§ 1. Introduction

In the introduction to the third and last volume of his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* of 1929, entitled “Phenomenology of Knowledge,” Ernst Cassirer remarks that the meaning in which he employs the term ‘phenomenology’ is Hegelian rather than according to “the modern usage of the term.”¹ What sense can it make, then, to invoke Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology in this context? Yet if, roughly speaking, phenomenology can be characterized as the *logos of phenomena*, that is, of being insofar as it appears (*phainesthai*) to a conscious subject, then the sense of phenomenology need not be so different from what Cassirer terms “the modern usage.”² Phenomenology in this more liberal sense would be an account of how consciousness experiences the world through different forms of experience and in different spaces of meaning. The addition ‘hermeneutic’, moreover, points to a broader methodological scope.


². It is noteworthy that around 1925, at a time when Martin Heidegger still conceived of himself (more or less) as a phenomenologist in the traditional (Husserlian) sense, he notes: “Contemporary phenomenology has, with certain caveats, a good deal in common with Hegel, not with the *Phenomenology of Spirit* but with that which Hegel meant with logic. The latter is to be identified with certain reservations with contemporary phenomenological research.” Martin Heidegger, *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, Gesamtausgabe 21 (Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann, 1976), 32. This is not merely a historical remark about Heidegger; he merely, and rightfully, points to a common problem in Hegel, Husserl, and the neo-Kantians.
than that which one usually associates with phenomenology, that is, the phenomenological paradigm of description based on intuition. ‘Hermeneutic’ connotes an interpretative dimension that goes beyond mere description. It will become necessary to expand phenomenology in this direction.

In this attempt at a comparison between Cassirer and Husserl, I shall employ this broad concept of phenomenology—with the addition ‘hermeneutic’—as a philosophical project that investigates how consciousness relates to the world. In this sense, it is neither solely Cassirer’s nor Husserl’s nor, for that matter, Hegel’s, although the phrase ‘of subjective and objective spirit’ undoubtedly has a Hegelian ring to it. Indeed, it points to a subjective and objective tendency that is present in Husserl and Cassirer, respectively. Moreover, ‘a hermeneutic phenomenology’ indicates that both philosophical concepts and methods, phenomenology and neo-Kantianism, usually taken to be so different from the very outset, can be mediated and brought to a certain synthesis. This synthesis forms a correlation within an account that aims at a transcendental theory that elucidates the interrelation of mind and world. This comparison does not intend merely to compare terminology when employing the words ‘phenomenology’, ‘hermeneutic’, and ‘subjective and objective spirit’ to characterize this enterprise. Instead, I propose to broaden the restrictive sense in which both philosophical schools have used these terms, in order to open them up towards a more encompassing account of transcendental philosophy in the spirit of phenomenology and Kantianism.

Indeed, Husserl’s analysis of the constitution of the world through subjectivity’s passive and active achievements and Cassirer’s account of the symbolic forms, as transcendental forms of intuition that constitute and structure the cultural “spaces of meaning,” can and must be seen as forming a correlation. This correlation gives an account of the way the world appears for an experiencing subject in the framework of a philosophical doctrine that is committed to transcendental idealism. Idealism states that all being is being-for-consciousness, and this forms a correlation that cannot be severed. Both Husserl and Cassirer endorse this general doctrine, yet they pursue it in different but reciprocal “directions.” Both the neo-Kantian and phenomenological methods in this sense are incomplete without one another. Certainly, for both Cassirer and Husserl this would have been asking a lot. Neither of them saw their philosophies as complementing each other in this way. However, both not only took over crucial elements of the other’s theory and integrated them into their own. They were also working on complementary projects. Perhaps they were not able to really see eye to eye due to the belligerent character of the

3. I take this term from Steven G. Crowell’s Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 2001). To thematize the specific “space of meaning” for experiencing subjects is, to paraphrase Crowell, phenomenology’s grand achievement.
philosophical scene in Europe in the first decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, the vigor with which discussions were fought out in defending opposing philosophical doctrines at that time is hardly comprehensible some eighty plus years afterwards. Philosophical convergences were both ignored and deliberately overlooked.

Yet to spell out these intersections and filiations after so much time has merit not only for the sake of historiography and for rectifying the tired image that neo-Kantianism was a floundering project that was rightfully superseded by phenomenology and existentialism. Reassessing the philosophical debate in this historical situation has significant systematic ramifications and points to a discussion that is ongoing in philosophy today, namely the question of how to analyze adequately the subject matter germane to transcendental philosophy. A modern conception of philosophy—in this Husserl and Cassirer agree—could only be placed in a transcendental framework. This is a systematic claim of timeless character. Yet, in order to show how Husserl and Cassirer arrived at this conclusion one cannot proceed purely systematically. This discussion requires a reconstruction of the historical developments in both thinkers. Indeed, their philosophies are not conceivable without the constant interaction with proponents of the other school that aided them in their own philosophical progress. Although proceeding historically, however, this should not cloud the fact that stating that there is such a correlation implies a strong systematic claim. After all, phenomenology has traditionally presented itself as forming a stark antithesis to Kantianism, especially to its alleged formalism vis-à-vis phenomenology’s intuitive approach. To show that phenomenology and transcendental philosophy in a Kantian vein are complementary has crucial consequences for both philosophies. As contemporary discussions show, this is not a dated issue but one that is reemerging in scholarship today.4

This discussion hinges most prominently on the method used for giving an account of the field or region germane to philosophy. The debate over method lies at the heart of the dispute between phenomenology and transcendental philosophy in the Kantian tradition: in particular, it has consequences of phenomenology itself. The critique, which has followed phenomenology like a shadow since its inauguration with Husserl’s Logical Investigations (1900–1901),5 is leveled at nothing other than what Husserl considered the most basic

4. See the interesting systematic introduction in Crowell’s Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning, where he shows how many of the ideas that, e.g., John McDowell discusses in his Mind and World (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1994) have been discussed between the neo-Kantians and phenomenology in the period I am dealing with in the present paper.

methodological premise, namely that of pure intuition that brings phenomena to clear and distinct evidence. In other words, the neo-Kantian critique aims at the method of direct, evident description based on intuition. Later (re-)formulated in the phenomenological movement by Martin Heidegger and others following him, it is nearly forgotten now that this criticism was already intensively discussed in the early years after the publication of the Logical Investigations among the prevailing thinkers at the time, including the proponents of hermeneutic (or life) philosophy and the neo-Kantians, most importantly Paul Natorp. This is more than merely a historical observation. Rather, Natorp’s initial critique aided Husserl in transforming his phenomenology into a transcendental philosophy.

Husserl was well aware that his new method was a radical departure from those of these established schools. Proponents of these challenged, as a reaction, this intuitionistic paradigm, which seemed fundamental to the point of being trivial, by insisting that pure intuition rests on unclarified presuppositions. In other words—as Gadamer later formulated it—Husserl’s ideal of presuppositionless description and presuppositionlessness was itself a presupposition. Accordingly, to stick entirely to description based on pure and evident intuition would result, for the most part, in trivial findings. Knowledge the way the Kantians understood it, as based on principles (not intuition), would never be reached. Through intuition one would not gain any true understanding, since understanding entails a certain interpretation whose basis is necessarily a specific type of construction, that is, it involves a cognitive activity. Description based on intuition might reach a high level of concretion, but it is neither the first task for transcendental philosophy, nor the last. Yet in spite of this critique, the merits of the phenomenological method were also acknowledged, within certain limits; description can certainly give a rich account of the life-world and consciousness that experiences it; but, truly philosophically, nothing much is gained by it. One needs more than just description in order to attain a philosophically satisfying method. Yet very few philosophers, least of all Natorp and Cassirer, were dismissive of the phenomenological method but saw it, instead, as a valuable tool to give an account of the life of consciousness. It was generally hailed as a method that was here to stay, while at the same time not being the last word on method either. Description needed to be complemented by construction.


6. Heidegger’s critique of the intuitive method comes most clearly to the fore in his emphasis on Dasein as being-in-the-world, which can at best “re-lucently” thematize its intentionally constituted interiority. Dasein’s true intentionality consists of “being-with” objects (as ready-to-hand or present-to-hand) or other Dasein “in the world.” This criticism is further advanced, e.g., in Jean-Paul Sartre’s account of the transcendence of the ego.
Indeed, this critique did not have the power to overthrow phenomenology; rather, it can even potentially strengthen it precisely by incorporating elements which were originally considered alien to it; Husserl did precisely this but thereby moved into the direction of the neo-Kantians. Husserl himself was much more open to the neo-Kantian point of view than many others of the phenomenological movement who saw in Husserl’s transcendental turn a mere aberration from his early principles. As such, this is certainly not merely a discussion from a Husserlian point of view intended to strengthen it at all costs. Rather, what is at stake is the method of doing philosophy within an enterprise committed to the transcendental turn. It was Husserl’s being true to the principles of phenomenology that led him to make the transcendental turn. Likewise, it was the compelling nature of Husserl’s phenomenological descriptions that led Cassirer to incorporate elements of Husserl’s method into his own. In general, the methodological opposition between phenomenology and Kantianism can be seen as a paradigmatic debate over this question of adequately studying what one could call “the transcendental realm,” and it is precisely a dispute over intuition versus construction as the basis for analysis with regard to the transcendental realm. The result of this essay will be that in order to analyze this transcendental realm, one needs both methodological principles. The perceived contradiction concerning both methods need not be maintained. Instead it can be conceived as a complementary correlation. Moreover, in the application of this method, both the phenomenological and the Kantian approach adhere to their own subject domains, which as well turn out to be a correlation “within” the transcendental realm, that is, the “subjective” and “objective” side, respectively. Thus what is at stake here is a double correlation: a methodological and a thematic one regarding the subject domain of this method.

Besides Natorp and Husserl, there is yet another figure of crucial importance here: Cassirer’s teacher and Husserl’s personal friend Natorp. Natorp was one of the first to publicly criticize Husserl’s method of phenomenological intuition and, later, Husserl’s static method in *Ideas I* and it was with Natorp that Husserl had the most intense interaction of all contemporary philosophers. Natorp’s sketch of a philosophical psychology in his *Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology* 7

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tion to Psychology\textsuperscript{9} from 1888 and later in his General Psychology according to Critical Method\textsuperscript{10} from 1912 had a significant influence on Husserl. Moreover, it was the method expounded in Natorp’s work that was to be the cornerstone of Cassirer’s method of symbolic formation. Confronting Husserl with Cassirer is impossible without first walking the reader through the discussion between Husserl and Natorp. Although Cassirer himself rests entirely on the “Marburg method,” the transcendental method proposed first by Hermann Cohen and expanded by Natorp by a critical psychology, Cassirer has significantly broadened and transformed its original scope. Thus, in order to properly assess this relation, one must take the historical route and discuss first the issues arising in the debates between Husserl and Natorp. Taking Natorp into this discussion also contributes to adding a largely unwritten chapter of the history of twentieth century philosophy, as his influence both on Husserl and Cassirer is usually downplayed by scholars.

Hence this paper is divided into two parts. The first part will reiterate the dispute between Husserl and Natorp and show how it helped bring about Husserl’s full-fledged method that stands under the heading of genetic phenomenology. Yet Husserl’s incorporating insights of Natorp’s method into his own “softens” the opposition between both methods. Since Cassirer builds upon Natorp’s method, the correlation between the phenomenological and neo-Kantian methods is visible already here. That is, Natorp’s method, originally intended as a critique of the intuitive phenomenological method, can be viewed as a way to complement Husserl’s phenomenology, because Natorp puts his finger on a weak spot in Husserl’s method, namely his alleged “static Platonism.” Husserl originally rejects Natorp’s genetic method of reconstruction, yet he later realizes that he must make use of “reconstructive” elements as he moves towards his “genetic phenomenology.” Incorporating these reconstructive elements implies a self-critique of Husserl’s intuitionism; indeed, certain “constructive” elements are necessary for his genetic phenomenology and hence for a full-fledged transcendental phenomenology. Natorp is the strongest influence behind Husserl’s turn to genetic phenomenology.

\textsuperscript{9}Paul Natorp, \textit{Einleitung in die Psychologie nach kritischer Methode} (Freiburg: Mohr, 1888); henceforth cited as \textit{EP} with page reference.

