of intentionality distinct from other forms of intuition such as perception. It is not just a component within an existing act but rather an act of a new kind. Furthermore—and this is an important point—attention does not focus solely on the subjective contents of the act (e.g. becoming more aware of the perceiving) but can traverse across all aspects of the original act and its object. Furthermore, Husserl wants primarily to stress that there are specific "shifts in attention" (*attentionalen Wandlungen, Ideen* 182/210), not just in actual variations in attention but ideal possible variations. The nature of attention is complex, and there are different modifications possible in terms of the amount of attention being paid, right to the limit case of inattention where the perceived or remembered object is barely present, present in a dead kind of way that does not awaken anything.

Husserl is also aware that in the varying aspects of perceiving as my eyes linger on the object different aspects come into focus and others recede into the background although they do not disappear altogether (§ 92). There are "modes of actualization" (*Aktualitätsmodi*) and corresponding "modes of inactualization" (*Modus der Inaktualität*) in a kind of 'dead consciousness'. At this point Husserl makes an interesting but undeveloped remark about the place of the ego in the act of attending. In attending there is a beaming or radiating out from the ego—this is not separate from the ego—the ego-ray is the ego itself radiating:

The radiating is not separated from the ego, but instead itself is and remains the ego radiating (*Der Strahl trennt sich nicht vom Ich, sondern ist selbst und bleibt Ichstrahl, Ideen* 184/214)

Is this another eidetic truth? Husserl describes the ego as living in its acts, not as a content of experience (he agreed with Natorp here) but as the experience of a streaming, radiating, intending and suffering life (§ 92).

Husserl does not develop his phenomenology of attention here. He acknowledges that attention did receive a preliminary treatment in the *Logical Investigations*, especially in Second Logical Investigation § 22 and also in the Fifth Logical Investigation § 19.

In the Fifth Logical Investigation § 19 Husserl repudiates the claim that attention is a special act that picks out only the 'content' of the subjective act rather than being focused or absorbed in the object of the act. Husserl thinks attending is a new character of act. Revisiting the discussion of expression in the First Logical Investigation, he here gives the example of listening to a spoken expression. He says we say the words and attend to the meanings and we can of course attend to the sounds specifically in themselves but then the meaning is lost. This attending to the sounds is not actually a component act of the original listening to the meaning but a new intentional act with a new object: "*Attention is an emphatic function which belongs among acts*" (Husserl 2001b, p. 118). More or less the same view is articulated in *Ideas* Chapter Three: attention is a new and irreducible form of intentionality.

In Husserl first discussion of attention in the Second Logical Investigation § 22, entitled "Fundamental deficiencies in the phenomenological analysis of attention", Husserl distinguishes selective attention from abstraction in the course of criticizing traditional empiricist (Locke, Berkeley, Hume) accounts of abstraction as a selective focusing on part of the individual content of an experience. Here he criticizes the "Lockean prejudice" according to which attention picks out the mental contents of the experience but locates them in the subject so that seeing a green tree is interpreted as having a sensation of green:

Unthinkingly one credits to *contents* everything which acts, in their straightforward reference, place in the *object*; its attributes, its colors, forms etc., are forthwith called 'contents' and actually interpreted as contents in the psychological sense, e.g. as sensations. (Husserl 2001a, p. 273)

He continues:

Led astray by the seemingly obvious, one takes experienced contents to be the normal objects to which one pays attention. The concrete phenomenal thing is treated as a complex of contents, i.e. of attributes grown together in a single intuitive image. And it is then said of these attributes, taken as experienced mental contents, that their non-independence precludes their separation from the concretely complete image: they can only be noticed in the latter. How could such a theory of abstraction intelligibly account for the formation of abstract ideas of that class of attributive determinations which are indeed perceived, but which by their nature never are adequately perceived, which cannot be given in the form of a mental content? (Husserl 2001a, p. 273)

This is an important point. Attention (and a mistaken understanding of psychological reflection) has assumed that the intentional object is actually a collection or complex of psychic contents each of which can be focused on. This precisely

misconstrues the intentional structure of the experience and the role of the hyletic stuff in portraying or conveying the sensuous properties of the object.

