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PHENOMENOLOGY
AND
DECONSTRUCTION

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I dedicate this thesis to Katrina. She has been its possibility.
This thesis examines the nature of the supplementary relationship between Husserlian phenomenology and deconstruction. Chapter 1 gives an account of the strategies and aims of deconstruction, determining these to be an attempt to respond, using ‘other names’, to the other which is excluded by phenomenology/philosophy in its attempts to master its own limits. In Chapter 2, it is found that alterity is encountered by phenomenology on its own thresholds, informing the genetic turn in phenomenology which is necessitated as a result of the inquiries into the temporal constitution which founds the possibility of an object’s being given as such to consciousness. Furthermore, it is shown how the possibility of the genetic turn resides in the indication relation examined in the phenomenology of signification.

Chapter 3 focusses on the deconstruction of phenomenology, and investigates the double movement in phenomenology which the deconstruction reveals, taking time and language as guiding threads. On the one hand, the genetic turn appears to reveal a founding alterity, which, on the other hand, phenomenology strives to suppress in accordance with its adherence to its own ‘principle of principles’. It is argued that the deconstruction aims to accord phenomenological respect to the alterity uncovered by phenomenological descriptions. This is done through thematising certain operative concepts, concepts which remain unthematised in phenomenology precisely because such thematisation would reveal a founding non-presence intolerable to phenomenology. Deconstruction supplements phenomenology to the extent that it attempts to name, on the fissured margins of phenomenology, the radical alterity uncovered by phenomenology in a way which does not reduce the very otherness of the alterity. However, in the final Chapter, it is argued, from the perspective of Levinas, that Derrida does not in fact manage to find a sense for founding alterity in phenomenology which is ‘beyond metaphysics’. The thesis concludes by arguing that, in order to achieve its strategic aims, as detailed in Chapter 1, the deconstruction of phenomenology needs to be ethically supplemented, one example of such an ethically supplemented deconstructive reading of Husserl being found in some of the most recent texts of Levinas.
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Abbreviations

This thesis has been printed on recycled paper.
In a review of J. C. Evans' study of Derrida's *Voice and Phenomenon*, entitled *Strategies of Deconstruction*, Len Lawlor writes that Evans' book:

... clarifies neither *Voice and Phenomenon*’s argumentation nor its conclusions; it clarifies neither deconstructive method nor its relationship to phenomenology in general. Nevertheless, it does provide one benefit: *Strategies of Deconstruction* indicates how badly we need to reread Derrida’s early works. *[Diacritics, 23.2 (Summer 1993), p 14]*

Lawlor argues that this need to reread Derrida’s early works is due not least to:

Derrida’s recent attempt to develop an ethico-political discourse. This discourse has been widely appropriated. Is it possible, however, to understand the implications of it without going back to the foundations of Derrida’s thought in phenomenology? *[ibid]*

The aim of this thesis is to clarify the method of deconstruction by following the specific case of Derrida’s reading of Husserl, undertaken in *Introduction to Husserl’s ‘Origin of Geometry’, Voice and Phenomenon*, along with the essays and sections of essays devoted to Husserl, collected in *Writing and Difference, Of Grammatology*, and *Margins of Philosophy*. The objective of the thesis is to demonstrate that the deconstruction of Husserl’s phenomenology, which works in the
space delimited by two readings of Husserl’s text, one revealing its metaphysical self-determination, the other displaying the text’s tendency to transgress this metaphysical closure, reveals an openness, a surplus, within the phenomenological text, which requires supplementation. Moreover, this overwhelming openness in the text of phenomenology does not have a merely contingent status, but is shown rather to found the very matters which phenomenology has argued are foundational. What is foundational, Derrida shows, in the realm of phenomenology, is non-presence or alterity, rather than the presence which Husserl himself claims to be foundational, in the principle of phenomenology. This surplus of founding alterity, it is argued, remains unnamed in the text of phenomenology, due to phenomenology’s metaphysical limitations. Thus, the deconstruction aims to name the surplus of phenomenology which grounds phenomenology without being nameable by phenomenology. Such an activity of naming will, it is argued, developing an analysis of the strategy of deconstruction in Chapter 1, open phenomenology to the beyond of metaphysics.

In the final Chapter of the thesis, however, we turn to matters relating to the second point made in the citation from Lawlor above. What is definitive of the discourse of metaphysics, as will be discussed in Chapter 1, is its will to mastery over its own limits, which is to say, its desire to erect itself as a complete, presuppositionless, or totalized discourse. In his reading of Husserl, does Derrida’s own text betray the same desire? It will be argued that in fact there is a vulnerability in Derrida’s text, a vulnerability which is exposed in a series of texts by Levinas. What we shall argue is that deconstruction has not managed to think through the full sense of the beyond of metaphysics which, it is claimed, the naming of what remains unnameable in Husserl’s text is
intended to accomplish. We shall argue, developing certain remarks in Levinas, that, even though Derrida has revealed the foundationality of that which phenomenology itself cannot make manifest, nevertheless his text remains governed by the very discourse which he is claiming to dismantle.

We shall argue that Derrida has not gone far enough simply in revealing that the living present of the phenomenological subject is in fact founded on non-presence. Rather, following Levinas, we shall argue that, in order that this notion of the founding of the subject by alterity be significantly thought beyond metaphysics, the full ethical implications of founding alterity need to be thought through. Thus, the final Chapter of the thesis will argue that deconstruction itself needs to be supplemented, in a manner similar to that in which phenomenology needs to be supplemented. What this need for supplementation will reveal, ultimately, is that what takes phenomenology beyond its limits, as shown in the deconstruction, is in fact the trace of radical ethics which is found within phenomenology as it is deconstructed. Thus, regarding Lawlor’s point, we would argue that Derrida’s ethical turn in his later works can be shown to be a response to the ethical deconstruction of his own work, and in particular, the readings of Husserl, which is undertaken in the work of Levinas. In the deconstructive supplement to phenomenology there is a trace of openness, a blind spot whose sense deconstruction has not recognised. In order to give sense to this openness, this vulnerability within the text of deconstruction, Derrida’s work requires to be ethically supplemented.

In providing this reading of Derrida, this work follows on in a tradition of readings of Derrida generally, which have shown that the
texts of deconstruction and radical, Levinasian, ethics are remarkably intertwined, meeting in something like the heart of a chiasmus. Such an argument concerning Derrida's relation to Levinas has been advanced by, most notably, Bernasconi, Llewelyn, Critchley, and Bemet among others. This thesis goes beyond these authors' texts, however, both in situating this chiasmatic relation of Derrida and Levinas within the specific region of phenomenology, which it is argued in fact opens the way to a sense for radical ethics beyond metaphysics; and also in offering a reading of Derrida which, in revealing the strategies of deconstruction in the concrete example of the reading of Husserl, aims to avoid the trap either of offering mere commentary or providing a critical interpretation. This seems to us to be the main failing of readings of Derrida which can be read as seeking to determine the essence of deconstruction, such as those of Gasché, thereby rendering the deconstructive text as a totalized whole.

Thus, by ultimately reading Derrida through Levinas, we hope to provide something like an elliptical displacement of the deconstructive text, showing a certain openness in that text's relation to phenomenology, an openness which is ultimately an indication of the trace of ethics within phenomenology.
In this thesis, I wish to explore the new style of thinking which we have learnt to call 'deconstruction', through an analysis of those texts of Derrida which deal with Husserlian phenomenology. In order to facilitate this analysis, I will provide, in the second chapter, an extended reading of those moments in Husserl which seem to provide the axial moments for Derrida’s deconstructions (most notably, these moments tend to concern the notions of time and the other).

At the same time, in giving these readings in order the better to
understand Derrida’s own work, it will become clear that there is already in Husserl a movement which anticipates the work of deconstruction. This is the movement from static to genetic phenomenology, anticipated in the descriptions of indication as early as the first *Logical Investigation*, and ‘forced’ upon Husserl through his temporal analyses. The ‘precise’ nature of (the) deconstruction (of Husserl) will become much clearer when we see the way in which moves already underfoot ‘within’ phenomenology become *modulated* in Derrida’s texts. The analyses of these modulations will be carried out in the third chapter of this thesis.

In order to retain a certain fidelity to the nature of deconstruction, which, as Derrida points out, is never simply a commentary, in the final chapter, a rapprochement between Levinas and Derrida will be staged, in order to develop the ethical moment of deconstructive thought. Once again, the argument here will be motivated by the awareness that this ethical moment itself has its roots in phenomenology; in particular, the notion of *responsibility*, as worked out in Husserl’s final texts; but also, and more importantly, to the extent that Husserl’s temporal analyses enable the event of the interruption of the Other, the face to face, which is for Levinas the beginning of Ethics.

In order to pave the way for these analyses, this first chapter of the thesis will offer some reflections on the strategies of deconstruction and on the ‘aims’ of deconstruction.
§ 1. The Double Science of Deconstruction

In a number of texts more or less contemporaneous with those texts concerned directly with Husserl, Derrida outlines, provisionally, the strategies of deconstruction. These strategic remarks arise within the context of writing about Heidegger, Rousseau, and Mallarmé. We are at once confronted by the fundamental aspect of deconstruction: that it is always a *textual* event. Deconstructive texts are always, first and foremost, readings of other texts.

This necessary textuality of deconstruction results from the critique of the transcendental signified, that is, the denial that meaning can exist independently of the signifier, the 'expression' of that meaning. Such a denial is informed by Saussure’s arguments in the *Cours de linguistique générale* that the relationship between the elements of signs, namely signifiers and signifieds, is irreducible, in the same way that there cannot be one side of a piece of paper without the other. A second crucial argument concerns the fact that meaning is produced through the more or less arbitrary differentiation of signs, as opposed to having any essential link to a particular sign. Thus, deconstruction begins from the realization that any meaning a text may have is produced precisely through the textuality of that text as opposed to having any existence independent of the text. Already, therefore, deconstruction will be concerned with the mode of expression of philosophical ideas, as well as with these ideas themselves.¹

¹. As we shall see, this very concern reaches its most determined moment in Derrida’s reading of § 36 of Husserl’s *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal-Time*, when, on reaching the absolute ground of constituting consciousness, Husserlian phenomenology is literally struck dumb. At stake in this reading will be the necessity of this failure of phenomenological language: as Levinas will ask: “Do we lack names, or is the thing itself beyond the nameable?” [OBBE 188, fn 18/AEAE 45]
Deconstruction aims to be a writing, or reading, or saying, which is otherwise (cf "Time of a thesis: punctuations", Montefiori (1983) p 37). Such writing otherwise will attempt to "produce" [produire; G 158/227] a relationship between what might be called the meaning of the text as intended by the writer (or perhaps the meaning of the text as it has been ‘traditionally’ understood), and that aspect of textuality which, as indicated above, is itself generative of meaning independently of any authorial control. Speaking schematically, it could be said that this relationship describes the ‘space’ of deconstruction.

The relationship produced by deconstructive reading supplements the text being read. In saying this, a further fidelity to Saussure is enacted. One of the aspects of metaphysical discourse which is to be deconstructed, as has been noted, is the adherence to a transcendental signified. Now, in order that Derrida does not commit himself to a transcendental signified, he stresses the extent to which the meaning of ‘key-words’ such as ‘deconstruction’ is acquired through inscription in a chain of signifiers (including, for example, ‘supplement’, as we shall see). The meaning of the terms is then produced through the differentiation between the members of this (endless) chain. Crucially, the majority of terms inscribed in this chain are words ‘found’ in texts being deconstructed. Thus, the meanings of these words are themselves already dependent upon contextuality. We can therefore begin to get a further understanding of the meaning of deconstruction by thinking it in terms of the notion of supplementarity found in Rousseau.2

2. We could equally well do this through a consideration of any of the other members of the chain. For instance, the relationship which was described as the space of deconstruction could also be understood in terms of difference. Thus, the ‘meaning’ of the text will never simply be present as intended by the author, due to the differential basis of the textual production of meaning; and further, due to the fact that
Deconstruction could be said to be supplementary in the sense, as determined by Derrida’s reading of the function of this word in Rousseau’s text, that writing supplements speech, or Thérèse supplements Mamma (who is herself already a supplement of an unknown mother; cf G 156/225). The supplementarity which is produced in Derrida’s reading of Rousseau is not quite the supplementarity the author had intended. The intended meaning is of that supplement which is simply added on to something which is already complete in itself. In this case, the writing which is added on to the representation of thought by speech is only a mediated representation in much the same way that the bed drawn by Plato’s artist is only a representation of that bed which is itself only a copy of the real form of the bed. However, and ‘at the same time’, Derrida urges that we pay particular attention to the function of the supplement, as it is revealed through the workings of Rousseau’s text: which is to ‘take the place of’, to ‘fill a void’. In this case, the presence of that which is to be supplemented is an ideal – it “ought to be self-sufficient” [G 145/209], but in fact, harbours a lack, a deficiency, which could be said to require supplementing. These two senses of supplementarity can never simply be separated (and Derrida will go on to demonstrate this in his reading of Rousseau). In the same way, it can be argued that the text to be deconstructed appears at first glance to be a whole to which the deconstructive text is added on. However, and at the same time, it becomes apparent that the deconstructive text is in fact inscribed within this process is without end, the final presence of the meaning will in turn be ceaselessly deferred. In presenting the strategies (and ‘aims’ in the next section) of deconstruction, it is to be hoped that by being sensitive to the contexts of the notions commented upon, we will not fall into the trap of overdetermining them as an absolute method.
a pre-existing space in the 'original' text.3

The deconstructive text fulfils its supplementary function, producing the relationship alluded to above, by what Derrida has called a 'double science'. The double science is the means by which the deconstructive reading becomes a productive “repetition without identity”. [D 4/10] In “Form and Meaning”, the non-identical repetition is likened to an “elliptical displacement” which occurs in the repetition of a circle. [M 173/207] The double science confirms the doubleness of supplementarity noted above. On the one hand, the supplement is other to a whole. On the other hand, it is, to a certain extent, already inscribed within the whole. The double reading engendered by the double science is equally within and beyond the text read. The form of this doubling can perhaps best be exemplified through a consideration of some strategic remarks Derrida appends to two readings of Heidegger in Margins.

In considering these strategic remarks, we are also led to a further aspect of deconstruction. As Derrida explains elsewhere, one of the factors determining the text which is put into relationship with that intended by the author in the deconstructive reading, is the extent to which the text is “governed by the system” of the language, and logic, in which the text is written. [G 159/227] In the case now under consideration (although this will always be the case for the text of metaphysics as a ‘whole’), the governing system is the metaphysics of

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3. This is one of the reasons why the deconstructive text uses ‘words’ to be found in the deconstructed text. Furthermore, the sense in which the original text already bears within itself the gap which is to be filled by the deconstructive text, is developed by Derrida when he spells out the different ‘literal’ senses of the word ‘deconstruction’ in his “Letter to a Japanese Friend” [in Wood & Bernasconi (eds) (1985)]. The sense which is most interesting here is that of _se déconstruire_, of ‘self-deconstructing’. The event of deconstruction is always a case of the text itself losing its construction.
In “Ousia and Gramme”, Derrida wonders whether Heidegger has managed to break with the dominance of presence in the account of time which is worked out in Being and Time, or whether in fact Heidegger is still working within a system governed by a traditional determination of presence. In the deconstruction carried out in “Ousia and Gramme”, Derrida suggests that the Heideggerian text is itself doubled, between the text which attempts to challenge the metaphysics of presence from within that system; and the text which marks a fissure in the metaphysical text. [M 65/75]

This schema of the Heideggerian text is then evoked by Derrida in a description of deconstructive ‘practice’ towards the end of “The Ends of Man”. At this point, Derrida’s ‘aim’ is to induce in contemporary French thought, and in particular, current French readings of Heidegger, a certain “trembling” [ébranlement]. Firstly, Derrida once again draws attention to the need (in a sense, contra-Structuralism) for determining the way in which a “‘formal’ organization” [M 134/161], itself meaningless, enables the possibility of meaning in the text. However, a “radical trembling” — and here Derrida’s point will hold with respect to the entirety of metaphysics and not just current French

4. As will be confirmed later, it is the very governing of the system of metaphysics by presence which leads to the necessity of deconstruction. For instance, to develop a note above, it could be argued that the reason Husserl finds himself unable to talk about the absolute flow of constituting consciousness is that there is nothing present which can be named. And yet, the ‘existence’ of this level of consciousness has been revealed by the very phenomenological descriptions which now appear inadequate; hence, at this moment, the need for a supplementary deconstruction.

5. With respect to Rousseau, such an organizing system could be characterised by the systematic repression of writing. [cf G 97ff/145ff] Derrida chooses to define this system historically as the “Age of Rousseau”, privileging Rousseau because it is in his text that this system is most profoundly thematized. In the text of Husserl, as we will see, the organizing system is once again the privileging of presence, to the extent that this privilege determines Husserl’s principle of all principles, the methodological principle which will, as noted by Ricoeur, be perpetually at odds with the descriptive fecundity of phenomenology.
thinking – “can only come from the outside [dehors].” The question is therefore raised once more of the doubling relationship between the text and its outside/other; this is the question of, on the one hand, that which is ‘brought in’ to supplement the text in deconstruction, and on the other, of the ‘beyond’ of metaphysics in general. This second aspect will be returned to in the following section. Here, the question at stake concerns the risks run in the task of deconstruction, which lead to the need for the double science.

In the deconstructive supplementation of texts which produces a relationship between the intended text and the organizing system which ‘goes beyond’ the thresholds of the original text, the most important strategical problem will be in establishing the supplementing text in such a way that it is neither simply subsumed within the original text, nor left totally outwith, or beyond, the text such that the text remains unaltered. Thus, the writing otherwise which is. how Derrida has conceived deconstruction will be a weave of two motifs.

Firstly, there is the irreducible need for a “respectful doubling commentary” which, although in itself unable to open a transgressive reading, nonetheless serves as a guardrail for such a reading. [G 158/227; see also the discussion of this point in the “Afterword” in Limited Inc, pp 142ff] Such a doubling commentary would provide the grounds for a deconstructive reading which would attempt to supplement the original text using only materials to be found within that text. These materials would then be used against the text. As Derrida points out, it is this type of reading which Heidegger tends to employ (and which he calls Destruktion). A good example of such a reading might be Heidegger’s “violent dialogue” with Kant in the Kantbuch.
However, the risk of this procedure – and it is this which is highlighted by Derrida in “Ousia and Gramme” – is that one ends up “confirming, consolidating, relifting (relever), at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs.” [M 135/163]

Secondly, therefore, a supplement which can cause trembling would be one which attempts to “change terrain” in an “irruptive manner”. [ibid] Here, the difficulty is in retaining the otherness of the terrain; one problem being simply that, in being constrained to use a pre-existent language, such a reading is always going to risk reaffirming the organizing system of the original text.

The double science, therefore, will affirm the necessity of both types of reading in attempting the deconstructive supplementation of a metaphysical text. However, in order to avoid the risks run by the two types of reading, the deconstruction itself will be a writing otherwise, that is, it will assume, in the words of Nietzsche, new “styles”.

We could summarize the ‘method’ of deconstructive reading, then, in the following way: it is a supplement which is both added to, and required by, a text, such that it produces a certain displacement between the organizing system of the text and the intentions behind the text; this displacement will attempt to take the text beyond the terrain of its organizing system (which has, as is to be demonstrated, determined the lack within the text in the first place) by means of a double reading, one which both works within and beyond the text being read; and finally, in order that the deconstruction should not simply confirm the organising discourse, it will employ new ways of writing. One such new style is exemplified in the “Tympan” which opens Margins.
§ 2. Tympanising Philosophy

My interest for these more or less visible framework structures, for these limits, these margin effects or these paradoxes of edgings continued to relate to the same question: how is it that philosophy finds itself inscribed, rather than itself inscribing itself, within a space which it seeks but is unable to control, a space which opens out on to another which is no longer even its other, as I have tried to make apparent in a tympanum as little Hegelian as possible. How is one to name the structure of this space? I do not know; nor do I know whether there can even be what may be called knowledge of such a space.

(Derrida, "The time of a thesis: punctuations")

1. Having briefly reviewed the strategies of deconstruction, the aim of this section is to develop more fully the stakes involved in deconstruction. In order to achieve this, a reading will be given of the essay "Tympan". The key themes of this text are the limit (or margin) which encloses; and the transgression of that limit (coupled with the question of the beyond 'of' the limit).1 One reason why this text provides an informative access to the 'practice' of deconstruction is revealed through the way in which the question of style raised at the end of the last section comes to work problems posed by the text. That is to say, the stylistic form of the text (such as its metaphorics, but also its textual design) might be considered to offer one 'solution' to apparent aporias described within the text, as well as providing the 'system of

1. Although the phenomenologist who is being deconstructed in 'Tympan' is Hegel, the key notions of enclosure and reflection, and the relationship between philosophy and its other which is called into question, hold equally for the phenomenologist with whom this thesis is concerned. As always with Derrida, a certain 'universality' is always left over from his deconstructions of specific texts. Compare the remarks in 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', where Derrida writes of the processes being described in Freud's Project: "No doubt life protects itself by repetition, trace, difference...It is thus the delay which is in the beginning." [WD 203] And in a footnote explains: "The concepts of originary difference and originary 'delay' were imposed upon us by a reading of Husserl." [emphasis added]
organization’ for raising these problems. This therefore avoids the potential difficulty of finding the text always already inscribed in the organizational system being deconstructed – one of the risks delimited in the account of the double science in “Ousia and Gramme”.

Hegel is chosen to represent philosophy in Derrida’s discussion of the limits of philosophy for reasons which echo those that motivated his choice of Rousseau as exemplary of the repression of writing which dominates philosophy. Hegel makes thematic that which is a characteristic of all philosophy, namely, the will to master its own limits (other forms this will takes include the rationalist desire for a presuppositionless philosophy). For Hegel, the question of the limit represents the very limit between his own system, and the systems he is critical of; and the possibility of moving beyond these systems is provided by a transcendence of the limit. It is a mark of Derrida’s proximity to Hegel that he should choose to situate his discourse on the ‘aims’ of deconstruction within the context of Hegel’s text.

The epigraphs to “Tympan” point towards the central text of Hegel’s for this discussion, that is, the Differenzschrift. This early work of Hegel’s is entirely appropriate for the questions which are to be asked of philosophy by Derrida, for it is in this text that Hegel engages in a series of “universal reflections... dealing with the need, presupposition, principles, etc, of philosophy”. [Diff 4/13] These reflections on the nature of philosophy in general are undertaken prior to that moment when the discussion can “concern only philosophy itself” [ibid], that is, when Hegel can embark on the construction of his own system. More importantly, this text of Hegel’s deals with the question, as indicated in the citation above, of the “need” [Bedürfnis] for philosophy. As Derrida
asks: "Does philosophy answer a need? How is it to be understood? Philosophy? The need?" [M x/l] These same questions could be transcribed and posed of this essay of Derrida’s through substitution of ‘deconstruction’ for ‘philosophy’.

The progress of this section then will be determined by the need to trace Derrida’s movement away from Hegel in terms of the interrelated themes of the need of philosophy (/deconstruction), and philosophy’s limit. How do these two themes intertwine in Hegel?

Hegel begins by reflecting on the difference between philosophical systems in general, and how such distinctions are possible. His argument is that all philosophical systems are themselves only the particular [eigentümlich] forms that the spirit of philosophy takes on, and that, furthermore, the problem in contemporary philosophy is that it has become obsessed with these particularities of system to the detriment of ‘true’ philosophy.2 This marks the first ‘need’ for philosophy, which is to be fulfilled, as the citation of the first epigraph makes clear, by philosophy’s “cast[ing] itself into the abyss à corps perdu.”3 However, this split between system and the matter expressed by the system, a distinction, as Hegel puts it, between the letter [Buchstaben] and the spirit [Geist] of philosophy, is made more ‘philosophical’ in Hegel’s subsequent formulation of the need.

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2. As Hegel writes (in a passage anticipating the one cited as an epigraph by Derrida), philosophy of the age (in particular, the philosophy of Reinhold) has constructed a vestibule [Vorhof] in which it can prepare itself for the step into the temple of philosophy; but, owing to the giddiness induced by the splendour of what is to be confronted in the temple, philosophy has contented itself with “busying itself in this vestibule with analyzing and methodising and telling stories”. [Diff 9/18]

3. Which is to say that the only way to move on from the vestibule, to leave behind mere concern with the particularities of systems, is to enter headlong into ‘real’ philosophy, which, as we have seen, is one and univocal, and therefore offers no support to differences of particularity.
In the section entitled “The Need for Philosophy”, Hegel argues that the form, or letter, of a system, that which differentiates one expression of philosophy from another, springs from the “living originality of spirit” [Diff 10/20], and takes on the form it does from the form that the “diremption” [Entzweiung] of the spirit from itself takes. This diremption is cited by Hegel as the need for philosophy. The form this event of diremption takes is further explained thus: “the appearance of the Absolute has isolated itself from the Absolute and has fixed itself as something independent.” [ibid] The diremption then is the hiving-off of the appearance of the Absolute from the Absolute, and the subsequent presentation of this appearance as independent.

The manifestation of this isolation is philosophy as reflection on the understanding. Its determining element is its finitude, expressed in the “multiplicity of its limitations”. The limitations of the understanding can be seen in Kant, most clearly with the case of his positing of things-in-themselves, which are the objective expression, as Hegel says, of nothing more than “the empty form of opposition”. [Diff 1/9] This is the crucial aspect of the manifestation of the diremption – that philosophy is delimited by a series of oppositions which result from the fact of the finitude of the understanding (a fact arising from the very independence, an independence which means that the understanding will always be dealing with what is other than itself – the classic subject-object split of philosophy).

Unquestionably for Hegel, the need of philosophy is to overcome the diremption which leads to the finitude of understanding. However, this observation is not so clear-cut as it seems. On the one hand the
simple transcendence of oppositions can result in what Hegel describes, by way of criticism of Schelling, as “the night in which all cows are black”. On the other hand, we need pause to reflect on the very form in which the need is expressed. Thus, as Heidegger says, in the 1968 Aix-en-Provence seminar, we need to ask whether the genitive in this expression is objective or subjective: is it the case that there is a need to philosophise (due to philosophy being stranded in the vestibule) as has been suggested up till now? Or, rather, are we to understand Hegel as telling us that this is something which philosophy itself needs? Heidegger’s answer, and this is surely not to do any violence to Hegel, methodologically or substantially, is that the genitive in “the need of philosophy” is both subjective and objective. Thus, at one and the same time, the diremption leads to a need for philosophy (to overcome the split), and, philosophy has a need to overcome the diremption, that is, philosophy has a need to “make whole”. And as Heidegger goes on, pointing to precisely the work that Hegel indicates needs to be done, this need of philosophy, to make whole, arises because unities are never given to philosophy (otherwise, once again, we would be in the night of the black cows!).

The need of philosophy then is to overcome what Hegel has described as understanding’s establishment of a multiplicity of limitations which tends towards infinitude, and thus totality. The problem with this movement is that the infinity posited is itself in opposition to a finitude (ie of the limitations) and is thus a bad (limited) infinity. It is this infinity, which is only the negation of the finite and thus still limited, which has to be overcome. This overcoming marks the moment that understanding becomes Reason, which is, in Hegel’s thinking at this stage, the appearance of the Absolute.
The form of the overcoming is the *Aufhebung*, which both retains the diremption (and so resists the Schellingian risk), but at the same time, sublates the opposition (for instance, between subjectivity and objectivity) rather than remaining fixated with it:

In [its] infinite activity... Reason has united that which was separated, and has subordinated the absolute diremption to a relative one which is determined by the primordial identity. [Diff 12/22]

What is the possibility of this movement of Reason? Its ‘origin’ lies in the ‘expression’ of the need [*das ausgesprochene Bedürfnis*] for philosophy, which forms a presupposition for philosophy to the extent that this is an expression of both the genitives as discussed above. In this sense, philosophy is answering its own need, which is therefore the possibility of the vestibule of philosophy which is evoked in the second passage cited by Derrida in his epigraph to “Tympan”. In starting from itself, therefore, the movement from the need for philosophy to the instrument of philosophising calls for the work of *reflection*. The task for reflection as Reason is to construct the Absolute for consciousness. That reflection may carry out this task, indeed, that this task is what is called upon in the need for philosophy, depends, as Hegel argues, on two presuppositions: firstly, that to an extent the Absolute is already present, otherwise it could not be sought. Thus, the construction of the Absolute by Reason is really only a letting *appear* through a sublation of the limitations imposed on consciousness by the understanding. The second presupposition is that consciousness is a being which has “stepped forth out of” [*Herausgetretenseyn*] the totality of being and non-being, finitude and infinitude, etc, to which Reason is to return it.
Here then we have the crux of philosophy, as Hegel has presented it. Philosophy arises from a need for totality, which is already philosophy’s own need (for itself). Through reflection on what is always already ‘there’, philosophical speculation aims to transcend the oppositions created by the limitations of the finite understanding, and to make these immanent by a process of simultaneous conservation and sublation. Through this process (of becoming) which is the work of Reason, the Absolute will ultimately become present for consciousness through the eventual sublation of the opposition between Absolute Subjectivity and Absolute Objectivity. This is the movement which is described in the third of the citations making up Derrida’s epigraphs to “Tympan”.4 The stakes for Derrida, as has been indicated, revolve around the interrelation between the need of philosophy, which arises from the diremption of a prior unity, and which seeks to reinstate the unity; and the means by which this need will be fulfilled, that is, through the transcendence of limits (imposed by the understanding), but at the same time, through the protection of these limits (which is to say, with Hegel, that from being absolute they become relative to the primordial identity).

2. It is to the transcendence of limits as the fundamental moment in the fulfilment of the need for philosophy that “Tympan” directs itself. And, in dealing with these themes, the further aim of the essay will be, as the title of the text suggests, and the first sentence affirms, “To

4. It is surely not just coincidence that these three epigraphs, describing as they do (starting from the bottom left) the movement from the beginning of philosophy, to the need, and the presupposition of the need, of philosophy, and ultimately to the process by which this need will be fulfilled, are presented in the form of a triangle, the figure corresponding most appropriately to the ‘shape’ of the dialectic.
The 'metaphorics' of this essay, and Derrida's 'intentions' in employing the particular mode of presentation utilised in "Tympan", will form the subject-matter for the final part of this section. This current part will focus on what might be called the 'philosophical arguments' of the text.