\textsuperscript{10}Paul Natorp, \textit{Allgemeine Psychologie nach kritischer Methode} (Tübingen: Mohr, 1912); henceforth cited as \textit{AP} with page reference.
The second part will illustrate how Natorp’s method sets up Cassirer’s own systematic approach precisely in overcoming Natorp’s methodological shortcomings. Cassirer readily and openly acknowledges Natorp’s influence. However, he views Natorp’s method as too narrowly conceived and thus expands it into a pluralistically conceived method. Husserl, for his part, makes a similar move that makes it possible to confront him with Cassirer. Having presented both the phenomenological and neo-Kantian methods, it will become clear how they can be synthesized into what I have termed ‘a hermeneutic phenomenology of subjective and objective spirit’. This is not meant merely as a historic account of the relationship between Husserl, Natorp, and Cassirer. Instead both methods together can help us gain a better understanding and yield a richer account of what transcendental philosophy is to accomplish. Both methods are neither unrelated nor unmediatable. They can—and in fact should—be unified. They complement each other in decisive ways that for the most part have not been acknowledged by representatives of either side of the “divide” to this day. In this sense, this discussion is, on the one hand, intended to reinvigorate a somewhat forgotten debate in the history of modern philosophy. On the other, it is a systematic contribution to overcoming the strict separation between the Kantian and phenomenological ways of framing transcendental philosophy.

§ 2. Husserl and Natorp: Intuition versus Reconstruction, Or Intuition and Reconstruction?

The dispute between Husserl and Natorp begins immediately after the publication of the first edition of the Logical Investigations in 1900–1901. To understand Natorp’s objections, one should keep in mind that in most philosophical circles, especially in the early phenomenological groups in Munich and Göttingen, Husserl’s call to the “things themselves” was perceived as a liberating turn away from questions regarding subjective foundational structures and categories and a turn towards the object. Although Husserl confusingly calls phenomenology “descriptive psychology” in the preface to the second volume of the Logical Investigations—after he had just completed a refutation of psychologism in volume I—the analyses are object-oriented insofar as phenomenology talks about objects as phenomena, that is, as they appear in (or “fulfill” themselves in) intentional acts, following the correlation of intention and fulfillment of the First Logical Investigation. What was to be thematicized in intentional analysis was the intentional relation that governs “between” ego and object. Consequently, in this early account Husserl took the stance of skepticism with respect to a pure ego synthesizing all these subjective acts;

11. See LI, 24, see n. 1 for the text of the first edition (which was subsequently modified in the second edition of 1913).
such would be succumbing to an “ego metaphysics”\textsuperscript{12} that phenomenology had purportedly left behind.

Natorp was the first to press Husserl on the issue of the pure ego and in the first book of Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and Phenomenological Philosophy from 1913, Husserl records that Natorp’s arguments in his Introduction to Psychology—arguments that he reiterated in his 1901 book review of the Prolegomena\textsuperscript{13}—led him to reconsider the question of the pure ego. As Husserl acknowledged, it was through Natorp that he had “learned to find” the pure ego (LI, 374).\textsuperscript{14} It was in Ideas I as well that Husserl introduced the phenomenological reduction, thus inaugurating the transcendental turn for phenomenology, and, in so doing, estranging a good number of followers of phenomenology. Phenomenology, Husserl realized, needed to make recourse to an ego as a foundation or center point synthesizing all experience. While this was framed as a Cartesian motive, as method of radical doubt, it is equally a concession to Natorp, who claimed from the outset that intentional acts must have a “radiating center [Ausstrahlungszentrum].” In Natorp’s words, it is constitutive for “facts of consciousness [Thatsachen des Bewußtseins]” to have a “relation to the ego” (EP, 11). Performing the transcendental turn in the Cartesian way made it unnecessary, if not impossible, for Husserl to deny the existence of such a center within egoic life. Also, closer insight into the nature of intentionality made it necessary for Husserl to focus on the subjective “side” of acts (the “noeses”) and hence their character as constituting or “transcendental.” These acts are transcendental insofar as a critical “epoché” was needed in order to thematize the structure of intentionality in its purity. Only such a “pure” thematization could be rigorously scientific (eidetic). Husserl sees the epoché as “purifying” consciousness of its worldly elements and “reducing” it to its essential structures, those of intentionality.

\textsuperscript{12} This concept of a pure ego that is lacking in the first edition of LI can also be termed ‘transcendental’ ego from Husserl’s later standpoint. Although, to be sure, both are not the same, what Husserl is about to discover is the ego which experiences world and thus cannot be part of the world, and is therefore “pure.” This conception of the pure ego as standing opposed to the world it experiences is, in simple terms, the way Husserl understands the “transcendentality” of transcendental consciousness. See Husserl’s letter to Dietrich Mahnke of 1925 (BW, 3, 450–51): “Then the phenomenological reduction, carried out on the basis of the general thesis [of the natural attitude], is merely the method . . . to study human interior life in its purity” (emphasis added).


\textsuperscript{14} See also his addition to this § 8 of the Fifth Logical Investigation in the second edition, ibid., 376. Here Husserl states that through Natorp he has learned to be less “shy of metaphysics” with regard to a metaphysics of a pure ego. Here he also mentions that he left this section in its entirety for the sake of documenting a certain, dated, discussion, since it also does not diminish the importance of the train of thought Husserl pursues in the Fifth Investigation. See also § 57 of Ideas I, 123–24, where he discusses the pure ego.
turn, necessarily includes an ego that relates intentional acts around a center.15 This is, however, already a presentation of the results of Husserl’s reflections as a response to Natorp. Let us backtrack to reconstruct how Husserl arrived at this conclusion.

Ironically, although Natorp is the one to insist on the existence of a pure ego, he himself takes a skeptical stance with regard to a description of this pure ego. Following Kant, the ego is a mere transcendental, a priori, synthesizing principle that makes experience possible. Experience itself, however, is at all times a dynamic process. Paradoxically, the manner in which Natorp conceives of his “psychology,” albeit framed “according to critical method,”16 implies that a psychology later envisioned by Husserl—an eidetic, descriptive discipline of intentional structures—is impossible. Natorp’s psychology has a different scope than an eidetic science, precisely due to the specific character of subjectivity. Psychology is supposed to tap into the concrete life of the subject, that is, precisely in its dynamic flowing that evades an eidetic characterization. What Natorp has in mind with psychology is not an experimental science but a philosophical consideration of subjectivity that needs to subjectivity’s special and distinct character. As such, the question is whether it should be part of transcendental philosophy. So, first, what is the character of transcendental philosophy according to the “Marburg method”?

Transcendental philosophy according to the “Marburg method” has to do entirely with objectivity and how objectivity becomes constructed through sub-

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16. Although this cannot further be discussed here, it is worth pointing out that the title of Natorp’s work is already programmatically aimed at the title of Franz Brentano’s Psychology from an Empirical [!] Point of View and is, to be sure, completely opposed to an empirical framing of subjectivity. Brentano’s work was first published in 1874. It plays virtually no role in Natorp’s Einleitung in die Psychologie nach kritischer Methode from 1888 and is mentioned only twice in passing in the new edition of the work from 1912, which bears the new title, Allgemeine Psychologie nach kritischer Methode and here only in the context of Natorp’s discussion of Husserl’s doctrine of intentionality (see AP, 274 and 286). As is well-known, Husserl saw himself in his early years as a member of Brentano’s school of thought but emancipated himself from this school at the latest after the publication of the Logical Investigations. Except for the theme of intentionality, that is, Husserl’s phenomenological psychology is much closer to Natorp’s than to Brentano’s. In a seminar from the winter semester of 1922–23, dealing with Natorp’s Allgemeine Psychologie, Husserl refers to Natorp’s Einleitung in die Psychologie as “one of the most important books [in psychology] of the nineteenth century” (Johan Heindrickus Pos’s unpaginated notes in the Husserl Archives in Leuven under the signature N I 26, here Husserl’s seminar of November 24, 1922).
jectivity, through the conditions that make constructed objectivity possible. The realm of objectivity—reality—comes to be known through objectivating acts (perception, for example), and continues to be objectively known, or simply “objectivated,” through positive sciences as higher-order objectifications. In simpler terms, experience constructs reality, and transcendental philosophy ascertains the conditions of possibility of this construction. This focus on the construction of reality, first through experience and then through science (and ultimately all other cultural activities), expresses the Marburg paradigm that transcendental philosophy has to take its departure from the factum that is primarily that of science (das Faktum der Wissenschaft). According to this Marburg reading, Kant’s critique of reason is firstly (if not exclusively) a doctrine of the “logic of scientific discovery,” a theory of science. Hence, every scientific deed discovers and ascertains new “findings” and as such objectifies them. Transcendental philosophy consequently clarifies the lawful conditions of the possibility of these cognizing deeds. Now, in this “objectifying” consideration, where is the subject? Subjectivity is “found” in the objects it creates, and critical, transcendental philosophy clarifies solely what is involved in constructing these objects. Transcendental philosophy is directed at the object, and as such, is inherently constructive, that is, object-oriented.

Natorp’s point now is that the factum, however, is a fieri, that is, something that is accomplished by human beings in their cultural activity. Psychology thematizes this fieri itself. Natorp thereby intends to fill in a dark spot that was left open in the original scope of Hermann Cohen’s method, namely, by providing a discipline dedicated to the subjective “side” of this process, to the fieri itself. The originality of this method becomes clear when one sees that this aspect was considered an entirely unnecessary discipline by Cohen. Natorp’s key insight was that philosophy in

17. This formula (“the factum is the factum of science [das Faktum der Wissenschaft]”) goes back to Natorp’s teacher Hermann Cohen. Furthering this idea, Natorp then insists that the factum is properly understood a fieri; i.e. the factum as that which consciousness experiences as (literally, from the Latin facere) “finished” is at the same time a product of experiencing and thus of “producing” (fieri) consciousness. See also Paul Natorp, Philosophische Systematik (Hamburg: Meiner, 2000), 12.

18. In his discussion of the constructive character of subjective description, Rudolf A. Makkreel is rightly making a connection to Kant’s conception of the reflective power of judgment which needs to construct a priori a teleology of (and for) empirical intuition. Thus, already at this level, Natorp as well as Cassirer (although the latter might have been more aware of it) go beyond the conception of subjectivity conceived as pure reason. See Rudolf A. Makkreel, “Wilhelm Dilthey and the Neo-Kantians: The Distinction of the Geisteswissenschaften and the Kulturwissenschaften,” Journal of the History of Philosophy 7 (1969), 423–40, here 430.

19. Cohen dismisses this subjective side wholesale. As he says in his most famous work, Kants Theorie der Erfahrung (Hildesheim: Olms, 1987), 103: “It is hence a sign of critical maturity to assume undissolvable elements of consciousness.” Kant’s theory of experience, in this reading, has simply nothing to do with experience but with concepts. Greetings to John McDowell!
some way or another needed to address this concretion of the life of the subject in its creative (‘poietic’, as he later calls it) character, and it makes understandable why Natorp saw himself in alliance with Husserl’s phenomenological approach from the outset. Yet, since he is steeped in the transcendental method, the character of his psychology is problematic.

Indeed, because experience is constructive and objectifying Natorp takes a skeptical stance with respect to a description of subjectivity itself: every utterance is objectifying. This holds also for that regarding subjective occurrences: the moment they are objectified, through whichever method, they are no longer subjective. But in this objectification—and one cannot avoid it—the subjective is lost; it is made objective. In objectifying subjectivity through experimental science, for example, that very element which accounts for the true meaning of subjectivity dissipates. The immediate subjective character has vanished, its dynamic nature is brought to a standstill and hence can no longer be recognized as what it intrinsically is, a dynamic process of concrete life. Objectifying subjective experience “inserts” subjectivity into another element in which it is treated like a doctor treating a corpse instead of a living being (AP, 191):

Because this is so, [consciousness] must be inaccessible to all further description; for all that through which one would want to describe it . . . could only be taken from the content of consciousness, that is, it would presuppose itself, the ego. . . . Being an ego means not being an object [Gegenstand] but, opposed to all objectivity, that to whom something is an object.