Let us now examine more closely Husserl's concept of noema as introduced in this chapter. That everything somehow has a kind of sense, that 'makes sense' to the subject or ego, is the fundamental intentional starting-point. Everything that is manifest in consciousness has some kind of coherent sense. Each *phase* of the experience also has a sense and here we have to think of sense in some sort of component feature, perhaps like phonemes in the constitution of languages. There is, moreover, a number of threads of unity running across the experiences. The object is experienced first and foremost as the same object given through different profiles and also apprehended in different noeses. They are all experiences of *the apple tree blossoming in the garden*. At the same time the noeses themselves are coordinated in a rigorous manner and 'crisscross' each other in very specific and determinately ordered ways. There are a number of noetic elements that come together and are united around a 'noetic core'. This is equally important as the 'noematic core' that guarantees the sameness of the object. The hyletic aspects belong to this noetic core but are different from the noetic aspects also in that core.⁷

Husserl is aware that the object has an identity in and through these manifestations. The hyletic data furthermore do not determine or anchor this identity. For example, I can talk to John on the phone [aural data] and see John on the street (without hearing him)—visual data. The visual and aural data are entirely different clusters of data—yet they are both *appearings of the same John*. Furthermore, John is not some ideal limit at the end of an infinite series of such experiences but present in each of them yet not in a static or immanentist manner. The hyletic data—although they do, for Husserl, anchor the intentional function, as Husserl says—at the same time underdetermine the intentional object. There can be no perception as a perception without hyletic sensory experiencings. That is what makes perception perception. Yet the perception of the intentional object as such is an achievement that goes well beyond and is essentially different from the experiencing of hyletic contents.

Husserl often says that noematic content or noema in a perceptual experience is "the perceived as perceived". He also calls it "the noematic correlate" or the "objective sense":

We may notice by this means that, within the noema in its entirety (indeed, as we had announced at the outset), we have to sort out *essentially diverse layers* [*wesentlich verschiedene Schichten*] that group around a central 'core,' [*um einen zentralen 'Kern'*] around the pure 'objective sense' (*um den puren 'gegenständlichen Sinn'*, *Ideen* 181/210)

⁷ For the relation of the hyletic moments to the act quality of the experience, see the contribution of John J. Drummond in this volume.

dene Schichten] that group around a central 'core,' [*um einen zentralen 'Kern'*] around the pure 'objective sense' (*um den puren 'gegenständlichen Sinn'*, *Ideen* 181/210)

The core is the purely objective 'sense'; the sense that remains the same, when we perceive, remember or think about the same object. This noematic core has to be stable across different noeses that take different stances or attitudes (perceiving, imagining, remembering) towards the intended object. But how could this core sense be grasped—is it 'John', as it were, in my example of speaking on the phone, or 'the blossoming apple tree'—abstracted from the fact that it is seen from this or that side? This discussion of the apple tree as such (*der Apferbaum schlechthin*) is already ambiguous. Husserl means the transcendent apple tree, the 'real' tree as it were. This tree has real properties including the property of combustibility. The tree does not lose any 'nuance' of its meaning and the perceiving and liking remains perceiving and liking. In attending to this we describe perception in its noematic aspect.

The problem in this Section is to identify the noema distinction without postulating an internal object that is different from the transcendent actual object. Perception cannot involve a depicting or else there is an infinite regress—with depiction explained in terms of perception and perception assuming depiction, and so on. Husserl here is distinguishing the kind of intentional indwelling of the intentional object from the imaginative depicting of an object. Husserl distinguishes the noema from the sense in this chapter, although he does say repeatedly that the noema is a sense. The sense does not exhaust the "full noema" (*Ideen* § 90). Furthermore, the noema can be uncovered only in the phenomenological or transcendental attitude (the two are equated in this chapter), whereas senses can be found in linguistics, logic and so on.

Husserl's discussion of the noema is unclear in this chapter because he does not really relate it to the intended object. Noemata do not survive—as it were—the withdrawal of the noetic act that supports them and to which they are correlated. They can be abstracted out or separated out but in this case one is simply focusing on one pole of the correlation. Noemata are not the same as senses. Furthermore, it is not necessarily the case that all noemata are expressible in linguistic terms. The peculiar experience of the quality of light filtering through the trees on an autumn day can perhaps be captured in painting or photography or in perception and memory—it has an undoubted sense—but there is no reason to think this sense is expressible in any natural or even ideal language.⁸ We might have to

⁸ Smith and McIntyre in their study articulate the 'expressibility' thesis, namely, that every noematic *Sinn* is in principle expressible in language. Furthermore even John J. Drummond supports

make up new words or simply refer to “component noetic moment no. 1” or whatever. If that is what expressibility means then, of course, it is possible. But I really think Husserl was more concerned with intuitive identification—we should be able—in suitable reflection—to recognize the peculiar operation of component noetic moment no. 1 and also be able to identify the specific function it is performing.