Perhaps the main move in the essay is Derrida's reformulation of the limit as the limit/passage. This move corresponds in a sense to the strategy outlined above with respect to Derrida's recasting of certain terms (such as 'supplement' in Rousseau) as undecidables. The crucial aspect of undecidable 'terms' is that they resist and disorganize philosophical oppositions "without ever constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics." [P 43/58] It is the movement of this resistance to speculative resolution which will be followed here.

As has been noted, Derrida returns us to Hegel's meditations at the beginning of the essay by posing the question of the need of philosophy; which is, as we have seen, that philosophy overcome diremption in order to achieve unity. For Derrida, this movement commits Hegel, and in this sense he is exemplary of the tradition of philosophy, to a certain relation to the limit. On the one hand this relation is manifest in the limitedness (finitude) of the understanding, which is committed to thinking in terms of fixed oppositions; and on the other, in the possibility of firstly transcending this limitedness, and secondly, of achieving unity. All of this amounts to saying that for Hegel (and for philosophy) the possibility of fulfilling the need of philosophy

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5. For a discussion of the overturning science which leads to the inscription of undecidables, see Derrida's response to the first question of the final interview in Positions.
lies in overcoming that which is responsible for the limiting. Thus, philosophy requires to achieve "mastery of the limit" [M x/I], such that "its own limit had not to remain foreign to it." [ibid] In other words, the limit of philosophy, rather than being opposed to philosophy, must be made thinkable, to/by philosophy. And this in turn, Derrida suggests, requires that what lies beyond the limit of philosophy, that which, in being opposed, establishes the limit, be made thinkable by philosophy:

Philosophy has always insisted upon this: thinking its other. Its other: that which limits it, and from which it derives its essence, its definition, its production. To think its other: does this amount solely to relever (aufheben) that from which it derives, to head the procession [marche] of its method only by passing the limit? Or indeed does the limit, obliquely, by surprise, always reserve one more blow for philosophical knowledge? Limit/passage. [M x-xi/l]

Thus, as Derrida writes, the issue will be the possibility of this movement beyond the limit, to think that which lies beyond the limit, such that the limit can be thought as limit. To think the limit as limit would be to return it to presence (to consciousness, or to philosophy), to interiorize it, rather than having it mark the 'beginning of absence'; in other words, to negate what is negating in the limit while at the same time retaining its functioning as limit. This movement is of course itself exemplary of the movement of the Aufhebung which is the 'motor of the dialectic', to the extent that absolute otherness is now thought as a relative otherness, and the limit no longer marks an absolute difference but a difference within identity/unity.

So now the question has become one of the possibility of philosophy thinking its other (as a means of transcending its limit). But
is this, in fact, a possibility for philosophy?

*To insist* upon thinking *its other*: its proper other, the proper of its other, an other proper? In thinking it *as such*, in recognizing it, one misses it. One reappropriates it for oneself, one disposes of it, one misses it, or rather one misses (the) missing (of) it, which, as concerns the other, always amounts to the same. Between the proper of the other and the other of the proper. [M xi-xii/II]

The problem that faces philosophy's attempt to think its other lies precisely in the possessive form; for the other has always been an issue for philosophy, has always already been (re-)appropriated by philosophy. This other is not the other which lies beyond philosophy and which thus serves to limit philosophy. The task for philosophy, the task faced by Hegel in attempting to move beyond the limit such that the limit can be sublated, is to find a way of thinking the other which does not reduce the other to an object which becomes the possession of philosophy. The question is one of whether, in Hegel’s terms, it is possible to retain the alterity of the other at the very moment that the other is being sublated, or whether at the moment of thinking the other, the otherness is lost, and the limit is simply pushed back a stage, but left intact as such? As Derrida writes, instead of philosophy simply *producing* its other (in which case the other would already be inscribed within philosophy, or as Derrida writes, engendered in advance by philosophy [M xv/VIII]), and thus merely remaining within the bounds of philosophy, "... in question will be, but according to a movement unheard of by philosophy, an other which is no longer *its other.*" [M xiv/V]

Derrida returns to the problem of the productivity of philosophy,
and in particular, of Hegel’s philosophy, in a number of places (such as 
*Glas*, “From Restricted to General Economy”, “To Speculate – on 
Freud”, etc). But this problem receives its most succinct formulation in 
the following phrase from “Tympan”: “its outside is never its outside”. 
[M xvi/VIII]6. It is a case then of the following – for Hegel, the 
possibility of fulfilling the need of philosophy and overcoming 
diremption lies in thinking the limit/other; but the very moment of 
thinkability of the other immediately returns it to within the limits,
makes the other simply a present object for philosophy. Which would be 
to say that, far from retaining a relative difference in identity, there 
would in fact only ever be the identity of the same, of the proper, what 
is proper to philosophy, what is always already philosophy’s property. 
The possibility of thinking the limit as such is that the limit be reduced 
to a(n internal) passage.

The need of deconstruction could be said to arise at the moment 
that the other/limit is appropriated by philosophy, and is thus lost 
(missed) by philosophy; at the moment when the limit appears to be 
reduced simply to a passage. How does this appropriation happen, in 
spite of the best intentions of, for example, Hegel? And is there an 
‘alternative’? Is the status of the passage/limit more complex than has 
been formulated thus far? Can the other be ‘approached’ without being 
appropriated – can the other of philosophy be ‘thought’ in its alterity? 
Here, then, the stakes of deconstruction’s relationship to philosophy are 
posed. Having considered the strategies of deconstruction above, we are 
now confronted with the point (of departure and of destination) of

6. The question in *Glas* would be formulated as “What remains of Absolute Knowledge?”; in “To Speculate – on Freud”, it will be a case of calling into question the supposed speculative step forward into what is already known, already possessed; nothing risking, nothing gained? Similar questions will be raised in Derrida’s analysis of the *Rückfrage*, the methodology of historical phenomenology.
deconstruction:

What is the specific resistance of philosophical discourse to deconstruction? It is the infinite mastery that the agency of Being [which Derrida has just previously glossed as "a process of reappropriation"] (and of the) proper seems to assure it; this mastery permits it to interiorize every limit as being and as being its own proper. To exceed it, by the same token, and therefore to preserve it in itself. [M xix/XIII-XIV]

The aim of deconstruction, is to call into question philosophy’s claim to mastery (over its own limit/other). The ‘place’ of the deconstructive strategy, the moment where the double science will get to work, will be the point where philosophy claims to go beyond itself in order to reappropriate the other of itself, and thus establish control over its own limits/thresholds/margins/closure. This mastery will be called into question in two ways. On the one hand, as has been noted, the appropriation of the other in fact reduces the alterity of the other, and thus renders debatable the claim that philosophy has managed to go beyond itself, and thus to determine its own limit.

On the other hand, and in a sense working in a counter-direction, deconstruction will position itself on the margin itself. Does the limit in fact successfully hold philosophy within itself? This becomes a double question, as Derrida notes [M xxiii/XIX], to the extent that not only is the margin of philosophy in general being questioned, but also the margin of the particular text being read. (To speak in Hegelian terms, we might say that the margins of both the spirit and the letter are being questioned.) In terms of the text being read, the question then would be does the margin of the text hold good, does it manage to close itself? At
this point in “Tympan”, a new relationship between philosophy and its other, and the text and its other, begins to emerge; and to take account of this relationship will be to acknowledge:

that beyond the philosophical text there is not a blank, virgin, empty margin, but another text, a weave of differences of forces without any present centre of reference;...and also to recall that the written text of philosophy (this time in its books) overflows and cracks its meaning. [M xxiii/XIX]

This then will be the focus of the deconstructive strategy – those moments in the text(s) of philosophy of overflow, where the margin no longer simply holds but cracks.

Deconstruction has a “double understanding” [“double entente”] of the limit, and the beyond of the limit, which understands the margin both as more than philosophy has wished to reduce it to, and less than philosophy has hoped for it – more and less to the very extent that it is both limit and passage at the same time. The marginality of the limit of philosophy is determined at the very moment that there is a seepage beyond the limit. This overflow forbids the recuperation of the limit because it is no longer ever fully present and therefore never able to be mastered. The further consequence of this movement is that what is inside philosophy itself becomes susceptible to the effects of the beyond, threatening philosophy’s “pretensions to univocal rigidity or regulated polysema.” [M xxiv/XX]. The unity sought by Hegel as the fulfilment of the need for philosophy is unachievable because, despite Hegel’s claims to the contrary, the limit cannot be mastered.

9. Recalling, of course, the point made earlier about the necessary textuality of deconstruction, and in particular, Derrida’s remarks in Grammatology that “there is no hors-texte”. [G 158/227]
3. The discourse of the margin outlined above represents one hand of the double science of deconstruction, the hand that works on the inside of philosophy, using the stones that are to be found already in the house against the edifice. This process has revealed that the pretensions to wholeness, of philosophy, and in particular, the pretensions of one philosopher, Hegel, who is taken to be exemplary of philosophy 'as a whole', are scuppered on the very terms set out by philosophy. The discourse of the limit required by philosophy to establish itself in fact reveals the limit working against philosophy.

But deconstruction has its other hand, the hand that attempts to change terrain and to affirm an absolute break with philosophy. More is required if deconstruction is itself not to run the risk of ultimately being reappropriated by philosophy; which would undoubtedly be the case if the foregoing were all that there was to the matter:

Thus, one will have said nothing, or in any event done nothing, in declaring 'against' philosophy that its margin is within or without, within and without, simultaneously the inequality of its borders. Simultaneously, by means of rigorous, philosophically intransigent analyses, and by means of the inscription of marks which no longer belong to philosophical space, not even to the neighbourhood of its other, one would have to displace philosophy’s alignment of its own types. To write otherwise. [emphasis added] To delimit the space of a closure no longer analogous to what philosophy can represent for itself under this name, according to a straight or circular line enclosing a homogenous space. [M xxiv/XX-XXI]

Deconstruction seeks therefore to write otherwise, with marks which are no longer to be found at home in the house of philosophy, in order to displace philosophy. These new marks could be said to conform to the
new ‘styles’ evoked by Derrida at the end of the strategic remarks in “The Ends of Man”. What is being suggested here is that the ‘styles’ of “Tympan” offer one way in which deconstruction can write otherwise, such that the other, the excess or overflow which is revealed by deconstruction, can be ‘thought’ by deconstruction while at the same time retaining its alterity.

The styles of “Tympan” serve both to determine the organizing system of the text, and also to facilitate the overflow of the text beyond itself. The counter-movement of the overflow, whereby the beyond flows back into the text, is the source of the organizing system. This can be verified by a brief consideration of the ‘metaphorics’ of the text, which are determined by the text of Biffures which runs along the margins of “Tympan”; and of the means by which these metaphorics themselves work to tympanize Hegel’s text/the text of philosophy.

Biffures is the first volume of Michel Leiris’ ‘autobiography’ La Règle du Jeu. A selection from this volume forms a column which runs the length of the essay “Tympan”. ‘Biffures’ has a double sense, suggesting not only ‘erasures’, its literal meaning, but also ‘bifurcations’ (bifurs). As Levinas writes:

**Bifurs** – since sensations, words and memories continually turn a train of thought from the path it seemed to be taking towards some unexpected direction; erasures – since the univocal meaning of each element is continually corrected and altered...in these bifurcations and erasures Leiris is concerned...to capture thought at that special moment when it turns into something other than itself. [“The transcendence of words”, 145-6/Hors Sujet 216]
Crucially, Leiris' text is devoted to the overflowing of intentions, of thought, by linguistic expression, and the interweaving of expression which makes such overflowing possible. Already we can see that this text is exemplary of certain notions with which deconstruction is itself concerned.

The word which begins the series of *bifures* which make up the column supplementing "Tympan" is 'Persephone', which leads towards a series of words which are woven around the notions of the helix, or corkscrew, and the spiral, that which curls in on itself, and in particular, the inner curvings of the ear; but at the same time, as well as curves, also the piercing (for instance of the screw), the perforating. All of these themes are gathered up into the homonyminous *perce-oreille* and *Persephone*; homonyms, at any rate, in the first halves of the words, which are associated with piercing; but in the second halves, it is a certain equivalence of sense, of, on the one hand, the ear, and on the other, of sound (*phone*), of hearing. So Leiris moves on to talk of that insect which, "so they say, perforates human tympanums". [*Bifures*, p 87] Moreover, Leiris links up the tympanum of the ear with the throat, both resonating caverns, in which the making of sound (the voice) and the hearing of the sound, are "durable[s] suture[d]". Finally, moving on from the voice, Leiris wonders about the relation between the spoken voice and the voice that sings, where the former is that which is most common, or proper, whereas the latter is most mysterious in comparison:

The mystery – if we wish at any price, for the purposes of discourse, to give a figure of speech to that which by definition cannot have one – can be represented as a margin, a fringe surrounding the object, isolating it at the
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The mystery – if we wish at any price, for the purposes of discourse, to give a figure of speech to that which by definition cannot have one – can be represented as a margin, a fringe surrounding the object, isolating it at the
same time as it underlines its presence, masking it even as it qualifies it. [Biffures, p 89]

This margin is what makes the hearing of the singing voice so surprising, what takes the singing beyond what can simply be reduced to the words being sung; other, it almost seems, to the voice itself; and all the more so if one is hearing the singing via some means of mechanical reproduction, such as a gramophone; almost as if the machine were itself singing, rather than the song ever having been sung.8

The text of Biffures provides Derrida's 'own' text with a series of notions which inform the reading of Hegel. Firstly, of course, there is the title of Leiris' work itself, as has been noted. Also, however, there is the notion of the spiral. Derrida picks up on this notion when he begins to think of the form of the movement of the appropriation of the other which informs philosophy. The helical figure of the spiral describes very well the apparent movement beyond which is only a movement of return. This figure is repeated in that of the labyrinth [M xviii/XIII], intimated in the epigraph of La voix et le phénomène, which bears its own exits within itself. However, since the figure here is one that folds in on itself, these exits are of necessity false exits, exits which precisely do not open out on to a beyond. There is here a further echo to the figure of the mise en abyme, often referred to by Derrida, which leads us to pose the provisional question of the relationship between the abyme and the abyss which Hegel calls on philosophy to cast itself into a corps perdu.

8. Was it a similar sense of surprise which led to Freud's resistance to conceive of the Mystic Writing-Pad as itself writing, rather than still relying on human hands?
The spiral also describes the form of the inner ear, as Derrida describes. This inner ear is divided from the outer ear by the tympan, or skin, which is said to be perforated by the ear-piercer. The figure of the tympanum is used by Derrida to stand for all the limits/margins discussed in the text. Most importantly, the perforating of the tympanum is itself the central moment of this text. Furthermore, Derrida follows Leiris' suturing of the voice with the ear. This is a most important moment, for it is this suturing which points towards what Derrida describes as the idealized form of presencing which dominates philosophy, namely the s'entendre-parler, which is at one and the same time, understanding oneself and hearing oneself speak. The perforation of the tympanum would also threaten to displace the voice and the inner ear, to interrupt the s'entendre-parler.

Finally (although these annotations are by no means exhaustive, rather, indicative), Derrida himself bifurcates from Leiris, when he pushes the various senses of tympan: not only to include the (hydraulic) wheel, which serves as a figure for the encircling envelopment which is one of the forms of hierarchisation by which philosophy attempts to appropriate its other; but also to include the sense of the tympan which is the "packing interposed between the platen and the paper to be printed in order to provide an even impression" [Collins English Dictionary], returning us to the writing machine (and the gramophone which is so strange for Leiris) which upsets the entire space of the "corps propre" [M XXI]; but most importantly, when he introduces the sense of tympanising as decrying, by means of a certain affiliation with the hammer which is both that which serves as a transmitter of vibrations to the tympan, and that which Zarathustra says we are to philosophise with. Interestingly enough, although the hammer strikes the tympan, its role is
also to protect the tympan...

The problem of simply reaffirming the organizing structure of the text being deconstructed is displaced by the new styles of writing otherwise. What this section has suggested is that the organizing structure of Derrida’s deconstruction of Hegel, and of philosophy in general, comes not from philosophy, but from the biffures of Michel Leiris. And that in a sense, Biffures, a text which is resolutely other to philosophy, to the extent that it revels in polysemia and the privileging of the signifier over the signified, has pulled the deconstructive text beyond itself, beyond the limits of philosophy, and towards philosophy’s other. Biffures supplements the deconstruction of philosophy, both from within the deconstruction, and from beyond, and in this doubling fashion, the deconstruction is able to begin to move towards the alterity of what is other to philosophy. In the next chapters, we shall go on to look at those moments where phenomenology attempts to ‘master its limits’ by thinking its own other, but where this attempt at mastery fails due to a certain overflowing of alterity. This overflow, which phenomenology will try to contain under the rubric of the Idea in the Kantian sense, is what calls for the response of the supplementary deconstruction.
Perhaps phenomenology can be founded only on that which limits it. Therefore it would not be philosophy but only the “threshold” of philosophy.

Ricoeur, “Phenomenology”

CHAPTER 2

OF PHENOMENOLOGY

In this chapter, I will trace the movement within phenomenology towards those limits which, it was suggested in the previous section, phenomenology attempts to master, but which, it will be suggested in the deconstruction, it in fact fails to do. Rather, the deconstruction will demonstrate that these limit moments serve as passages whereby phenomenology inadvertently exposes itself to that which lies beyond its closure, while at the same time that which is other to phenomenology, comes to invade phenomenology.

This movement parallels a certain historical development within phenomenology. Phenomenology’s overriding question, a constant throughout Husserl’s long itinerary, is how it is that the objective (and in particular, objective meaning) comes to be a possession of subjective
The following sections of this chapter follow the successive steps made by Husserl within phenomenology, and the resultant reconfigurations of the phenomenological discipline, as he attempts to find an answer to this question.

In the first section, we begin by introducing the principle which will determine the methodology of phenomenology, namely that the phenomenologist will deal exclusively with those phenomena which are directly presented to consciousness. This principle will ultimately be seen to commit phenomenology to two ‘imperatives’, the tension between which being one of the themes which will occupy Derrida in his readings. Thus, on the one hand, the ‘principle of all principles’ enables Husserl to proceed with the rallying cry with which phenomenology announced its inception, that is, the return to the things themselves [die Sachen selbst]. On the other hand, the descriptive fecundity of the principle will be seen to be compromised by the implicit metaphysical determination which it harbours, and which manifests itself in the (methodologically) idealist drive to secure consciousness as a realm of absolute being and hence certainty, a movement which Derrida will subsume under the general notion of the ‘metaphysics of presence’. This tension becomes more and more apparent, as will be made clear in the following pages, the deeper phenomenology moves towards its own (founding) limits. In these cases, two tropes will commonly repeat themselves: the recourse to the Idea in the Kantian sense with all its attendant implications of a failure to brings the matters at hand to presence adequately, and an admission of a failure of phenomenological language. Derrida’s texts will concern themselves directly with the
precise nature of these expressions of phenomenological hesitation as it approaches its own limits. As we shall see, they recur most crucially at the (philosophical?) moment of what could be called the ‘phenomenology of phenomenology’, the moment when phenomenology most explicitly aims to ‘master its own limits’.

Having begun with phenomenology's principle, we turn to Husserl’s consideration of how it is that objects come to be presented to consciousness, in intentional experiences. Here, Husserl gives an account of the basic structure of consciousness to be examined by phenomenology. It is found that the mode of givenness of objects to consciousness is fundamentally meaningful, and to this end, the second section provides an analysis of the phenomenology of meaning [Bedeutung].

It is also a phenomenological discovery that the possibility of an object’s being given to consciousness meaningfully is the synthesising capacity of consciousness. In order to explain this capacity, Husserl embarks on a phenomenological analysis of internal time-consciousness, which reveals the temporal structures of consciousness which make synthetic activity possible. At the same time, however, the investigations into time-consciousness also reveal a pre-active synthesising ‘activity’ at work in consciousness, and this revelation precipitates the genetic turn in phenomenology, a methodological move examined in the fourth section. It will also be seen at this stage that the possibility of this genetic turn lies in the possibility of the phenomenological discussion of indication, which had been dealt with in the phenomenology of meaning.

Thus, time and indication mark out the necessity and the
possibility of the genetic turn in phenomenology, a turn itself required
to fulfil the requirement of displaying the means by which objectivities
are able to be presented to consciousness. It is therefore of the utmost
importance with respect to this development that Derrida should turn his
eye specifically to these two themes in some of the most explicitly
deconstructive passages of *Voice and Phenomenon*. We shall have to ask
what implications Derrida's deconstructions at this point have for the
possibility of the genetic turn within the limits of phenomenology.

In the fifth section of this chapter, we will consider Husserl's
account of how, specifically, the passive syntheses investigated in genetic
phenomenology enable an object to be presented to consciousness; and in
the sixth section, we will look at Husserl's attempts to provide an
account of the constitution of the other within phenomenology. This is
of importance because, as Husserl realises, for something to be
objective, it requires not only to transcend a particular moment of
subjective consciousness (which is made possible by the synthesising of
the manifold of what is successively presented in the flux of
consciousness), but also the totality of any subjective consciousness, that
is, that it be objective not only for me, but for others as well. We shall
see that, once again, indication has a central role to play in the
constitution of the other. From the constitution of the other, Husserl
moves on to the constitution of the intermonadic community, which,
when taken together with the findings of genetic phenomenology
(regarding the possible investigations of the 'history' of sense-genesis),
lead Husserl to turn to history in his final texts. The importance of this
historical turn for the problem of how objectivity becomes a possession
of subjective consciousness, and the possibility of its being displayed
within phenomenology, will be examined when we come to read
In this last named text, we will see that one of the consequences of the deconstruction is to call into question the possibility of the 'findings' of genetic phenomenology, and the subsequent turn to historical phenomenology, being contained within the limits of phenomenology (whereas the previously mentioned deconstructive theme had been to question whether the very grounds of genetic phenomenology could be presented within phenomenology). By way of an anticipation of this questioning, the final section of the chapter provides an analysis of the relation between the Idea in the Kantian sense, and infinity, and what may be called the 'need' for phenomenology (returning us, thereby, to the reading of Hegel undertaken in the first chapter). This will return us to themes introduced in the previous chapter, and will provide a means of progressing to the next chapter, where the need for the deconstruction of phenomenology will be addressed.
§ 1. Presence and Absence

1. The stakes are announced as early as the first pages of the first section of the first chapter of the first part of *Ideas I*. All sciences [Wissenschaften] (including the science of phenomenology) have an “object-province” which is the domain of their investigations; and for all the correct statements [richtige Aussagen] of every science about these object-provinces, there are certain intuitions [Anschauungen] which are the groundings that “validate the legitimacy” of such correct statements. Some of these intuitions are “given originally”.

We have originary experience of concrete physical things in “external perception”, but no longer in memory or in forward-regarding expectation; we have originary experience of ourself and of our states of consciousness in so-called internal or self-perception; not, however, of others and of their mental processes in “empathy”. [I 6/Hua III 8]

Some pages later, Husserl breaks off from a brief critical discussion of some philosophical theories of experience (empiricism, Platonic realism, idealism), in order to announce the principle which is going to inform his phenomenological enterprise. Bracketed (suspended) will be all philosophical, scientific and naturalistic presuppositions whatsoever. Phenomenology will get back to the things themselves, just as they present themselves to consciousness:

Enough now of absurd theories. No conceivable theory can make us err with respect to the principle of all principles:

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1. By ‘intuition’ Husserl means an act whereby an object is presented to consciousness. This notion will be returned to below.
that every originary presentive intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition, that everything originarily (so to speak, in its “personal” actuality) offered to us in “intuition” is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, but also only within the limits in which it is presented there. We see indeed that each <theory> can only again draw its truth itself from originary data. Every statement which does no more than confer expression on such data by simple explication and by means of significations precisely conforming to them is...actually an absolute beginning called upon to serve as a foundation, a principium in the genuine sense of the word. [I1 44/Hua III 51]

The principle of all principles, as it is so stated, provides phenomenology both with its method and its subject-matter.2 The subject-matter is simply what is given, what is presented, in intuition, just as it is given; and the method – the expression by simple explication of what is given. This notion of expression will itself require phenomenological clarification,3 and this will be considered in the next section. First, however, the subject-matter itself requires further discussion.

In order to talk about the intuition of objects, Husserl defines some terminology [LI V, § 13]. Phenomenology will talk of “intentional experiences [Erlebnisse]”, where the:

adjective ‘intentional’ names the essence common to the class of experiences we wish to mark off, the peculiarity of intending, of referring to what is objective, in a presentative or other analogous fashion. As a briefer expression, in harmony with our own and foreign verbal

2. cf Brand (1955), ch 1.

3. cf Ideas I, §§ 124-6 and Crisis, p 359 [370] on the possibility of complete expression
usage, we shall use the term ‘act’. [LI 562/ Hua XIX 392]

Acts, the class of experiences with which phenomenology will concern itself, share the essential character of intentionality. Husserl takes this term from Brentano, who, in distinguishing between psychical and physical phenomena, found that the former, uniquely, bore the hallmark of directionality, in other words, that they are directed towards an object.4 An act, then, is consciousness of an object. The absolutely crucial insight contained within this point of departure, which is the very possibility of phenomenology, which provides the ground for that uniquely phenomenological motif, the reduction,5 is that the object which is the object for consciousness, to which consciousness is directed, need not exist. In a paragraph added to the second edition of Logical Investigations, after the publication of Ideas I, and therefore after phenomenology’s ‘discovery’ of the reduction, Husserl writes:

We may now point out that this concept of consciousness can be seen in a purely phenomenological manner, ie in a manner which cuts out all relation to empirically real existence (to persons or animals in nature): experience in the descriptive-psychological or empirically-phenomenological sense then becomes experience in the sense of pure phenomenology. [LI 537/Hua XIX/I 357]

A corollary of this disinterest in the existence of the objects of consciousness is that what will be studied by phenomenology is whatever can be an object for consciousness, as it is given to consciousness. An


5. On the sense of reduction in Husserl, see H. L. van Breda (1951); it is through the reduction in its various forms that phenomenological descriptions assume their essential status; cf Levinas (1973), ch 6.
object's appearance is its mode of givenness to consciousness, and, as Ricoeur says, "phenomenology is born the moment that, by bracketing the question of being – whether provisionally or definitively – one treats the manner of the appearance of things as an independent problem."6 This is still the case at the end of Husserl's itinerary, although by this stage the method of phenomenology has been somewhat refined. So, in the *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl is able to write:

... without exception, every conscious process is, in itself, consciousness of such and such, regardless of what the rightful actuality status of this objective such-and-such may be, and regardless of the circumstance that I, as standing in the transcendental attitude, abstain from acceptance of this object as well as from all other natural acceptances...Each cogito, each conscious process, we may also say "means" something or other and bears in itself, in this manner peculiar to the meant, its particular cogitatum...Conscious processes are also called intentional; but then the word intentionality signifies nothing else than this universal fundamental property of consciousness: to be consciousness of something; as a cogito, to bear within itself its cogitatum. [CM 33/Hua I 71-2]

It remains to consider what Husserl means when he talks of the bearing within itself peculiar to meaning. Nonetheless, through this understanding of the structure of consciousness, we are led to the "incessant questions" of phenomenology: "How does an in-itself disclose itself? In what lived experiences? From what primordial acts of positing meaning?"7

As thus described, consciousness and its object are always


irreducibly linked. Thus, in Ideas I, Husserl describes the irreducible noetic-noematic structure of consciousness, where noesis denotes the nature of the directedness-toward (it could be a perceiving, but it could equally well be a loving, a doubting, an imagining, a believing, a questioning, etc); and where the noema denotes the object of the conscious act in its mode of being intended. Given such a structure, the analyses of consciousness undertaken by phenomenology can be carried out in two directions. Thus there can be:

- noematic analyses, that is to say analyses dealing with the objective face of the subjective process (the perceived as such, the imagined as such, etc), and
- noetic analyses, dealing with the attentional modalities, with the power of the "ego" of the cogito, and with the temporality of the subjective flux of adumbrations [Abschattungen] of things.

Prior to the elaboration of the noetic-noematic schema of consciousness in Ideas, Husserl had already attempted his first distinctively phenomenological analyses of the intentionality of consciousness, and its relationship with the problems of knowledge, in the 5th and 6th Logical Investigations. The motivation for this work was to remain the motivation for all of Husserl’s subsequent investigations,

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8. "the distinction and description of intentional experiences without regard to their intentional objects is impossible." [LI 412/Hua XIX/I 202]

9. Ideas I, p 214 [Hua III 203]. By reinscribing the Greek terms noesis and noema to describe the structure of consciousness, Husserl hopes to avoid potentially metaphysical realist, or idealist, interpretations of his work. The metaphysical neutrality of phenomenology, and the extent to which Husserl manages to preserve such a position, is one of the matters under scrutiny in chapter 2 of John Llewelyn's Beyond Metaphysics? On noesis and noema as Husserl's response to the criticism that his position in Logical Investigations was realist, see Levinas (1973), pp 54-6.

10. Ricoeur (1967), p 9; cf Cartesian Meditations p 36 [Hua I 74] and Formal and Transcendental Logic pp 33-4 [Hua XVII 36-8].
right up to the very late essay ‘The Origin of Geometry’. As he writes in the Foreword to the First Edition of *Logical Investigations*: “I felt myself more and more pushed towards general critical reflections on the essence of logic, and on the relationship, in particular, between the *subjectivity of knowing and the objectivity of the content known*. . . .” [LI 42 [emphasis added]/Hua XVIII 7; cf *Formal and Transcendental Logic* § 100.] Husserl returns to this fundamental question in the Introduction to Volume II of the German edition:

How are we to understand the fact that the intrinsic being of objectivity becomes ‘presented’ [Vorstellung], ‘apprehended’ [Erfassung] in knowledge, and so ends up by becoming subjective? What does it mean to say that the object has ‘intrinsic being’, and is ‘given’ in knowledge [in der Erkenntnis ‘gegeben’]? How can the ideality of the universal qua concept or law enter the flux of real mental states and become an epistemic possession [Erkenntnisbesitz] of the thinking person? [LI 254/Hua XIX/I 12-13]

2. Husserl, in the 6th *Logical Investigation*, is concerned with “laying bare the Origin of the Idea of Meaning” [LI 668/Hua XIX/II 538] within consciousness. Are there only “certain restricted sorts of mental acts” [Hua XIX/II 538] which can mean something? In answering this question, Husserl is led to distinguish between those acts which do carry meaning [Bedeutung], and those which only appear to. In the descriptions which clarify these distinctions, the essence of meaning-bearing is disclosed. Thus, in the expression of a perception, it is not the perception itself which gives the meaning. My perception of a blackbird can be the perception on which many different expressions can be based.