It is psychology’s task to “save” subjectivity from objectification. This does not mean that Natorp rejects an account of consciousness altogether; rather, there can be no direct description of consciousness in the way that there can be a direct intuition of a perceptual object or a direct cognition of a law of nature. Consciousness is not among, next to, or above other objects and objectivities; for it is not an object. Rather, it is opposed to all objectivity and as such the “foundation” of all objectivity as that from where construction takes its departure. Because Natorp insists on the special character of consciousness in the most radical way, it can never be conceived along the lines of or by any analogy to objective reality; there persists, as it were, an “ontological differ-

20. I shall quote the passage for the sake of its striking language: “When reading nearly all books on psychology, one cannot lose the impression that one is walking through morgues: One sees corpse next to corpse and hundred hands busy with stripping the dead of even the faintest appearance of livelihood, even the faintest memory of any life, a memory that was at least preserved before taking apart the corpse, when all joints were together according to their original combination.” Husserl comments on this passage with “Notabene,” marginal note on page 192 of Husserl’s personal copy of Allgemeine Psychologie, which is stored at the Husserl Archives in Louvain under the shelf signature BQ 342. Husserl’s personal copy of Allgemeine Psychologie will be henceforth referenced as ‘BQ 342’ with page number (quoted after Husserl’s copy of Allgemeine Psychologie).
ence” between subjectivity and objectivity. Natorp is keenly aware of the immediacy and absolute originality (AP, 29: “absolute Ursprünglichkeit”) of that which one nowadays might call ‘first-person perspective’ that renders his consequence this radical. Excluding this direct access to subjectivity is intended to preserve its very nature. Yet, although Natorp is correct in insisting on this radical difference, Husserl contends that he does not carry through with it completely on the methodological level. Let us thus briefly turn to Husserl before discussing Natorp’s psychological method.

Although Natorp already makes these claims before Husserl begins his philosophical undertaking, it is clear that they contradict everything phenomenology stands for. Indeed, it is paradigmatic for any phenomenological approach—transcendental or “realistic”—to declare intuition based on subjective evidence as a foundation for any further philosophical inquiry. Phenomenology is, in its purest and most basic sense, description of consciousness based on intuition. This is formulated in Husserl’s famous “principle of all principles,” according to which everything philosophy builds upon must have a foundation in “self-giving evidence and intuition” (Ideas I, § 24, p. 51). However, this foundational principle does not entail just any intuition, such as basic sensuous perception. Phenomenological intuition comes into play when describing essences.

This implies a claim concerning what is not yet truly phenomenological description. In this sense, where the phenomenological principle is carried out most impressively is precisely in thematizing consciousness eidetically. In this respect, both Natorp and Husserl are vigorously against “naturalizing” consciousness as not recognizing the radical difference between subjectivity and “objective” being, that is, nature. Whereas Natorp proposes an approach to consciousness that is different from the objectifying tendency, Husserl goes a different path, yet for the same reason, that is, to avoid naturalism. Yet precisely with this eidetic science he is also intent on getting back to the concrete life of consciousness.

Indeed, that consciousness Husserl wants to describe with the phenomenological-intuitive method is not the natural consciousness we find in our everyday experience. It is from this consciousness and having-of-world that we must practice an epoché and look at pure structures of consciousness-as-such. This “bracketing” of the natural attitude, which consists of believing in the existence of the world independent of subjective experience, reveals “absolute” subjectivity that is not part of the world but opposed to it as its transcendental correlate. The subjective structures that transcendental phenomenology describes are hence no longer those of worldly (human) subjectivity, but subjectivity-as-such. However, this subjectivity is only attained by a radical change of attitude, in which (Husserl insists) nothing is “lost” but viewed from a radically different perspective. Phenomenology is conceived as the eidetic science of transcendental subjectivity, something Husserl also likes to term “transcendent-
at empiricism,” a provocation to any Kantian, neo- or otherwise. From here, Husserl comes to embrace transcendental idealism as the doctrine which is committed to the radical opposition between (constituting) subjectivity and (constituted) objectivity, both of which are related to each other in a “correlational a priori.” It is clear, however, that Husserl operates with a novel concept of “transcendental.” It is not a formal set of knowledge from principles a priori but a field of intuition into the subject after the epoché has occurred (and with it, a bracketing of the naive belief in the independent existence of the world); it is not merely a formal, but a material a priori that thematizes the concrete life of subjectivity eidetically. Thus, consciousness can be described when one makes a shift from the naive, everyday perspective to the phenomenological standpoint.

In other words, as opposed to Natorp, Husserl insists that a description of subjectivity in itself is possible if one concedes that subjectivity is an experienceable region of conscious life to which one can gain access via reflection (or “introspection”) when one breaks with the ordinary way of viewing things. Yet Husserl agrees with Natorp that this description must not naturalize subjectivity and treat it as another worldly being—hence the shift via the phenomenological reduction to pure, transcendental consciousness. Yet, whereas Natorp employs his critique of intuition of consciousness as a criti-

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22. Although this terminological distinction between formal and material a priori can be found in Husserl—see Hua XVIII, 220—it was especially Max Scheler who emphasized the “material a priori” as phenomenology’s main discovery vis-à-vis the purely formal a priori in Kant. See his magnum opus, Formalism in Ethics, and also his text “Phänomenologie und Erkenntnistheorie” (Phenomenology and Epistemology) from circa 1916. It is noteworthy that in this text from his Nachlass Scheler formulates the distinction between formal and material a priori precisely in the context of a critique of Cassirer’s philosophy of symbolic forms (this passage shall be discussed subsequently), see Max Scheler, Schriften aus dem Nachlass I: Zur Ethik und Erkenntnistheorie, ed. Maria Scheler (Bern: Franke, 2d ed., 1957), 383–84: “Phenomenology’s apriorism is indeed able to take up the correct intuitions that were present in Plato’s and Kant’s apriorism. Yet an abyss divides phenomenology from these other doctrines. . . . Next to the so-called formal a priori of the intuitive facts of pure logic, every factual region reveals to the intuitive regard in each case a whole system of material principles a priori, based on essential intuition, principles that tremendously expand Kant’s apriorism. And in each case is the a priori in the logical sense a result of the a priori of the intuited facts that constitute the objects of judgments and principles.”

23. I am using the terms “introspection” and “reflection” very loosely here. All that I mean to say is that access to subjective structures requires a turning-away from the world and a turn-to experience of world. Since Husserl later distinguishes between “natural” and “radical” reflection, he concedes a rudimentary form of this type of reflection already in the natural attitude, whereas only “radical” reflection performs a break with the natural attitude. We can, however, neglect this complicated issue in Husserl’s theory of the phenomenological reduction in this discussion. For a discussion of this distinction, see Edmund Husserl, Erste Philosophie (1923/24). Zweiter Teil: Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion, ed. Rudolf Boehm, Husserliana VIII (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1959), 92–97.
cism of phenomenology, for Husserl it becomes the very starting point for a transcendental recasting of the phenomenological method. From this perspective, the phenomenological reduction is a way out of the epistemological dilemma Natorp had described, that is, that describing involuntarily is objectifying. The problem is not solved but avoided by taking a detour via another level of reflection by breaking with the natural attitude. The transcendental standpoint attained in the transcendental reduction situates itself in another “dimension” vis-à-vis that of objectivity. This is possible because the phenomenologist practices a radical break with the natural attitude and thereby is in a position where she can intuit conscious structures, which are not her private structures but which belong to any subjective experience-as-such. Hence, the transcendental turn first truly enables phenomenological (eidetic) intuitionism; a pre-transcendental account would be by necessity naturalistic.

Although Natorp, in turn, agrees with Husserl’s emphasis on intentionality and its discernible structures, this structure is to him a mere formal framework which in itself does not yield the basis for any further “material” investigation. Thus, Husserl writes on the margin of his copy of Natorp’s General Psychology, in a passage where Natorp expounds his critique of intuition:

The opposition object-subject at play here finds its understandable resolution only through the phenomenological reduction, or in the contrast between the natural attitude, which already has givennesses, being, objects, and the transcendental attitude which goes back to the ego cogito, that is, that makes a transition to absolute reflection which posits primal facts [Urtatsachen] and primal cognition [Urerkenntnis], that is, absolute cognition . . . that has no pregivenness but is cognition which solely has itself [sich selbst habendes Erkennen].

Husserl’s method of the transcendental reduction is a critique of the Kantian paradigm that intuition into the true realm of subjective life—whether one wants to label it transcendental or not—is impossible without “killing” it.  

24. Natorp weighs them somewhat differently, however: he calls them consciousness, the “fact-of-having-something-consciousness” (die Bewußtheit), and the content of the latter. See AP, 33–37 (§ 6), although this threefold distinction is already to be found in Einleitung in die Psychology from 1888. This characterization is not identical to Husserl’s theory of intentionality. Husserl criticized Natorp’s view in the Logical Investigations of 1900–1901, which was in turn criticized by Natorp in Allgemeine Psychologie from 1912. On the margin of Allgemeine Psychologie, in the passage where Natorp critically discusses Husserl, Husserl writes: “In the LI, I had posited ego = stream of consciousness. With ‘experienced’ in the LI I meant ‘to be part of the being of the stream.’ I denied a pure ego. But what I said there was of course wrong” (BQ 342, 34). Thus Husserl’s later stance on intentionality as breaking down into pure ego, the intentional act, and the content of this act can be seen as a modification of his earlier view with an incorporation of Natorp’s notion of a pure ego.

25. BQ 342, 22.

26. As an aside, it should be pointed out that Husserl’s later reflections on time-consciousness in the thirties and the thematicization of the “lived present” (lebendige Gegenwart)
However, while Husserl believes to have secured his sense of “transcendental empiricism,” we will see that the opposition between “intuition” and “construction” is not so easy to maintain when actually doing phenomenological description. This skepticism with regard to consciousness is not the last word Natorp has to say about the method of psychology; for if this were the case, obviously his whole project of a rational psychology would come to an end right here. So, what is the method of Natorp’s psychology? Rejecting the approach of direct intuition does not mean that nothing can be said about consciousness. To be sure, consciousness cannot be described immediately and directly, but why not indirectly and mediately? This is the way Natorp in effect proceeds. If subjectivity is radically opposed to objectivity and if the transcendental method is about constructing objectivity, it is conceivable that the method Natorp proposes for the subjective “side” merely goes the opposite way of the constructive method; namely, it is re-constructive. It takes its point of departure from the “finished,” “crystallized” objectivities (the facta) and pursues the opposite direction in reconstructing the dynamic, flowing life from which objectivity has become constructed (the fieri). Natorp also speaks of a “turning inside out” (Umstülpung) of the constructive method in going the opposite path of reconstruction. This reconstructive method is indeed a form of reflection (AP, 20), only with the clear knowledge that this reflection cannot directly access the immediacy of subjective life. It can only reconstruct it retrospectively, moving “backwards” from its objectified achievements. It is a “reverse” movement and in this sense comparable to a “reduction” in making recourse from the immediately given unities (the seen object) in experience to the subjective multiplicities in concrete subjectivity, which “constitute” the former in “intentional” activities (the dynamic, ever-new acts). Hence, the method of reconstruction is designed to bring back
the concretion of subjective life, however mediatelly, for every direct de-
scription would be an abstraction. The reconstructive move goes backwards
from the objectivations that are achieved by science and before all science,
without any conscious intent, [in] every quotidian way of representing
things. It [namely, reconstruction] consists . . . in undoing the objectivations . . . in thought [= construction], by reinserting that which has been severed
by abstraction into the original interconnections, by giving back dynamics
to the fixed concepts, and in so doing by bringing them back to the flowing
life of consciousness. . . . It is . . . a complete and pure turning-around
[Umkrehrung] of the method of objectifying knowledge, scientific as well as
prescientific. . . . (AP, 192–93)

It is for this reason that psychology comes at a point where the work of
philosophy is finished, it is philosophy’s “last word,”29 as it presupposes the con-
structive work, that is, the objectification of facta. However, the question
lingers, what exactly it is that remains to be discussed for a general psychology
if it is framed in Natorp’s way, by merely giving a reconstructive interpretation
of that which has already been thematized in constructive analysis. It should be
mentioned that Natorp’s sketch of such a discipline in General Psychology
(which he calls a “foundation of the foundation”30 of psychology) has remained
a fragment and never is carried out.31 Despite the internal problems with this
discipline, however, the main insight of his psychology is his emphasis on the
dynamic character of consciousness as opposed to the fixed nature of facta. In

straight forwardly posited as real in normal perception—so the object as well as the predi-
cates are certainly unities vis-à-vis manifolds of constituting conscious lived-experiences (con-
crete noeses).”