Husserl goes on to say that this does not affect the sense of what is being manifested but only the mode of its manifestation. “Changes of illumination” (*Beleuchtungswechsel*) do not alter the sense. But is this right? I can—in a case of vision—imagine that my car, seen under the dappled light of a street light that is shining through a screen of leaves from a nearby tree, will have a dappled appearance. Do I neglect this mode of actualization of the phenomenon? Is that even what he is talking about? What Husserl says is as follows:

Obviously, the modifications in the noema thereby are not anything like merely external annexes that come to something that remains identical. Instead, the concrete noemata vary through and through; it is a matter of necessary modes in the manner of givenness [*Modi der Gegebenheitsweise*] of something identical. (*Ideen* 184/213)

The noema is not the same as the sense, because the noema changes under different noetic forms of attending, whereas the sense, as something ideal, remains constant across different noetic forms. Husserl will later in the book speak of the core of the noema as a “determinable X”.

Husserl is claiming that there are very specific forms of attention that seem to belong essentially to certain noetic moments. This might be considered to be another eidetic law:

Rather it is apparent, viewed from the noetic side, that certain noeses, whether it be a matter of necessity or their specific possibility, are conditioned by modes of attention and, in particular, by positive attention in the paradigmatic sense. (*Ideen* 184/213–4)

Thus a decision-taking has as a definite mode of actuality. Husserl clarifies with an interesting list of position takings such as decisions, denials, valuations, and resolving-to-do scenarios that have a definite modality of attention attaching to them:

in a qualified way (Drummond 1990, pp. 127–30). Why should that be? It depends on what we mean by ‘expressibility’—it is certainly the case that specific noetic moments may have no names in natural language.

Every instance of ‘carrying out, implementing an act,’ ‘actually [*aktuell*] taking a position,’ for example, ‘carrying out, implementing’ [*Vollzug*] the process of resolving a doubt, rejecting something, positing a subject and attributing a predicate to it, or carrying out the process of making an evaluation [*Wertung*] and an evaluation ‘for the sake of someone else,’ the evaluation of a choice, and so forth—all that presupposes focusing attention positively on that toward which the ego takes a position [*wozu das Ich Stellung nimmt*]. (*Ideen* 184/214)

In other words, it belongs to the noetic side of the essences of conscious acts that there is a certain attentional focus [*Aufmerksamkeit*] on the matter being decided, denied, evaluated, proposed. There is also a manner in which that matter is presented, whether it is being doubted and affirmed, willed, and so on.

Husserl passes from the consideration of perception to other acts and, specifically, judgment. He clearly distinguishes between judging as a psychological process and judgment as an ideal act (§ 94), citing Bolzano, whom he believes has not made this fully clear even with his notion of “judgment in itself”. Although Husserl praises Bolzano highly in the *Logical Investigations* and especially in his Draft Introduction to the Second Edition, in this chapter he claims that Bolzano did not see that the judgment in itself has to understood from two different sides—has two different senses—depending on whether it is the noetic or the noematic moment that is being specified. As a logician he was interested narrowly in the noematic aspect of judging and did not see that the judging itself also had a specific character.

Bolzano never saw that two intrinsically possible interpretations lie at hand here, both of which would need to be designated as ‘judgment in itself’: the specific character of the experience of judgment (the *noetic* idea) and the *noematic* idea correlative to it. (*Ideen* 188n. 33/218 n. 1)

Bolzano was interested solely in the idea or ideal sense, the proposition, expressed in the judgment. But, as Husserl points out, focusing on this idea is not yet phenomenology, which involves a relation to a subject. For that reason, logic and mathematics are eidetic sciences but not yet phenomenology. The noema that is focused on in logic is the noema devoid of its noetic element. Whereas, for Husserl, what is important is the essential correlation between noesis and noema.

In § 94, Husserl analyzes the nature of the noema in judgments of the form “S is P”. What is judged—what he calls here the “content of the judgment”—is the proposition or thought that S is P. In this sense, Husserl says the noema of the judgment is “the judgment”, i.e. the content of the judgment rather than that which is judged about:

The judged [*Geurteilte*] is not to be confused with what the judgment is made about [*Beurteilte*]. (*Ideen* 186/216)

But considered phenomenologically a judgment has both noetic and noematic components and these are essentially correlated. The manner of the act of judging (declarative, putative, possible, made evidently, asserted blindly, and so on) directly affects and modifies the judgment made (the judgment noema). Husserl says that the full noema, the judgment, must be actually taken here in its full concreteness in which there is consciousness of it in the concrete judging. Husserl says across different kinds of judging of the same judgment content, the 'noematic "What"' has to be the same, this is the noematic core, the element that guarantees different kinds of judgment are *about the same matter*.