11. Included in the English translation of the *Crisis* as Appendix VI.
(“there goes a blackbird”; “was that a blackbird?”; “what a beautiful bird that was”; etc). Evidently, the perception itself is not irrelevant to the meanings expressed in such examples. But, we cannot suppose that the act of perception, the act of consciousness which is directed towards the blackbird in a ‘perceiving mode’, and which has the blackbird as its object, “is the act in which the sense [Sinn] of the perceptual statement, its expressive meaning [ausdrückendes Meinen], is achieved” [LI 681/Hua XIX/II 551] On the other hand, the expressions in the examples do stand in a certain distinctive relation to the perception, and it is “through [this] relation that the perception is in its turn said to be expressed” [LI 681/Hua XIX/II 552] It is this relation which Husserl focusses on, a relation which he will call:

... an act, since the expressive experience, whether or not accompanied by a percept, always has an intentional direction to something objective. This mediating act must be the true giver of meaning, must pertain to the significantly functioning expression as its essential constituent, and must determine its possession of an identical sense, whether or not this is associated with a confirming percept. [LI 682/Hua XIX/II 552]

How then do the act of expression and the act of perception, in which things appear, stand in relation to each other? Husserl considers the act of perception: how does something appear to consciousness in an act of perception?

[W]e undergo a certain sequence of the class of sensations [Empfindung], sensuously unified in a peculiar serial pattern, and informed by a certain act-character of ‘interpretation’ [Aufassung], which endows it with an objective sense. [LI 688/Hua XIX/II 559]
Being brought together, therefore, are the act by which a meaning is expressed, and an act whereby mere sensations are given a form, such that they are "interpreted" as being sensations of an object. What unites these two acts, so that the one can inform the other?

The answer seems clear. The relation... is mediated, not merely by acts of meaning, but by acts of recognition, which are here also acts of classification. [ibid]

Thus, the object being perceived, precisely in being perceived as an object, is recognised, in this example, as a blackbird. On the basis of this recognition, it can be expressed as such ("This is a blackbird").

The possibility of recognition and classification introduces us to the heart of the issue at hand. It is in the nature of words to have the character of generality: to the word "blackbird" corresponds the possibility of knowing as, and calling "blackbird", all blackbirds that might be given in possible intuitions. This entails that, in calling this particular object a blackbird, I recognize it as being of the same type as all other blackbirds, as all other objects which I call "blackbird". This I do through an "identifying synthesis". At this point, two fundamental moments in the phenomenological investigations are approached: 1. Identity within a manifold. In the descriptions above, we have come across two types of identity in manifolds (and we will come across more shortly). Firstly, the identity of the object as object through the manifold of sensations in perception. Secondly, the identity of the general object-type [Eidos] through all the particular instances of that type. The recognition of an identity in a manifold is made possible
through the identifying synthesis.\textsuperscript{12} 2. The generality of the word\textsuperscript{13} is in turn made possible by its ability to function meaningfully \textit{in the absence} of any particular perception. "Blackbird", in order that it be a meaningful sign, must be able to function whether there is a blackbird present or not. When words are used in this fashion, in the absence of their referent, they can be said to signify emptily, to be \textit{unfulfilled meaning-intentions}. However, if there is an object present which the word refers to, then the act of intuition [\textit{Anschauung}] which is directed towards this object may be said to \textit{fulfil} [\textit{erfüllen}] the act of meaning ("the act of pure meaning, like a goal-seeking intention, finds its fulfilment in the act which renders the matter intuitive." [LI 694/Hua XIX/II 566]) Husserl describes the recognition made possible by the identifying synthesis and the fulfilling of acts of meaning by acts of intuition, as "expressing the same fact, merely from different stand-points. The former adopts the standpoint of the object meant, while the latter has the two acts as its foci of interest." [Hua XIX/II 567]\textsuperscript{14} Both recognition and fulfilment may be called "act[s] of identification" since the identity between the objects of the acts of signification and intuition is itself an "\textit{objective datum which corresponds to the act of fulfilment}... it has its own peculiar intentional correlate, an objective something to

\textsuperscript{12} On \textit{objectifying acts} as the possibility of the phenomenon of identity, see Sokolowski's review of Findlay's translation of \textit{Logical Investigations} in \textit{Inquiry} 14, p 327; and on identities within manifolds, see the same author's \textit{Husserlian Meditations}, pp 21f and ch 4.

\textsuperscript{13} On the difference between the generalities object-type and word, cf \textit{Formal and Transcendental Logic}, pp 154-5 [Hua XVII 162-3]

\textsuperscript{14} We see here an exemplification of the point made with regard to \textit{Ideas} by Ricoeur, quoted above. A further distinction may be drawn between a static fulfilment, where the act of meaning and the act of intuition are temporally coincident; and a dynamic fulfilment, where the members of the relation and the act of recognition which unites them are disjoined \textit{in time}. A consideration of the temporal aspect of dynamic fulfilment, and of the question of the identity which subsists through a temporal manifold will form the point of departure for Husserl's analyses of time-consciousness; and also for the analyses of the 3rd section of this chapter.
which it is ‘directed.’” [Hua XIX/II 568]¹⁵

3. Until now, Husserl has been considering acts of intuition which
fulfil signitive acts.¹⁶ What is the nature of the relation between the
object which is intended in signitive acts, and the object which is
intended in fulfilling acts of intuition? Are the objects identical, or
merely similar, and if similar, what is the nature of their similarity?
These questions require further clarification of the acts in question.
Firstly, and in agreement with what was said in § 13 of the previous
Investigation, Husserl broadens his discussion – signitive acts have stood
as a paradigm case of empty intentions, and thus requiring fulfilment.
However, as is underscored in § 10, all acts of consciousness, qua acts
(through being directed-towards an object), “are able to found relations
of fulfilment.” [LI 699/Hua XIX/II 572] Husserl then indicates the
direction his investigations are going to take at the end of the section.
Although some acts of fulfilment may be dynamic, because of the
temporal delay in fulfilment, this is not to say that intention is a type of
expectation. On the other hand, there is expectation when “perception is
in flux [Fluß]”. That is, rather than in a case of “tranquil perceiving”
[ruhender Wahrnehmung], in a case of a continuous series of percepts,
“all belonging to the perceptual manifold [Wahrnehmungs-
mannigfaltigkeit] of one and the same object”, any particular percept

¹⁵. The possibility of synthesis which itself enables the acts of identifying being discussed here will be
the subject of the 5th section of this chapter.

¹⁶. This because in attempting to give a phenomenological account of knowledge, it becomes apparent
that “all theoretical thought [theoretische Denken] and knowledge [Erkennen], is carried on by way of
certain ‘acts’, which occur in a context of expressive discourse [ausgedrückten Rede]. In these acts lies
the source of all those unities-of-validity which confront the thinker as objects of thought and
knowledge.” [LI 667/Hua XIX/II 537]
within the series suggests/indicates [Andeutung] perceptions to come.

At this point, Husserl approaches the heart of his account of the fulfilling relationship, taken from the perspective of acts of intuition:

All perceiving and imagining is, on our view, a web of partial intentions, fused together in the unity of a single total intention. The correlate of this last intention is the thing, while the correlate of its partial intentions are the thing's parts and aspects. Only in this way can we understand how consciousness reaches out beyond what it actually experiences. It can so to say mean beyond itself, and its meaning can be fulfilled. [LI 701/Hua XIX/II 574]

The perception of an object, therefore, is an identity within a manifold of acts, some of which are, at any given moment, unfulfilled; while some are fulfilled by the object as it is present from a particular side or aspect. The total intention is able to be directed to the object as such, rather than being limited to particular aspects of the object, through the fusing which binds together the series of filled and empty intentions.

Before considering the nature of the relationship between the object of a signitive act, and the object of a (fulfilling) intuitive act, let us pause briefly to draw attention to what Husserl says here about the way in which the perception of a particular aspect ‘suggests’ [Angedeute] other potential aspects of that object. Some pages later, this notion is emphasised, when Husserl writes that those aspects of a perceived object which are not present in a particular act “are no doubt subsidiarily intended [mitgemeint] in more or less definite fashion, symbolically suggested [symbolisch angedeutet] by what is primarily apparent.” [LI 713/Hua XIX/II 589; emphasis added] This schema of that
which is present ‘motivating’ a belief in that which is absent is precisely the schema Husserl will use in his account of the function of indication. Husserl’s use of the words *symbolische angedeut* here inclines us to conceive of the function so described as being a type of *Anzeigen* [indicative relation], as also is the indicative sign *[Anzeichen]*. 17

Husserl writes of the mode of givenness of an object in an act of sensuous intuition: “the object is not actually given, it is not given wholly and entirely as that which it itself is. It is only given ‘from the front’, only ‘perspectivally foreshortened and projected’, etc.” [LI 712/ Hua XIX/II 589] Thus, in the case of the perception of an object which transcends consciousness, the object itself is never fully present. Its absence is always a matter of degree. However, this degree of absence of an object in perceptual consciousness should not alarm us, Husserl says, since, if this were not the case, then the essence of every object would be exhausted in a single perception. It would simply be impossible to see an object ‘from the other side’. It belongs then to the essence of an object of sense perception to appear to consciousness in such a manner. However, although this is the case, that the object itself is never fully present to an act of perceptual intuition, nevertheless, as has already been suggested by Husserl, an act directed to a transcendent object still “grasps [*erfaßt*] the object itself [*Gegenstand selbst*].” [LI 713; Hua XIX/II 589] Husserl explains this possibility in the following manner:

If we may conceive of a percept put into a relation of fulfilment to the adequate percept that would *offer us the object itself*, in the ideally strict and most authentic sense, then we may say that a percept so intends its object that this ideal synthesis would have the character of a *partial*

17. The indicative relation will be the topic of the second part of the following section of this chapter.
coincidence of the purely perceptual contents of intending and fulfilling acts, and also the character of a complete coincidence of both complete perceptual intentions. [LI 713/Hua XIX/II 589-90]

Throughout the flux of perceptions of an object, the same object is always intended; and each aspect of the object present in an act of intuition is present precisely as the aspect of the object, as ‘belonging’ [gehören] to the object. The possibility of this “pertaining to the same object” is the synthesis of fulfilment which binds self-manifestations [Selbsterscheinungen] of an object to other self-manifestations of the object which are not yet, or are no longer, present.

Returning to the original question then, what is the relationship between the object as it is intended in a signitive act, and the object which is presented in an act of intuition which fulfils the signitive act? Using the preceding observations concerning the presence and absence of the object in acts of intuition, that is, regarding the “fullness” of the acts, as a guide, Husserl is able to write:

The signitive intention is rather lacking in every sort of fullness; the intuitive presentation first brings fullness to it, and through identification, into it. A signitive intention merely points to its object, an intuitive intention gives it ‘presence’, in the pregnant sense of the word, it imports something of the fullness of the object itself. [LI 728/Hua XIX/II 607]

Intuitive acts can provide the basis for signifying acts, which, however, never present the object as such, but rather ‘point to it’. Signitive acts are therefore empty acts. The object to which signitive acts point, however, can be made present in intuitive acts which,
through a unity of identification, fulfil the signitive acts, that is, give them fullness.

This notion of fulfilment, however, is itself only ever an *ideal*. As Husserl has already suggested, and as he here goes on to underscore, the whole object can never be fully present to consciousness. Thus, a signitive act, for instance, one which serves as the basis of a judgement, can never be wholly fulfilled in an act of intuition. Husserl reflects on this state of affairs in the Fifth Chapter which concludes the First Section of the 6th *Investigation*.

The act of intuition, which can serve to fulfil a signitive act, which latter is completely lacking in fullness, itself has only a degree of fullness. Although, as Husserl notes, the intentional character of perception is direct presentation, which is to say, it “gives” [gibt] the object perceived (as opposed to for instance imagination, in which the object is given as *Vergegenwärtig* as opposed to *Gegenwärtig*); nevertheless, “‘direct’ presentation does not amount in general to a true being-present.” [LI 761/Hua XIX/II 646] Direct presentation only exhibits degrees of perfection of objective presence. The absolute perfection of objective presence, that is, full givenness of the whole object is an “ideal limit” [*ideale Grenze*]. Thus the full presence of an object to consciousness is “a goal in which increase of fulfilment terminates, in which the complete and entire intention has reached its fulfilment.” In the (ideal) case of the achievement of this goal, “genuine *adequatio rei et intellectus* has been brought about. The object is actually ‘present’ or ‘given’, and present as just what we have intended it” [LI

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18. The possibility of such *givenness*, and its relation to *presence*, will be a topic to which we will have cause to return throughout this thesis.
Complete givenness of an object then, and also, therefore, adequate fulfilment of a signitive act, is always a telos to which fulfilment aims; on the one hand, there is the goal of complete presence of the whole object, which would be a ‘perfect’ intuition; and on the other hand, there is the goal of complete fulfilment of the signitive act, which would constitute perfect adequation of thought to the thing itself.

In this section, we have followed Husserl from his point of departure in the principle of phenomenology, through his descriptions of the intentionality of acts, to his account of the relationship between meaning-intentions and the acts of intuition which fulfil these intentions. The point these investigations have reached is one of an irreducible interweaving of presence and absence, which only reaches termination in the form of the positing of an ideal goal. We shall return to the phenomenological status of this ideal throughout this chapter, and in particular in the concluding section. Prior to this however, we shall turn our focus to the interweaving of presence, absence and ideality, in Husserl’s account of signification in the 1st *Logical Investigation.*
§ 2. Signs and the Analyses of Logical Investigations

1. Meaning and Expression

The paradigm of empty intentions, the signitive, or meaning, intention, which Husserl thematized in the 6th Investigation, in its relationship with the fulfilling intuitive act, is first introduced in Logical Investigations in the 1st Investigation. There Husserl gives phenomenological clarification to the notion of meaning [Bedeutung]. Once again, in conformity with the phenomenological principle, it is a question of what meaning is, and of how meaning is constituted by consciousness. Husserl’s investigation will be rendered more complicated however due to the role played in communication by indication. Indication marks a structural absence, as has already been noted with respect to the symbolical suggestion of non-present aspects in aspects presented in intuitive acts. Indeed, as Sokolowski has noted, indication is “the paradigmatic case of something absent being intended by consciousness.” [Sokolowski 1974, p 112] In the case of meaning intentions, as they function in communicative discourse, the presence of indicative signs evidences an irreducible absence of meaning, which has a crucial impact on the course that Husserl’s investigations take. The notion of indication will be studied independently in the second part of this section. Indication, and phenomenological themes associated with its functioning, will also resurface in our discussions of genetic phenomenology, and in particular, passive synthesis and empathy.

In his Introduction to the second volume of Logical Investigations, Husserl writes that all thinking, all knowledge, can only arise through verbal expression. [cf Introduction, § 2] We have also
already seen, with respect to the principle of phenomenology, that the methodology of phenomenology aims to confer direct expression on what is presented to consciousness as it is presented to consciousness. Thus the phenomenological itinerary of *Logical Investigations* begins with thoughts - as they present themselves in their “grammatical clothing”. [LI 250/Hua XIX/I 8] The task is to determine the relationship between the thoughts expressed in language, and the linguistic form of the expression.

Within the first few lines of the chapter, Husserl specifies that “meaning” [*Bedeutung*] is the “sense” [*Sinn*] which a sign “expresses”. [LI 269/Hua XIX/I 30] The scare quotes are Husserl’s warnings of terminology which remains to be fully specified, as will be seen. Already at this stage however, the discussion is directed towards specifying the understanding of signification which will inform the investigation. At issue will be the relation between a sign [*Zeichen*], and that for which it is a sign, that which the sign “designates” [*bezeichnet*]. There appear to be two ways in which a sign may be related to that of which it is a sign. On the one hand, a sign may express something; while on the other hand, a sign may point to something. This latter relation of pointing to Husserl designates as *Anzeige* [indication], and a sign which performs this function he calls *Anzeichen*. To the former function he restricts the term *Ausdruck* [expression]. It is to the function of expression that the attention of this section will be turned.

Husserl himself concentrates on expressions in his investigations, since it is through expression that ideal meanings are made present to consciousness. What are ideal meanings, and how are they expressed by expressive signs? That meanings are not simply the expressive signs
themselves can be understood if we perform a quasi-eidetic reduction, or free variation. We can imagine a sign simply as a "a physical sign phenomenon... for instance the word as such." [LI 282/Hua XIX/I 46] When we consider the sign simply as a 'physical' phenomenon, it is merely an object— the printed word on the page, for instance. We could say many things about a sign so considered (describing its morphological form, the number of letters it has, etc), all independently of the sign having any meaning. This would be the linguistic equivalent of considering the physical object as such, which, when considered 'aesthetically', is called a work of art. It would appear that there is something added to the physical phenomenon of the sign through which the sign becomes 'meaningful'.

What is added to the sign is "acts which give it meaning [Bedeutung]" [LI 280/Hua XIX/I 44]. Husserl calls such acts "meaning-conferring acts or meaning intentions [Bedeutungsintentionen]." [LI 281! Hua ibid] Husserl immediately distinguishes meaning-conferring acts from meaning-fulfilling acts, in which consciousness is directed towards an object which is given as present to consciousness, and which is the same object as that intended emptily by the meaning-intention (as was discussed in the previous section). However this fulfilling act need not take place. Just as the physical sign phenomenon appeared not to be essential for meaning itself, so also meaning does not depend on a fulfilling intuition. Again, this becomes clear from a reflection on the functioning of language, which, as has already been noted, always has the capacity to function in the absence of a referent. Thus, returning to our example of the previous section, it would be perfectly possible to carry out a meaningful conversation about the blackbird whether or not it had been seen by the interlocutor. As Husserl says:
A name, eg, names its object whatever the circumstances, in so far as it *means* that object. But if the object is not intuitively before one as a named or meant object, mere meaning is all there is to it. [LI 280/Hua XIX/I 44]

Husserl now turns to the meaningful expression, the expression not as mere sound but as informed by a meaning intention. The distinctions elaborated so far have pointed to what is involved in expression – the sign, the 'meaning', and the object referred to – but in such a way as to show in what way the materiality of the sign and the intuitive presence of the object of reference are not essential to meaning as such. What is inessential to meaning is the 'concrete factuality' of the word and the referent, the actual presence of the spoken or written word, or the actual presence of the object to which the sign refers. At the same time as making these distinctions, however, Husserl has begun to approach what is essential to the expression of meaning: "the expression itself, its sense and its object correlate." [LI 284/Hua XIX/I 48] These moments of meaning differ from the ones described as inessential to the extent that Husserl has turned "from the real relation of acts to the ideal relation of their objects or contents." [ibid] By this Husserl means, with regard to the expression itself for example, not the particular instantiation of the sign, the sign in the physicality of its being, but rather the sign in its 'ideality': "'Quadratic remainder' is the same expression by whomsoever uttered." [LI 284/Hua XIX/I 48] In the same way, the meaning of the expression remains the same, whomsoever utters the expression. The meaning of the expression is an ideality, an identity which "neither arises nor passes away." [LI 285/Hua XIX/I 50] Meaning is the *ideal content* of transient acts which intend that content.

All acts of meaning which intend, which are directed to, the meaning expressed by the term "quadratic remainder" have the same ideal content. And it is this ideal content which is the meaning, the sense, of that particular expression. In this way, meaning can be said to be the content of the act. [LI 287/Hua XIX/I 51]

The third moment of meaning mentioned above is the objective correlate [Gegenständlichkeit]. The objective correlate of a meaning is that about which the expression says something. Husserl is quite specific here: although expressions not only have meaning, but also refer to certain objects, "the object never coincides with the meaning." [LI 287/Hua XIX/I 52] However, the object is related to the expression in the same way that the meaning is, namely by the acts which inform the expression, which give it sense. The distinction Husserl is drawing here is familiar enough. Two expressions may have the same object of reference, but different meanings (for instance, the victor at Jena/the vanquished at Waterloo). The case is slightly different when we have occurrences of the same meaning but different objects – different to the extent that this is the normal course of language, where the word 'horse' will always have the same meaning, whether the 'object' referred to is the horse pulling the milkcart or Shergar. What is at issue here is the means by which expressions refer to objects, and that can be seen to be through the meaning of the expression. What distinguishes the object referred to, as it is described here, and the blackbird which was the subject of our earlier conversations, is the ideality involved. Thus we can clarify what was said previously in the following manner: when we mean [meinen] something in an expression, the ideal content of the meaning refers to an object; this object is also ideal, and as ideal is called the fulfilling sense [erfüllende Sinn]. If the object is, in fact,
presented to consciousness (which of course it need not be), then the object itself \([Gegenstand\ selbst]\) is said to be 'given' to consciousness: “and, to the extent that our expression really measures up to the intuitive data, [it is] given \textit{in the same manner} in which the expression \textit{means} it.” [LI 291/Hua XIX/I 56] Thus Husserl has distinguished between three notions of content at work: the intending sense, the fulfilling sense, and the object itself. [LI 291/Hua XIX/I 57]

The procedure by which Husserl has clarified the relationship between expression and meaning will be returned to when we come to consider \textit{Voice and Phenomenon} in the next chapter. However, as already suggested, in communication, signs not only function expressively, but indicatively also.
2. Indication and Essentially Occasional Expressions

It has been noted that all signs [Zeichen] serve to designate [bezeichnen] something or other; but that designation can function in different ways. As we have seen, the expressive function of the sign serves to designate an ideal meaning. However, there are also signs, which "do not express anything." Such signs are "notes, marks, etc." [LI 269/Hua XIX/I 30] These signs Husserl terms indications [Anzeichen]. The relation between the indication sign, and what it designates, Husserl terms Anzeige ['indication relation']. Husserl will claim that both functions of signs are at work in actual communication (although, as we have seen, it is the expressive function which interests Husserl more at this stage, because of its relation to ideal meaning). In order to establish this point, and also in order to treat of the expression function itself, Husserl proceeds to determine the essence of the indication relation [das Wesen der Anzeige], and how this relation is exemplified by indication signs [Anzeichen].

Husserl begins by referring to 'marks' [Merkmale] as being exemplary of the indication relation. The types of marks he has in mind are those such as the brand which is the sign of a slave, or a flag which is the sign of a nation. [LI 269-70/Hua XIX/I 31] However, there are other signs which have not been produced with the specific aim of designating something or other. For these types of signs Husserl gives

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3. The distinction between the indication relation [Anzeigen] and the indication sign [Anzeichen] being drawn here is not clear from Finlay's translation of the Investigations, in which both terms are translated as 'indication'. I have learnt a great deal about this issue from an unpublished paper by John Llewelyn (to be delivered at Memphis, September 1993), entitled "Meanings Reserved, Re-served and Reduced". The relevant pages of this paper deal with certain criticisms of Derrida's interpretation of Husserl to be found in Evans (1991).
examples of physical phenomena which indicate certain other facts, such as the Martian canals which are said to be a sign of intelligent life on Mars, or the existence of fossil remains which are a sign of the previous existence of life-forms which cannot now be found on earth. Husserl chooses to distinguish between these two types of signs which are examples of the indication relation. It is only those signs which are artificially produced in order to serve as indications [Anzeichen] that have the function of designating [Bezeichnen] (and this function can be applied both to the act which brings about the sign, as well as of the sign itself in its relation to what is designates).

What is the indicative relation, of which the indication sign is a special example? Firstly, in order to be an indication, something must serve to indicate something else to a thinking being. In order that such a role be fulfilled, the following essential circumstance must hold:

that certain objects or states of affairs [Sachverhalte] of whose reality [Bestand] someone has actual knowledge indicate to them the reality of certain other objects or states of affairs, in the sense that their belief in the being [Sein] of the one is experienced (though not at all evidently) as motivating a belief or surmise in the being of the other. [LI 270/Hua XIX/I 32]

Husserl then says that it is this relation of motivation which is the common element which serves to unify all "acts of judgement in which indicating and indicated states of affairs become constituted for the thinker." [LI 270/Hua XIX/I 32] Motivation has the objective correlate for consciousness of a "material connection" [sachlich Zusammenhang] in the form of a since [weil]; that is to say, some state of affairs must exist since some other state of affairs has been given to consciousness. In
Sokolowski’s phrase, “The given is interpreted as a sign for the absent.” [Sokolowski 1974, p 112]

Having established a distinction between the general indication relation and indication signs as a specific instance of this relation, Husserl is now forced to draw a further distinction. The descriptive unity put forward on the common basis of the relationship of motivation extends beyond the material connection of indication to include the connection of *deduction* [*Folgerung*]. Husserl therefore specifies a distinction between *Beweis* [proof, demonstration] and *Hinweis* [indication, intimation]. The distinction has already been foreshadowed to the extent that the motivation which occurs in an indication relation leads from the givenness of one state of affairs only to a *belief* in the existence of another state of affairs. In the case of a logical demonstration, or proof, the force of the motivation is that much stronger – given the case that all a’s are F, and x is a, to go on to deny that x is F is to court absurdity, because the conclusion is already contained within the premises, and therefore that the conclusion must obtain [*bestehen*] if the premises obtain is an evident insight [*Einsichtigkeit*]. As Husserl writes, evoking Hume, the relationship between the contents of judgements in an indication relation is not the same as the relation between premises and conclusion, namely entailment, because there is no necessary connection in the former case. In the latter case, however, such a connection is indeed *present to consciousness*. [LI 272/Hua XIX/I 33]

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4. Along with failing to distinguish between the indication sign [*Anzeichen*] and the indication relation [*Anzeigen*], Findlay here translates both *Hinweis* and *Beweis* as 'demonstration', thus glossing over a crucial distinction.
Indication signs are a species of the indication relation; which in turn is a species of the Motivierungszusammenhang. These relations are in turn founded on the category of ‘association of ideas’ [Ideenassoziation]. The crucial aspect of association is its creativity, which enables the essential moment of the indication relation, the movement of transcendence from what is present to consciousness to what is absent, while at the same time retaining what is present to consciousness. It is the creative ‘power’ of association which enables this simultaneous going beyond and retention which is not an experience of lawful necessity. Thus, association “creates additional phenomenological characters and unities [Einheiten].” [emphasis added; LI 274/Hua XIX/I 36] Husserl writes that although what are related are separate, they are experienced as unities rather than as merely coexisting, because, due to the creativity of association, “we usually feel their connection forcing itself upon us, a connection in which one points to the other [das andere hinweist] and seems to belong [gehörig] to it.” [ibid] This belonging together is a new phenomenological character with which the contents of consciousness are imbued, due to the creative work of association.5

Having determined the essence of the indication relation in terms of motivation as a particular type of association of ideas,6 Husserl returns to his discussion of the relationship between the indication sign and the expression sign. Expressions, as we have seen, designate

5. It is this same creative ‘power’ of association which would enable the phenomenon described in the last section, of the givenness of one aspect of an object “symbolically suggesting” other sides not yet present, precisely as other aspects of the same object, that is, as belonging together, as sharing the phenomenological character of being aspects of one and the same object.

6. § 5 of this chapter will return to the notions introduced in the preceding paragraphs, when we come to consider the phenomenological characteristics of pre-predicative consciousness. At this point, Husserl’s observation concerning the link between his discussion of indication and the origin of Genetic Phenomenology (cf Experience and Judgement, § 16) will assume critical importance.
Bedeutungen. Now, Husserl specifies that, contrary to common linguistic practice, he is going to restrict his use of the term 'expression' such that it excludes that type of bodily gesture or facial expression which tends to accompany our speech, and which can serve to indicate to an interlocutor the 'state of mind' of the person speaking. These are to be excluded because they occur without the intention of the speaker, which is to say that they do not serve to communicate an intended meaning – they do not designate a meaning. Indeed, as Husserl goes on to point out, they can only be said to be 'expressions' (in the colloquial sense) because they are so interpreted by the interlocutor. In this case, in other words, they are not functioning as expressions but as indication signs.7

Husserl has said, in the 1st section of the Investigation, that in communication, the expressive function of signs is always interwoven with the indicative function. Having established the essence of the two functions, it can now be specified in what way this is the case. Husserl considers the phenomenon of communication itself – what is the point of communicating? One employs language with the intention of communicating one's thoughts to another, "with the intention of 'expressing oneself about something'" through the means of language. [LI 276-7/Hua XIX/I 39]. Now in order that this act of communication succeed, it is necessary that the interlocutor understands that the sounds uttered, or the marks written, are in fact instances of language, in other words, that the other is using language in order to communicate. This requires that the interlocutor appreciate that the sounds/marks have a

7. Once again, in the discussion of genetic phenomenology, this observation will be of the utmost importance; in particular, it will be of relevance to Husserl's discussion of empathy [Einfühlung] in Ideas II.
Bedeutungsintention, and that they indicate the other's thoughts, or meaning-intentions.

All of this is made possible by the use of signs (either spoken or written). On the one hand, the sign functions expressively, to designate the meaning intended. This meaning becomes present (as an ideality) to the interlocutor through the experiencing of the signs. On the other hand, the intentions themselves of the communicator, of necessity, cannot be made present to the interlocutor. In order that the interlocutor know that there are sense-giving intentions lying behind the acts of communication, the signs function indicatively. That is, "they serve the hearer as signs of the 'thoughts' of the speaker." [LI 277/Hua XIX/1 40]

When signs function as indications in this way, Husserl says that they fulfil a cognizance-giving function [kundgebende funktion]. Thus, when a speaker uses language, the signs used function on the one hand to express a meaning, and on the other hand, to give cognizance of the sense-giving experiences animating this meaning.

Essentially Occasional Expressions

The role of indication then is to serve to give cognizance to an interlocutor the thoughts which have animated the meanings of a speaker. This function of cognizance-giving will of necessity always fall short of presentation – the thoughts of the other will always be unpresentable to the hearer's consciousness. When the act of communication is considered in this way, it becomes clear that there are two elements at work, one subjective and the other objective. On the one hand, there is the objective content of the meaning expressed, but on the other hand, there is also the subjective act of meaning-intention. It is the
subjectivity of this act which renders it unpresentable to the hearer, and therefore in need of intimation in communicative activity. We could say, provisionally therefore, that the expressive side of the sign’s function corresponds to objectivity, whereas the indicative function does not. However, there are certain expressions, which make up the subject-matter of the 3rd Chapter of the 1st Investigation, which threaten to throw this distinction into jeopardy, and thus to admit an element of non-objectivity into supposedly objective meaning.