29. Natorp uses this phrase in his essay “Philosophie und Psychologie,” Kant-Studien

30. See AP, vi: “Grundlegung zur Grundlegung.” In a letter to Husserl from July 2,
1918, Natorp characterizes his attempts as follows: “actually it is not psychology, but a
doctrine of categories for psychology” (BW 4, 139).

31. The Allgemeine Psychologie was conceived as Book I of altogether (presumably) two
books. Natorp announces in the preface that he will “shortly” make the second volume
available, but this second part never appeared. One can speculate that it was due to internal
problems in his method that he felt compelled to change his stance on a “general” psychology.
In turn, Natorp focused on what he was later to call “general logic” and abandoned the
project of a critical psychology altogether. This transformation is reconstructed in detail by
Jürgen Stolzenberg in Ursprung und System. Probleme der Begründung systematischer Philoso-
phie im Werk Hermann Cohen, Paul Natorp und beim frühen Martin Heidegger (Göttingen:
Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 189–249 (chap. 4). Helmut Holzhey, in his comparison
between Husserl’s and Natorp’s draft of a psychology, also comments critically: “Natorp’s
foundation of a philosophical psychology gives us only meager contributions to a theory of
subjectivity, contributions that are oriented at traditional psychological dispositions.
Husserl’s phenomenological analyses give us incomparably richer material and have, ac-
cordingly, been received much more intensively in the positive sciences.” Helmut Holzhey,
“Zu den Sachen selbst! Über das Verhältnis von Phänomenologie und Neukantianismus,” in
Sinn und Erfahrung. Phänomenologische Methoden in den Humanwissenschaften (Heidelberg:
this sense, Natorp at all times emphasizes that this reconstructive method proceeds “genetically” (AP, vii) in recapturing the dynamic life of the original, flowing character of consciousness, as opposed to the “static” constructive method which treats objectivities as “finished” unities. Natorp’s reconstructive psychology does not become executed, but it makes the point that will become important for Husserl, that is, that an analysis that does justice to the life of consciousness must be cast in a manner that conforms to this dynamic life. What is furthermore problematic in Natorp is that, since construction and reconstruction merely differ in the direction they pursue (Natorp also speaks of a “plus” and “minus” direction of the same path), their methodological character is also the same: whereas the constructive way is teleological, the reconstructive path is causal; it merely goes the opposite way of the former; it is a “reverse teleology.” Thus, contrary to Natorp’s pronouncements, the way the reconstructive method treats subjectivity is still “naturalizing.” This is also the reason why the reconstructive method does not really add anything new to the transcendental method, and certainly nothing to a genuine understanding of subjectivity.32

But let us now turn back to Husserl. Although Natorp’s position seems weak with respect to Husserl’s more elaborate method of the phenomenological reduction, it is this reconstructive method that forms the backdrop of Husserl’s genetic turn, a method that essentially rectifies Natorp’s legitimate intentions; and Husserl never questioned the agreement between Natorp and himself in these principal matters. In this respect, Husserl even reluctantly admitted Natorp’s influence in taking over the “genetic” aspect of psychological description that Natorp declares the paradigm of reconstructive analysis (see AP, § 9, 249–50). In fact this is one of the only aspects where Husserl explicitly agrees with Natorp upon studying his works in 1918, although he presents it as though he came upon the genetic method on his own terms by predating it. During this phase (1917–18), Husserl explicitly begins drafting a genetic phenomenology.33 In a letter to Natorp from the summer of 1918, Husserl not only underscores the importance of the genetic, dynamic account of consciousness, but also drops the rather off-handed comment that he has posited the theme of genetic analysis for phenomenology “for already more than a decade.”34


34. BW 5, 137. Husserl makes this statement in the context of the alleged characterization of his phenomenology as “Platonism,” a critical point Natorp had made in his review
While one can say with certainty in the light of the development of Husserl’s thought that this is incorrect, scholars have wondered what he meant with this comment, and the primary candidate is usually, and rightly, considered Husserl’s analysis of internal time-consciousness. Husserl has dealt with this topic since 1905, and in his epilogue to Ideas I from 1930 he judges retrospectively that the omission of time-consciousness is one major shortcoming of Ideas I.³⁵ The phenomenology of internal time-consciousness is by no means already a genetic analysis of subjectivity. However, the discussion of time in the phenomenological context is the privileged path towards it. As Kern argues,³⁶ Husserl probably had this in mind in this letter to Natorp. So, how does Husserl move from an analysis of time-consciousness to genetic analysis?

In short, Husserl’s analysis of time-consciousness thematizes the temporality of the flow of subjective life itself. Conscious life is a dynamic flow of ever new now-points in which the ego lives, in the “lived present.” However, the “nows” are not discrete points (as, for example, in Aristotle’s concept of time³⁷) but each present consciousness is embedded in a temporal horizon, in

of the Logical Investigations. However, in his discussion of Husserl’s “new standpoint” in Allgemeine Psychologie (§ 14, 287–90), Natorp insists that—although Husserl came “a good deal closer” (289) to a “genetic Platonism”—his account of subjectivity is still “static.” Natorp cites here Husserl’s Logos-article, “Philosophy as Rigorous Science” from 1911, which (to be fair to Husserl) was merely intended as a programmatic essay against “historicism” and Lebensphilosophie. On the margin of this passage in Allgemeine Psychologie, Husserl thus writes: “There is no mention of the difference that I make in the Logos-article concerning phenomenology and psychology!” (BQ 342, 290). With regard to Natorp’s conception of philosophy as “genetic,” Husserl most likely extracted this from Natorp’s Deutscher Weltberuf of 1918 (see BW 5, 172 n. 178), which he also read at the time (at the end of the Second World War). In this book, written for a broader audience, Natorp lays out a teleological view of world history.


³⁶. See Kern, Husserl und Kant, 348. The above statement is incorrect, but not because Husserl did not broach genetic themes in this period, as he did, e.g., in his “Thing and Space” lecture course from 1907; see Ding und Raum. Vorlesungen 1907, ed. Ulrich Claesges, Husserliana XVI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973). What makes it problematic is that Husserl claims that he has “posited the theme of genetic analysis for phenomenology,” which implies an explicit statement about “genetic analysis.” While it is true that genetic analysis was at work in this period as well as, more explicitly, in 1917–18, Husserl does not come to characterize his attempts as “genetic phenomenology” until the 1920s. In other words, his reflections on method came after his actual methodological work.

³⁷. Aristotle in Physics 219b2 defines time as arithmós kinéseos katà tò próteron kai tò hysteron, i.e. as the (counted) number of movement regarding the earlier and the later, much like pearls on a string, whereas for Husserl the “now” is only an ideal limit. In this analysis, Husserl is indebted to William James’ and Henri Bergson’s analyses of internal time as
that each now-impression is preceded by a previous one which is not “past” but which “lingers,” and likewise, the present now anticipates a new now. Hearing a melody as melody (and not as a sequence of unrelated tones) is only possible if that which I just heard is retained while I hear a present note and the hearing of the note now anticipates another coming note. The analysis of the temporal structure of subjective life itself reveals that the primal impression of the now is embedded in a series of immediately past retentions and protentions immediately to come. A phenomenological description of how the ego experiences something in time must pay heed to this “internal time-consciousness” itself vis-à-vis objective, physical time. Or said differently, the way the ego’s intuition functions can only occur in this temporal fashion: to the intuition here and now belongs necessarily an original presentation and a halo of de-presentation, past and future. To say it in Natörp’s words: the fundamental character of consciousness is that it is dynamic, hence the method to analyze it must be genetic.

If this is the case, then one must concede that the focus on intuition (in the “here and now”) only grasps a very small aspect of conscious life. It is a “static” description that is based on what is intuited in this here and now only. If one wants to give a phenomenological description of other dimensions of conscious life, such as memory or imagination, it is clear that one cannot bring the past memory, as past, to direct evidence and intuition. I can remember a past occurrence here and now, but only as past and not now; this constitutes the very essence of memory. If one acknowledges that consciousness is dynamic, then one must accept that there are aspects and elements of conscious life of which I can never have direct intuition, although they certainly exist as having undoubtedly contributed in shaping my current experience. Examples of such essentially unintuitable yet decisive occurrences are my own birth or death, the subjective life of others (be they past or present) or the primal impression of a type of object I have known since shortly after my birth (or consisting of an “impression” of now with “fringes” rather than discrete boundaries. See Klaus Held, “Husserl’s Phenomenology of the Life-World,” in Donn Welton, ed., The New Husserl: A Critical Reader. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2003), 32–62.

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38. This is, to be sure, a very condensed summary of Husserl’s phenomenology of inner time-consciousness. His 1904–1905 lecture course and other texts pertaining to this topic are to be found in Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins (1893–1917), ed. Rudolf Boehm, Husserliana X (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969); English translation; On the Phenomenology of Consciousness of Internal Time, trans. John Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991).

39. The same goes, although not in a temporal fashion, for the conscious life of another person: I can never bring another’s own subjective experience to direct intuition. This is precisely the problem setting up Husserl’s reflections on intersubjectivity, see esp. the Fifth Cartesian Meditation, see Kartesiansche Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge, ed. S. Strasser, Husserliana I (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1950), 87–88; English translation of the former: Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960), 87–88 (original pagination). See also Hua XXXIV, 287, where Husserl uses the term ‘reconstruction’ precisely in the context of describing the experience of another ego.
which I have not constituted at all like a cultural object that was “given” to me “ready made”). Yet these are the preferred topics in Husserl’s genetic phenomenology. Hence, the method of intuition reveals its limits in cases such as these, where one thematizes, not static intentional structures, but the dynamic flowing life that produces (“constitutes”) objects of experience. This was the brunt of Natorp’s critique from the very beginning, when he termed Husserl’s analysis of act-intentionality a “static Platonism” (AP, 288–89). Indeed, these dynamic phenomena are not topics externally related to Husserl’s thought but his own favorite examples and areas of research. However, the topic of transcendental phenomenology is—ideally—a description of the totality of subjective life in all of its facets and dimensions. Hence, in thematizing the temporality of subjectivity itself, Husserl realizes that a description of “fixed” intentional structures of consciousness is merely a static description which is blind to the dynamic, genetic dimensions (“layers”) of consciousness. Static description, in ignoring any notion of the subject’s temporality, catches merely the surface dimension of subjectivity, disregarding its “depth structure.” Thus, seemingly in his own way, Husserl discovers Natorp’s “flowing” (dynamic, genetic) structures of subjectivity by expanding his view beyond mere given-nesses in intentional acts (which are merely thematized as given in the now) to their genesis. Yet this insistence on the dynamic flow of subjective life is not only the bedrock of Natorp’s psychology; it was also his strongest point of contention with Husserl’s static phenomenology.

In other words, as Natorp already proposed, the structural (“eidetic”) account has to be supplemented by a dynamic (“explanatory”) account. A genetic account can no longer be eidetic but moves into a “hermeneutic” dimension, as Husserl himself indeed likes to refer to his genetic analyses as interpretation (Auslegung). Moreover, since this dynamic depth structure—which Husserl also calls a passive genesis⁴⁰—cannot be brought to direct intuition, it can merely be made evident through a reconstructive method. Although Husserl prefers the terms ‘restitution,’ ‘unbuilding’ (Abbau), or ‘regressive method’, or even ‘interpretation,’ there are a few places in his manuscripts where he does indeed use Natorp’s term “reconstruction.”⁴¹ While this is not the place to analyze the reconstructive elements of Husserl’s genetic phenomenology—a description of the temporality and ultimately historicity of transcendental consciousness⁴²—

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⁴¹. See the passages Kern has collected in his Husserl und Kant, 370–73. See also Hua XXXIV, 287 (see also n. 39 above).

⁴². For an in-depth presentation of Husserl’s turn to genetic phenomenology and a full outline of this genetic method, see Donn Welton, The Other Husserl: The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2001), as well as Anthony J.
only this should become clear, that Husserl’s own intuitive method applied to consciousness as a whole cannot but revert to reconstructive elements in its attempt to grasp the full “body” of the transcendental realm. In other words, it is impossible for phenomenological analysis to remain at the purely intuitive, static level if it wants to do justice to consciousness as a whole. Static analysis per se bleeds into a genetic account in an organic expansion of its descriptive scope. Yet, when one enters genetic spheres the descriptions that one gives are not and cannot be based on intuition, at least not on intuition alone. The consequence is that the difference between intuitive and reconstructive methods cannot be strictly maintained.