For simplicity he excludes the verbal features of judgment, the grammatical features of the sentence (analysed by Bertrand Russell and others) in order to focus on the essential structure of the judgment as such. Husserl thinks the phenomenological analysis of judgment is interested in something more than logic. Logic is not interested in the full noema of the judgement, the "noema in its full composition" (*Noema in seinem vollen Bestand*, *Ideen* 187/218), but only in a certain aspect of this judgment noema, its abstract ideal sense. The phenomenological approach is interested in the manner in which the judgment is given, the "how of givenness". As Husserl points out

Consider a judgment 'S is P,' made on the basis of evidence, and 'the same' judgment, blindly made. The two judgments are noematically diverse but identical in terms of a core of sense [*Sinneskern*] that is alone determining for the formal logical consideration. (*Ideen* 188/218)

The noema—understood as the logical noema—does not stand alone; it is not 'self-standing':

The same 'S is P,' as noematic core, can be the 'content' of a certainty, of a surmising of it as possible, or of a supposing, and so forth. The 'S is P' does not stand alone in the noema; instead, insofar as it is thought there as content, it is something not self-standing [*Unselbstständiges*]. (*Ideen* 189/219)

This is an important point. If the noema is not something "self-standing" or "independent" then it cannot be conceived of as an ideal mind-independent abstract object in the manner of a Fregean sense. Husserl does not say in this chapter that the noema is particular or universal, it is a kind of meaning but a meaning which includes reference to the subjective point of view. This makes it a very peculiar kind of entity.

Having discussed first straightforward perception and then judgment, paragraph 95 focuses on emotional acts and acts of willing. Husserl simply wants to make the point that the noesis/noema correlation applies here also but with a different essential structure. A new layer is added to an intentional experience when the element or moment of "valuing" is introduced. Not only do we value something (i.e. perform an act of valuing or appreciating, correspondingly the valued object appears as valued, as appreciated. We can simply say, it is a valuable object, or as Husserl says "it introduces valuableness as a new objective layer". The intended object has the property not only of being actually valued now by someone but as being valuable, although this needs a great deal of further analysis.

As the chapter concludes Husserl has brought to light the essential correlation between noesis and noema. He has introduced the new concept of noema which is meant to cover all that is involved in "the perceived as such", "the judged as such", and he has also begun to recognize how differences in the noetic bring about changes in the noema. Only hinted at in this chapter is the complex manner in which sense-contents (what Husserl calls the "hyletic" contents) are actually part of the noetic character of the act. The object intended is characterized primarily as transcendent. In order for different noetic acts to be anchored to the same intentional object there must be a common "noematic core". These are all discoveries on which the discussions in Chapter Four will build. Much more will be said about the concept of noema.

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Nicolas de Warren

Concepts without pedigree: The noema and neutrality modification

Section III, chapter 4, On the problems of noetic-noematic structures

"Everything is difficult."
- Edmund Husserl

1. Phenomenological pedagogy

"On the problems of noetic-noematic structures," the heading for a sweeping set of paragraphs 97–127 in *Ideen I*, represents a central discussion for the inception of pure phenomenology and phenomenological philosophy. As Husserl states in § 84, "intentionality is the basic theme of objective oriented phenomenology." As the unique subject-matter of phenomenological inquiry and the principle acquisition of its method of *epoché* and reduction, intentionality essentially characterizes the "absolute region" of pure consciousness and its field of phenomenological structures. Before we enter into the depth and details of the noetic-noematic structures under consideration in these paragraphs, we do well to remind ourselves of Husserl's over-arching enterprise and ambition. In the paragraph immediately preceding (§ 96, appropriately titled "transition to subsequent chapters") this turn to "the problems of noetic-noematic structures," we find yet another occasion where Husserl reminds his readers of the spectacle unfolding before their eyes within the dense progression of *Ideen I*.

Husserl writes: "Phenomenology presents itself in our exposition as a science that is commencing. Only the future can instruct us on how many of the results of the analyses attempted here are ultimately valid" (*Ideen* 193/224). This emphasis on phenomenology as a commencing science (*anfangende Wissenschaft*) was first announced in the opening statement of the Introduction to the *Ideen*. As Husserl there proclaims: "Pure phenomenology is an essentially new science, one that, by virtue of its very distinctiveness, lies far afield of natural thinking and consequently presses now, for the first time, for development" (*Ideen* 3/3). From these very first lines, the reader and would-be phenomenological thinker is invited to participate in an unheralded enterprise, the significance of which is deemed pressing for our times, yet without any initial transparency regarding the direction and object of this adventure. This invitation to pure phe-