In order to distinguish such expressions from the ‘normal’, objective expressions, Husserl calls them essentially subjective [wesentlich subjektive], or occasional [okkasionelle] expressions [LI 314/Hua XIX/I 86]. Such expressions include personal pronouns, spatio-temporal indices (such as ‘here’, ‘there’, ‘now’, ‘then’), etc. Such expressions share the following common characteristic, namely that:

... it is essential to orient actual meaning to the occasion, the speaker and the situation. Only by looking to the actual circumstances of utterance can one definite meaning... be constituted for the hearer. [LI 315/Hua XIX/I 87]

As exemplary of essentially occasional expressions, Husserl gives the following account of expressions including the personal pronoun ‘I’:

What its meaning is at the moment, can be gleaned only from the living utterance and from the intuitive circumstances which surround it. If we read the word without knowing who wrote it, it is perhaps not meaningless [bedeutungsloses], but it is at least estranged [entfremdetes] from its normal sense. Certainly it strikes us differently from a wanton arabesque: we know it to be a word, and a word with which whoever is speaker designates [bezeichner] themselves. But the conceptual presentation
Such substitution, however, fails to capture the meaning of the first person pronoun. This is because there is a divergence between the objective sense of the expression ‘I’, and its immediate sense when used in communication. Such a divergence arises due to the fact that the meaning of ‘I’ consists of a direct presentation of the person who uses it: “Each speaker has their own I-presentation (and with it their own individual notion of I) and this is why the word’s meaning differs from person to person.” [LI 316/Hua XIX/I 88]

Thus, contrary to the essential features of meaning as described previously, it appears that in cases of essentially occasional expressions, meaning is dependent on a recourse to context in association with the referent of the expression. In order to explain the dynamics of occasional expressions, Husserl turns to the notion of indication, which heretofore had been excluded from the realm of meaning as such:

But since each person, in speaking of themselves, says ‘I’, the word has the character of a universally operative indication sign of this fact. Through such an indication relation the hearer achieves understanding of the meaning, they take the person who confronts them intuitively, not merely as the speaker, but also as the immediate object of this speaker’s speech. [LI 316/Hua XIX/I 88 translation altered]

The case is similar when one comes to look at demonstratives such as ‘this’. The full meaning of ‘this’ is only presented to the hearer when confronted by the speaker; in the absence of the context of the
expression, one is left only with the indication function of the sign, which here points to the universal demonstrative function of the expression (just as the decontextualised 'I' only indicates the sign's "allgemeine Bedeuntungsfunktion").

The problem posed by essentially occasional expressions, therefore, is that, when functioning in the absence of the context of the utterance, which is one of the essential possibilities of the ideality of meaning, the sign is reduced to its indicating function; in order that the meaning of the sign be realised for an interlocutor, they need to be present during the speaker's utterance, thus introducing an apparently irreducible element of non-objectivity to the meaning of essentially occasional expressions. How will Husserl surmount this problem, which he admits seems to threaten the grounds of his whole theory of meaning? The answer bears a certain familiarity to the account of adequation in the 6th Investigation:

...ideally speaking, each subjective expression is replaceable by an objective expression which will preserve the identity of each momentary meaning-intention. We shall have to concede that such replacement is not only impracticable, for reasons of complexity, but that it cannot in the vast majority of cases, be carried out at all, will, in fact, never be so capable. [Hua XIX/I 95]

Husserl aims to solve the problems posed to his general theory of meaning by essentially occasional expressions therefore, by arguing that the universal semantic function of all such expressions could in principle be supplemented in such a way as to designate uniquely each meaning-intention which animated each particular occurrence of the expression. Such a solution would, of course, require an infinitude of expressions,
to which we do not, at present, nor indeed will we ever, have access to. However, according to Husserl, the phenomenological state of affairs demands this in principle substitution, since whatever is meant in an essentially occasional expression, to the very extent that it is meant, must in principle be knowable as meant (ie objectively). Once again, the precise interweavings of what Husserl has so patiently tried to tease apart will have to be returned to in subsequent chapters; and in particular, once more, the rôle of the ideal which has intervened so decisively in Husserl's account of occasional expressions. Prior to this, we shall have cause to focus on the rôle of the Ideal in the following section, in which we will consider Husserl's analyses of time-consciousness, which pave the way for the grounding of the possibility of the identity syntheses discussed in the previous section, and which are the possibility of the givenness of objectivities.

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8. That Husserl himself remained unsatisfied by this account of essentially occasional expressions is evident from his remarks in the Foreword to the second edition (1913) of Logical Investigations, in which he describes their treatment as a tour de force, while yet underscoring that all empirical predications nevertheless belong to them.
§ 3. Time-Consciousness

1. Initial Responses to the Problem

The problem of temporality is without doubt, as Husserl says, one of the most difficult in phenomenology. It is also one of the most important - for our purposes, the need for analyses of time-consciousness are necessary for an understanding of the possibility of identity syntheses. [PCIT 286, 346/Hua X 276, 334] Husserl continually reworks it throughout the entire itinerary of his phenomenological project. It is first approached in a series of lectures in 1901, and is most famously worked out in the 1905 lecture series published as the main text of *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*. However, as we now know thanks to the exemplary work of Rudolf Boehm, editor of *Husserlianu X*, the work as published was in fact pieced together from writings spanning the whole decade from 1901-1911. Boehm has meticulously separated these out, and it is now possible to trace a distinct development in Husserl's thought over this period (as has been done by, most notably, John Brough). The developments of the latter part of this period are of great interest, as they point forward to the analyses which are introduced in Husserl's later great works, such as the *Ideas* and *Cartesian Meditations*. There, the analyses of time occupy crucial positions in the development of Husserl's argumentation, but their expression is often disconcertingly dense. A close reading of the texts of the early 1900's can serve to explicate some of the problems of these later texts. This section will, therefore, introduce Husserl's

1. cf in particular Brough's introduction to his own translation of Hua X, published as Volume 4 of the *Collected Works* series; and the important article "The Emergence of an Absolute Consciousness in Husserl's Early Writings on Time-Consciousness" (in Elliston & McCormick, 1977); and also "The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness" (in Elliston & McCormick, 1981).
analyses of time-consciousness, tracing through the distinctions between the levels of 'cosmic' time, constituted immanent time, and the constituting time of the absolute consciousness. Through an analysis of these extraordinary descriptions, we will also be introduced to themes which will dominate the later sections of this chapter: the possibility of phenomenological reflection, the work of pre-predicative consciousness, and the possibility of consciousness of the Other (which is explained by Husserl in terms of the temporal structure of consciousness). The main focus of this section, however, will be to try to understand Husserl's problematic discussions of the flux of absolute consciousness, discussions which motivate the remarkable work to be found in the unpublished C Manuscripts at the Husserl-Archives, especially on the theme of the living present [lebendige Gegenwart].

Husserl begins by carrying out a phenomenological reduction, and suspending belief in the existence of 'objective' time, in order that the time that is given to consciousness can be studied just as it is given to consciousness. [PCIT 350f/Hua X 338f] In this way he can begin to pose the question of the essential possibilities of what he calls the a priori temporal laws, laws in other words which must hold if we are to have any experience of time at all:

We seek to bring the a priori of time to clarity by exploring the consciousness of time [Zeitbewußtsein], by bringing its essential constitution to light, and by exhibiting the apprehension-contents and act-characters that pertain - perhaps specifically - to time and to which the a priori temporal laws essentially belong. [PCIT 10/Hua X 10]

These are the laws that would have to apply to time in order that it be time in its essence; namely, that:
... the fixed temporal order is a two-dimensional infinite series, that two different times can never be simultaneous, that their relation is a non-reciprocal one, that transitivity obtains, that to every time an earlier and a later time belong, and so on. [ibid]

As should be clear, this approach is exemplary of the phenomenological approach, in the bracketing of the empirical existent which enables the being-sense [[Seinsinn]] of the thing itself to appear. However, these analyses will be exemplary in a further way, in that they will reveal a character which is a necessary aspect of all acts of consciousness. In other words, not only are the things themselves given to consciousness always given as being in time, but also the acts in which these objects are given are themselves irreducibly temporal. Any phenomenology of the acts of consciousness will therefore of necessity have an account of the phenomenology of the consciousness of internal time at its centre.
2. Meinong, Brentano, and Husserl’s early account of time

The essence of the consciousness of time as it is revealed by phenomenology is distinguished by two characteristics which inform Husserl’s first, schematic, analyses (typical of the period 1901-1907), and which mark Husserl’s advance on the two theories which most influence him, those of Meinong and Brentano. The problem for all three is to account for the consciousness of duration and the duration of consciousness. Meinong’s inability to account for the former of these, and Brentano’s failings in his discussion of the latter, form the beginnings of Husserl’s own accounts.

At this stage, Husserl is still working with the schema of consciousness worked out in *Logical Investigations*, and which was described above in §1. This remains the basic schema which informs Husserl’s phenomenology up to the end of the first decade of the century – ie apprehension-content of apprehension (the *Auffassungsinhalt*-schema). Although many of the insights gained in the *Investigations* will be retained beyond this period, they will be subject to revision in the light of the developments provoked by the work on time-consciousness. The most fundamental shift will be in emphasis: from concentrating on the apprehension, Husserl begins to pay more and more attention to the mode of apprehension. Here, though, the question will initially be one of

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2. As Wood correctly notes (1991, p 62), this poses a potentially troublesome problem for Husserl in that such an apparently primitive phenomenological datum might in fact elude phenomenological scrutiny, to the extent that, in accordance with its own principle, phenomenology deals with what is immediately given, and duration (involving as it does a necessary commitment to a degree of *succession*) would appear never to be given immediately as such. Thus, one of the crucial moves in Husserl’s analyses will be to demonstrate that duration/succession can be given as such in consciousness, rather than having to be built up from a series of parts as a judgement.
the possibility of the apprehension of a temporally extended object.

Husserl considers ['Supplementary Text’ No 29; PCIT 223-235/Hua X 216-228] Meinong’s attempt to account for our intuition that time is now. Meinong distinguishes between what he calls temporally distributed and undistributed objects, the former being objects which require extension in time to unfold (such as a melody), whereas the latter do not (for instance, a tone). (Husserl already quibbles with this distinction, for it is undoubtedly the case that even objects which are “undistributed” are still temporal in themselves, they still “fill time” even if only as a constancy.) The question is – does the consciousness of a temporally distributed object itself have to be temporally distributed? In other words, is consciousness of a process itself a process? Meinong answers that the consciousness of a process parallels that process, such that a moment \( t \) of the process corresponds to a perception \( t \) of the consciousness of the process. Each moment of the consciousness of the process gives a now-moment of the process. But if this is the case, how could we ever have a consciousness of the whole process as process? His answer to this question is that a process is only a process when it is complete, and the momentary perception which corresponds to the final moment of the process is also a unifying act which gives the process as a whole.

In this way Meinong can hold on to his conception of time as the now, without any need for recourse to an extended perception, and hence to a distributed object which the now could not be. However, as Husserl claims, this is “nonsense” [Unsinn]. For if each perception is itself momentary, and corresponds only to a momentary ‘object’, then the only possible content of a perception at the completion of the process
would be the final moment of the process. In other words, it is simply impossible on Meinong’s own terms for anything other than the momentary to be given in a momentary act of consciousness; thus, no enduring thing could be given. Which is to say that the object of the final unifying act is denied to the unifying act, so that the unifying act is not a unifying act—hence Husserl’s comment about Unsin.

From his criticisms of Meinong’s theory, Husserl is able to approach the first crucial point in his account of time-consciousness. In order for there to be consciousness of duration, the acts which are so conscious must themselves have duration: “Consciousness must reach out beyond [hinausgreifen] the now. It must do this in each momentary act.” [Hua X 226]. Husserl finds an awareness of the need for the stretching of consciousness in Brentano’s theory of time. The fundamental insight of Brentano’s theory of time, according to Husserl, is that:

When we see, hear, or in any way perceive something, it always happens that what we perceive remains present to us for a time, but not without undergoing modification... namely, that something remaining in consciousness in this way appears to us as more or less past, as pushed back in time, as it were. [PCIT 11/Hua X 10-11]

This modification (which is necessary if what is retained by consciousness is to be able to be differentiated from what is present, of the just having sounded tone of a melody, for instance, through which the tone takes on a new temporal character), is retained in the consciousness of a present tone through what Brentano calls an “original association” [PCIT 14/Hua X 13]. Due to this original association, new representations are conjoined with representations just past, through “new representations reproducing the content of the preceding ones,
appending the (continuous) moment of the past as it does so.” [PCIT 176/Hua X 171] In this way, we can have consciousness of succession, or duration, through the relationship between what has just been with what is present, a relationship of before and after.

Although Brentano has made this important step in beginning to explain the possibility of our consciousness of time, [PCIT 16/Hua X 15] his theory is itself fundamentally flawed, as was Meinong’s. The problem for Brentano is that he chooses to describe the possibility of the representation of what has just been as the work of fantasy [Phantasie], such that what is reproduced in the succeeding moments of consciousness is ‘non-real’ (as opposed to what is now presented, which is real). The problem with this, however, is that it provides no means for distinguishing between a consciousness of a presently occurring temporal succession, and a consciousness of something temporal which happened some time in the past. Since this latter undoubtedly is also something which is not real, we would be in a position, as Husserl describes, when remembering a temporal succession of some time ago, of dealing with fantasies of fantasies. [PCIT 17/Hua X 16] That is to say, on Brentano’s account, we would have no way of distinguishing between perceiving a succession and remembering the perception of a succession from the past. In Brentano’s account, it would appear that a contradiction arises, in so far as the content reproduced as past is still nonetheless experienced in the present, and thus ‘as present’. What Brentano fails to explain is how, in an enduring perception of A, “what I now have in consciousness as A with its new character is identical with something that is not in consciousness now but that did exist.” [PCIT 19/ Hua X 18] This problem has arisen for Brentano, according to Husserl, from his having failed to distinguish between what, at this stage, Husserl
calls “act, content of apprehension, and apprehended object.” [PCIT 19/ Hua X 17]

On this schema, Brentano’s problems have arisen from his concentration on the temporality of the contents to the detriment of the act-character, and its temporality. In order to avoid Brentano’s problems, Husserl’s analyses will attempt to redress this balance. Thus, when we come to consider our consciousness of a melody, Husserl suggests that we take a “cross-section” [Querschnitt] of consciousness in order to concentrate on a momentary phase of the duration of the consciousness of the melody. When we take such a cross-section, we see that at any moment, consciousness has a triple intentionality. That is, at any, present, moment of consciousness, there is present what is intended now, the ‘now-phase’ of the melody; but also what has just past, and what is just about to come. As present, these three moments must all be perceptual, presenting what is; however, the mode of presentation of the three moments of intentionality differs. Thus, the moment of the melody which has just past:

although no longer present itself, is still present to me, but only as just past. [The intention, the act of meaning this tone, endures, and endures longer than the sounding tone. The tone is no longer there: no perception. But ‘it’ is ‘still meant’.] The event is not there-itself; it itself is something not-now. Its being-past is something now, something present itself, something perceived. [PCIT 219/Hua X 212-3]

Thus, Husserl’s account is similar to Brentano’s, but with the major difference that the pastness of the just having been which is an element of the cross-section is no longer a pastness of the object, nor the content of consciousness, but rather the result of a mode of intending. This
mode of intending Husserl calls at this stage "fresh memory" \([\text{frischer Erinnerung}]\). In the case of that which is about to come, the mode of intending is necessarily somewhat different. Here it is a case of an empty intending, an openness to that which is about to come, and which will be fulfilled in a conscious moment which is itself about to come. In this way, then, Husserl is able to describe the consciousness of a temporally extended object as being of necessity itself temporally extended.

3. Fresh memory can now be distinguished from secondary memory, or recollection, through the fact that while fresh memory presents its object, in the mode of just having been, recollection merely represents the object, in a mode of givenness equivalent to that of fantasy or imagination. In calling such memory secondary, Husserl emphasizes that it is founded on fresh memory, due to the necessity of the past's having already been constituted presentatively before it can be re-presented in recollection. \[\text{cf PCIT 190/Hua X 184}\] The essential difference then is between recollection which is a new act in which the object has a different mode of givenness \([\text{ie re-presentation}]\); and fresh memory which is a modified intentionality, which still intends a present object, but as just having been. The openness of consciousness to what is about to come will play a crucial rôle in subsequent discussions of reflection, and of the horizons which are always already concretely given with any act of consciousness. It will also be seen to be of fundamental importance, along with the irruption of the Idea in the Kantian sense, in Husserl's account of the possibility of the process of idealisation.
3. Husserl's Mature Position

The position adumbrated above exemplifies the apprehension-schema already mentioned, to the extent that Husserl conceives of the immanent sensation which is animated by the act of intention, thus becoming a sensation-of, as itself neutral; in the case of these discussions, in particular, neutral with regard to time. Thus, temporal constitution, the distinction for instance between a sensation remembered and a sensation presently perceived, does not lie in the appearing sensation itself, but in its mode of being intended [cf PCIT 300/Hua X 289]. Now, in his treatment up until this stage, Husserl has not given any account of the temporality of the animating act, which we have seen needs to have duration, and hence a certain temporality, if the content apprehended is itself to be constituted temporally. Crucially for phenomenological method, the question is how the temporality of the immanent act which constitutes the temporal object is to be given in immanent reflection? It is in approaching this question that Husserl's thinking begins to undergo an important development, evidenced in the manuscripts which form the basis for the Third Section of the 1905 lectures (manuscripts collected under the heading “On the primary conclusion of the investigations” in the 5th Section of the Second Part of Hua X) and the Appendices. This change will have fundamental consequences for the subsequent development of phenomenology.

In describing the apprehension-schema in the following way, Husserl suggests that such a position might in fact be quite untenable:

my original view... operated with experienced contents (eg sensuous contents) and regarded them as apprehended in
one way or another, depending on the circumstances. Everything is merely a matter of differences in apprehension, which would simply attach itself to the content that is experienced and that exists in consciousness, ‘animating’ [beseelend] it. [PCIT 331/Hua X 319]

The question Husserl poses of this schema is whether it can allow the possibility that one and the same content can be apprehended in distinct ways (as now and just past) ‘at the same time’ (eg during the perception of an enduring temporal object)? Some means must be found of establishing the distinction between the different modes of apprehension. What is it about the immanent act which enables it to constitute, in the same present, one moment of the appearing object as just having been, another as now-given, and another as about to come? Husserl’s answer is that the immanent act itself is made up of a now point which intends the now point of the object, a fresh (primary) memory which intends the object as just having been, and so on. In other words, the temporalising act is itself a constituted temporal object, with its own a priori structure.

Husserl gives phenomenological basis for this claim when he argues that:

every experience is ‘consciousness’, and consciousness is consciousness of... But every experience is itself experienced [erlebt], and to that extent also ‘intended’. [PCIT 301/ Hua X 291]

Further on, Husserl characterises the situation in terms of a “flow [Fluss] of flows”, through, or in, which unities are constituted. All flows are consciousness through and through,

and each flow pertains to a unity. These unities are
therefore the *contents of consciousness in the primary sense*, experiences understood as occurrences that are experienced (which are unities) or intended (sensed). [PCIT 303/Hua X 292]

This experiencing, or sensing, of the immanent acts of consciousness, in which temporal objects are constituted, Husserl will call the Absolute flow of time-constituting consciousness.

The ‘transcendental’ argument in favour of the existence of such a flow is backed up by this phenomenological analysis. Husserl is suggesting that we are in fact aware of the temporality of our flow of consciousness, that we in fact sense, or experience, the consciousness which intends objects, and experience it as a unity pre-reflectively, although without yet thematizing, ie. objectivating, these acts. (That this latter is nevertheless possible is however a necessary corollary of the flow of flows, a point which we will see exploited in the next section on reflection.) This phenomenological description says nothing as yet about how this sensing is related to the constitution of the immanent acts. As yet, the sensing described appears to be non-temporal, a sort of ‘abiding impression’ of the flowing on of the transitory acts of consciousness.4 We can summarize the position reached by Husserl at this stage by referring to Appendix VI. There Husserl explicates the three levels which have been teased apart in the account of the possibility of time-consciousness:

1. Empirical objects as they are ordinarily perceived; these objects have a temporal character (they endure, etc).
2. The appearing of the objects, their constitution in acts of

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4. cf Brough, in Elliston & McCormick (1977) p 94. This notion of the abiding impression of the passing of the acts of consciousness strikes resonances with some ideas of Emmanuel Levinas which will be one of the topics of the final chapter of this thesis – cf PCIT 118f/Hua X 114; and p 358 *infra.*
consciousness, which is also temporal (and which temporality enables the constitution of the objects appearing in the acts; thus, that an experienced object \( x \) occurs before an experienced object \( y \) is due to the fact that the experience of \( x \) occurs before the experience of \( y \); and this possibility of a before and after of experiences is founded on the stretching of the acts of consciousness enabled by primary memory and primary expectation).

3. The absolute flow, in which the immanent acts are themselves temporally constituted.

Before turning to Husserl’s analyses of the Absolute Flow, the account of the constitution of temporal objects can be summarized by way of a diagram, modified from those presented in § 10 and No 53. This diagram represents the flow of acts of consciousness (acts \( p, q, r \) & \( s \)), and their temporal form. [see p 78 over]
DIAGRAM OF TIME

THE COMING-TOWARD & RUNNING-OFF OF PHENOMENA

p/q/r/s – times of cross-sections

small case letters indicate expectations of the coming-toward of as yet indeterminate 'phenomena'; number of indices suggest 'intensity' of expectation

dotted lines represent putative extensions

sloping lines serve to indicate that fading-away and coming-toward are continua; they also suggest regularity: A' & B' have similar degrees of 'intensity'

large case letters indicate 'preservation' in consciousness; indices suggest degree of fading-away or running-off

Thus, at cross-section taken at time r, the present act of consciousness is made up of the now-point intention C; and also preserved intentions, modified as retentions A'' & B' (preserved in their running off); and anticipatory intention, modified as protention ,d (anticipated in its coming-towards).
Let us consider the succession of acts in which an object is presented from different sides. In act p, the front-side of the object is presented. This side fulfils now-point intention A; also, however, this act has primary expectations of sides which are yet to be presented to consciousness, and these are therefore empty intentions (cf the discussion of the 6th Investigation above). If we now consider an act slightly further on in the flow, say act r: in the now-point of this act, the reverse side of the object is directly given to consciousness, as now-perceived. In the same act, however, there is the further expectation (empty intention) of the side of the object which has yet to be seen – ,d. Also, there is the primary memory of the side of the object which was just present, but which has now passed away; this side was presented in act q, and was the object fulfilling the now-point intention B. Furthermore, also retained in act r is the primary memory, now pushed that much further back, of the front-side of the object, which fulfilled the now-point intention A in act p.

Some important points should be noted about the diagram of time here presented. 1. The object fulfilling each of the now-point intentions is presented to conscious ‘in the now’ so to speak. 2. The cross-section lines denoting the immanent acts, and the lines representing the coming-towards and fading away (diagonal lines) are continuous, to represent the fact that these are continua of experiences. These continua establish the possibilities of identities within manifolds, as discussed in § 1. 3. Continua also establish the possibility of consciousness of duration, indicating as they do the ‘durationality’ of consciousness. This durationality is shown by the sloping lines, such that there is no gap between the ‘simultaneity’ of the slipping away and retaining.
The Absolute Flow [absoluten Fluss]

We have so far followed Husserl in his positing of the absolute flow on the basis of consciousness' experiencing of its immanent acts. However, there are more important questions which have to be asked at this point: how does the absolute flux constitute the immanent temporality of the acts depicted in the diagram? How does the flux come to know itself? And how is the flux constituted (given that it is known)?

It was suggested in part 2 above that part of the problem of Brentano's theory of time, and to an extent also with Husserl's own early account of time-consciousness, was that it was too content-orientated, and that this led to problems in distinguishing between presentation and re-presentation. In his account of the absolute flux of time-constituting consciousness, Husserl moves beyond a contents-based theory completely. He retains the structure of the threefold intentionality for the flux (and in doing so is able to retain the possibility of the constitution of the duration of acts of consciousness), which he terms as retention - primal impression - protention. However, these are intentionalities without 'objects'. What is intended is the temporal form of the immanent acts, or perhaps more strictly, the acts in their temporality. Thus, the now-point of the immanent act corresponds, in the flux, to the primal impression [Urimpression], and this primal impression is said to intend, to experience, the Now-moment of the immanent act. [PCIT 383/Hua X 372] Husserl specifies this type of experience as Erlebnis, to underline the aspect of the acts being 'lived-through'. As Brough writes [Elliston & McCormick (1977), p

5. cf Brough, in Elliston & McCormick (1977)
95], the absolute flux simply *is* experiencing. The same holds for the past and future aspects of the primal flux. Husserl calls these *retention* \([Retention]\) and *protention* \([Protention]\), and these intentionalities are the sensings of the pastness and the about-to-come-ness of the act that just was and the act about to come. As Husserl says, there is no real \([reell]\) content in the sensing of the apprehension of a tone, but rather that:

... the real content of the consciousness of the now contains at most sensed tones... \([retention]\) really contains consciousness of the past of the tone. \([PCIT 324/Hua X 312]\)

Thus, the absolute flow of consciousness constitutes immanent temporal objects (acts) simply as temporal objects, it intends the nowness of the now, the pastness of the primary memory, the ‘about-to-comeness’ of primary expectation. By virtue of the intentional moment of the primal impression of the absolute flux, a moment of the immanent object is experienced as Now \([cf Brough, op cit, p 96]\); and when the Now-moment elapses, it is *retained* in consciousness, but now in the mode of having-been.

Let us consider the following. I hear a tone. It is now appearing. In the next moment it appears as the same in quality and intensity – but as ‘past’ and as receding ever farther into the past. Over against this, we speak of the consciousness of the immanent time of this tone: the consciousness of the present tone, the consciousness of the tone that just was and that is sinking farther and farther back in time. \([PCIT 389/Hua X 377]\)

The 3 levels of time-consciousness could thus be schematically represented as in the following table:
The question of how the flow comes to be constituted is a much more difficult one for phenomenology, and indeed provokes in Husserl a reaction as if to a scandal. Firstly, though, how does the flow appear to itself? Having indicated that there is an awareness of the temporality of acts, Husserl tries to focus on this awareness. What essential characteristics does the awareness of the temporality of acts have? How is the sensing which accompanies all acts to be described:

I find a ‘succession’ in this consciousness; I find it to be a ‘flow’. And in this flow I find a phase of the ‘now’; namely, a phase that makes the tone-now originally conscious: the original presenting phase. But I find ‘together’ with this phase a continuity of phases that make up the consciousness of what elapsed earlier. And this whole ‘being-all-at-once’ formed from original presentation and the continuity of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'Level' of consciousness</th>
<th>Constitutive Relations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absolute Flux</strong></td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(fundamental form of time consciousness)</td>
<td>Primal Impression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intentional correlate</strong></td>
<td>Primary memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(temporal immanence)</td>
<td>(before)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Now-point</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary expectation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(after)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-phase of object</strong></td>
<td>Just elapsed phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Now phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Just about to come phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
phases relating to the past makes up the *moving moment* of the actuality of consciousness that, in unceasing change, constitutes the immanent object. [PCIT 389/Hua X 378 emphasis added]

We know the flux *as* flow[ing]. But to know something *as* something is for that thing to be constituted as a unity within a manifold of appearings. Now given that what Husserl is talking about here is the *absolute* flow, the absolute level of consciousness, the very possibility of any consciousness at all to the extent that it holds the moments of consciousness together (as we shall see in § 5 below), there can be nothing else which constitutes the flux. Yet, given that we experience the flux as a unity, it must be constituted. Husserl’s solution is that the flow has a *double intentionality*: not only does it constitute the temporality of immanent objects, it also constitutes itself. And this is what Husserl announces is indeed scandalous, absurd even. [PCIT 390/Hua X 378]

Why should this be the case?

It is because this violates what one might describe as the absolute principle of the intentionality which is the subject-matter of phenomenology. Namely, that which is intended, and that by which it is intended, always belong to different ‘dimensions’. Intentionality, as its Latin root indicates, is a directedness *beyond*, it is consciousness’ possibility of transcending its own limits. The noema, or intentional object, is never a *reell* content of consciousness. To forego this principle is the price Husserl must pay in order to avoid the infinite regress of constituting flows. But is it too high a price to pay? What, in fact, is the possibility that:

... two inseparably united intentionalities, requiring one
another like two sides of one and the same thing, are interwoven with each other in the one unique flow of consciousness... self-appearance of the flow must necessarily be apprehensible in the flowing. The self-appearance of the flow does not require a second flow; on the contrary, it constitutes itself as a phenomenon in itself. The constituting and the constituted coincide. [PCIT 393/Hua X 381]

The possibility of the coincidence of constituting and constituted is the double intentionality of, in particular, retention. In the flux, when the constituted phase of the act passes, so does the intention of that phase, the primal impression. However, this impression is not lost, just as the now-phase is not simply lost. Rather, it is retained in the new primal impression. Thus, the primal impression, as well as sensing the nowness of the act also senses the just-pastness of its own just-having-been as primal impression; and it is related to this intentionally. Perhaps this should not be so surprising, since it conforms precisely to what Husserl describes as the possibility of the consciousness of duration. Moreover, although our absolute level of being is as we know a presence, a present awareness of the time of our acts, nevertheless, in order for this presence to abide, it must retain the structure of stretching-beyond which has been described already; otherwise, we would be in a pre-synthesising position which would undoubtedly not be experience (cf Ideas I, § 49; and PCIT 121/Hua X 117).