Indeed, this difference is artificial, although Husserl takes pains to show that even interpretation rests on intuitive elements. Although he insists, rather stubbornly, on the paradigm of evidence, he does concede the necessity of “explanatory” or “interpretative” analysis that is not based on evidence. In a remarkable passage where he discusses the scope of genetic analysis, he concludes:

This is “interpretation,” but obviously it is not arbitrary, but an unwrapping [Auseinanderwicklung] of an evidencing intentionality. Or rather, such unraveling [Aufwicklung] is from the very start interpretation; and all intentional analysis, all self-understanding [Selbstverständigung] of consciousness, which finds its expression in “description,” is interpretation . . . .”

Steinbock, Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology After Husserl (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1995). Since Husserl’s genetic phenomenology is not the topic of this paper, I can limit myself to pointing to these two studies devoted to this theme.

43. Emphasis added. Here the quote in its entirety, from A VII 13/62b probably from the beginning of the 1930s, where Husserl struggles with the attempt to maintain an “evidencing” element of intuition within phenomenological “description” (I am indebted to Rochus Sowa at the Husserl Archives in Louvain for bringing this passage to my attention): “But here is something else we need to pay attention to. There are not only acts that, based on the intentional explication of their horizons, bring the evidence to bear that they are continuing validities of previous primal validities. There are also those validities that are not themselves such continuing validities but bear within themselves continuing validities of a similar type. There are also acts that give themselves as primally instituting insofar as they yield to ‘new’ information that is not given to us in the sense of a continuing validity. In this sense, all our external experiences of new objects that we have never encountered before are, as new experiences, ‘primally instituting.’ Yet in another sense they are not primally instituting. First of all one should point out that the first seeing of a palm tree has an influence for seeing future palm trees that themselves have not never been seen. They are individually unknown but yet ‘something,’ ‘a’ known object. Already in the first viewing of something new we have a sensu scheme of that which we have to expect in continuing seeing and in closer knowing (in which the new individual objective sense first of all constitutes itself). In the new-validity as validity of its meaning we have at the same time co-valid the old validity with its old meaning that slides over the newly developing meaning from its beginning stadium onward. And in this overlapping the new meaning forms itself as meaning with an anticipatory content, and the anticipation itself fulfills itself more or less perfectly, thereby modifying itself.” The rest of the quotation is cited above. Here the original German: “Aber hier kommt noch anderes in Betracht. Es gibt nicht nur Akte, die durch intentionale Expikation ihrer Horizonte die Evidenz mit sich bringen, dass sie Fortgeltungen früherer Urgel-
Thus, contrary to Husserl’s own emphasis that such interpretation is interpretation of “evidencing intentionality,” his latter claim, that “all self-understanding is interpretation,” runs counter to his original claim. Intuitive evidence is in fact a very late phenomenon in the life of consciousness as well as for the phenomenological method, as it rests on the larger foundation of interpretation that can only proceed reconstructively. Although Husserl claims in the above-quoted letter genetic phenomenology as his own discovery, the genetic, dynamic dimension that is required to analyze subjectivity through reconstruction was the whole point of Natorp’s psychology that he already laid out in his *Introduction to Psychology* from 1888, which Husserl knew well before any talk of genesis in his own writings.\(^44\) Thus, phenomenology as a description of consciousness needs to be complemented by a reconstructive account. In other words, phenomenology becomes *hermeneutical*.

Although Husserl’s genetic phenomenology is in this sense crucially indebted to Natorp’s reconstructive method, there is, however, one decisive difference. The subjectivity that phenomenology analyzes is not part of the world (of “objectivity”). The “reconstructive” method that phenomenology employs...
is not a causal reconstruction, since subjectivity in its original sense is not part of the world of objectivity; hence something like a “causal” account will not do justice to subjectivity in its own right. One can give a causal account of subjectivity, but that would treat it as a part of nature in what Husserl calls the “naturalistic” attitude. This was, as we recall, Husserl’s earlier critique of Natorp’s methodological naiveté. Indeed, treating subjectivity in its germane sense means occupying a position that reveals subjective structures in their own original character and lawfulness, a lawfulness that is radically different from that pertaining to the sphere of objectivity. The “causality” in the sphere of conscious life, which Husserl calls “motivation,” functions according to its own, very distinct laws, such as, association. Again, this topic need not be discussed here; all that should become clear is the context of Husserl’s specifically phenomenological approach to subjectivity through the genetic phenomenological method, which came into being only after having been exposed to a decidedly non-phenomenological conception of subjectivity, both thematically and methodologically.

To summarize, one can say that both Husserl and Natorp employ a method which in each case can be termed reconstructive. However, the difference is that although Natorp proposes a reconstruction of the concrete life of the subject in the framework of his General Psychology, he stops short of actually “delving” into the “depths” of subjectivity. He proposes but does not perform an actual genetic analysis. The reconstructive method is solely meant to “undo” that which has already been achieved by objectivation. It can only revert back to reconstructing “subjectivity” from the objective achievements which stand before us as cultural objects. The label for all that man constructs is culture. Ultimately, although Natorp had the crucial intuition, subjectivity in his method can only be known ex negativo; that is, Natorp does not cash in on his own legitimate intuition. Reconstructive work comes to an end with the pure ego as merely an a priori principle, a sheer ideal zero-point beyond which one cannot trespass. Hence, a real philosophical “psychology” is not carried out, although he gives the main guiding clues to Husserl. Natorp’s analysis has


46. Welton, *The Other Husserl*, also mentions the influence of Natorp (443 n. 38), but does not get into this influence in any detail. See, however, his essay “The Systematicity of Husserl’s Transcendental Philosophy: From Static to Genetic Method,” in Welton, ed., *The New Husserl*, 255–88, where he gives the Natorp influence a broader treatment, see ibid., 266–70. Here (270) he concludes that “from Husserl’s perspective after the transcendental turn, Natorp’s analysis could be viewed only as an unwelcome mixture of psychological and transcendental analysis,” while conceding that there is an influence on Husserl from the part of Natorp. From what has been said above, it should be clear that this influence was crucial to Husserl’s transcendental recasting of phenomenology.
its “locus” in the transcendental realm; yet the “subjective side” of it is essentially a black box.

As has been argued, however, Husserl’s whole endeavor is to demonstrate how such a description of conscious life is indeed possible when one takes seriously the ontological difference between both spheres (subjectivity and objectivity, attained in the transcendental and the natural standpoints, respectively) in the methodological sense. Indeed, Husserl’s subtle descriptions of consciousness in his intricate analyses of time-consciousness, perception, memory, and phantasy belie any skepticism concerning the efficacy of such analyses. To be sure, Husserl’s descriptions are also “object-oriented,” as they thematize intentional acts (as intending-something). Yet they are intentional structures of experience and as such they can be made thematic in a reflexive turning away from the world “out there” into its origin in meaning-bestowing intentional structures of consciousness. Yet the other point inspired by Natorp is that even these phenomenological descriptions cannot methodologically do without reconstructive and constructive elements, insofar as there are dimensions of conscious life which simply cannot be brought to direct intuition. They can be reconstructed, not causally as in Natorp, but in a new attitude that brings into view consciousness’s specific character. This does not, however, mean a bankruptcy of the phenomenological method, but rather a deepening and an opening towards (if one does not shy away from the term) speculative, metaphysical dimensions. Although Husserl throughout his lifetime steered clear from such designations of his phenomenology, in his later phase his analyses are full of such elements, especially in his speculative thesis of the inborn teleology of all consciousness. Although he never went beyond mere announcements and did not go through the pains of truly working out these speculative ideas, Husserl openly acknowledges—and not only in his correspondence with Natorp—his connection with the innermost intentions of speculative idealism.

Comparing Natorp’s and Husserl’s methodology, one can conclude that both of them represent “transcendental methods.” Yet, while Husserl gained important insights through Natorp’s method, Natorp’s own psychology is methodologically flawed. What is not touched by this critique, however, is Natorp’s original transcendental method of construction, a method that uses constructive elements to explain how it is possible for consciousness to experience the world of culture. Thus, while Natorp is oriented towards the object of the investigation, Husserl is oriented toward the subject, or (in other words) Natorp in the objectifying, Husserl in the subjectifying aspect of transcendental life. Seen from this perspective, the opposition turns out to be a relative one in that

47. See the aforementioned letter to Natorp from 1918 (BW 5, 137), as well as Husserl’s letter to Cassirer of 1925 (BW 5, 4–5). One should also bear in mind that the bulk of Husserl’s manuscripts on metaphysics and teleology are still unpublished (section E III of his Nachlass).
Natorp—in Husserlian terms—looks at the noematic, Husserl at the noetic side of the “transcendental realm” as that which makes experience of world possible. Both locate their philosophical projects within a transcendental register. Although Husserl was himself not blind to this noematic dimension, he rarely thematizes this aspect as more than an afterthought, whereas Natorp, due to his dogmatic restrictions, shies away entirely from conceding a proper description of the noetic. Both positions, however, need not be mutually exclusive; they merely emphasize different sides of the same coin. Both thematize the conditions of possibility of experience of world in “subjective” and “objective” directions, respectively. Ironically, it is Husserl who fulfills the idea of a “subjective grounding of knowledge” that Natorp had envisioned as a counterweight to the transcendental method firstly introduced by Cohen. Furthermore, whereas Natorp employs a constructive method for his subject domain (objectivity), Husserl's method, in going the reconstructive path, becomes thereby genetic. Thus Husserl, firstly, exploits Natorp’s radical difference between subjectivity and objectivity to establish a methodological difference, enabling him, secondly, to access and analyze genetically the noetic side of “the transcendental.” The important methodological conclusion of this section is that in this respect both methods form a correlation; one necessarily supplements the other. Whereas up to now this sounded like a purely formal correlation, it will be up to Cassirer, who was well-versed in both Natorp’s and Husserl’s methods, to fill this “promise” with content.

§ 3. Husserl and Cassirer: Noetics and Noematics within the Pluralistically Conceived Transcendental Realm

To show how Cassirer fits into the picture, we first have to point out the shortcomings of Natorp’s method as they appear to Cassirer. These shortcomings are not internal flaws in Natorp’s psychology but rather appear as an

48. Following Husserl’s terminology especially in Ideas I, the noetic “side” of transcendental subjectivity is the act of (thinking, remembering, etc.), whereas the noematic aspect is the object insofar as it is experienced. Thus, the immanently given, not the transcendent object, must be viewed as intentum. See Ideas I, 200–24 (the chapter on “Noesis and Noema”). This interpretation is indebted to Holzhey’s lucid article “Zu den Sachen selbst!” where he compares especially Natorp’s and Husserl’s methods as paradigms of both philosophical schools. He interprets the task of Natorp’s psychology as—in Husserl’s terms—“constitutive-noematic” (15), which leaves out the constitutive-noetic aspect, the aspect that is supplied by Husserl. Although Holzhey does not spell out this consequence, I do not hesitate to admit that it is this basic insight which has aided the author in developing the interpretation presented here.

49. “On the Objective and Subjective Grounding of Knowledge” was the title of Natorp’s first publication where he introduced the subjective tendency that later, first in Einleitung in die Psychologie from 1888, became the reconstructive method. Husserl knew this article and cited from it in the Logical Investigations. See Paul Natorp, “Ueber objective und subjective Begründung der Erkenntniss,” Philosophische Monatshefte 23 (1887), 257–86.
unwarranted—and indeed unnecessary—restriction on Natorp’s part, which Cassirer purports to overcome. However, Cassirer by no means does away with the Marburg method. Rather, he both transforms Cohen’s transcendental and Natorp’s reconstructive method. Specifically, Cassirer considers Natorp’s method, although in principle correct, too narrow and in need of broadening. It is important to note that this is an insight the late Natorp himself had reached, which prompted, for example, Heidegger to rightly point out a methodological convergence in the late Natorp and the Cassirer of the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms. In either case, one can say that both Natorp and Cassirer have, in their way, moved away from the original neo-Kantian focus on scientific experience without simultaneously giving up the general framework of transcendental philosophy in the spirit of Kant. The label that has been applied to neo-Kantianism by critics, that it merely provides a justification for the positive sciences, is both incorrect and, in the light of where Cassirer took the Marburg method, especially unfair. Both Natorp and Cassirer have proceeded to a novel and original concept of transcendental philosophy and of “the” transcendental, and it was especially Cassirer’s conception that came close to that of the late Husserl. The decisive insight that both Cassirer and Husserl had independently of each other was that the transcendental realm is structured in a plural fashion.

To start out, Natorp was widely perceived as the most severe “methodological fanatic” of the neo-Kantian movement. This characterization—which

50. See Heidegger’s little known text on the history of the philosophical chair (Lehrstuhl) in Marburg, written on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the University of Marburg in 1927 (in Martin Heidegger, Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik [Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann, 1991], 304–11, here 309–10), an account that gets the relation between Natorp and Cassirer just right: “In these last years, Cassirer strives to sketch a general ‘philosophy of culture’ on the basis of the neo-Kantian paradigms. His ‘Philosophy of Symbolic Forms’ strives to subsume the activities [Verhaltungen] and formations of spirit under a systematic interpretation following the idea of ‘expression’ as guiding clue. In his way, Cassirer converges with the attempts of Natorp, attempts that take their bearings more on the general categorial grounding of the system and not in the concrete interpretation of single ‘symbols’ of spirit.”

51. Indeed, such a judgment is also unfair with respect to Natorp and Cohen as well. Cohen first conceived of the transcendental method and limited it, at least in his commentaries to Kant’s First Critique, to the positive sciences. Yet to reduce Cohen to his work on theoretical philosophy deliberately ignores his extensive works on ethics, aesthetics and, especially, religion. See the accounts of the scope of Cohen’s philosophy by Stolzenberg, Ursprung, and Holzhey, Cohen und Natorp.

52. See Hans-Georg Gadamer’s (after all, a pupil of Natorp’s) introductory text to Natorp’s late work, Philosophische Systematik, xii–xiii: “[In his draft of a General Psychology] Natorp was moving along paths that converge with Dilthey’s psychology of the spiritual sciences as well as with Husserl’s phenomenology. Yet his question with respect to this psychology did not have the purpose of a new grounding of the spiritual sciences, nor that of a methodological reorientation of philosophical research. Instead, it had to do with the systematic notion of the unity of philosophy as such that appears to him in the correlation of
was not entirely positive—pertained to the fact that he seemingly wanted to reduce every factual philosophical problem to a methodological question within the transcendental method, and in a sense this judgment is correct. As he emphasized, every factum is a fieri and as such subject to the transcendental method. Method is the absolute of philosophy, or philosophy is nothing but method because the method, in the sense of method, retraces the steps of the fieri. In this sense, Cassirer charges Natorp with a methodological monism stemming from his alleged “metaphysical monism,” that is, that there is just one objective reality which can only be broached by one method, that of objectivation. To Natorp the realm of objectivity is originally nothing but nature, indeed, the nature with which the positive sciences deal. Although there is no reason to believe that there is more than one reality, Cassirer asserts, this is not to say that there is only one type of or one way of experiencing reality, a point clearly influenced by phenomenology. Natorp’s transcendental method, at least before changing his view in his late philosophy, does in fact pay heed to only one type of objectivity: it merely focuses upon that which the positive sciences cognize and claim as the product of their cognizing activity. His approach only considers what Kant had thematized in the framework of theoretical philosophy. This was indeed Cohen’s point of departure, to focus on the factum as the factum of the sciences (das Faktum der Wissenschaften). However, did not Kant himself insist, if not on different realities, then at least on different ways of thematizing reality, namely through the disciplines of ethics, aesthetics, and religion? Recalling the scope of Kant’s critical philosophy, Cassirer states:

The meaning of the moral ought, the meaning of the work of art, the meaning of the religious, all of this is only visible to us in a special attitude of spiritual regard [geistiger Blick] . . . . Can we set ourselves to rest with this manifold of “perspectives” [Gesichtspunkte]; shall we just accept it as a last facticity, as a factum of spiritual being and spiritual life that we can no further explain and break down? If this were the case, then the very idea of philosophy itself would threaten to get lost.

In other words, was not reason more than pure reason alone? Surely, there is but one reason; however, as already Kant insisted, it has different ap-
plications and intentions. Is therefore, as Cassirer asserts, reason not better understood as spirit? Seeing reason in a broader conception as spirit, there are, accordingly, different ways in which it can experience the world. Yet, although the move from reason to spirit seems like a mere repetition of Hegel, Cassirer moves into an entirely different direction.

Indeed, the world we live in and which is constructed through subjective activity—this transcendental paradigm Cassirer does not question—is not merely the world of science. Science is but one, and certainly not the most fundamental, manner in which the world is constructed. As one of reason’s points of crystallization, science presents merely one type of the broader account of subjective activity, which is more properly conceived as spirit. Kant’s canonical differentiation of the applications of reason into aesthetics, ethics, and religion is a start, but not enough for Cassirer. He goes even further as to include all activities and achievements of subjectivity, insofar as they are principal ways in which subjects encounter the world in a meaningful (“spiritual”) way. This is in keeping with Natorp who does not differentiate between “rational” and “irrational” human activities; all human activities somehow contribute to the way the world is for human beings. The world is entirely a world of culture, even something like “pure nature” is a product of the sciences as cultural activities. To Cassirer, this is the consequence of the sense and tradition of what he calls “modern idealism,” which is committed since the Renaissance positing and further investigating the correlation between world and spirit. He is merely drawing the most far-reaching consequence from the Marburg method that all experience constructs reality, namely, that different experience constructs differently. Following Natorp’s train of thought but at the same time breaking with him critically, Cassirer asserts:

Eye to eye philosophy stands again not only with the particular sciences but rather with the world of spirit, which comprises, besides science, law as well as morality, art as well as religion. All of these need to be investi-

57. See Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B641, in Kant’s gesammelte Schriften 3, ed. Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1904/11); English translation: *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Macmillan, 1968), B 218: “Yet if pure reason for itself can be practical and really is practical, as the consciousness of the moral law demonstrates, it remains nevertheless always one and the same reason that, be it in theoretical or practical intent, judges according to principles a priori.” See also *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, ed. Karl Vorländer (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990), 2; English translation: *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), 3. Here Kant differentiates the application of reason in its “purely theoretical” *Gebrauche* (use, employment) *vis-à-vis* its practical use and the power of judgment, thereby bridging the gap between both applications of reason and as such constituting another “moment” of reason, see ibid., 11/14-15.

58. For Cassirer’s view of modern idealism in a nutshell, see the introduction to volume I of *The Problem of Knowledge*, see *Das Erkenntnisproblem in der Philosophie und Wissenschaft der neueren Zeit* I (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994), 1–18.
In taking over Natorp’s constructive method, Cassirer thereby multiplies the process of objectivation. He, too, employs the “transcendental method”; this method, however, has many forms of application. Opposed to Natorp’s methodological monism stands Cassirer’s pluralism, again merely following an insight Natorp had but did not exploit methodologically.

Yet in this pluralization of Natorp’s method Cassirer goes one crucial step beyond. The problem with Natorp’s method was that, again following Kant, he remained fixated on the lawful character of scientific objectification. As mentioned, in his late period Natorp did arrive at thematizing art and religion and other “spiritual” regions; Cassirer was aware of Natorp’s last vision. Yet even then Natorp remained fixated on the laws that govern their constructions and characterize their internal structures; he did not overcome the paradigm of lawfulness. Yet the criteria of “general truth” and “lawfulness” only pertain to science and not, say, to language or art as equally valid expressions of the human spirit. Where one talks no longer of a lawful type of experience as in science, the character of what it is to be a law changes as well. Science, for example, uses language, but in a different way and to a different end than that of everyday parlance. To be sure, everyday language has a certain regularity or general nature as well, but this is of a different kind and rigor than that of scientific discourse:

The generality of linguistic ‘concepts’ does not stand in the same line as that of scientific . . . “laws”: one is not merely a continuation of the other, but each moves in different tracks and expresses different directions of spiritual formation. (PSF III, 66)

The full range of reality as formed by spirit would be too narrowly understood if one only examined it through the categories of lawfulness and exactitude as guiding clues. We are not just embedded in and given over to nature but are constantly in the process of forming reality into a world of humankind, into a culture. Cassirer thusly concludes his critical discussion of Natorp:

If we want to gain a truly concrete view of the ‘full objectivity’ of spirit on the one hand, its ‘full subjectivity’ on the other, we must attempt to execute this methodological correlation, that Natorp posits as principle, for all regions of spiritual creating. It will become clear that the three main directions

60. See esp. Paul Natorp, Vorlesungen über praktische Philosophie (Erlangen: Philosophische Akademie, 1925); here he mainly deals with art, philosophy of economy (Wirtschaftsphilosophie), and pedagogy. His philosophy of religion is sketched in his Philosophische Systematik. Natorp died in 1924 and was unable to complete his philosophical system.
61. This whole chapter deals with Natorp and Cassirer’s critique of Natorp’s method, see PSF III, 53–67, esp. 58–67.
of ‘objectivation’ that Natorp presupposes in close connection to the Kantian Critiques . . . do not suffice. (PSF III, 67)

Hence different spheres of experience require different guiding principles in ascertaining how they construct their specific reality. The main directions of spirit’s objectivation are what Cassirer calls the ‘symbolic forms’. His philosophy of symbolic forms only becomes understandable in light of the foundations laid by Natorp. The symbolic forms are the ways in which reason, conceived as spirit, manifests itself and through which the world comes to be experienced in different forms of experience. These forms shape the “spaces of meaning” that conscious human beings occupy in the manifold of their activities. As opening and allowing for spaces for spiritual activities, these forms are functional contexts (of which constructing nature is but one type) in which spirit comes to reveal itself, in language, myth, art, religion and, to be sure, science. They are “ways which spirit pursues in its objectivation, that is, in its self-revelation” (PSF I, 9). These forms are not empirically discernable modes of human behavior but dimensions in which spirit “lives” and comes to understand itself. They are, in their plurality, transcendental forms of intuition in the Kantian sense, but with different and distinct “internal” logics and manners of functioning, of which scientific “lawfulness” (or lawfulness in general) is but one. These forms are “symbolic” because, in the literal sense of symbol from Greek sym-bállein (to throw together), each individual object is tied into a functional context, it stands in and for a specific space of meaning. In totality, these forms shape reality in the universal sense of that which is formed by human spirit.

This totality Cassirer calls “culture.” Hence, “the critique of reason becomes the critique of culture. It strives to understand and to show how all content of culture, insofar it is more than a mere particular content, insofar it is grounded in a general form-principle, presupposes an original deed of spirit. Only in this endeavor does the basic thesis of idealism find its true and complete realization” (PSF I, 11). The actual task of Cassirer’s Philosophy of Symbolic Forms is to discern and to describe these symbolic forms in their own specific

62. In fact, Cassirer somewhat obfuscates the origin of his theory in Kantian philosophy in his first introduction to the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms; he introduces it by way of symbolic notation in mathematics that he has learned from the mechanical scientist Hertz, see PSF I, 5–6.

63. In his discussion of newer concepts of transcendental philosophy, Hariolf Oberer claims that “since the publication of the ‘Philosophy of Symbolic Forms’ Cassirer has always been judged (against his own self-understanding) as a phenomenologist. That is, in his ‘Philosophy of Symbolic Forms’ one has pointed with special emphasis to the (alleged) non-neo-Kantian character of this work.” Hariolf Oberer, “Transzendentalsphäre und Konkrete Subjektivität. Ein Zentrales Thema der Neueren Transzendentalphilosophie,” Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung 23 (1969), 578–611, here 586. Contrary to this assessment, one can show that Cassirer claimed for himself at least phenomenological influence. See the famous footnote in PSF II, 16 and the quotation in the letter to Husserl in the Conclusion. In the footnote in PSF II, Cassirer does not refer to himself as a phenomenologist.
ways of functioning. For the factual implementation of these descriptions Cassirer does not hesitate to employ the term phenomenology, insofar as this analysis attempts to be true to the internal functional structures of each of the symbolic forms and describes them in their essential and necessary traits. The phenomenological influence lies precisely in taking experience seriously in the way the spirit constructs different “spaces of meaning.” His method is thus constructive as well as descriptive. In this respect, Cassirer also calls his endeavor a “phenomenology of consciousness” (PSF III, 64), with consciousness constantly being “objectified” in the symbolic forms as spiritual contents through which human beings understand the world. In this sense, it is phenomenological more in the Husserlian, descriptive sense than in that of Hegel. What is Hegelian is the move from reason to spirit. What distinguishes him most from the latter is, however, that there is no hierarchy involved in spiritual formation, but each symbolic form is an independent and equally valid expression of spirit. There is no teleology, but rather a centrifugal emanation of spirit into different directions.