Here, however, Husserl goes even further, and this is the most important move: for just as there is a double intentionality in the flux as primal impression, so also the (intentional) retention not only intends the primal impression just elapsed, but also its own retentional aspect. In other words, not only is the just-having-been impression intended by
retention, it is intended precisely in the *mode* of just-having-been. There is then a double retention, a retention of retention; [PCIT 86/Hua X 81] not only of what is retained, but also of the retaining of the retained. And this double retention is the possibility of the self-constitution of the flux, because the awareness at the same ‘moment’, so to speak, is the same retention, of the just elapsed impression and of itself as a retention, which is itself a moment, a part interwoven with the ‘new’ impression, hence forming a continuum. Through the double intentionality of retention, the flux becomes apparent precisely in its flowing. In this remarkable function, we have the first inkling of what Sokolowski will describe as the “othering and gathering at work” which makes possible the flux precisely in its passing, its flowing. [Sokolowski (1974), 160-1] In establishing itself as a continuum, the flux constitutes itself by differentiating itself.6

6. With respect to this notion of othering and gathering, and to mark an interesting apparent move away from the consequences of the apprehension-schema, attention may be drawn to the remarkable 5th Appendix. [Also discussed by Picard (1946)] Here, Husserl considers whether perceiving and perceived must necessarily be simultaneous. If we take a transcendent object which is perceived, the answer is evidently no, which is clear from consideration of the case of stars. If we turn to the appearance of the object, it is certainly the case, Husserl suggests, that we assume that the object has existed prior to our perceiving it, and will continue to exist after our perception finishes. But could we imagine a continuous perception which follows the existence of the object from beginning to end, such that “a phase of perception then corresponds to each phase of the object’s duration”? [PCIT 115/Hua X 110] Even if this were the case, “that is still not to say that the point at which the object’s duration begins and the point at which the perception begins must coincide.” [ibid] For, Husserl says, the data of sensation, what will come to be known as *hyletic data*, the types of sensation cited as examples throughout the discussions of time (such as tone-data), are necessary components of the constitution of the (intentional) object – they are the means by which the object as *Abschattung* appears. But these data are themselves already constituted. And this is precisely the work of the temporal flow, to ‘gather’ these data together (the work of what will come to be known as passive synthesis). Only when the sensations have been so gathered can the act of perception begin.

The question is – does the perception of the object, the act of constituting itself, occur simultaneously with the *datum* of sensation; or, when we have said that the sensation is itself already constituted, does this mean to suggest that this (passive) act of constitution takes place before the perception? Such a before would seem to introduce an irreducible moment between sensation and perception. Husserl suggests that this latter is indeed the case, with the following implication: that, at the very moment when the perception begins, “a part of the datum of sensation has already elapsed and is preserved only in retention.” [ibid] Thus, animated by ‘apprehension’ in the present moment is not just the *present sensation*, but also that aspect of the datum which just was, which has just passed away. What is apprehended in the present is always already to an extent passed. Thus, even in the basic
One further problem remains for Husserl. In order to talk about the phases of the flux here, a certain temporality would need to be introduced into the flux, a certain before and after. And yet, the flux flows. It is sheer event. As we have seen, it contains no objects as such, just the sensings of temporality. Husserl suggests that the flow does possess a:

... prephenomenal, pre-immanent temporality [which] becomes constituted intentionally as the form of the time-constituting consciousness and in it itself. [PCIT 393/Hua X 381]

But this temporality is a "quasi-temporality" – since there are no contents of the flow, nothing changes, nothing remains the same, there is nothing which can bear the a priori laws of temporality. This problem marks the astonishing difficulty of what Husserl goes on to call a transcendental aesthetic, and is appreciated already at this stage when he admits that words like "flow" as they are used here can only be at best metaphorical. Literally, nothing flows. Husserl calls this realm of experience, in deference to this problem, absolute subjectivity, and suggests that for all of it, names are lacking. [§ 36]

Having pushed phenomenology to its absolute limit, to that which act of perception, there seems to be a delay which parallels the othering which Sokolowski harnesses to the gathering. Already, at any rate, there seems to be an awareness in these pages of the analyses of pre-predicative experience which will be taken up again in texts such as Experience and Judgement. However, the fundamental question seems to be this: given this irreducible structure in the act of perceiving, the paradigmatic act for phenomenology, what is the possibility of reflecting on the sensing which has always already past? [cf Ideas I § 85]

7. The problem of talking about that which is sheer event is similar to the problem discussed in the analysis of essentially occasional expressions – at stake is an irreducible singularity, which resists the ideality of meaning. This will also be a topic of discussion in our final chapter.
is the most fundamental level of consciousness, Husserl finds that phenomenology is lacking the words to describe what is found there. In later sections of this thesis, the question of whether in fact names are lacking or whether there is rather nothing here to be named will be considered. Prior to that however, and before finishing this section, there is one further point to be considered regarding Husserl’s analyses of our consciousness of time, and this point takes us back to the notion with which each of the previous two sections have concluded.

In *Ideas I*, Husserl gives a very brief summary of the findings of his earlier analyses of time-consciousness in the chapter on the Universal Structure of Pure Consciousness (§§ 81ff). There, Husserl describes the duration of the acts of consciousness (the *Erlebnisse*) as having their places in “an infinite continuum of duration...one endless ‘stream of mental processes’” [I 194/Hua III/I 182]. The stream of mental processes, as he goes on, cannot begin or end. At this stage, Husserl talks of the now-phase as being the persisting form [*verharrende Form*] of experience, which has *horizons* of before and after (retention and protention), which are the consciousnesses of the just past and the just about to come. Once again, he affirms that “the stream of mental processes is an infinite unity.” [I 196/Hua III/I 183]

However, in a problem which echoes the one of talking about the absolute flux, there is a problem announced by Husserl in § 83, concerning the possibility of *knowing* this infinite stream as infinite stream, as a unity. We can have knowledge of the stream through reflection (according to eidetic laws, a point to be developed in the next section), but “by essential necessity this whole concatenation is *never*
given or to be given by a single pure regard.” [Ii 197/Hua III/I 185] Rather, Husserl argues, the unity of the infinite stream of mental processes is seized upon in the manner of an idea in the Kantian sense. [ibid]

This ideal givenness of the infinity of the mental stream echoes the ideal of adequacy in perception, and the ideal of finding objective expressions to replace essentially subjective expressions (the subjectivity in this phrase, and the absolute subjectivity which eludes names in the time-consciousness analyses, are of course closely related precisely to the extent that occasional expressions are temporally subjective). The nature of the function of this ideal will be returned to in the final section of this chapter, and throughout the following chapter. Here, it may suffice to remark, that in each of our chapters to date, the analyses under consideration have reached a point where that which requires to be presented for phenomenological scrutiny seems to resist the very possibility of such presentation; and that, at each of these points, Husserl has found himself either failed by phenomenological language, or needing to have recourse to an idea now understood in the Kantian sense, hence denoting what cannot be presented as such to consciousness, but which nevertheless must be assumed as such by consciousness.8

8. cf Critique of Pure Reason, A 327/B 384: “I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experience... They are concepts of pure reason, in that they view all knowledge gained in experience as being determined through an absolute totality of conditions. They are not arbitrarily invented; they are imposed by the very nature of reason itself... Finally, they are transcendent and overstep the limits of all experience; no object adequate to the transcendental idea can ever be found within experience.” Kant later specifies that such ideas “never allow of any constitutive employment” [A 644/B 672; emphasis added], but have an “indispensably necessary, regulative employment”. [ibid] Transcendental ideas supplement the ‘normal’ ideas of human reason, having not, like Platonic ideas, a “creative power”, but a “practical power (as regulative principles)” [A 569/B 597]. The task of reason, in which the transcendental ideas are employed, is to “prescribe to the understanding its direction towards a certain unity of which it has itself no concept, and in such a manner as to unite all the acts of the understanding, in respect of every object, into an absolute whole” [A 326/B 383].
§ 4. Reflection and Phenomenological Method

1. Time and Reflection

The recourse to the idea in the Kantian sense, and the threat of silence encountered at phenomenology’s limits, leads us to a consideration of the method of phenomenology, and in particular, the impact that the analyses of time-consciousness have on phenomenological method. Broadly speaking, it will be suggested that it is the structure of temporality which is the possibility of reflection as phenomenological method; but that Husserl comes to realize that this possibility is also the condition of impossibility of such a method as conceived within static phenomenology, hence motivating the turn towards genetic phenomenology, characteristic of Husserl’s work after the period of the Ideas.

A meditation on reflection is required when we pause to consider what has been said to date: so far, we have considered the acts of consciousness which enable us to have knowledge about the world, and to give linguistic expression to such knowledge, as well as those acts which constitute the temporality of the world about which we have knowledge. As we know, Husserl’s principle of phenomenology has dictated that the subject-matter of phenomenology is to be strictly limited to what is given originarily in intuition. So how do we have knowledge of what is given in intuition, and how do we come to know about those acts in which there is originary givenness? Through what means do we gain access to hyle, noesis and noema? [Ideas Part 3, ch 2]

The means by which, “acts themselves, and their immanent
meaning-content [can be made] our objects” is through reflection. [LI 255/Hua XIX/I 14] Later, Husserl writes: “the phenomenological method operates exclusively in acts of reflection.” [I 174/Hua III/I 162] As Levinas says, phenomenology just is the study of consciousness through reflection. [Levinas (1973), p 129] We need to be careful here to distinguish precisely what is meant by reflection. Phenomenological reflection differs from mundane reflection, or reflection as we normally carry it out in the natural attitude, in that natural reflection is always concerned with the existence of the object. [cf Hua VIII 95] This is the typical case in which, having seen something, we might reflect in order to determine whether we have really seen that thing or not. As we know, in the phenomenological reduction, interest in the being of the object is suspended, and this same state of affairs holds for phenomenological reflection.

Reflection in phenomenology aims to be philosophical intuition. [cf Levinas (1973) p 154] In order to grasp what this type of intuition is, we can follow Husserl in comparing it to the intuition of transcendent objects in ‘external’ perception. As we saw in reading the 6th Investigation, perception of transcendent objects is of necessity always incomplete. The mode of givenness of a transcendent object is always as adumbrated, [cf I 90/Hua III/I 88] given from a certain point of view, in a certain aspect. Complete givenness of a transcendent object is always only an ideal. Furthermore, in transcendent perception, there is always the possibility that one can be mistaken about what one perceives, there is always so to speak ‘room for doubt’. [I 102/Hua III/I 97; cf also EJ 92/EU 99f] Finally it is necessarily the case that the object perceived in transcendent perception can never be a reell content of consciousness,
therefore, the transcendent object as such can never be perceived in immanent perception. [I 89/Hua III/I 87]

Immanent perception differs from transcendent perception in all three aspects of mode of givenness, type of being, and dubitability. In an act of immanent perception, the “cogitatio itself” is made an intentional object for consciousness; that is, an act is directed towards another act, which thus “becomes the object of a so-called ‘internal perception’” [I 78/Hua III/I 77]1 Thus, it can be stated as a maxim of immanent acts of consciousness that:

... it is essential that their intentional objects, if they exist at all, belong to the same stream of mental processes to which they themselves belong... The consciousness and its Object form an individual unity made up purely of mental processes [Erlebnisse]. [I 79/Hua III/I 78]

It will be immediately clear from this point about immanent perception being a unity of Erlebnisse that the being of the object of immanent perception and the being of the act in which this object is given are the same. However, the unity of intention and intentional object in immanent perception is not just an ontological unity. In:

... a perception of something immanent, perception and perceived form essentially an unmediated unity, that of a single concrete cogitatio. Here the perceiving includes its Object in itself... This sort of really inherent ‘includedness’ is a pre-eminent characteristic of the perception of something immanent, and of the position-taking founded on such perception. [I 79-80/Hua III/I 78-9]

1. The possibility of this “reflective turning of regard” will be considered below.
This includedness results in an essential difference between the mode of
givenness of an immanent object and that of a transcendent object, and
the knowledge we can have based on them. Because the unity between
perceiving and perceived is unmediated, since the perceiving includes its
object, the object as it is given in immanent perception is given
absolutely; which is to say that “a mental process is not adumbrated.” [I1
90/Hua III/I 88]. As Husserl explains, it does not make sense to talk of
anything other than a spatial object being presented from a different
standpoint. Because there is no other standpoint from which an
immanent object can be given, it follows that the givenness of the
immanent object is adequate.

the perception of a mental process is a simple seeing of
something which is (or can become) perceptually given as
something absolute, and not as something identical in modes
of appearance by adumbration. [I1 95-6/Hua III/I 92]

The absolute givenness of the immanent object entails that, whereas we
can doubt what we have seen in transcendent perception, “every
perception of something immanent necessarily guarantees the existence
of its object.” [I1 100/Hua III/I 96] What is given in immanent
perception therefore always has the status of evidence. [Evidenz]

The analysis of the status of the object perceived in immanent
perception gives theoretical founding to the pre-eminent role the
principle of all principles plays in phenomenology. However, there is an
apparent problem which occurs in this presentation, and that is the
problem of scepticism. How can we know that the act lived through, and
the act as it is then given in reflection are indeed one and the same?
Might it not be the case that in being reflected upon, the act undergoes a
necessary modification, thus rendering it impossible ever to capture the act itself? In providing an answer to this question, we can also begin to approach the means by which consciousness is able to reflect on itself.

Husserl responds initially to this sceptical question by providing a purely formal answer: that in order to call into question that which the sceptic proposes to doubt, they must first presuppose this as a presupposition. This is specifically so in the case of reflection in that, in order to cast doubt on the status of the object given by reflection, one first has to reflect, that is, reflect on the activity of reflecting (which can only be given through reflection). [I 186/Hua III/I 174] A further point is that the sceptic, who questions whether the reflective act does not modify that reflected upon to such an extent that it might never be known in itself, presupposes that they have some knowledge of what the act is in its unmodified state. Yet the only possibility of such knowledge is precisely what is being called into question by the sceptic. [ibid]

Although Husserl presents these arguments as demonstrating the "counter-sense" [Widersinn] of the sceptic claims through returning to the matter itself in eidetic intuition, nonetheless, he also admits that in order to be clear about this, the possibility of reflection itself still requires further elaboration. As we shall see, Husserl’s substantive argument is that it is the temporal structure of consciousness which both enables reflection, and provides the wherewithal for countering the sceptic doubts (although, as we shall also see, this also provides Husserl’s account with certain further problems). The other ground for the possibility of reflection is the structure of intentionality itself.
Intentionality allows reflection to yield the object's mode of
givenness to consciousness since, even though reflection 'turns away'
from the world of things to focus on the stream of mental events, it does
not simply reveal the 'eventhood' of the mental events because such
events, due to the structure of intentionality, always contain their objects
irreducibly. As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, it makes no
more sense to think of a piece of paper without its reverse side than it
does to think of an act of consciousness without its corresponding object.
[cf Levinas (1973), p 129]

Intentionality enables reflection to capture the object as well as the
act intending that object; but it is the retentional aspect of the structure
of consciousness which allows the reflective regard itself. Husserl comes
to posit retention as the possibility of the reflective regard by
investigating how the object of reflection is presented to consciousness,
in exemplary phenomenological fashion. The crucial point about an act
which is reflected upon is that it is found:

... as actually present now, but not as only now beginning.
It is there as continuing to endure, as already lived before,
only not looked at. [I1 176/Hua III/I 164]

This makes clear two things: that there is a continuum between the act as
lived through and the act as objectivated in the reflective regard. And
secondly, the modification that the object as intended in the lived
experience undergoes when the act in which the object was presented is
reflected upon. This modification is further highlighted, as Husserl
notes, when we choose (as we can of necessity) to reflect on the
reflective act itself, and thus see the reflecting act itself reflectively
modified.
We have seen in the previous section that the possibility of the duration of consciousness – which is in turn the possibility of a continuum between the objects of consciousness – is enabled by the ‘stretching’ of consciousness, made possible by the protentions and retentions which are moments, along with the primal impression, of each ‘present’ phase of consciousness. If we turn to Appendix IX of *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal-Time*, we can see in what way this structure of consciousness enables reflection, and how, simultaneously, it provides the certainty regarding reflection called into doubt by the sceptics. There, Husserl underscores the fundamental point that retentions are themselves intentional, and what they intend is the primal impression just elapsed, in the mode of its just having been. In this way, the impression is ‘pushed back’ into consciousness while still being “kept in grip”, that is, retained. Now, if we consider an act P, with primal impression p; which is then succeeded by an act Q; then act Q will have p intended by its retentional phase in the mode of just having been (lived through). Thus, in Q, p will still be ‘kept in grip’ in addition to the primal impression of Q. That is to say, the act Q is still conscious (retentionally) of the content of the previous act, there is a continuum between the preceding and the succeeding acts. Because the content of P is still present in Q, the primal impression of Q can now be made up of p, that is Q can be directed backwards at P. In this way, the previous act can be objectivated without having departed from consciousness.2

It is the fact of the continuum, the fact that reflection and object

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2. The language of this paragraph is meant to signify that the description is being carried out on the level of the absolute flux, so that the primal impression p of act P will be of the now-point of an immanent object, that is, an act of consciousness, which will in turn intend the now-phase of an object. [cf Sokolowski (1974), pp 156ff]
reflected upon are linked within the same mental process, which guarantees that there is an “absolute legitimacy” governing reflection on something immanent. [I1 180/Hua III/I 168] At the same time, this provides the phenomenologist with the means of analyzing precisely the modifications undergone in reflection, on the basis of an analysis of retentional modification. For instance, one modification undergone is that the previous mental process had been lived through latently, so to speak; however, in the reflective regard, this living through has now become objectivated. [cf Hua VIII 89]

Although the retentional phase of consciousness seems to both enable reflection, and guarantee its legitimacy, there are still certain problems which arise in the analyses of reflection. The first of these arises when we come to consider the I that is given in reflection. So far we have concentrated on the acts of consciousness which are reflected upon. However, a fundamental aspect of mental processes is precisely their being lived through, that is to say, their subjectivity. It is no coincidence that Husserl terms the ultimate level of consciousness, which is a pure experiencing as we have said, as an absolute subjectivity. However, in reflection, of necessity, this subjectivity must be essentially modified in the objectivating act; the I of the reflected mental process is now an Object, and moreover, an Object for the subjective experiencing which is now being reflected upon. Or at any rate, it is this unity which Husserl is stressing. For instance, in Ideas II Husserl underlines that:

... no matter how much a phenomenological transformation is expressed hereby with regard to the cogito... yet it is evident, in virtue of further reflections at a higher level, that this and the other pure Ego are in truth one and the same. [I2 108/Hua IV 102]
What further reflection could in fact show this to be the case? Would not a further reflection only establish the identity of the I's as *Objects*, and not as subject and object? Is it possible in fact to effect a bridge over this 'splitting' [Spaltung] of *subjective* and objective I's? Is it not necessarily the case that the identification of the I's after being previously split is always of necessity a 'creative' activity? The answer to these problems is in the negative. The higher order act gives us the clue. Although the subjectivity of the act reflected upon changes, it changes precisely in its mode of givenness, *to the absolute level*. Initially, its mode of givenness is to be anonymous, and non-the thematic. In reflection, however, the I which lives through the mental process is thematized and therefore becomes non-anonymous. Now, in order for there to be this distinction in modes of givenness, there has to be something *which is itself being given*. And that this is indeed the *same* thing is guaranteed by the continuity established by the absolute flux.

Thus, what this apparent problem has shown in its solution is that the difference between the reflecting-I and the I-reflected is nothing other than the temporality of the I, its being in time.3 We are working once again in the realm of the double intentionality of retention. For the retention intends, 'at one and the same time', the previous primal impression as just having been, and also as just before the current primal impression. In other words, retention intends both the act as it was just experienced, *and also* the experiencing *of* the act. The apparent problem of reuniting the previously split-I is in fact none other than an extrapolation from what we heard Sokolowski calling the "othering and gathering" of the flow.

3. On all of this, cf Brand (1955); in particular, pp 67f
The further problems engendered in the founding of reflection by the temporal structure of consciousness do not appear to admit of such clear-cut answers. We have seen that one way in which transcendent perception is essentially distinct from immanent perception is that the latter gives its object adequately. However, this observation is complicated somewhat, as Husserl describes in *Ideas I* § 44. For, given the importance of retention for reflection, we are constrained to "swim[ming] along after" the flux of mental processes. The unity of the stream cannot be grasped completely by such a perceiving which swims along with it. [I1 97/Hua III/I 93; cf also § 83] There is always therefore a limit to reflection, an incompleteness due to the contents of consciousness being forever pushed back, ultimately falling out of consciousness. Husserl in fact describes this incompleteness as an "inadequacy"; but there is an absolute phenomenological distinction between this inadequacy and the inadequacy characteristic of transcendent perception (the former being due solely to temporal transcendence within immanence, whereas the other is the spatio-temporal transcendence of *things*). Whether or not this is indeed the case, it seems strange for Husserl to have described this incompleteness as indicating the inadequate character of immanent perception, given that it is precisely adequacy which is serving as an essential marker of the distinction between transcendent and immanent perception.4

The final problem to which attention may be drawn at this stage concerns the way in which the reflective regard is fulfilled by the previous act. So far, the retentional moment of present mental process has been the focus of our attention. If we turn our attention towards the

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4. This point is further developed by Aguirre (1970), § 33b, who makes the interesting observation that the limit between the two types of perception at this stage could be described as a "flowing limit" [184]
protentional moment, it would appear that the mental process, and the mental process reflected upon are not, in fact, identical, as has been argued. Mental process P, as we know, is made up of retention, primal impression and protention. Let us say that the primal impression intends p, the retention intends o (which just was), and the protention intends q, which is about to come. Now, q is intended emptily in P-protention; and this unfulfilledness is essential. In mental process Q, following on from P, the primal impression q has as its object the just elapsed act. In the retention, this act will have been preserved as such (although now intended in the mode of just having been), that is, with its unfulfilled protention. However, as the object for the current mental process Q, the protentional moment of P will be fulfilled (by the current mental process). That is, the protention can no longer be a directedness-to-what-is-to-come, which is of necessity unfulfilled. Another way of putting this would be to say that there is an open horizon to the mental process, which is its protentional aspect; but that in reflection, the mental process is given as completed, or closed off (to the extent that the protention is no longer open).

If we were to draw a conclusion from the posing of these problems, it might only be to say that the identity which is supposed to be found in reflection may in fact be a presupposed identity. There is an element, either of subjectivity, of the being-lived of the mental process, or of the necessary openness of each phase of the mental process (an openness which corresponds to the infinity of the stream of mental events), which seems to resist the necessarily totalising gaze of the reflective act. The implications of this openness, and of the othering and gathering, for the methodology of phenomenology will be discussed in the following part.
2. Time and Genetic Method

Although the analyses of static phenomenology can provide an account of the noetic-noematic structure of acts of consciousness, and also of the way in which acts follow on from each other; it does not offer any account of how one act ‘comes out of’ another. In order to describe this ‘growing out of’, the methods of genetic phenomenology will be required. This current section will provide an overview of the main themes of genetic phenomenology, as well as suggesting in what ways some of the notions studied in preceding sections point forward towards genetic phenomenology.

Before presenting a schematic account of genetic phenomenology, let us follow Husserl introducing the need for genetic analyses by way of the example of a judgement (in Chapter 4 of Part II of *Formal and Transcendental Logic*). The concern of the *Logic* with logical “truth in itself”, or “objective truth”, points to certain problems, such as the extent to which objective truth entails “true for everyone” and true for all time; but there is also the problem of that *about which* Objective truth is predicated, namely, what Husserl calls the “Urteilssubstrate”. In this, it is a case of working back from, say, a categorial judgement, with its necessary syntactical form, to the ‘elements’ of the judgement, considering whether these themselves have syntactical form (for instance, the sense of the predicate might only be possible in relation with another predicate), until ultimately one arrives at the ultimate substrates, predicates, etc, without any syntactical form, which constitute

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5. It should be clear from this initial formulation of the ‘tasks’ of static and genetic phenomenology that the latter in no way replaces the former; the relationship is more one of ‘supplementation’ (although the sense of this word will have to be determined in the light of work to be done in the next chapter). [cf CM § 37]
the "elementary cores" of a judgement. These elementary cores have the sense of "absolute something" upon which the levels of the judgement are built. Now, in order for truth-logic to be of interest, one must have a sense of that to which truth relates, which in turn requires that the ultimate cores, as matters or states of affairs corresponding to the judgement sense, be intuited [anschaulich]. This requires a return to certain "sense-elements" which form the ultimate Kernstoffe of the judgements. [FTL § 81]

The crucial point about such core-stuffs is that they "are prior to all judging", but that ultimately, all judging must, in its generality, be about such stuffs in their singularity. [FTL 204f/Hua XVII 212]6 It is a question of the possibility of an individual instantiating a general judgement sense. In order to approach this question, we must first consider how individuals as such are in fact given to experience. This mode of inquiry represents a concentration on the subjective, which Husserl claims has so far been lacking from all judgement-theories, to their ultimate detriment. Now Husserl argues that when we turn to this subjective aspect, we can concern ourselves with what he calls the "Sinngenesis" of judgements. Thus, in a judgement of the form 'S is p', there is, as Husserl suggests, a nominalising activity on the noetic side, by which a certain individual has attributed to it the original predicate of the noematic side. This forms the basis of a "principle of genetic order", which in turn points to:

6. Welton [1983, § 5] establishes this as one of the two main problems for static phenomenology, in terms of static phenomenology's inability to account for the referent of a proposition as a Gegenstand, as opposed to an Objekt. The other problem relates to the "concreteness" of the noema, in terms of gradations of clarity with hyle [cf I § 105]. We shall return to this point when looking at the implications of the analyses undertaken in LI VI, § 14 b, for genetic phenomenology. [cf Ch 2.1.3]
an unravelling of the sense-moments that are implicit in, and belong essentially to, the sense that has plainly come to light. Judgements, as the finished products of a ‘constitution’ or ‘genesis’, can and must be asked about this genesis. The essential peculiarity of such products is precisely that they are senses that bear within them, as a sense-implicate of their genesis, a sort of historicalness; that in them, level by level, sense points back to original sense and to the corresponding noetic intentionality: that therefore each sense-formation can be asked about its *essentially necessary sense-history*. [FTL 207-8/Hua XVII 215]

Husserl goes on to say that this phenomenon is not limited to judgements, but is a universal peculiarity of all intentional consciousness.

Having followed Husserl’s introduction of the need for genetic analysis, we can turn now to his general characterisation of genetic phenomenology. Static phenomenology begins with a unified object as it is given to consciousness, and aims to make clear the precise mode of givenness by which such an object can be presented to consciousness. This is achieved through the steps of the various reductions: from an initial reflection on the experience in which the object is given, through the phenomenological/transcendental reduction, which brackets existential questions concerning the experience, and finally, through the eidetic reduction, by which the analysis attains the status of a universal and essential account. Genetic analysis, however, broadens this account, turning to “the whole concrete nexus in which each consciousness stands.” [FTL 316/Hua XVII 316] These might include, for instance, the effect of the “situation” in which a judgement is made by a particular subject. To admit this into genetic analysis is to turn precisely to those elements which where suspended in the account of expression and
meaning, and which returned problematically in the account of essentially occasional expressions. Another aspect of the situation which would be admitted here would be of the history of the subject making the judgement, in terms of the “temporal genesis” of the particular act.7

In genetic analyses, it becomes clear that there are two ‘primitives’, and these relate to originary givenness in experience. On the one hand, in order for any object to be presented to consciousness at all, it must first have been synthesised as the same by means of the unifying stream of immanent temporality. Husserl’s realization of this essential necessity stems from the analyses which we have studied already in § 3 of this chapter. The crucial moment in this development was the departure from the Inhalt-Auffassung schema, which enabled Husserl to consider the hyle as something other than a mere already-given awaiting apprehension. The second primitive arises from the phenomenological fact that we are not, so to speak, continually ‘surprised’ in our experiences of the world, even though we are perpetually being confronted by new objects. This is due to what Husserl terms the “double genetic after-effect [Nachwirkung]”, whereby the first after-effect is the keeping hold of in retention which allows potential reproduction; and the second is the:

... ‘apperceptional’ after-effect, which is such that anything (no matter how it is originally constituted) that is present in a similar new situation will be apperceived in a new manner. [FTL 317/Hua XVII 317]

The possibility of this ‘taking in the stride’ of new objects is twofold –

7. Welton characterises this as a taking back of noematic meaning to its origin in experiences, to “turn to the sphere of receptivity proper and interrogate a single sense moment in terms of its becoming for consciousness, ie in terms of its aesthetic ‘history’.” [Welton (1983), p 177]
on the one hand, there is the work of association, as we shall see, and on the other, the temporal structure of consciousness, once more. This latter is due to the retentional pushing back into consciousness of the what-was-just-before until it reaches a limit, at which point it:

... subsides into the universal substratum – the so-called ‘unconscious’, which, far from being a phenomenological nothing, is itself a limit-mode of consciousness. The whole intentional genesis relates back to this substratum of sedimented prominences, which, as horizon, accompanies every living present and shows its own continuously changing sense when it becomes ‘awakened’ [Weckung]. [FTL 319/Hua XVII 318-9]

Whenever, therefore, an object sinks from the extended phase of consciousness’s retentional hold, it passes into the ‘unconscious’, where it can serve to provide a context of similarity for future experiences via association, or can itself be awakened associatively, on the basis of the presence of some other object. All of these associative functionings occur passively, as the preceding account should make clear.

The work of association is one of the principal themes of genetic phenomenology, as we shall see in the next section. On the basis of association, we can begin to approach the other main theme of genetic analyses, motivation [Motivierung]. Now, we have already encountered these notions in Husserl’s account of indication, and it is perhaps unsurprising therefore that Husserl should write in Experience and Judgement:

That association can become a general theme of phenomenological description and not merely one of objective psychology is due to the fact that the phenomenon
of *indication* is something which can be exhibited from the point of view of phenomenology. (This insight, worked out as early as the *Logical Investigations*, already constitutes there the nucleus of genetic phenomenology.) [EJ 74-5/EU 78]

As we saw, in the indication relation, the presence of one object to consciousness motivates a belief in the existence of some other object, by means of an association between the two. Now, we have also met such a notion in the 6th *Investigation*, where Husserl had written that non-present sides of an object are symbolically suggested by the side which is presented to consciousness. These other sides are not part of the perceptual content therefore, but are *apperceived*. Apperception denotes that “excess, the surplus that each act of sensible apprehension carries within itself”. [Welton (1987), p 14; emphasis added] Welton has based this definition of apperception on the contents of a manuscript of Husserl’s entitled “*Statische und Genetische Phänomenologische Methode*”, collected in Hua XI. There Husserl writes:

> Could we not define apperception in this way: a consciousness that not only has something conscious in it but, at the same time, has it conscious as motivating [consciousness of] something else... pointing to [hinweist] this other as something belonging to it, motivated through it. [Hua XI 338]

The fundamental issue in this new step of Husserl’s is to attempt to provide an account of what pulls consciousness beyond itself in its present moment, and motivates intentions which currently lie beyond the present intention. This motivation will include not just the way that acts grow out of each other, but also the way that objects come to affect

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8. cf also Aguirre (1970), p 152 fn.
consciousness [cf PP 159/Hua IX 209]. As Welton puts it, Husserl is aiming to describe the “context of that habitual world in terms of which individual acts arise.” [Welton (1987), p 16] In genetic phenomenology, we could say that Husserl is returning the ego to a world. In saying this, are we pointing to an apparent relinquishing of the transcendental status in genetic phenomenology? This question will form the focus for our reading of Derrida in the next Chapter.

In this section, we have seen that the turn to genetic phenomenology occurs to an extent through the development of Husserl’s writings on time, which reveal a primitive layer of passive synthesis, but also, that there are intimations within all acts of the effect of the horizons of acts which come to motivate consciousness, and in particular, of those temporal horizons which describe the openness at the margins which the act of reflection looked at in the previous section attempted to close. The act of reflection, in trying to ensure this closure, will find no means of access to that historicality which will be the domain of genetic analyses. In the following sections, we will concentrate on the dominant strands of genetic phenomenology, paying particular attention to the way in which those notions which we have seen pointing towards genetic phenomenology from Husserl’s earlier works are developed. At this point, however, we might provisionally suggest that a dominant thread which has begun to emerge in the genetic ‘turn’ is the effect of that which is of necessity non-present to consciousness on present consciousness.
§ 5. Passive Syntheses

1. We have seen that Husserl wishes to claim that all judgements, for instance, contain an implication of the 'sense-genesis' of the judgement, pointing back to the originary elements upon which the judgement is built. Ultimately, this sense-genesis begins with the self-givenness of an object to experience, and the so-called primitives upon which such self-givenness depends. In this section, our concern will be with the way in which the possibility of self-givenness is described within genetic phenomenology. [cf p 47 supra] The most important distinction between Husserl's static and genetic positions with regard to this problem arises from his renunciation of the Inhalt-Auffassung schema, which prompted the development of the ideas distinctive of Husserl's mature theories of time-consciousness.

In order to gain access to Husserl's genetic position, we may profitably begin by reviewing the account, within static phenomenology, of how it is that objects come to be presented within consciousness. In § 97 of Ideas I, Husserl describes the means by which an object is presented to consciousness in perception. In this section, Husserl wishes to distinguish between the being of the noema, the object here as perceived, which is an irreal component of consciousness; and the being of the noesis, and the hyletic sensation data, which are inherent components of mental processes [Erlebnisse]. It is through the noetic

1. The thematic development of this section has been greatly influenced by the exemplary work of Donn Welton, who wishes to argue that within Husserl's genetic turn, an alternative reading of Husserl can be provided to that which serves as the basis for Derrida's "critique". [Welton (1983), p 1] Welton's work seems to us to point the way forward in Husserl studies; interestingly, however, he is perhaps rather closer to Derrida than he imagines. The question which would need to be asked of the Husserl presented in Welton's text is whether he is still doing phenomenology, according to his own principle? To a certain extent, it is the same question which is being posed in this thesis.
animation of the hyletic data that the latter can appear to consciousness as the appearance of the object perceived. In the terms of the analyses of *Logical Investigations*, studied in the first section of this chapter, the animated data becomes the *Abschattung* which partially fulfils the intention of the whole object.

Now it is clear from this account that in order for there to be any perception at all, the primitive moment is the animation of the hyletic data which enables the perceived object to appear. What is the nature of the relationship evoked here? In § 85 of *Ideas I*, Husserl introduces the distinction alluded to above, between "‘sensuous’ mental processes", that is the sensation-contents of colour-Data, tone-Data, etc, which themselves are not appearance-moments of the object perceived (these would be the colouredness of the thing, the sound of thing, etc); and, overlaying these sensuous moments, a stratum which "animates", which "gives sense" upon, the sensation-contents, by which means the object is able to present itself to consciousness as an appearing. Husserl calls the sensation-contents "sensuous υλη", and the animating activity "intentive μορφή". Husserl goes on to say that "sensuous Data present themselves as stuffs for intensive formings, or sense-bestowings." [I1 204/Hua III/I 192] As they present themselves, they are "formless stuffs". The animating intensive morphe Husserl calls *noesis*, and its primary function will be the *synthesising* of an identity within the manifold of hyletic data.

The crucial aspect of this account for the purposes of characterising Husserl’s static position is that of ‘formless stuffs’. Such a formulation is entirely congruent with the account of perception
subsumed under the *Inhalt-Auffassung schema*. For instance, we may compare the following passage, typical of this schema:

The sensed red is a phenomenological datum that, animated by a certain apprehension-function, presents an objective quality; it is not itself a quality. The perceived red, not the sensed red, is a quality in the proper sense, that is, a determination of the appearing thing... it is only through the apprehension that the sensed red receives the value of a moment presenting the quality of a physical thing. Considered in itself, however, the sensed red contains nothing in this regard. [PCIT 6-7/Hua X 6-7]

The situation here then is that the sensation is a content of the stream of consciousness which only exhibits a quality, that is, functions as an adumbration, when it has been apprehended: it is formless, immanent, matter, which awaits form from a noetic act.²

We have seen that this is the same schema which Husserl held in his early time-theory, namely that an immanent content of consciousness is given temporal determination through an act of temporal apprehension. As we know, this schema is dropped in Husserl’s thinking on time, since, in a succession of perceptions of the same thing, giving the thing as enduring, each successive apprehension would give the thing as now, and therefore as a continuity of nows rather than a succession (that is, all the phases would exist ‘in the now’). [cf PCIT No 49] What is needed is some means of conceiving of the ‘apprehensions’ as

². nb however the important qualifying footnote appended to this passage, dating from a later period than the composition of the lecture course. It is perhaps worth noting at this stage that the schema being discussed here is analogous to the schema whereby a meaning-intention animates the dead matter of a ‘mere signifier’, that is the word qua physical object. [cf Ch 2.2.1; see also Sokolowski (1974), p 124] What would the implications of the departure from the Inhalt-Auffassungschema be for Husserl’s theory of language? We will return to this point when we come to consider Derrida’s essay “Form and Meaning”.

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themselves temporally formed, as well as temporalising, and this Husserl achieves through his account of the absolute flux with its comet's tails of retentions and protentions. The upshot of this shift in Husserl's thought is that the immanent contents of consciousness always already bear a temporal form, prior to their constitutive activity. This point is developed in the 5th Appendix to which we have already drawn attention. There, we found Husserl meditating on the question of the simultaneity of perception and perceived, and coming to the conclusion:

... that the data of sensation, which play their role in the constitution of a transcendent object, are themselves unities constituted in a temporal flow. At the moment when the apprehension commences, the perception begins; before that moment we cannot speak of perception. The apprehension is the 'animation' of the datum of sensation. It remains to be asked, however, whether the apprehension begins simultaneously with the datum of sensation or whether the datum must not be constituted - even if only for an extremely brief period of time - before the animating apprehension can commence. It seems that the latter is what occurs. [PCIT 115/Hua X 110]

The position adumbrated in this Appendix points forward to one of the distinctive themes of Husserl's genetic analyses. It will no longer be the case that sensate-matter is a 'blind-stuff' awaiting animating form. Now it is the case that hyletic stuff bears the form of a pre-constitutional, that is, a pre-active, synthesis. It is this 'form' which will be investigated under the heading of 'passive synthesis'. Questions to be asked include those concerning the nature of the inner-character of the sensations 'prior to' their Darstellungsfunktion, and whether this inner-character has a determinative effect on noetic animation.3 In the rest of this

3. cf Welton (1983), § 8.2
section, the three fundamental forms of passive synthesis will be considered in turn, beginning with the most basic, the temporal syntheses, moving on to associative syntheses, and concluding with kinaesthetic syntheses. From a consideration of this last, we will be led on to the subject of intersubjectivity to be studied in the next section.

2. Temporal Syntheses

In Experience and Judgement, Husserl writes that all perceived individuals have the common form of time, since time "is the first and fundamental form, the form of all forms, the presupposition of all other connections capable of establishing unity." [EJ 164/EU 191 emphasis added] And once more, in § 16, Husserl writes that sensuous data [sinnlichen Gegebenheiten] are always:

... already the product of constitutive synthesis, which, as the lowest level, presupposes the operations of the synthesis in internal time-consciousness. These operations, as belonging to the lowest level, necessarily link all others. Time-consciousness is the original seat of the constitution of the unity of identity in general. [EJ 73/EU 75-6]

These passages point to the fact that all syntheses, including passive syntheses, are ultimately founded on the universal form of co-existence that is given to immanent data by temporal constitution.4

Having concentrated on the absolute flux as constitutive of the universal form of consciousness in § 3, we may briefly review the

4. cf also CM 43/Hua I 81, where Husserl makes the same point, underscoring the fact that the issue here is one of the temporal appearance of Erlebnisse.
passive synthesis of temporality with respect to the problematic introduced in § 4.2 via *Formal and Transcendental Logic*. At stake is the possibility of the givenness of an individual which might instantiate a judgement. The first point is that such an individual “is in no wise a single datum but exhibits in itself a multiplicity of structures in which it constitutes itself as an immanent temporal unity.” [EJ 106/EU 116] Husserl considers the example of a simple grasping [*schlichte Erfassung*] of a sound which endures, unchanged. The sound appears through a series of phases, in which it appears in the form of a “concrete present”, always surrounded at each now-point [*Jetzpunkt*] by horizons of continuous pasts and futures on each ‘side’. The present appearing, precisely as present, “is in a constant original flux” of now to now. Thus, the sound, as an appearance, bears a temporal form such that it “is *passively pregiven* [*vorgegeben*] as unity of duration” [EJ 107/EU 117] Notice that Husserl here describes the sound as being *pregiven*, suggesting that this is a givenness before an apprehension. On the old, static, schema, one could not say that, prior to apprehension, there was anything ‘given’.

If we now turn to the act of grasping the(pregiven sound, we see that the act of grasping itself endures, and endures as long as the sound ‘is heard’, which is to say, as long as the sound appears as such. Husserl goes on to specify that the act of grasping does not intend each momentary phase of the enduring sound, but rather, intends “through” [*durch*] each present phase now appearing *to* the sound as such, that is, as a unity. Thus, it is the very pregivenness of the sound, as a temporally constituted unity, that allows the act of grasping to go beyond the mere momentary appearance of each phase of the sound, to the sound itself (the sound as it endures through the flux of its
appearings). The possibility of this grasping of an enduring unity is itself based on the synthesising of the succeeding ‘acts’, such that each new act which ‘springs up’, springs up as following on from the previous act. The synthesis which establishes this ‘movement’ as a continuous flow depends on the interweavings of retentions and protentions, as previously discussed. This leads to an interesting point, which Husserl draws attention to: namely, that the structure of the flux of the acts is a passively constituted regularity which, seemingly paradoxically, is a regularity pertaining to activity:

Accordingly, there is not only a passivity prior to the activity, as passivity of the originally constitutive temporal flux, which is only preconstitutive, but also a passivity erected on this, a passivity which is truly objectivating, namely, one which thematizes or cothematizes objects, it is a passivity which belongs to the act, not as a base but as act, a kind of passivity in activity. This formulation shows that the distinction between passivity and activity is not inflexible, that it is not a matter here of terms which can be established definitively for all time. [EJ 108/EU 119]

Husserl concludes by underlining that it is only on the basis of such temporal syntheses that any individual can be given as enduring, and hence given at all. We shall return to this remarkable flowing limit between passivity and activity in the next chapter.

3. Associative Syntheses

Somewhat further on in Experience and Judgement, Husserl writes that association is a form of passive synthesis which is “founded on the lowest syntheses of time-consciousness.” [EJ 177/EU 207] Now, if we continue our citation from page 111 above, regarding the universal
form of consciousness constituted by temporal passive syntheses, we find Husserl reminding us that “form is nothing without content.” [EJ 73/EU 76] We need now to look at how association, founded by temporal synthesis, provides a content for consciousness.

If we return, once more, to the example of the experience of an individual which instantiates a judgement, we find that the simple grasping of an object is already an achievement [Leistung] of active consciousness which is distinct from the “passively pregiven unity of identity” [EJ 59/EU 60] which provides the possibility of such grasping. We are now on a level, so to speak, between the pure form of consciousness, and the active grasping of objects in the acts of consciousness. On this level, we are dealing with a “pure affective pregivenness, in which there is nothing yet of cognitive achievement: the mere ‘stimulus’ [Reiz] which proceeds from an existent in the environing world.” [EJ 60/EU 61] Before the act of grasping, the “existent” is passively pregiven (ie preconstituted [vorkonstituiert]) as a unity of identity. In order that the grasping act can be stimulated thus, it must needs be that what is passively pregiven is not simply the one existent. Rather, the particular existent is always one which stands out [heraushebt] from a “field of pregivenness”. [EJ 72/EU 74] It is precisely as standing out that a particular existent is able to “stimulate” conscious activity.5 How is such a field constituted?

If we consider the field phenomenologically, it becomes apparent

5. In our discussion of genetic phenomenology in § 4.2 above, attention was drawn to the aspect of one act’s ‘growing-out-of’ another, which static phenomenology was unable to account for. With this account of an ‘object’ (although of course such a term is certainly not valid in this context) within the preconstituted field of pregivenness which stimulates active consciousness, we begin to approach genetic phenomenology’s means of treating this phenomenon; cf CM 79/Hua I 113.
that although it contains no objectivities as such (these being the product of active consciousness), nevertheless, consciousness is not confronted by "a mere 'swarm' of 'data'" [EJ 72/EU 75], that is, the field is not a pure chaos. Rather, it is a "Sinnesfeld". Consider the following example. One abstracts from one's perception; if one is considering visual perception, then we can say that what we see is composed of colours, of light and shade. Now, abstracting from the active regard of consciousness, the field of sense is not strictly made up of colours as such, since a colour in the strict sense is always an appearing, and thus, an aspect of an actively constituted object. On the other hand, Husserl claims that, by an abstractive turning-of-regard [Blickwendung], we can make the apperceptive substratum [apperzeptiv Unterschichte] into an object. This possibility, Husserl argues, presupposes that what are thereby brought to phenomenological light must be "already unities of identity which appear in a multiform manner and which, as unities, can then become thematic objects." [EJ 73/EU 75] Thus, the sense data, not yet the colour as such, which are made the object of such a phenomenological regard must have already been constituted as a unity, implying, firstly, as we know, temporal syntheses. What is given in this unified form?

Firstly, the field itself is a unity, a unity of homogeneity, opposed to all other, heterogeneous, fields. Secondly, the particular constituted unity upon which a regard can be focussed is thereby "raised to prominence in such a way that it contrasts with something." Thus, data of a particular hue (for instance 'white') may stand out against data of a different hue (say 'black'); but at the same time, the 'like' data (the different 'patches' of 'white' for instance) blend, or coincide, with each other.
Thus with regard to content the most general syntheses of sensuous data raised to prominence within a field, data which at any given time are united in the living present of a consciousness, are those in conformity with affinity [Verwandtschaft] (homogeneity) and strangeness [Fremdheit] (heterogeneity). [EJ 74/EU 76-7]

It is therefore the case that, what could at best be described on the static analysis as, for instance, a similarity of colour of an object, is, in fact:

... already the product of the one or the other kind of synthesis of coincidence, which we may denote by the traditional term association, but with a change of sense. It is the phenomenon of associative genesis which dominates the sphere of passive pregivenness, established on the bases of syntheses of internal time-consciousness. The term ‘association’ denotes in this context a form belonging essentially to consciousness in general, a form of the regularity of immanent genesis. [EJ 74/EU 77-8]

In what, for our argument, is one of the most crucial passages in all his work, Husserl goes on to specify that, in keeping with the point that this traditional term will have a new sense, it is possible to distinguish the association which is to become a general theme for phenomenology from the notion employed within standard psychology, due to the fact that an exemplary form of the associative relation has already been thematized in phenomenology. This exemplary form is the phenomenon of the indication relation [Anzeigen] itself exemplified by the indication sign [Anzeichen], as studied in the 1st Logical Investigation. Moreover, Husserl suggests that already in this account of indication in the Investigations there is to be found the “nucleic seed”
[Keim] of genetic phenomenology. [EJ 75/EU 78]6 What is the essence of association?

Association comes into question in this context exclusively as the purely immanent connection of 'this recalls that', 'one calls attention to the other'. We can catch sight of this phenomenon only in the concrete [emphasis added], where we have individual prominences, individual data, standing out from the field: the one recalls the other. And this relationship is itself capable of being shown phenomenologically. It presents itself in itself as a genesis; [emphasis added] one of the elements is characterized relative to consciousness as that which awakens [weckendes], the other as that which is awakened [gewecktes]. [EJ 75/EU 78 translation modified]

The possibility of such associative awakening of the one by the other, of the absent by the present in the indication relation, is similarity [Ähnlichkeit].7 Thus, the relations of homogeneity and heterogeneity, which are the bases for the constitution of the field of sense as a unity, as well as of the individual which comes to prominence as a unity, are themselves based on fundamental modes of associative unification:

6. On association's connection with the indication relation on the hyletic level, cf PP 127/166; note that here, the crucial aspect of the relation is stressed, namely that what is awakened through association is not thereby presented 'in' the givenness of the awakening sensation. The awakened is rather pointed ahead to [Vorweisens], or reminded. The equivalent point in the discussion of the indication relation would be between Hinweis and Beweis, where that which is pointed to in the latter (the conclusion) is in fact 'self-contained' (in the premises). Thus the essential movement of 'joining' in immanence, of synthesising, is brought out. That the joining is immanent enables the phenomenological distinction to be drawn between association and objective induction. [cf Bachelard (1968), p 190, fn 83] Cf also the co-givenness in the analysis of the symbolic indicating in Ch 2.1 supra, and in the analysis of appresentation in CM 5.

7. Throughout the discussion, it should be noted, Husserl stresses that even heterogeneity, or strangeness, itself presupposes a degree of similarity – in order for the unlike to come to prominence, it must share something in common with the like, so to speak. The notion of absolute strangeness is here senseless: there could be no similarity for instance between a sound datum and a colour datum.
It is thus by associative blending (homogeneous association) that a field of sense is a unity; likewise, its order and articulation, as well as all formation of groups and likenesses, are produced in the field by the effect of association: the similar is awakened by the similar, and it contrasts with the not similar. [EJ 75/EU 79]

Associative syntheses fill out the form of the temporal syntheses by passively constituting a unity of likeness, through the establishing of a 'bond' in immanence between data – the like joins together with a 'separate' like and so on, while at the same time standing out from the unlike. Through this double movement, seemingly similar to the othering and gathering encountered with respect to time, unities of sensuous givenness are preconstituted. The suggestion is that the binding of data established by such a gathering is equivalent to the bond between the indicating present and the indicated absent in the indication relation.

4. Kinaesthetic Syntheses

As well as being a field of homogenous and heterogenous data, the sense-field is also a concretely kinaesthetic field. In discussing the simple apprehension of an enduring tone, Husserl notes that sounds are, for the most part, “given as spatially localized” [EU 117], and that spatial locations such as proximity or remoteness are determined with “reference to a spatial null-point, our own bodies, on which every here and there is oriented.” [EJ 107/EU 117; cf PP 121ff/157ff]8 Now, given
that hyletic data are not ‘in’ space, how is such localization possible? In *Ideas II*, Husserl poses the following, related question:

How is the content of the sensation connected to what is constituted, and how does the Body, which is equally a material thing, have in itself and on itself the contents of sensation? [I2 161/Hua IV 154]

Husserl’s answer is that there is a further type of passive synthesis, namely the so-called *kinaesthetic syntheses*.

When we come to talk of kinaesthetic syntheses in the role of the passive preconstitution of objects, we are dealing with a different ‘kind’ of synthesised sensation to those which, when animated by consciousness, present the colour/sound etc of the object perceived – this is intimated by the ‘relational’ aspect introduced by discussions of localization and null-points. The distinction between the types of sensations can be given phenomenological clarification. Consider the following case. As I sit typing, I pause to reflect. My elbows lean on the arms of my chair. I abstract from any interpretative apprehension, and am thus left with the ‘mere’ sensations. Now, it becomes apparent that these sensations may be apprehended in either of two ways: on the one hand, they may be apprehended as the feeling of hardness of the arms of the chair; on the other, they may be apprehended as feelings which are occurring in a certain place in my body. That is, touch sensations such as these can both present the surface quality of an object, *and* present a certain quality of a lived-body experience. This example makes clear the ambiguity of the body as sensed thing and sensing ‘subject; as Husserl says, as “*empfindenes Ding*” and “*subjektiv Objekt*”, an ambiguity which

*Investigation.*
will be developed in the next section.

Now, although in this example the ‘same’ sensations are ‘different’ on the basis of apprehensions (as in the static model), when we come to consider the matter of localization, we see that in fact, kinaesthetic sensations are of necessity apprehended in a different manner to the other sensations (that is, by implication, their ‘form’ of pre-givenness to consciousness is different). [cf I2 62/Hua IV 57] Thus, when animated, kinaesthetic sensations do not reveal an aspect of a perceived object; rather, as we saw in our example, they reveal something of my bodily existence. In so doing, they go on to determine “circumstances” which have a motivational effect on the apprehensions of ‘presenting’-sensations, and the courses they take. Thus, for instance, depending on kinaesthetic sensations of eye movement there follow a “motivated order” of images of the thing pertaining to the visual sensations of it.

An apprehension of a thing as situated at such a distance, as oriented in such a way, as having such a colour, etc, is unthinkable, as can be seen, without these sorts of relations of motivation... We constantly find here this two-fold articulation: kinaesthetic sensations on the one side, the motivating; and the sensations of features on the other, the motivated. [I2 63/Hua IV 58]

In so motivating the order of appearing-sensations, the kinaesthetic sensations determine the orientation of the thing in relation to the body: if I move around the object, it will appear from a different point of view. This point of view is precisely the relation of the thing-there to my body-here, that is to my body as “the null-point of orientation”.

Having established the body as null-point of orientation through
the circumstances given in kinaesthetic sensations, let us turn now to the relation between the body and the kinaesthetic sensations: how does the body sense? If we return to our example, we may modify it in the following instructive fashion: in pausing from typing, I this time draw my hands together, so that the tips of the fingers are touching. Now, if I modify this situation, I can, if I so wish, choose to touch the fingers of the one hand with the other. In doing so, the touching fingers ‘sense’ the roughness of the skin of the other fingers. At the same time, however, the fingers which are touched also sense, but do not thereby apprehend an object. That is, they sense passively. If I reflect on this phenomenon, I find “a series of touch-sensations, which are localised” in the fingers which “are not constitutive of properties.” [I2 152/Hua IV 145] In this way, I can sense “on and in” the body, and thus, we can talk of “specifically Bodily occurrences of the type we call sensings.” [I2 153/Hua IV 146] As Husserl goes on to explain [§ 39], it is the case that all such sensings (that is, also including the general feelings of the body, such as well-being, tension, etc) “have an immediate bodily localization”.

Thus we can say that kinaesthetic sensations always serve to localize experience with respect to the body – either in terms of bodily sensings or as orienting perceived things. As localizing in this way, the syntheses of these sensations serve to found all higher order apprehensions (such as perception), such that we can say, “a human being’s total consciousness is in a certain sense, by means of its hyletic substrate, bound to the Body.” [I2 161/Hua IV 153] We will return to these matters in our next section, when we follow Husserl in moving from one’s own body to the body of the other, the first step towards the
fundamental problem of the constitution of the other within the sphere of ownness.

5. Passive Synthesis and the Genetic Account of Perception

What effect on perception, and on perceptual sense, do the passive associational and kinaesthetic syntheses, as well as the temporal syntheses, have? Does the way in which the relation established between the sensations passively synthesised go on to determine the way in which they are animated by the intentive noesis? We may summarize the passive syntheses described above in the following way: the temporal syntheses provide a general form for consciousness; this form is passively filled with content (a field of sense) supplied by associative syntheses, which in turn results in a certain motivation of perceptual sense; the field of sense is further determined to the extent that it receives an order, and an orientation, from the kinaesthetic syntheses. The kinaesthetic syntheses also have a motivational effect on consciousness.

What is the nature of such motivational effects? In the case of associative syntheses, as we have seen, the creation of the field of sense is accompanied by the syntheses of prominences, on the basis of homogeneity and heterogeneity. These prominences result in the syntheses of coincidence "their own productive power." [EJ 76/EU 79] The prominences "strike us", thereby exerting "a stimulus on the ego which makes it turn toward.". Husserl claims that all apprehension of data results from such 'events' of stimulus (the case would be similar even in non-perceptual apprehensions). When there is apprehension after such an 'event', Husserl says "the ego yields [folgt] to the stimulus"
[EJ 77/EU 81], in such a way that what was background before becomes now foreground. The background here is the analogue on the level of passive constitution of what, on the level of active constitution, Husserl has previously termed the “horizon”, which surrounds all experiences [Erfahrungshorizont; EJ 32/EU 27]. The horizon is both internal, to the extent that the aspectival presentation of a thing always points towards other aspects not present but nonetheless anticipatively aimed toward [EU 28]; but also external, an infinitely open horizon of cogiven ‘objects’. That the ego can be stimulated from within these horizons indicates the “Sinnestranszendentenz” which “clings to every particular apperception.” [EJ 34/EU 30] Thus we can say that, within each present experience of consciousness, there are degrees of ‘non-presence’ (the internal and external horizons, the passively constituted prominences and backgrounds) from which the ego can be affected. When the ego yields to such stimuli, and accomplishes the turning-toward, there is what Husserl calls a “being-awake [Wachsein] of the ego” [EJ 79/EU 83]: “To be awakened means to submit to an effective affection.” [“Gewecktwerden heißt eine wirksame Affektion erleiden”; ibid] Husserl determines such a turning-toward as the receptivity of the ego, a notion which he deems not to be opposed to the activity of the ego, but to be understood as the lowest level of activity of the ego, to the extent that it “consents” to what affects it. We once again meet the floating limit between activity and passivity.9

9The crucial notion of associative awakening is returned to by Husserl in § 42 of Experience and Judgement, where association serves to link the present with the not-present (as would be the case in the functioning of the indication sign as we have seen), for instance in the case of recollection. Associative awakening serves to forge the link, on the basis of similarity, with what is present and what is not-present: the present ‘awakens’ the not-present. The possibility of such associative awakening has: “its ground in the fact that between the like and the similar a ‘sensuous’ unity is already passively constituted in advance, a unity in ‘subconsciousness’, which unites the different situations of actual and submerged intuitions.” [EJ 179/EU 210] Thus awakening denotes the vivifying of an already existing link. Husserl goes on to stress that all occurrences of associative awakening and linkage take
Thus, the content of a perceptual act is now seen to be founded on the associative syntheses to the extent both that they provide its pre-formed content, on the basis of the content (that is, the ‘form’ of the field of sense and of prominences ‘arises’ from likenesses of content), and awaken its activity. It is also founded on the kinaesthetic syntheses. These syntheses provide the orientation of the perceptual sense, they give it a circumstance, through bodily grounding perceptual acts, and thus providing perceptual sense with a null-point to which all that is perceived is relative. Furthermore, motivation enters this account, in that the orientation is “founded upon purpose”. [Welton, in Elliston & McCormick (1977), p 64] Kinaesthetic movements are not simply the parallel of appearances, but determine the possibilities of appearances, and indeed, lead them on. [cf ibid; and I2 62-3/Hua IV 57-8] Thus, in the same way that the content of data determines the ‘form’ ‘produced’ in associative syntheses, so too is that content in turn determined by the orientation of the body. [cf FTL, Appendix II, § 3 c; cf Welton, ibid] In Husserl’s genetic account of perception, the fundamental motif appears to be found in the openness of intentional consciousness; that is to say, the presence of an object to consciousness is never simply a closed presence, but has a ‘history’ of genesis from the passive syntheses which both enabled the particular act, and motivated it; as well as having an anticipatory openness towards future motivations which will in turn determine acts to come. This open structure of consciousness reflects, and is founded on, the form of the absolute flux.

place in the domain of passivity. Finally, by way of a deferral for the present time, Husserl writes that: “The analysis of all this is the theme of a phenomenology of presentifying consciousness, which cannot here be further carried out.” [ET 179/EU 211] What is the relation between the phenomenology of presentifying consciousness and the ‘transcendental aesthetic’ which Husserl begins to approach in the lectures on time-consciousness, and which is, like the phenomenology of presentification, announced but deferred in this text? [cf EJ 68/ 167/EU 72,194]
§ 6. The Constitution of the Other

1. Empathy [Einfühlung] and the Body

In the previous section, we considered the realm of passive subjectivity, where the ego is affected prior to any objectivating act, that is, prior to all objectivity as such; and at the same time, we had pause to consider the role of the body in this realm. We shall return to the body once more in this section, where our topic is to be one which Ricoeur has described as the “touchstone of transcendental phenomenology.” [Ricoeur (1967), p 115] Ultimately, the problem Husserl will have to confront is to describe “comment l’autre en tant qu’autre, dans son altérité irréductible, se présente à moi.” [ED 180]

The problem of the other occurs initially when we come to reflect on the true nature of objectivity. As always, phenomenological descriptions begin by taking an object as a transcendental clue, or guide, for subsequent investigations. Now, although the descriptions have taken place on a solipsistic level to date (as determined by the reductions), it nevertheless becomes apparent that when considering the object qua object, its sense requires that we go beyond the mere realm of solipsism per se. For if the thing which is being postulated as objective is in fact solely constituted for one subject, then it remains irreducibly subjective, that is, an appearance only for the one subject. [I2 86-7/Hua IV 81-2] That is to say, it is part of the sense of objective that what is objective is objective for everyone: “For logical Objectivity is eo ipso Objectivity in

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the subjective sense as well" [Hua IV 82]¹

How are we to constitute the other, as condition of the sense of objectivity as for-everyone, from within the 'solipsistic' realm? Husserl intimates an answer to this problem when he is introducing the point discussed above: there appears to be a circle of sorts when we come to talk of intersubjectivity as the condition of apprehending the object as object, since, how can we have an apprehension of another person if not through the apprehension of their Body, that is, through apprehension of a thing? [I₂ 85/Hua IV 80] Thus the discussion of the constitution of intersubjectivity becomes intertwined with a discussion of the body, carried out, not on the level of material nature, but on the level of animate nature.