Yet Cassirer’s Philosophy of Symbolic Forms comes with the same “objectifying” focus as Natorp’s. Thus, Cassirer refers to his philosophical project as a phenomenology of “objective spirit” (PSF III, 65) and in so doing explicitly makes recourse to Natorp’s method of objectification. Only what is objectified is not reason but spirit. Cassirer’s philosophy of culture represents a phenomenology of objective spirit, a spirit, however, that is pluralized into different symbolic formations with their own particular modes of functioning and “lawful” regularity. As such, he is both loyal to Natorp’s transcendental method and the phenomenological paradigm of unprejudiced, phenomenon-oriented

Rather, he commends Husserl’s phenomenology for “bringing into sharp view for the first time again the differences of spiritual ‘structural forms’” and for having “shown a new way that is distinguished from psychological questions and methods” (ibid.). Furthermore, as the present essay intends to show, his Philosophy of Symbolic Forms is also decidedly neo-Kantian character. To be sure, Cassirer’s philosophy—as a philosophy of culture—has expanded its scope by opening itself up to other forms of “structural forms” of Geist. Due to the phenomenological character of his approach, one can say that Cassirer treads on middle ground between both schools, as Husserl himself has moved towards a neo-Kantian conception of symbolic formation as well.

64. Although Cassirer uses this term to describe Natorp’s project, it becomes clear from the context that he also includes his own philosophy of culture in this framework, however, to be sure, without Natorp’s problematic restrictions. The term “phenomenology” in general is certainly not exclusive to Husserl’s treatment of consciousness. For instance, Thomas Nagel uses it as a title for a scientific discipline with the first-person perspective; see his The View from Nowhere (Oxford: Oxford University, 1986) and Mortal Questions (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1979), 179.

65. For a discussion of Cassirer’s “hermeneutics of objective spirit,” see Rudolf Bernet, La Vie du Sujet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994), 139–61, esp. 141–53, for a comparison between Cassirer’s theory of perception and Husserl’s theory of eidetic intuition. This discussion lies beyond the scope of this paper.
Whereas Natorp looks at the world purely formally from the standpoint of an absolute method, Cassirer actually immerses himself in the manifold traditions of human culture, as witnessed in his works on Renaissance philosophy, mythology, linguistics and modern physics. Due to his impressive erudition, he is the first to truly bring the transcendental method to life.

Yet there can be no mistaking that in this original interpretation of Natorp’s (and Kant’s) method, Cassirer also buys into a claim of Natorp’s that has been shown to be problematic. For the same reasons as Natorp, Cassirer denies any direct access to subjectivity or, for that matter, spirit. He insists that his analysis of spirit is equally a “reconstructive analysis” in the sense of a genetic account of spirit’s formation (PSF III, 65). We can only ever speak about subjectivity by reconstructing it backwards from the endpoint of its objective achievements, the symbolic forms themselves. Yet as he insists even then, “spirit does not reveal itself in its essentiality.”

We are, as subjects, what our place in culture is. In other words, although Cassirer overcomes Natorp’s methodological impasse by multiplying the types of objectivations to capture all realms of spiritual activity, he nevertheless remains bound to the neo-Kantian dogma of the inaccessibility of subjectivity. His talk of “spirit” instead of subjectivity clouds his position with regard to the latter, but his doctrine of the “symbolic forms” implies the paradigm of subjectivity’s (or spirit’s) inaccessibility; I am not spirit, I partake in it. The term ‘symbolic’ implies this as well. There can never be a direct intuition of entities; all intuition is always mediated through a symbolic meaning. Each experienced entity, qua experience, is a functional element within a symbolic form. Entities can only be perceived as bearing a “symbolic pregnancy” that “connects them internally” to a symbolic form. We never experience being “eye-to-eye” but always through the “tincture” of symbolic vision, which is not an obstacle but a necessary precondition of our finite experience.

This symbolism does not distort being but is the way—the only way—in which we can have any experience.

It is for this reason—experience can only be symbolic—that any analysis of subjectivity can only be indirect as well. There is thus a double reason for subjectivity’s inaccessibility: Not only do we not see subjectivity “in itself”; we only have access to it symbolically. All that can be said about it will be “re-

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66. Ernst Cassirer, *Zur Metaphysik der symbolischen Formen*, ed. John M. Krois et al. (Hamburg: Meiner, 1995), 52. This volume is a collection of Cassirer’s unpublished drafts for the fourth volume of the *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*.

67. Although Gadamer’s paradigm is history, one can well apply his famous metaphor of the subject as a “flickering light.”

68. In this context, Cassirer likes to refer to Kant’s image of the “light dove” that feels the bothersome resistance of the air but can in fact only fly in this very element. Cassirer, *Zur Metaphysik der Symbolischen Formen*, 218, 265.

69. It is in this light that Max Scheler—in a discussion of the relation between phenomenology and neo-Kantianism—came to define phenomenology precisely as a “desymbolization of the world.” See n. 20 above.
constructive” and will only give a “negative” image by means of an explication of the symbolic forms and of what occurs within them. The reconstructive method will be genetic only with regard to the objectifying symbolic forms. Cassirer scholars might object that Cassirer does discuss subjectivity, in the context of knowledge as a symbolic form of its own (in the third volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*). Yet Cassirer’s account only deals with the structures that are needed to clarify the functioning of cognition, not subjectivity itself; that is, the concrete dynamic life of the subject. The dynamic vivacity of the subject remains (deliberately) untouched. Thus, although Cassirer expands the concept of objectivation in a most original and fruitful way, he still remains bound to the problematic Kantian paradigm of subjective analysis as a region that is “off limits.”

However, as we have seen previously following Husserl, this alleged inaccessibility of subjectivity due to its non-intuitability need not be maintained. One can support this by conceding that a phenomenology of subjectivity (in the style Husserl has demonstrated it) need not and in fact cannot rest entirely on intuition. Rather, this “direct and evidencing intuition” is merely the uppermost stratum of a larger and multi-layered structure, of which even subjectivity—as the rational, self-conscious personal agency—is but the abstract top stratum. It would be abstract, that is, if one were to isolate it from its larger, genetic “depth structure.”

We have now come to the point where we can put the pieces together and see how Cassirer’s “expanded” position of the neo-Kantian method and Husserl’s mature standpoint form an encompassing theory that accommodates both the noetic and noematic direction of the transcendental realm. Let us first turn to Husserl.

Although no longer bound to strict intuition but also including construction or interpretation, Husserl’s genetic phenomenology intends to show how the world is constituted for an embodied subject by the subject’s very acts in his method “from the bottom up,” that is, through an analysis of foundational strata beginning from the most primitive levels of perception and moving to the highest strata of judgmental and scientific consciousness. For instance, by showing how perceptual objects are constituted through our bodily interaction with them in primitive *kinaesthesis*, Husserl gives a lucid account of subjective acts in which objectivity becomes “constituted,” whether these descriptions be intuitive or not. Indeed, it is this reconstructive interpretation that enables Husserl to access this depth structure of subjectivity, a dimension he calls ‘passivity’. This is precisely the meaning of ‘passivity’ in ge-

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70. Husserl in his late manuscripts dealing with the relationship between transcendental and mundane ego employs—among other metaphors—the distinction between “concrete” and “abstract” to characterize the nature of the transcendental ego. The ego would be understood as abstract were one to disregard its transcendental, genetic depth structure. Only as such can one truly reach “concretion.” See *Hua* XXXIV, 198–201 (text no. 13).
netic phenomenology: by describing how through primitive intentional acts more complex objectivities such as cultural objects and ultimately culture itself (as a universal horizon of meaning) are “built up,” “passivity” means nothing other than “no current ego-involvement.”

In a perception of spatial objects in the here and now, I have things already of a higher order (as ‘cup’ or ‘table’), that is, as cultural artifacts. It takes an analysis of Abbau or reconstruction to reach the primitive level of just perceiving an object in its “pure” and uncultured existence. Husserl’s mature genetic phenomenology thus reconstructs acts that have been executed in the past—by myself, by others, before me, alongside with me—but that nevertheless contribute, in a sedimented and habituated ways, to the manner in which I, here and now, perceive and understand the world.

To use an example, in reconstructing acts of a certain type of experience, say visual perception, we can “hit upon” a primal instituting (Urstiftung) in which a particular type of object (‘tree’) is given for the first time and from which “radiate forward” certain apperceptive guiding clues that prefigure future tree perceptions. To be sure, this reconstruction is not factual in that person X, reflecting back on her past experience, will “find” this first “actual” vision of a tree. The reconstructive analysis is reconstructive in that it goes back to what ideally must have been a first tree vision, and describes interpretatively what this must have been like. These descriptions, though not themselves eidetic, generate such eidetic insights as the presumptivity of all perceptual world experience. Thus, genetic phenomenology necessarily goes beyond intuition towards the reconstruction of that which cannot be made evident, but all of the structures it describes are those of intentional acts; acts, that is, of experience. This reconstruction cannot proceed causally when it talks about transcendental subjectivity. Causality can never be a law of passivity, for these “events” within the passive sphere are not guided by rational thought un-


72. The topic of passive genesis is dealt with most broadly in Husserl’s lecture course on transcendental logic from the early Twenties. This lecture is published in Hua XI and XXXI. Parts of this lecture have also been used by Ludwig Landgrebe in his edition of Husserl’s posthumous work Erfahrung und Urteil: Edmund Husserl, Erfahrung und Urteil. Untersuchungen zur Genealogie der Logik (1938), ed. Ludwig Landgrebe (Hamburg: Claassen & Goverts, 1948); English translation: Experience and Judgment: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic, trans. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1973).
der “logical” principles. They are proto-rational acts, but as such subjective activities, unaware of what they may accomplish. For example, the movements of the eye are unconsciously part of the constitution of a physical object. In this sense, one can plausibly speak of Husserlian philosophy as a phenomenology of subjective spirit that strives to give a description of the subjective “conditions of possibility” that are involved in a concrete subject’s having of world.

Now it is crucial to see that Husserl, similar to Cassirer, moves to a pluralistic conception of “subjective spirit” as well. Although there might be one world, what is experienced in intentional acts in the normal pursuit of life is always something singular according to the “active” mode of experience. Different acts constitute different objects and spaces of meaning. Thus, in his later reflections on the nature of intentionality as world-constituting, Husserl ultimately moves towards a pluralistic concept of constitution that brings him in connection to Cassirer’s plural conception of symbolic forms. His train of thought goes roughly as follows: Husserl realizes that intentional acts, as ways of “having” objects, come forth from a “horizon” of intending. This horizon is a certain meaningful way of intending or having, not just singular cogitata, but a world. However, in each cogitatum is intentionally implicated a horizon of other possible objects of experience. Yet in the sense of the correlational Apriori, the horizon has a correlate on the side of the acts as well. Husserl calls this “horizon” on the noetic side “attitude.” An attitude is a perspective one takes with regard to that which one experiences. Depending on the perspective, one will experience wholly different phenomena. To use Husserl’s example: something like a “house” will be something completely different to an architect, a real estate agent, or a potential buyer, with special interests guiding their perceptions in each case. Each attitude determines the specific “spiritual regard” that is different depending on the attitude taken. Husserl’s house-example has striking similarity with Cassirer’s famous “line-example”; the line in the form of a sine curve can be understood, depending on the “context,” as a mathematical graph, an artistic ornament, etc. (see PSFI, 30). What consequence does the introduction of the concept of plural horizons have for the last stage of Husserl’s philosophical development?

Moving from a “pin-point” thematization of intentionality as intentional acts to “horizonal intentionality” opens up a whole new array of phenomenological research. What comes into view is a plurality of attitudes. Different attitudes “intend” different worlds (the aesthetic attitude intends the world of art, etc.), and henceforth one can speak of a plurality of worlds as meaningful “contexts” that are correlated to a plurality of attitudes. 73 Husserl focuses only on a few examples of attitudes and does not really develop this important insight.