Thus far, our consideration of the body has been limited to a concern with the means by which I am localized 'in' my body, and things are in turn localized with respect 'to' my body. This double localizing of the body was revealed through an analysis of the peculiar phenomenon of simultaneously touching and being touched. If we pause for a moment, and consider this phenomenon further, an important phenomenological insight is revealed. I begin by considering my body, simply as another thing. Apart from the qualification that there are certain aspects of 'my' body which I cannot perceive, my body appears to me as a typical example of material nature. However, if we take the

¹. The sense of Husserl's point here can also be approached via a comparison with the itinerary of the 1st Logical Investigation, where, in order to thematise meaning in its objectivity, Husserl first has to put out of play all aspects of communication with ties to subjectivity (for instance, the indicating function of signs and essentially occasional expressions, the paradigm example of the latter being, of course, utterances utilising the first person pronoun). The point is that meaning, as such, is of necessity ideal.
privileged case of tactile perception, then we are confronted by the doubling phenomenon already described – that is, at one and the same time, I constitute the touched as an object, but also, there are the being-touched sensations which are not constitutive. Now this doubling can equally apply to the sensations in both parts of the body in such a case, that is, if one is touching one’s fingers with fingers from another hand, the doubling occurs in both sets of fingers. This leads to the following phenomenological observation: that “the Body is originally constituted in a double way.” [I2 153/Hua IV 145] On the one hand, the body is a “a physical thing, matter”; on the other, “I sense ‘on’ and ‘in’ it”. Now, as we have observed, these properties of sensation belong, as localized, precisely to the body, and thus, when I live through an experience of touching myself, I ‘co-apprehend’ both the touch-sensations and the body touched. Thus, the sensing body and the body touched ‘coincide’, leading us to make a strict phenomenological distinction between the Body and other material objects. This has a parallel expression, if we refer back to kinaesthetic syntheses, when we consider the body as the locus of orientation for all physical things. In this case, we can say that all things are presented to my consciousness as “over and against me – they are all ‘there’” [I2 166/Hua IV 159], with the sole exception of my body, which is always present to me as here. On the basis of these observations, Husserl is led to posit the body as the unique example of a thing which is lived through, that is, as an animate thing.

In fact, this claim is not strictly accurate, since we do not experience our body as a spatial thing like all others, as long as we remain on the solipsistic level of experience dictated by the reductions. [I2 169/Hua IV 161] Thus, the turn to the problem of intersubjectivity in
Ideas II is motivated not only by the need to constitute the true objectivity of the object, but also by the need to constitute oneself both as a material thing and as animate. At the same time, of course, we are thereby able to confront the apparently paradoxical circularity of needing to know the other before we can know the thing, but only being able to know the other as a thing.

In the course of our normal experience, we come across rational, living beings – we apperceive other human beings. That is, we apperceive beings who are “unities of things and subjects.” [I2 170/Hua IV 162]. How are these constituted? Given originally [ursprünglich] is the material Corporeal [animate] body [materielle Leibkörper], which is

2. Therefore, the problem in Ideas II does not concern the specifically philosophical paradox of constituting the alterity of the other within the sphere of ownness. This way of posing the problem, distinctive of Cartesian Meditations, arises, as Ricoeur points out, when Husserl comes to attempt a philosophical interpretation of phenomenology. [Ricoeur (1967), 65] This difference in motivation between Ideas II and Cartesian Meditations, in particular with respect to the posing of the problem of the constitution of the other from the point of view of idealism, informs Ricoeur’s whole reading of Husserl. Thus, for Ricoeur, the moment of ‘critique’ arises in the conflict, in Husserl’s text, between the fecundity of methodological idealism, as represented by the descriptions of Ideas II, and the ‘austerity’ of the dogmatic, interpretative, idealism of Cartesian Meditations. Can the respect for alterity evinced in the earlier text be carried through into the later text’s “idealistic interpretation of its own descriptive activity”, particularly when it is a case of reducing “all otherness to the monadic life of the ego, to ipseity”? [op cit, pp 113-4] Is not this tension between the respect for transcendence, ‘in practice’, and the attempt to reduce transcendence to immanence, ‘in theory’, precisely that which informs both Derrida’s and Levinas’ readings of Husserl? We shall have to verify this in subsequent chapters.

On the difference between the approach of Ideas II, and the philosophical problem of ‘other minds’, cf Merleau-Ponty (1964), p 169. This remarkable essay – “The Philosopher and his Shadow” – highlights many of the questions we are raising in relation to Husserl’s genetic turn, particularly as it is exemplified in Ideas II. For Merleau-Ponty, as for the interpretation of Husserl we are here following through, the striking quality of these texts is the audacious way in which the descriptions seem to break from the strict boundaries of phenomenology; eg “Husserl has upset the relationships between the constituted and the constituting.” (p 172) “Thus the forces of the constitutive field do not move in one direction only; they turn back upon themselves.” (p 173) (see also the whole of the final paragraph of the essay) These remarks carry a strong resonance of Derrida’s claim, at the end of the crucial long footnote beginning on p 84 of Speech and Phenomena [VP 94] which comments on § 36 of On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time, that “il faut déconstruire jusqu’au concept de constitution.” With respect to the question being raised in this thesis, pace Welton, the following remark is of great interest: “These late analyses of Husserl’s are neither scandalous nor even disturbing if we remember everything which foretold them from the start.” (p 180)
a material thing like all others. [ibid] To say that the other is first given as material Leibkörper “originally” is to say that “the object is there ‘actually’, ‘in the original’, and is not merely co-presented.” [I2 171/Hua IV 162] This notion of original presence is to be distinguished from “appresence” [Appräsenz], which “refers back to primal presence”. Although not all determinations, or aspects, of something given in primal presence may in fact be present, nonetheless, it is the case that for such a thing the currently non-present determinations may be brought to presence. Through a continuum of acts presenting different aspects, the same object would remain as primally present throughout. Husserl specifies, however, two different types of primal presence, which will determine the course of the subsequent analysis. On the one hand, there is the primal presence of objects which can be present for any subject. On the other hand, there is the primal presence which can only be given to a particular subject. The latter would include all the contents of my consciousness which can only ever be present to me. On the basis of this distinction, we can distinguish between the modes of givenness of other persons – thus, within the originary givenness of human beings, we may distinguish between the primal presence of the givenness of the other’s body, which is present in the first sense described above; at the same time, however, there is a sense of the person which is not given in primal presence, namely, the subjective being of that person.

Now, it has been stated that persons are apprehended as unities of thing (body) and subject, yet, as we can see, only the body of the other is in fact given in primary presence. Thus, Husserl is led to say that the subjectivity of the other, which is apprehended along with the body
which is given as primally present, is "experienced in appresence." \[I_2 \ 172/\text{Hua IV 163-4}\]. What is the possibility of the appresentation of the subjectivity of the other on the basis of the presentation of the bodily other, such that, on the basis of the latter, the two can be apprehended as a unity? Husserl begins by saying that the \textit{bodies} that I experience are:

material things of the same type as the material thing constituted in solipsistic experience, ‘my Body’, and I apprehend them \textit{as Bodies}, that is, I feel by \textit{empathy} that in them there is an ego-subject, along with everything that pertains to it... Transferred over to the other Bodies thereby is first of all that ‘localization’ I accomplish in various sense-fields and sense regions. \[I_2 \ 172/\text{Hua IV 164}\]

Following on from this transfer of localization is the psychic co-ordination which depends on it, namely, the precise nature of experiences whose content is determined on the basis of bodily orientation. (That is to say, there is an extent to which the distinctive subjectivity of my stream of experiences arises from my unique bodily perspective; thus the particular dependence of the constitution of the ego-subject on its body is also transferred.)

What is the nature of \textit{Einfühlung}, and in what way is this transfer of localization possible? In confronting these questions, we begin to approach the core of the matrix of relationships which has structured the analyses of this chapter. The first basis for appresentation is the series of "original connections" of "regular co-existence", which occur

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3. The designations "sense-fields" and "sense-regions" refer, respectively, to the two localizations achieved by means of kinaesthetic syntheses, as discussed in the previous section; the sense-fields refer to the bodily localization of sensings, while sense-regions refer to the orientation of spaciality with respect to the body. The use of 'field' in the former case corresponds to the usage in the case of the fields of sense which are pregiven due to the work of the associative syntheses.
in the solipsistic subject; these include, for instance, the field of warmth experienced when touching the body, the indeterminate localization of common feelings, such as well-being, etc, and the 'feeling' of the internal body, such as feeling the heart-beat through one's chest. The coexistence here is one paralleling that of touched and touching which we have considered before, and the crucial point for Husserl is that the feeling and the felt are a co-presence which "refer to one another". Secondly, however, the system of appresentations becomes a "system of ordered Anzeichen" through continuous experiences of others.

What does Husserl mean by this notion of a system of ordered indication signs? Consider the example of touching an object: I touch my desk, and feel its smooth top; I then move my hand over to the edge, and feel a roughness in the wood. I can carry on touching in this way, such that I could build an inventory of touch-aspects of the object which correspond to finger positions, and along with these, a series of touch sensations in my fingers – these are all given, as Husserl has said, in co-presence. Also along with these, I have the visual appearance of my touching fingers in the respective positions. In empathy, I see the other's touching hands, when they perform the same process of moving touches of the desk surface. On the basis of the co-presence which I myself experience when I touch, I appresent the touch-sensations which, for the other, are co-present with the finger movements which I see (and which are seen as a material objectivity, as specified above), but which for me, are "presentified in co-presence". Thus, what is tactually co-present for me along with my visual presentations, as primally present, is co-presented to me in the case of the other as presentified.

The same process holds for the appresentation of the other's
psychic processes which are co-present with their feeling-sensations, on the basis of various "appresented pointings". Thus, on the basis of the other's sensings, which have been appresented to me, the acts which the other lives through, and which are founded on the pre-given sensings, are 'pointed-to'. This pointing again results from the constant connection between sensings and acts which I myself live through. Through the continuous experience of such appresentations of sensings, which in turn point to the psychic life of the other, a signifying system is established, where certain movements indicate interior life, which in turn are 'confirmed' by subsequent actions, which also point to psychic life; and these, ultimately, lead to a "System von Anzeichen".

Once again, this account in Husserl's later phenomenology has been foreshadowed in his analyses of signification to be found in the 1st Logical Investigation. There, we recall that Husserl distinguished between "meaningful expressions" and those expressions, such as involuntary bodily expressions, by which "a person's mental states achieve understandable 'expression' for his environment." [LI 275/Hua XIX/I 37] The 'meaning' which such expressions have does not arise from any intention on the communicator's behalf, but rather resides solely in acts of interpretation by the interlocutor. It is the possibility of such interpretation which is being explicated here. Already, however, in the 1st Investigation, Husserl had specified that the means whereby the acts of intention which bestow meaning upon signs are intimated to an interlocutor, in actual communication, is the indication function of

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4. For a further working through of this process, compare the following passage from the appendices: "By means of empathy, all Ego-relations are ascribed to the subject of the other Body, and it is to be noted from the outset in this connection that empathetic apperception first grasps 'from the outside' the other's Body as a body like any body and then as a bearer of sensations and of possible effects and thereby at the same time as organ of a subject, a subject who is dependent on this organ for his sensations, perceptions, and for his further subject-acts and dispositions. [I2 358/Hua IV 347]"
signs. [cf LI 277/Hua XIX/I 40] In a passage which appears to refer directly backwards to these ideas in the *Investigations*, Husserl writes:

Gradually, in this way, a system of indication signs is formed, and there is finally in actuality an analogy between this system of signs ‘expressing’ psychic events, both the active and the passive, and the system of signs of language for the expression of thoughts, abstracting from the fact that language itself, as actually spoken, also belongs to the former system. [I2 174-5/Hua IV 166]

Before returning to Husserl’s analyses of empathy here, we might pause to note again Husserl’s observation in *Experience and Judgement* that the account of indication in the 1st *Logical Investigation* already bore within it the nucleic seed of genetic phenomenology. Furthermore, on the basis of that passage, we could hazard a more developed genetic account of the possibility of empathy, as it is being described here in *Ideas* II. Such an account would draw attention to the role that association, on the basis of the indication relation, would play. Thus, the exemplification of the formal schema of the indication relation by empathy here would be along the following lines: the presence of one object – namely, the body – motivates a belief in the existence of some other ‘object’ – here, the subjective life of the other. This motivation is founded in the association relationship, the purely immanent connection of this recalls that, which itself has its genesis in the relation of similarity. We might say that the similarity relationship here is displayed in the co-presence between body and bodily sensations. In the case of empathy therefore, there is the similarity between perceptions of bodies, which, in the case of the perception of my body is always co-presented with certain subjective qualities. On the basis of the association between bodily perceptions, I am motivated to believe that
the other’s bodily movements are accompanied by relevant lived experiences, just as my bodily movements are; and these experiences are pointed to, in the same way that, in an indication relation, that which is not present is “Bezeichnen” by that which is present.

Husserl proceeds, in the account being presented in Ideas II, to reflect back on the implications of empathy for the constitution of the psyche, claiming that it is only through the developed experience of the appresentation of the other’s psychic life on the basis of the other’s body, that I, in self-experience, would introject all my experiences into my body. [I2 175/Hua IV 167] Now, a crucial aspect of this whole process of empathy is intimated by Husserl in an appendix, when he writes: “when I, in the act of empathy, experience others, I do not take them only as the experienced of my experiences, as my possession, but as subjects like myself, hence as subjects for their surrounding world”, [I2 365/Hua IV 354 emphasis added] and hence, as subjects of the one surrounding world which is the identical world for all possible subjects. The possibility of the experience of the subjectivity of the other, which does not simply reduce the other to another object in the world as I experience it, arises from the process of localization which we have been considering already.

As has been noted, along with the ‘interior’ localization of bodily sensings, kinaesthetic syntheses also yield an orientation of things, in space, to me, via my body: things in space are ‘there’ relative to I who am ‘here’. Thus, when the other’s psychic life is appresented to me, on the basis of the appresentation of bodily sensings, then it follows along with these sensings that they provide for the other an orientation in
space. So, on the one hand, the body of the other is primally present to me in perception as there; on the other hand, the subjectivity of the other which is appresented to me on the basis of this primal presentation has the subjective quality of a ‘here’ for the other subject in relation to which all things are ‘there’. Moreover, as Husserl stresses, [I2 177/Hua IV 169] the very subjectivity evoked here ensures that the ‘here’ form which all things are ‘there’ for the other is uniquely their ‘here’, as indeed is my ‘here’ uniquely mine: this is yet a further reason why the other’s point of view can only ever be appresented to me. However, from this situation, a peculiar point arises: for while the other’s body is ‘there’ for me ‘here’, in the appresentation of the other’s experience, then, if that is an experience of my body, then my body is a ‘there’ for the other’s ‘here’.

This ability, on the basis of appresentation, to conceptualize myself as an object ‘there’ for the subjectivity of the other person’s ‘here’, ensures that the other given in empathy is never simply given as an object of my experiences. We shall return to this point when we consider the analysis of the constitution of the other in Cartesian Meditations, in the following part of this section.
2. The Constitution of the Other in the 5th Meditation

It has been noted above, with reference to Ricoeur, that the main difference between the analyses of *Ideas II* and *Cartesian Meditations* is that the latter text introduces a specifically philosophical dimension to the problem, which results in a development of the tension between the descriptive respect for the very *otherness* of the Other, and a methodological requirement that this otherness be constituted within my own consciousness. The philosophical determination of the analyses is indicated at the very outset of the Meditation, when Husserl imagines a possible philosophical objection that could be raised at the conclusion of the 4th Meditation, whose task had been "to gather all of the preceding intentional analyses up into the ego." [Ricoeur (1967), p 106] Does this apparently ultimate fulfilment of the reduction not leave the ego as a *solus ipse*? [CM 89/Hua I 121] The true impact of this question is only felt subsequently, when Husserl specifies that what is at stake is the absolute "possibility of actually transcendent knowledge" being accounted for "purely phenomenologically." [CM 90/Hua I 122].

As we saw in the first section of this chapter, the possibility of an object as such being given in subjectivity (which was already there we suggested, the fundamental question motivating phenomenology), that is, the possibility of a transcendence 'within' immanence (rather than a mere inherent content of consciousness – cf CM 26/Hua I 65), is the "nonreducibility of what is meant to the particular act or acts in which it is meant." [Carr (1974), p 87]. That is to say, what marks off the objective from the subjective contents of consciousness is the inadequation between act of meaning and act of fulfilment, in the language of *Logical Investigations*. This, however, only distinguishes the
transcendent from the immanent in my consciousness. As we have already noted, and Husserl notes at the close of the 3rd Meditation, in order that the 'merely' transcendent be strictly objective, it must needs be the case that the object can be as such for everyone. [cf CM 96/Hua I 127; and, especially CM § 48] In other words, that the object meant be now irreducible to any possible act of mine. Thus, despite the initial indication of solipsism as the problem, the real motivating force behind the 5th Meditation is the ultimate possibility of objective knowledge, which in turn means that objects of knowledge be objects for everyone, and therefore that others need to be constituted within phenomenology.

It is clear from this last point that at stake is not the question of the existence of others, but rather, in accordance with phenomenological method, it is a question of determining firstly how others are presented to consciousness, and subsequently using this as a transcendental guide for the investigation into how they are constituted by consciousness. This poses a particular problem for phenomenology due to the fact that others have a being for me, just as all other objects do, but that, uniquely, they also have a being for themselves. [cf I2 330-1/Hua IV 318] Thus it becomes a question of how to constitute the being-for-themselves of others 'in' their being-for-me. This is accompanied by the parallel problem that the other transcendental ego is, like my own transcendental ego, not of the world – but rather, the world is for them, just as the world is for me. [cf Carr (1974), p 91] In other words, the problem is to give a phenomenological account of the subjectivity of the other, as well as of the objectivity which is presented to consciousness when I perceive the other. In this way, we have the precise form of the tension highlighted by Ricoeur, "between the two requirements of
constituting the Other in me and constituting them as Other”, that is, the “conflict between the requirement of the reduction and the requirement of description”. [Ricoeur (1967), pp 116-7]

In order to give strict delimitation to this problematic, Husserl, beginning in § 44, performs an “abstraction from everything that transcendental constitution gives me as Other”, [CM 93/Hua I 125] to achieve a reduction to the “transzendentale Eigensphäre”. Through performing this abstractive reduction, Husserl underscores the methodological import of the constitution of the sense of the other in and by me; namely, that the sense of the other “is drawn from the sense ‘me’”. [Ricoeur, ibid; emphasis added] That is to say, it is only through a constitution of the very sense of the own, of my own, that I can then move to the sense of ‘not-my-own’, to a sense of other than my own. The reduction to the sphere of ownness serves, therefore, to give phenomenological clarity to the sense of the relationship I-Other, and indeed to both terms of the relationship, and to how the latter can be constituted within the former. [cf CM 94-5/Hua I 125-7] What remains in the reduction to the sphere of ownness? There is Nature as it is included in ownness and, “as having its place in this Nature thanks to the bodily organism, the psychophysical Ego.” [CM 98/Hua I 129]. Through this ‘owned body’ (which we have seen analyzed already, in Ideas II), nature is owned as relative to the body.

In § 49, Husserl details the course to come by which the constitution of the “Seinsinn” of the “Objective world” on the basis of my “primordial ‘world’” will be explicated. [CM 106/Hua I 137] The first stage consists of the explication of the constitution of the other ego; which is to be followed by the constitution of intersubjective nature on
the basis of the constitution of the other [§ 55], and which in turn leads to the constitution of an 'intermonadic community' [§§56ff]. Here, we will concentrate on the development of the first of these stages.

The first stage in the constitution of the Objective world, is the constitution of the ‘other’ ego as other, that is, before the other has attained the sense Mensch. How is the ‘other’ presented to consciousness in experience? Firstly, it must be noted that, although we say that in ordinary experience the other is directly present to us, “bodily, in person” [leibhaftig], in truth, this is only partly the case, since the Erlebnisse of the other are not in fact present to me, nor is the other’s ego, nor the Erscheinungen for the ego. If these were given originarily to me, if they were directly presented to me, then they would in fact be the contents of my consciousness, and there would not be an experience of a genuine other. We would be, in a sense, one and the same. Thus, Husserl argues that there must be “a certain mediacy of intentionality” [CM 109/Hua I 139 emphasis added], whereby something is made present to consciousness as a ‘there along with’ [Mit da], but whose mode of givenness is never to be itself there [selbst da]. Thus, on the basis of the givenness of the primordinalen Welt, there is “a kind of making co-present, a kind of appresentation”.

So much is familiar from Ideas II; here however, Husserl goes on to specify appresentation in a way which was not mentioned in the earlier text. Here, Husserl says that appresentation in fact occurs in all normal transcendent experience, to the extent that, in the perception of a transcendent object, only one side is ever given originarily to consciousness; but that this given aspect at the same time appresents the, at present, hidden aspects of the object, “and prescribes for it a more or
less determinate content.” This determination underlines the importance of the role of Anzeigen in appresentation, which we stressed in our reading of the account of empathy in Ideas II; for we recall that, in Logical Investigations, Husserl had written that the non-present aspects of the object are symbolically indicated by what is “primarily apparent” [LI 713/Hua XIX 589]. On the other hand, Husserl goes on to specify that appresentation of the subjectivity of the other is a distinct type of ‘indication’, since, while the other side of the object can always be presented to consciousness, in principle, such a presentation of the contents of the consciousness of the other is of necessity impossible. This corresponds exactly with Husserl’s account of the relation between the indication and expression functions of signs in Logical Investigations, where the former is needed precisely because the act of meaning which animates the otherwise dead husk of the sign is necessarily not present to the interlocutor, and hence needs to be indicated to them.

The question asked in Logical Investigations, namely, how does the indication sign ‘present’ (or designate) the act of meaning to the interlocutor in communication, is now repeated here, with only contextual variation:

How can appresentation of another original sphere, and thereby the sense of ‘someone else’, be motivated in my original sphere and, in fact, motivated as experience – as the word ‘appresentation’ (making intended as co-present) already indicates? [CM 109/Hua I 139 emphasis added]

Let us take the sense of “someone else” as our guiding thread, our transcendental clue. In the primordial sphere of ownness, an other
person is experienced. What is primordially given? A *Körper*.\(^5\) In the sphere of ownness, as we have already noted, the only body which is experienced as “animate organism” *[Leib]* is my own body. However, even though what is primordially given is only a body *[Körper]*, nevertheless, I apprehend this body as a *Leib*.\(^6\) What is the possibility of such an apprehension? Since the only body experienced in the sphere of ownness as an animate organism is my own body, then my apprehension of the body of the other as an animate organism:

... must have derived this sense by an *apperceptive transfer from my animate organism*... It is clear from the very beginning that only a similarity connecting, within my primordial sphere, that body over there with my body can serve as the motivational basis for the ‘*analogizing*’ apprehension of that body as another animate organism. [CM 111/Hua I 140]

Thus, on the basis of a *similarity* between the body primordially given, and my own body, which I experience as an animate organism, there is an apperceptive transfer whereby I apprehend ‘by analogy’ (with my own body experienced as an animate organism) the body of the other as an animate organism. Husserl stresses that such apperception is not a species of inference (in a similar fashion to the way in which the intimating function of the indication sign was to be distinguished from

\(^5\) It should be noted that at this stage, the *Körper* experienced is not yet a ‘human’ body, since only my body is experienced as such; that is to say, it will only be due to the *pairing* to be discussed below that, on the basis of certain similarities coming to prominence, the other’s body will be apprehended as a body like my own. [cf Theunissen (1986), p 59, & CM 110/Hua I 140]

\(^6\) If we pursue our analogy with Husserl’s theory of signification, we might say: when communicating, what is primordially given is the signifier purely as a sound, that is, a physical phenomenon. [cf LI 282/Hua XIX 46] The sign in this sense is a *Körper*. In the act of communicating, however, we apprehend the sign as meaningful, as animated by a meaning-giving act – that is, we apprehend the sign as a *Leib*. [LI 280-2/Hua XIX 44] As we have already suggested, it is the indication function of the sign which motivates us to apprehend the sign as animated.
the notion of *Beweis*). As a basis for this claim, he cites the example of our everyday perceptions whereby we noticingly grasp that which is given beforehand, that is to say, we ‘recognize’ familiar objects. This recognition is founded on the fact that every time we perceive an object ‘for the first time’, a sense is constituted through an “primal instituting”. Recognitional perception “points back” [zurück] to this primal instituting, such that there is “an analogizing transfer of an originally instituted objective sense to a new case”. [CM 111/Hua I 141]. This point recalls the discussion, in Appendix II of *Formal and Transcendental Logic*, of the “double genetic after effect” of, firstly, retention, and secondly, apperception. Due to the retentional structure of consciousness, as we know, the impression is retained until eventually pushed back into the unconscious, which latter is a horizon which accompanies every living present. Through the passive functioning of association, that which has been pushed back into the ‘unconscious’ can serve as the ‘context’ for future acts in which similar objects are given. Association, as we have seen, is the immanent connection of ‘this recalls that’, whereby something which is present awakens something now not-present on the basis of a similarity [Ähnlichkeit] holding between the two. [cf EJ 75/EU 78; & p 140 supra] As we also know, association, as a universal law of passive genesis, can only be known through concrete examples, and for phenomenology, the functioning of the indication sign is exemplary. Thus, we might suggest once more (in accordance with the analyses of *Ideas* II) that the indication relation will serve as our means of access to the apperceptive transfer being discussed here. Here, therefore, rather than being an inference, the associational aspect of apperception ensures that the similarity between the other’s body and my own motivates me to perceive it with the sense of body.
Once again, however, having established a connection with another function accessible to phenomenology, Husserl proceeds to effect a distinction; for, just as the appresentation of the other is different from the appresentation whereby the other side of the object is indicated by the present side, due to the fact that, unlike the currently hidden side of the object, the other ego can never be made present; so in the case of the apperceptive transfer, where in normal perception all aspects have occurred in the primordial sphere, in the case of the alter ego, a genesis “at a higher level” leads to the establishing of a new sense. Having indicated the form of the apperceptive transfer by which the analogizing apprehension might come about, Husserl now has to specify the, so to speak, ‘content’ of the association which motivates the transfer. The problem here is how the Körper which, as yet, is simply like all other things in the world, is to be apprehended as having the sense ‘human body’. The mediacy of the appresentational aspect of the apprehension has to be explicated.

Husserl determines the association between ego and alter-ego as a pairing [Paarung], that is, an “occurrence in configuration” as a pair (or group/plurality): “pairing is a primal form of that passive synthesis which we designate as ‘association’” [CM 112; Hua I 142], thereby distinguishing it from identification. The first essential moment of the pairing relation is that two data are given in a unity having already been passively ‘synthesised’ on the basis of similarity. Having been so pregiven, there is a “mutual awakening” of consciousness, which adverts

7. Theunissen’s [Theunissen (1986), p 63] argument that this remark refers to the pairing which occurs after the analogizing transfer seems to be correct, and the exposition attempts throughout to respect the thrust of his argument – that there is a pairing of bodies as Körper which motivates the analogizing transfer, subsequent to which there is a new pairing between animate organisms, which founds the constitution of the intermonadic community.

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to the paired given such that there is "an overlaying of each with the objective sense of the other." [CM 113/Hua I 142] The degree of coincidence which results from this overlaying of sense terminates in the absolute case of *Gleichheit*. It is on the basis of this overlaying of sense that the sense of the one is transferred to the other, such that one can be apperceived "according to the sense of the other". At all moments of this transfer, however, the paired data are still presented to consciousness as different.8

In the pairing of my body with the other’s, the other’s body (as yet, still lacking the sense of ‘human body’) enters my field of perception. Throughout all my lived experiences, I am present to myself as a psychophysical ego, and as an animate organism. The pairing relationship here, then, is between our two bodies, whose common determinations are apprehended with an overlapping coincidence. This overlapping coincidence stimulates consciousness, that is, the two like

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8. The possibility of this overlaying of sense is also dealt with by Husserl in the study of relational consciousness (of which *paaung* is a type) contained within *Experience and Judgement*. In § 44 of that text, Husserl describes the act of relational contemplation, in which the apprehending regard moves from member to member of the relation, the possibility of which “presupposes a ‘sensuous’ likeness or similarity” [EJ 189/EU 224] prior to the apprehending, as previously described. This pre-given exerts a stimulus, awakening the interest of an apprehension which holds the givens together, and runs through them. This running-through then ‘changes’ into a succession of single apprehensions, and in the transition between these, that which was already to a certain extent stressed on the passive level comes to prominence as a foundation of likeness or similarity. “The things which are common ‘coincide’, while those which are different separate.” This overlapping goes beyond what is common to all succeeding acts, in which there is an overlapping due to the retentional aspect of the temporal stretching of consciousness, such that there is a “coincidence in the objective sense. With the transition from the apprehension of A to that of B, which is like or similar to A, B is brought in consciousness to an overlapping coincidence with A, which is still retained in grasp, and there is in both of them coincidence of like with like, while the unlike enters into conflict.” [EJ 190/EU 224-5] To distinguish similarity from likeness, Husserl specifies that in the case of the latter, there is no gap between the two, such that they are changed into a unity which, although doubled in consciousness, is materially one – the two are “ineinander”. In the case of similarity, there is a gap, such that the blending of the two leads to a community, which remains a duality of material separation. The two are “akin”, and thus form a pair, “where the one is certainly ‘like’ the other but ‘stands off’ from it.” These notions are further developed in the 3rd Part of *Experience and Judgement*, on the constitution of general objectivities; cf § 81 in particular.
'bodies' mutually awaken consciousness. How does consciousness so awakened then make the apperceptive transfer such that both bodies become overlaid with the objective sense of the other, in other words, how does consciousness now intend the sense of the other? Husserl's answer is that the sense constitution of the other occurs necessarily "as an 'intentional modification' of that ego of mine which is the first to be Objectivated" [CM 115/Hua I 144]. This intentional modification can be understood by an analogy with time.

For instance, if we consider the mode of givenness of what is presented to consciousness in memory, we see that what was previously lived through is now presented (in the living present) in the mode of past. It is precisely in this mode that it is able to be distinguished from the present living through of it.