73. I can merely hint at the problem of attitudes in this context. For a detailed analysis of these issues, see the first chapter of my “Phänomenologie der Phänomenologie” (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002).
One may suggest that this would be a meaningful way to further develop Husserl’s phenomenology of “subjective spirit”; indeed, Husserl merely began working on these issues in his late philosophy in the context of the life-world. Yet it is fair to say that Husserl, too, has thereby expanded the original scope of his transcendental method of constitution by multiplying the “forms” in which the world becomes constituted for us in a plurality of meaningful ways. However, all of these worlds as horizons of meaning have their ultimate foundation of constitution in transcendental subjectivity that is pluralized into different constitutive attitudes. He thus supplies the “subjective” dimension that is missing in Cassirer. Also, although Husserl acknowledges the plurality of types of subjective constitution through different attitudes—which equally may be called transcendental forms of intuition—he has not made the attempt to categorize them in the way Cassirer has done with his order of symbolic forms. Perhaps one reason why Husserl has shied away from this task was that he intuitively feared a “constructive” element creeping into such an analysis. Yet one can take one’s point of departure from meaningful contexts (“worlds”) and move towards subjective structures that correlate to them and in this sense pursue Cassirer’s systematic agenda that takes its departure from the “finished” spaces of meaning. In other words, there is no reason to believe that one should preclude a priori such a systematization in the context of Husserl’s constitutive analyses.

By contrast, one could say that Cassirer’s “system” of symbolic forms is perhaps too constructive or rigid to allow for other conceivable forms. Yet despite this systemic outlook that is lacking in Husserl and arguably too strong in Cassirer, Cassirer’s phenomenology of objective spirit cannot stand on its own and in this sense can be a “partner” with Husserl’s. As shown, in his late philosophy Husserl presents a rudimentary form of a phenomenology of subjective spirit in the form of the plurality of attitudes that complements Cassirer’s philosophy of objective spirit, in that Husserl strives to thematize the plurality of attitudes that constitute the different worlds of meaning that Cassirer calls symbolic forms. Yet the different symbolic forms depend on human beings and their activities. They are the “element” in which humanity dwells, and this dwelling cannot be separated from the activities that engender them. In Cassirer’s terminology, the symbolic form of, for example, myth is constituted by a different way of subjective “comportment” than that of science. Yet the objectification of spirit must have a subjective, constitutive side to it that Cassirer ignores. And in this sense one can rightfully speak of Husserl’s phenomenology of subjective spirit and Cassirer’s phenomenology of objective spirit as correlative methods that are but two directions of the “transcendental consideration,”

74. This issue whether the symbolic forms are to be understood as a systematics (hence a construction) or a certain description with “systematizing” tendencies is discussed especially in Cassirer’s drafts for a fourth volume of the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.
directions that can be isolated only artificially. They are both committed to a transcendental account of the world, focusing, in Husserl’s case, on the noetic, and in Cassirer’s case, on the noematic side of “the” transcendental, both of which break down into a *pluralité* of meaning-formation and meaning, respectively. Furthermore, both strive for a “phenomenological” analysis of their subject domain, and both use description (based on intuition) and interpretation (based on reconstruction) as the methodological tools to describe it. Yet, in so doing, just like Natorp and Husserl, they merely emphasize two different sides of the same coin. Indeed, focusing on one side does not stand in contradiction to looking at the other, if one concedes that both of them will yield a different *type* of account. And in both cases, description as a static account (which Husserl would call ‘eidetic’, Cassirer ‘substantial’) necessarily leads to an interpretative or genetic dimension, which Husserl calls ‘explanatory’, Cassirer ‘functional’. Both phenomenologies can be subsumed under the title ‘hermeneutics’ insofar as the descriptive account must be expanded into the explanatory, interpretive dimension.

This interdependence comes most clearly to the fore when one excludes one side of the correlation. In his mature philosophy, Husserl came to realize that constituting subjectivity and constituted world cannot be analyzed in isolation. The *ego cogito* necessarily includes the *cogitatum* in its horizontal dimension as world. Only late in his career did he come to focus on the noematic aspect of this correlation in thematizing the horizon into which intentional life is directed. This horizon as a nexus of meaning and referential implication is concentrated in the term “life-world.” However, this life-world is not merely a homogenous *cogitatum*, but breaks down into different nexuses of meaning, which Husserl calls ‘special worlds’ (*Sonderwelten*), the world of science, the world of the natural attitude, with its sub-forms of the world of business, art, religion, etc. These are meaningful nexuses of referential implication and as such not essentially different from the symbolic forms in Cassirer’s sense, in that they are guided by a “spiritual regard”—a specific attitude—that shapes the specific space of meaning and the way entities are experienced in and through this specific attitude. However, Husserl achieved these insights too late as to devote exhaustive treatment to them; something he realized with great dismay. Moreover, his account lacks systematic overview, a perspective maintained by Cassirer so rigorously from the start. Yet Husserl’s realization was precisely that if one merely drafts a phenomenology of subjective spirit without giving a correlative objective account of the forms into which these subjective achieve-

75. These topics are dominant especially in the *Crisis*, though they are to be found nearly everywhere in his research manuscripts as of the late Twenties. See Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*, ed. Walter Biemel, Husserliana VI (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1950), 504–7.
ments actually “crystallize”—an account of the *constituens* without the *constituta*—one ends up with a random collection of narratives of subjective acts, of something he himself mocked as “picture-book phenomenology.” Without a noematic account of that *to which* the achievements of subjective life are actually directed, subjectivity diffuses into thin air. In other words, how it exactly happens that transcendental life constitutes a world of *culture* with its plural forms is a task that, Husserl saw, would have to be completed, if there was to be any lasting value for his phenomenology.

On the other hand, merely remaining on the “objective,” noematic side of things, as Cassirer did, renders any type of subjective agency obsolete. Without a strong concept of subjectivity, the symbolic forms remain devoid of “life.” The term “spirit,” though sublime, ultimately fails to hide this dark spot in Cassirer’s theory. One could even go so far as to suggest that this omission made it systematically impossible for Cassirer to draft an ethics.76 Where there can be no access to subjectivity, any talk of moral agency, ought, volition, and personal responsibility is meaningless. Without a subjective (noetic) account supplementing the objective (noematic), Cassirer’s objective spirit remains impersonal and ultimately dead. Spirit can have no agency of its own, though it may be *spirit’s* necessary condition to be anonymous. Surely one cannot content oneself with what would be a renewed version of Hegel’s vision of the sacrifice of individual subjects on the altar of absolute spirit. To keep spirit “alive,” one needs to remember that it is actually a subjectivity, ultimately an intersubjectivity, that generates spirit forming culture in all of its activities. Taking over Natorp’s paradigm of subjectivity’s inaccessibility accounts for this weak point in Cassirer. In this sense, Husserl’s counter-position vis-à-vis Natorp holds against Cassirer as well. Indeed, from a Husserlian standpoint, one would have to reject this anonymous notion of ‘spirit’ as this seems to advocate an impersonal “agency” governing the world. Cassirer’s use of ‘spirit’ bears too much idealistic weight as to be satisfactory to Husserl. However, also Husserl’s expansion of the transcendental realm that incorporates intersubjectivity is equally in danger of losing sight of personal agency. In Husserl’s late philosophy one can sometimes get the impression that the subject is but an insignificant “zero point” in the ocean of intentional acts that are not mine. With this caveat on both sides, one can still agree on a philosophically acceptable use of the term “spirit” as the totality of subjective activities in different “attitudes.” Yet only a “noetic” consideration that Husserl gives fills spirit with life. And only a sys-

76. For a critique of Cassirer’s omission of a moral philosophy in his system, see Birgit Reck’s (at times rather polemical) essay, “Kultur ohne Moral? Warum Ernst Cassirer Trotz der Einsicht in den Primat der Praktischen Vernunft Keine Ethik schreiben konnte,” in Dorothea Frede and Ralf Schmücker, eds., *Ernst Cassirers Werk und Wirkung. Kultur und Philosophie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), 58–78. The brunt of her critique is that Cassirer’s paradigm of human beings’ practical activity precisely obliterates any genuine difference between activity as such and specifically moral activity.
tematic “noematic” account of culture as constructed in various symbolic forms provides the necessary objective counter-balance to Husserl’s act analyses.

§ 4. Conclusion

In the forgoing I have sought to show that both Husserl and Cassirer can be seen as working on the same philosophical project, that is, a description of the subject and the world insofar as both form a correlation within a philosophy that can be termed transcendental idealism. It is a philosophical project that thematizes how the world comes to be experienced for subjectivity through a plurality of conscious processes that terminate in a plurality of meaningful contexts. Although both thinkers were darkly aware of this kinship, they did not, unfortunately, pursue this lead themselves. Indeed, Cassirer writes in a letter to Husserl in 1925:

Since the publication of the first volume of the *Logical Investigations* I have always held the conviction that between the tasks that phenomenology sets for itself and the basic insights of critical philosophy there lies a deep commonality: to be sure, what is at stake for both of us is what you call . . . ‘the radically executed science of the transcendental, to be executed *ad infinitum*. (BW 5, 6)  

Yet both were too engrossed in their own mindset and their (partly erroneous) presuppositions about the others’ standpoint as to make it possible for either to truly synthesize their projects. This goes for Husserl and Cassirer and Husserl and Natorp. Unfortunately, this is also true for most scholars focusing on either strand of the tradition. If one removes the blinders on both sides, one will find remarkable similarities in the way their mutual tasks are actually carried out. Thus, this retelling of the history of Husserl’s, Natorp’s, and Cassirer’s philosophical interaction—and this can only be a beginning—has the systematic result of revealing the commonalities in both methods, enabling them to contribute in the joint effort of critical transcendental philosophy.

In describing and reconstructing transcendental structures, broken down into an account of subjective acts on the one hand and of symbolic forms on the other, both Husserl’s phenomenology and the neo-Kantian method are committed to a “phenomenology of spirit.” But, it is in the realization of the

77. This comes from a letter to Husserl from April 10, 1925. Cassirer quotes here Husserl’s letter of April 3 of the same year (*BW* 5, 5).

78. As an example I would merely like to mention Cassirer’s account of myth in which Cassirer openly admits his indebtedness to Husserl (*PSF* II, 16 n.) and towards which Husserl, in turn, was very sympathetic, as well as generally towards a phenomenology of primitive consciousness as witnessed in Husserl’s enthusiasm for the works of the French ethnologist Claude Lévy-Brihl.

79. Whereas *Geist* (spirit) is ubiquitous in Cassirer’s oeuvre, Husserl only seldomly mentions it as a topic of its own, e.g., where he talks of phenomenological psychology thematizing “universal intersubjective spirituality” (*Hua* XXXIV, 102), or what he also calls
limits of intuition and the necessity of incorporating constructive as well as reconstructive elements that the methodology of this phenomenology takes on a hermeneutic dimension. It strikes the reader as a compelling coincidence when Husserl characterizes his phenomenology—in a public lecture of 1931—as “hermeneutics of conscious life,” and Cassirer for his part—in the drafts for the planned but unpublished fourth volume of the Philosophy of Symbolic Forms—writes: “Theory of knowledge is essentially nothing but a hermeneutics of cognition, a hermeneutics that in each case grasps a special ‘direction’ of cognition and uses it as a basis for interpretation.” Both only hint at what they mean by ‘hermeneutics’, but this term is employed here to characterize their mutual projects, it is used as the method of faithful description expanded into interpretation and directed into opposite but correlative directions. Drafting such an encompassing “phenomenology of spirit” is of course a truly Herculean task, one that can merely be hinted at from afar. Instead, I would like to end this discussion with the humbler, but perhaps not less important, suggestion that, with respect to the correlation between the noetic and noematic sides of the transcendental realm, the phenomenological method based on intuition need not stand in contradiction with the neo-Kantian transcendental method based on construction. Rather, both can and need to be mediated in the way attempted. They emphasize the two aspects of the same hermeneutic-phenomenological approach to transcendental philosophy as the proper way to analyze the transcendental realm in its “subjective” and “objective” dimensions. 


82. Earlier versions of this paper were delivered as part of the Leroy Loemker Lecture Series at Emory University, Atlanta, in January 2003, as well as the Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (SPEP) in Boston in November 2003. I would like to thank the participants in these discussions, as well as David Carr, Rudolf Makkreel, Donald Verene, Paul Crowe, David Weberman, Steven Crowell, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful and insightful comments and criticisms, most of which I strived to incorporate in this version. Last but not least, I would like to thank Kyle McNeel for his help with grammar and style.