Somewhat as my memorial past, as a modification of my living present, 'transcends' my present, the appresented other being 'transcends' my own being (in the pure and most fundamental sense: what is included in my primordial ownness). In both cases the modification is inherent as a sense-component in the sense itself; it is a correlate of the intentionality constituting it. [CM 115/Hua I 145]

The analogy is developed to the extent that, just as in immanent perception, the harmony of the memories which occur in the present founds the constitution of my past, so the appresentations of the other which occur in my present, and which are motivated by what is presented to me in my primordial sphere, found the constitution of an ego other than mine - "in non-originary presentations of a new type, which have a modificatum of a new kind as their correlate". [ibid] The difference of course is that what is constituted in the former case is the
past of an ego which is identical to my own, whereas in the latter case, the constituted ego is other than mine.9

A further stage yet is required in the constitution of the other as an animate organism. It is still the case that the other constituted as an intentional modification of myself remains to a defining extent a duplicate of myself. Thus, the exposition having so far been carried out with regard to the passive syntheses of association, Husserl turns now to the passive syntheses of kinaesthesia. We know that the things of the

9. This analogy is made more precise in the Crisis. There, Husserl writes that in the transcendental exposition of recollection, to that which is recollected (namely, a present which has passed) "‘there belongs also a past ‘I’ of that present, whereas the actual, original ‘I’ is that of immediate present.” [C 185/Hua VI 189] It is in this present that the recollection is presently experienced (in the mode of having been). In this way, the present I constitutes "a variational mode of itself as existing (in the mode of having passed)". In the same way as the present I constitutes itself as enduring through its pasts: "the immediate ‘I’, already enduring in the enduring primordial sphere, constitutes in itself another as other. Self-temporalization through depresentation, so to speak (through recollection), has its analogue in my self-alienation (empathy as a depresentation of a higher level – depresentation of my primal presence into a merely presentified primal presence). Thus, in me, ‘another I’ achieves ontic validity as co-present.” [C 185/Hua VI 189] Thus, in establishing my present I as the same as the I that is presented as past, I depreseent my present I into a past originary presence; in the case of the constitution of the other, however, the depresentation results in my present I becoming a non-originary presence. This movement is similar to that discussed in § 4.1 above, under the notion of Spaltung, where the reflecting I is both the same and other than the reflected I. It remains to be seen to what extent the two movements of depresentation described here by Husserl are in fact alike. It is apparent that it is of the utmost necessity for phenomenology to respect the strict distinction between the two; and yet, as the basis for the analogy, a certain fundamental likeness must hold. What are the implications of this likeness, for phenomenology?

We might also draw attention here to remarks which Derrida makes in Grammatology, which refer to this notion of ‘depresentation’, and which are of the utmost significance for the thesis which we are adumbrating in this work. These remarks are situated in the context of the introduction of the notions of the trace (a notion to which we ourselves will return below) and archi-writing into a reading of Saussure. Derrida relates this notion of the trace to the track which a certain doubling reading beyond the transcendental text leaves in the transcendental text, without thereby being reduced to that text [cf our remarks on the strategic aims of deconstruction in 1.1 supra]. At stake will be the extent to which this pathway respects the imposition of an understanding of the trace within phenomenology, but whose ‘originary’ status could never be countenanced by a discourse for whom what is originary is synonymous with presence/the present: “Le Présent Vivant (lebendige Gegenwart) est la forme universelle et absolue de l’expérience transcendante à laquelle nous renvoie Husserl. Dans les descriptions du mouvement de la temporalisation, tout ce qui tourmente pas la simplicité et la domination de cette forme nous paraît signaler l’appartenance de la phénoménologie transcendante à la métaphysique. Mais cela doit composer avec des forces de rupture. Dans la temporalisation originaire et le mouvement du rapport à autrui, tels que Husserl les décrit effectivement, la non-présentation ou la dé-présentation [emphasis added] est aussi ‘originaire’ que la présentation. C’est pour quoi une pensée de la trace ne peut pas plus rompre avec une phénoménologie transcendante que s’y réduire.” [G 91]
world have a spatial orientation of ‘there’ with respect to my body as the null-point of orientation, due to kinaesthetic syntheses. Moreover, any point that is presently ‘there’ for me can become ‘here’ through the “free modification of my kinaesthesias”. [CM 116/Hua I 146]. From this new ‘here’, the same things will now present themselves from different perspectives. Now, crucially, the sense of the other that I have is not such that I apperceive them as having the same spatial orientation that I have ‘here’. On the contrary, I apperceive them as having the same sorts of perspectives of the world that I would have, if I were in their position. [CM 117/Hua I 146] Moreover, I apperceive the other precisely as having such modes of presentation as ‘theres’ with respect to the ‘here’ which the other is, that is, that the world is orientated to the other as a null-point.

We can now complete the substance of the pairing relationship which was introduced above. Our question has been how the pairing of the bodies of myself and the other leads to the apperceptive transfer whereby I apprehend the other not just as a body but also as an animate organism (whose subjectivity is appresented to me along with the presentation of their body in the primordial sphere). This has occurred as an overlaying of the objective sense of animate organism on both members of the pair on the basis of an intentional modification of myself (just as I am conscious of the recollected experience having been lived through, and I depresent my ego such that it is intentionally modified as being past, so with the presentation of the other, I depresent my ego such that it is intentionally modified as other). The final step is to constitute this other as being a ‘here’ for the world as ‘there’ in the same way that the world is ‘there’ for me ‘here’ (through which, as we know from Ideas II, the body becomes constituted as a psychophysical
If we return to the pairing of the two bodies, it is evident that the other's body is not directly associated in the 'here' that characterises my apprehension of my own body. Rather, we now have another pairing. In this case, the appearance of the body of the other "awakens reproductively" another appearance, namely, of how my body would look to me if I were there (where the other is now). This appearance is paired for me with the appearance the other 'there' has for me 'here' [cf I2 177/Hua IV 169]. This is the final step by which the "assimilative apperception becomes possible and established, by which the external body over there receives analogically from mine the sense, animate organism" [CM 118/Hua I 147] On the basis, therefore, of this associative overlapping of the senses of "the other body from 'here'”, a new sense is built, in accordance with the specification noted above [cf CM 111/Hua I 141]. Due to the precise nature of this pairing, it becomes evident how what is appresented with the presentation of the other’s body in my primordial sphere is not simply the product of my sphere of ownness. My sphere of ownness is determined psychophysically by the kinaesthetic syntheses, such that everything presented primordially is orientated with respect to my 'here', including the 'there' of the other’s body. In the initial pairing, the other’s body is presented as 'there' to me 'here'; on the basis of this body presented 'there', the second pairing ensures that the 'here' of the other is appresented along with the body 'there'. Thus, the other can be constituted both as something presented within the sphere of ownness, thereby respecting the idealist imperative, but also, and at the same time, it is apppresented in its subjectivity, as a monad for whom the world is likewise 'there' in relation to it as 'here'.
§ 7. The World For, and As, Others

Landgrebe writes that "transcendental genetic phenomenology is a transcendental theory of history". [Elliston & McCormick (1977), pp 103 & 107] This section will attempt to understand what is meant by this statement, through following the development of the phenomenological concern with history out of the implications of the analyses of the constitution of the other, and the resultant constitution of an intermonadic community. The section will conclude by considering the modification of the phenomenological method (of reflection) which the historical turn of genetic phenomenology compels.

Intersubjectivity and the Intermonadic Community

The immediate consequence of the account of the constitution of the other within the sphere of ownness, which concludes with the appresentation of the localization of the world to the other's body as a null-point, is the constitution of the "commonness of nature" [CM 120/ Hua I 149]. The world for me, oriented to my body, and the world for the other, are not in fact different worlds, but different appearances of the same world. [CM 123/Hua 151] In this way, of course, we have the possibility of a multiplicity of modes of givenness which goes beyond the sum of potential appearances for me, and hence, that stronger sense of objectivity indicated previously. However, the notion of the common [gemein] intimates a further problem for phenomenology, that is the constitution of that region of objects which derive their meaning from the community, such as cultural artifacts, political institutions, universities, etc. How is this commonness constituted?
The constitution of the commonness of Nature is developed from the here-there relations of the bodies in the pairing relationship. For the objective thing in nature which is the body of the other over there for me here, is also, and at the same time, what is subjectively here for the other; and I am also there for the other here. It is, in both cases, the same body which is given in different modes of appearance. [CM 123/Hua I 152] The difference in modes of appearance arises from the relativity of the things of nature to the body as null-point, and in this case, both bodies belong to each other’s sphere of ownness. The relationship between different points of view of the same thing/nature becomes clear on the basis of this ‘dialectic’ of bodily localizations. The identity of nature is a synthesis analogous to the identity synthesised between what is given presently to consciousness, and what is presentiated in memory [CM 126f/Hua I 155; cf Ricoeur (1967), p 134]:

... every natural Object experienced by me in the lower stratum receives an appresentational stratum (though by no means one that becomes explicitly intuited), a stratum united in an identifying synthesis with the stratum given to me in the mode of primordial originality: the same natural Object in its possible modes of givenness to the other Ego. [CM 125/Hua I 153]

Following the temporal analogy, we know that the sense of an object is a unity of the manifold of appearings of the object, and that the synthesis of this unity is enabled by the temporal constitution of consciousness by the absolute flux/living present. In the case of the object considered in its strictly objective sense, there is a unity of the manifold of appearings to myself and to the other/others (it is objective ‘for everyone’). The objective sense is therefore no longer for me, but for us. The world which is ‘there’ in relation to my body as a null-point is ‘there’ as an
objectively common nature in relation to an intersubjective null-point. From this position, I can experience the other as other, but also, as other to yet further others, who are in turn other to him/her; and of course, for all these others I also can be experienced as other.\footnote{The difficulties with the \textit{objektivierende Gleichstellung} required here, which seems to run counter to the idealist demands of constitution within the sphere of ownness, are worked out by Husserl's positing of \textit{a psyche} which is the instantiation of the ego in the same way that the notion of the owned body is. [cf CM 130f/Hua I 158; also I$_2$ Section III, chap 1; and Ricoeur (1967), pp 136f]} In this way there is the constitution of the "community of monads" which Husserl designates as "transcendental intersubjectivity" [CM 130/Hua I 158]. The essence of this community is that there is "a mutual being for one another" [CM 129/Hua I 157] among the members of the community.

On the basis of this being for one another, Husserl is able to go on to explicate acts which are specifically intermonadic, that is, which are directly related to other members of the community, and which in turn lead to the constitution of "social communities". In the same way that phenomenology seeks to explicate the constitution of the sense of the world for me, so the introduction of the notion of social communities leads to the need to explicate the:

... constitution of the specifically human surrounding world, a surrounding world of culture for each person and each human community; likewise the problem of the genuine, though restricted, kind of Objectivity belonging to such a world. [CM 132/Hua I 160]

The reason that the objectivity of the cultural \textit{Umwelt} is restricted (in apparent opposition to the fundamental sense of 'objectivity') is that, unlike the physical world which is universally accessible as such to all subjects, the cultural surrounding world is relative to particular
intersubjective communities: different social communities constitute different cultural surrounding worlds. Each person has primary access to, and thus understanding of, the objective surrounding world which is constituted by the community to which he or she belongs; and s/he does so precisely "as a person who belongs to the community fashioning it historically. [CM 133/Hua I 160] This historical fashioning of the social community, its "horizon of the past", can be investigated by all members of the community. This is because the significance of the surrounding cultural world, and the things within it, itself has a temporal genesis. [CM 135/Hua I 162] Thus, in the same way that whatever is presently given to consciousness has a sense-genesis, or history, which can be traced within genetic phenomenology, [cf FTL 207-8/Hua XVII 215], so also the sense-genesis of the cultural objects of a social community can be traced.

The sphere of the cultural world corresponds to what, in Chapter 2 of the 3rd Section of Ideas II, Husserl had described as the spiritual [Geistig] region. It is only on this level that the person is finally constituted, in relation to the "habitual properties" of the community. Furthermore, at this stage of the analyses, "the transcendental sense of the world must also become disclosed to us ultimately in the full concreteness with which it is incessantly the life-world for us all." [CM 136/Hua I 163]

**History and the Life-World**

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2. The possibility of an understanding of an 'alien' culture, and of the surrounding world of an alien community, is only possible by a kind of empathy which parallels that by which I have access to the experiences of an other. Just as I am the null-point for the world as it is for me, so the intersubjective community is the null-point for the cultural Umwelt. [CM 134f/Hua I 161]

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As Carr writes [Carr (1974), p 68], it is the two themes, of genetic phenomenology (and the possibility of investigating the history of sense-genesis) and the phenomenology of intersubjectivity, which, as we have seen, lead to the historical turn in Husserl’s last work, and the concomitant concern with the life-world. This development in Husserl’s thought takes place within the parameters of an investigation into the crisis which has befallen Europe, and ‘European man’. These notions will be returned to at the conclusion of this chapter. Suffice to say at this stage that, for Husserl, the crisis has arisen through a forgetting of origins, and in particular, the origins of sense; that, rather than an active thinking through of sense, sense has come to be passively accepted. It is apparent that a phenomenological response to the problem of the crisis, framed in this way, will not be dissimilar to phenomenological themes with which we are familiar, namely, the investigation into the origin of the being-sense of the things themselves. What is distinctive about the investigations of the Crisis however is that for the first time the sense of Ursprung is understood historically.

The notion of the passive acceptance of sense returns us to intersubjectivity. We know from Husserl’s texts on genetic phenomenology that it is the apperceptional after-effect of primal instituting acts which, starting with the movement of retention, results in the sedimentations of sense, which are awakened associatively when, in the future, I experience something of a similar type, and thereby am able to recognize the object of my current act. The results of the investigations into intersubjectivity point to the fact that these sedimentations can also arise from primal experiences which are not mine – rather, these would be the experiences of others, which are passed on to me, which are communicated to me. I take these ‘on board’
without the necessity of living through the primary experiences. It is in this way that I acquire the sense of the *Umwelt* shared by the social community to which I belong. The corollary of this is that, in the same way that my primal experiences which have become sedimented in my unconscious can be reactivated (as well as being non-intuitively awakened), so also the experiences which I have taken up from others can also be reactivated: that is to say, the investigation of sense-genesis, enabled by the traces of historicality in the present sense, can also be carried out with respect to those senses which belong to the community, what might be thought of as the collective sedimented unconscious of the community. The relation between my present consciousness and the sedimentations which go to make up my 'habitualities' (and which in turn ‘fill out’ my ego as monad), [cf CM 66ff/Hua I 100ff] forms my ego "in, so to speak, the unity of a 'history'.” [CM 75/Hua I 109] The relation between the ‘collective consciousness’ of the social community and ‘its’ sedimentations forms the unity of its ‘history’.

Individual conscious life may be said to be essentially historical in the sense that every *Erlebnis* takes place against the background of, and is thus mediated by, a past which is both its own past and a social past. [Carr (1974), p 111]

The implication for Husserl is that the static phenomenological investigations of the transcendental conscious must now be supplemented not only by the investigations into sense-genesis undertaken in genetic phenomenology, but also by investigations which are specifically *historical*, to the very extent that the sense-genesis of the individual ego

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3. We shall return to these ideas, and the phenomenological investigation into the passive receptivity of objective sense, when we come to read Derrida's *Introduction* to the text which seems in many ways to be an exemplary instantiation of the ideas here outlined, namely, “The Origin of Geometry”. Derrida's question will be whether and how historical investigation is possible within phenomenology.
is interwoven with the intersubjective history of the social community. In the same way that the transcendental phenomenological reduction aimed to understand what is taken for granted, more or less passively, in the natural attitude, by means of a holding-back from the belief involved in that attitude, thereby allowing consciousness to discover itself in its originary sense-giving activity; so the historical reflections now undertaken by Husserl aim at withdrawing from the passive acceptance of what is passively acquired in the form of social-historical sedimentation, in order that the originary (now understood historically) sense-giving activity may be revealed. In the phenomenological reduction, consciousness is revealed living through its sense-giving activity, that is, this activity is present. Of necessity, the original sense-giving activity of some other which is now sedimented ‘in’ me cannot be lived through by me; rather, the best that can be hoped for is that it can be lived through again as presentiated. [cf Crisis § 15, especially pp 71ff/Hua VI 72ff]4

The particular sense with which Husserl is concerned in the Crisis, and which the text is aimed at reactivating, is that of the world. It is a fundamental aspect of the crisis, as Husserl presents it, of Europe, and European Sciences, that the sense of the world has been lost, through the collective passive acceptance of the sense of the world expressed in the sciences. Husserl is not calling into question scientific sense; rather, he is arguing that the relation between the sense of the world expressed within scientific discourse, and the sense of the world as it is experienced (and as that very experiencing is revealed within

4. The sense which Husserl is concerned with at this stage in the text is that of philosophy, and its own unity of history; we shall return to the core of this thought at the end of the next section. We shall also return to the method of historical reflection, and its relation to the ‘normal’ phenomenological method of reflection, at the end of this section.
phenomenology), has been severed. Due to this severing, the way in which the scientific sense of the world is ultimately founded upon our pre-scientific experience of the world is no longer clear, the way in which science is about the world has been forgotten. As the heading for § 2 of the Crisis has it, the ‘crisis’ of science is “the loss of its meaning for life” [C 5/Hua VI 3]. In order to re-establish the connection between the sense of science and our experience of the world, phenomenology must confront two tasks. On the one hand, it must reflect back on the historical development of the sciences, concentrating in particular on the development of objectivism (in which way science becomes estranged from our subjective experience of the world). Ultimately, this historical investigation into the development of scientific sense will return to the point at which science begins, and at that point, it will be seen that of necessity, science gets underway because of certain ‘motivations’. This is the point at which, for instance, geometry begins, as the formalization of certain properties which have a pre-eminence based on their practical value. Thus, a flat surface is of more benefit than a curved one for placing things upon – and this leads ultimately to the concept of a straight line, and so on. This insight is retained at the outset of modern science, with Galileo, who proposes to look for the manifestation of the mathematical in all phenomena. Thus begins the mathematization of nature, subsequently developed in the philosophies of Descartes and Leibniz, and thereby setting the precedents for the objectivism which also dominates philosophy.

On the other hand, phenomenology must reveal the essence of that

5. Unfortunately we cannot here go into the connection between the crisis in the sciences and the wider crisis engulfing contemporary Europe, that crisis “de l’humanité européenne, au moment de la montée l’hitlerisme et de l’angoisse historique qui étreint l’Europe entre 1930 et 1939.” [Derrida, “La Phénoménologie et le Clôture de la Metaphysique”, Ms p 13] For discussion of this, and Husserl’s own position as a Jew in Germany, see Landgrebe’s “The Life-World and the Historicity of Human Existence”, passim; and Ricoeur (1967), p 144.
world from which the mathematization of the sciences begin. This world, upon which science performs its abstractions, is the "intuitively given Umwelt" [C 25/Hua VI 22] which Husserl goes on to call the prescientific "practical Lebenswelt", and which serves as the "forgotten meaning-fundament of natural science". [C 48/Hua VI 48] Now, the essence of the life-world is that it is experienced subjectively, as Husserl's accounts of sensuous perception have shown; and, moreover, that the character of this subjective appearing is determined by the social community in which I find myself. It is this community which determines my practical interest in the Umwelt. (Note that, as Husserl points out, a theoretical interest in the world is only one type of praxis; C 105/Hua VI 107) It is due to this necessary connection with the historical community that "the term Lebenswelt has essentially a historical-social connotation: a Lebenswelt is relative to a certain society at a given moment in history". [Gurwitsch (1956-7), 372] The life-world is the pregiven ground of our existence [ibid], and hence investigations of it will centre on the passive syntheses which enable this pregivenness, [cf Carr (1974), p 137] particularly the kinaesthetic syntheses which determine my practical involvement with the world. Finally, what takes this notion of life-world beyond earlier accounts to be found in Husserl's phenomenology, is the manner in which all these characteristics (of history and society, of passive syntheses and practical involvement) are woven together in the constitution of a world. [cf Carr, ibid; and with the worldliness of kinaesthetic syntheses, supra]

World as Horizon, and the Methodology of Historical Phenomenology

In order to gain an understanding of this worldliness of the life-
world, we turn now to Husserl and Landgrebe's clarification\(^6\) of the concept in the Introduction to *Experience and Judgement*. In so doing, we will also be able to consider the methodology which is distinctive of the historical turn in Husserl’s phenomenology, and to compare it with the method of reflection which is characteristic of the static transcendental phase of Husserl’s work.

As we have seen genetic phenomenology aims, in this particular example repeated in *Experience and Judgement*, to trace the judgement back to its foundation in pre-predicative experience. Husserl calls this tracing back a Rückgang [EJ 22/EU 14].\(^7\) What we get back to in the retrogression is the pregiven objects in whose existence we believe, and the preliminary presence [Voranliegen] of which comes to affect us, to awaken the activity of cognition by “entering into the background of our field of consciousness”. [EJ 29/EU 24] Affecting means that the object “stands out from” the always co-present surroundings which are the domain of what is passively pregiven. As the field surrounding the particular object which comes to affect us forms a unity of passive belief, so the universal ground which precedes all possible cognitive activity is the *world*. Everything which comes to affect us does so *from this world* in which we believe, and believe to be existent. As Husserl writes: “It is this *universal ground of belief in a world* which all praxis presupposes, not only the praxis of life but also the theoretical praxis of cognition.” [EJ 30/EU 25] Moreover, the being of this world in its *totality* is the presupposition of all judging, and thus does not arise *from*

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6. See the Editor’s Forward for an explanation of this remark, in particular, EJ 6-7/EU XXV

7. This retrogression from the evidence of the judgement to its foundations in the evidence of pre-predicative experience clearly parallels the retrogression from scientific evidence to its foundation in the evidence of the life-world.
a judgement, it is not the result of an act of consciousness. The totality of the world, and all the objects in it which can come to affect me, is always “already there”.

How are we to understand this notion of world being used here? Husserl wishes to indicate by this notion that what comes to affect us never does so as something absolutely ‘out of the blue’, so to speak. Rather, we have a preknowledge [Vorwissen] of the world and its objects which is indeterminate but not empty. The structure of this preknowledge thus corresponds closely with that of the temporal intentional modification of protention. This ‘anticipational’ preknowledge forms the “Erfahrungshorizont”. This horizon is of two types, internal and external. The internal horizon of experience determines the nature of my experience of an object. Due to the horizon, I have the possibility of moving around the object, thus making present further determinations, or aspects, of it. The horizon ensures both that this is a possibility and also that what is thereby given is always a determination of the same object. The internal horizon specifies, therefore, the endless possibility that I can make an infinity of aspects of the object present:

[The] horizon in its indeterminateness is co-present from the beginning as a realm of possibilities, as the prescription of the path to a more precise determination, in which only experience itself decides in favour of the determinate possibility it realizes as opposed to others. [EJ 32/EU 27]

By means of the internal horizon of experience, intentionality is able to anticipatively “aim beyond” [hinausmeinenden] a core of givenness. Now, this aiming-beyond can also be directed to other objects, as well as
other aspects of this current object. Thus, in the same way that the internal horizon provides the possibility of the givenness of other sides, so the external horizon provides the possibility of the experience of other objects. The external horizon is likewise an infinitely open co-givenness of objects (as the internal horizon is a ‘co-givenness’ of sides), to which I can turn, and which I have preknowledge of as existent real things in the world. All existence is therefore “Inexistenz” the open horizon of the world. The horizons mark the transcendence of sense which clings to all apperceptions, and which, at the same time, determines the sense of what is presently given.8

The indeterminate preknowledge which accompanies all experience is made up, then, of the internal and external horizons. These are accompanied as well by the sedimentations of previous experiences, as we have seen before. Together, horizons and sedimentations provide consciousness with a preknowledge of types, such that everything is experienced with a degree of familiarity (which, at the lowest level corresponds to the type: thing as thing). All types are ultimately encompassed by the “totality of typification belonging to the total horizon of the world in its infinity”. [EJ 36/EU 33] In this way we can see that the world is to be understood as the horizon of all individual real things which can be experienced. [EJ 37/EU 33] The Rückgang tracing the foundational origin of predicative experience goes back to the world so understood. Husserl writes that:

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8. This account of the horizon further supplements the accounts of potentialities enabled by the kinaesthetic syntheses, and the apperceptonal after-effect, discussed previously. Note also that the internal horizon of sides which are cogiven had previously been described in terms of the non-present sides of the object which are symbolically indicated by the side presently given. Thus we see the interweaving of many of the themes which have occupied us in our discussions of genetic phenomenology, and in particular, a certain reciprocity now between indication and anticipation, and so by implication, protention. Could an account of the notoriously recalcitrant concept of protention be given from the perspective of the indication relation?
The retrogression to the world of experience is a retrogression to the ‘life-world’, ie, to the world in which we are always already living and which furnishes the ground for all cognitive performance and all scientific determination. [EJ 41/EU 38]

Having determined the sense of what it is that the Rückgang is returning to, Husserl begins now to specify more precisely the method involved in this retrogression. Firstly, it is clear that the life-world cannot be found simply by reflecting on our predicative acts, since all of our experience is ‘impregnated’ by the “precipitate” [Niederschlag] of logical (and scientific) operations, which have a determinate effect on our horizons of experience. For instance, to refer back to an example already cited, we cannot help but experience surfaces, shapes, etc, in terms of the idealizations of geometry. Thus we ‘see’ a straight line, or a flat surface, without the concomitant awareness that these very notions are in fact idealizations, objective where our experiences are subjective. It is forgotten that this objectivism is: “a garb of ideas thrown over the world of immediate intuition and experience, the life-world. [EJ 45/EU 42; cf C 51/Hua VI 52] The Rückgang cannot rest with this layer of experience, however, and must go further back, tracing the historicity which has been left in the act as a sediment, back to its Ursprung. It is from this ultimate doxic layer of prepredicative experience of the life-world that all cognition derives its sense. [EJ 46/EU 44]

If reflection on acts is inadequate to the task of revealing our experience of the life-world, how is the Rückgang to be effected? How are we to get beyond the level of experience revealed by reflection, while at the same time remaining true to the phenomenological demand that we be satisfied only with what is given directly to consciousness,
just as it is given? The idealizations of what is given in experience, and thus in what is given in an act of reflection, must, Husserl writes, be dismantled in order to reveal the "concealed formation of their sense." [EJ 47/EU 46] This dismantling, or unbuilding [Abbau] of the idealizations of founded experience is necessary in order to enable the:

retrogression to a hidden subjectivity – hidden because it is not capable of being exhibited as present in reflection in its intentional activity but can only be indicated by the sedimentations left by this activity in the pregiven world. [EJ 48/EU 47]9

These sedimentations will then be subjected to a dismantling in order to reveal the life-world, our world [EJ 49/EU 47]. In order that this dismantling does not simply reveal a facticity, an historical origin in the 'normal' sense of history, an eidetic reduction would also need to be performed. On the basis of this presentation of the originary sense of the life-world, a further step is required, which is called the Rückfrage, by which, on the basis of the sense of the life-world taken as a 'transcendental' clue, we may investigate the sense-giving activity of the originary transcendental subjectivity which constitutes it. [EJ 50/EU 49] On the basis of the Rückfrage the originary transcendental subjectivity can ultimately be 'presented' to consciousness; and subsequently, the ensuing sense-formations by which scientific idealizations are applied to the originary experiences, such that the experience of the life-world and the scientific determination of the world can be reconnected.

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9. Once again, therefore, we see that the possibility of the genetic inquiry is to be found within the possibility of the phenomenological presentation of the indication relation, a possibility which, as we have seen, exists on the basis of the concrete example of the indication sign. The Rückfrage can be carried out on the basis of what is presented in consciousness due to the fact that its subjective origin is indicated by the traces of historicity left as sediment in the present Leistung, that is, on the basis of the trace of what is not-present in what is present.
§ 8. The Limits of Phenomenology

In the preceding sections, we have followed the movement within Husserl's phenomenology whereby the transcendental subject, from a status of reduced purity, is gradually returned to the world. Husserl's analyses of time-consciousness, initially necessary in order to establish the possibility of the consciousness of an enduring transcendent object, have subsequently revealed that time-consciousness has its own transcendences. These transcendences in turn paved the way for the genetic turn which conspicuously utilised the indication relation which had initially been bracketed off in its instantiation by the indication sign in the 1st Logical Investigation. Within this genetic turn, we have discovered that the possibility of the constitution of sense is itself founded. Prior to any constituting activity, the ego always requires to be affected, and the possibility of such affection ultimately requires both that the ego be located in a body which is itself located in space, and secondly, that the ego be interwoven within a community of other egos. These two requirements point to a necessary historicity in the constitution of sense, a historicity which leaves its trace as a sediment in the ultimately constituted sense. To what extent does phenomenology retain a respect for its intuitionistic imperative in the situating of the ego in the world in the genetic turn, and to what extent are its descriptions in this realm hampered by the metaphysical limits of transcendental idealism? Is Husserl at this point able to respect the principle of phenomenology, and to describe what presently appears to consciousness only as it appears? In the next chapter, these questions will inform our understanding of Derrida's reading of Husserl. It has already been suggested in Chapter 1 that deconstruction is a meditation on the limits of philosophy, and so, by way of concluding this chapter, certain themes
will be highlighted which seem to bring together an understanding of the movement of thought in Husserl’s genetic turn, and also a clearer conception of the limits of the phenomenological enterprise.

1. How are we to understand the notion of the presence of the things themselves in phenomenology, in which evidence consists? Evidence, as Husserl explains in the 3rd Cartesian Meditation, is the originary self-givenness [Selbstgegebenheit] of the thing itself. Yet this seems to contradict the idealism of phenomenology, and the extent to which consciousness is constitutive. Does not the very sense of a self which gives itself, conflict with the understanding of constitution whereby any sense an object might have is to be derived from my constitutional activity? As Ricoeur argues [Ricoeur (1967), pp 101ff], Husserl is able to surmount this problem by reducing the presence of what is given in evidence to the present of my consciousness. What is presented is present through the syntheses which are enabled by the temporal structure of consciousness in which the present moment is interwoven with the just having been and the about to come. In this way, part of the manifold givenness of the object is held as a unity in consciousness and thus able to be synthesised. Therefore, Husserl would be able to argue that, while the thing ‘gives itself’, it is consciousness which gives sense. It is in this light that the fundamental importance of the constitution of the other for phenomenology can be seen, for it is only with this step that phenomenology is able to confront a ‘genuine’ transcendence as alterity.

As both Ricoeur and Landgrebe, among others, have argued, it is with the notion of the givenness of the thing, prior to the activity of constitutive consciousness, that Husserl is able to move beyond Kant’s
conception of the spontaneity of the understanding. But at the same time, the analysis of the givenness of the object prior to its being informed by consciousness needs a new departure in phenomenology, which, as we have seen, is effected in the turn to genetic analyses. In Ricoeur’s phrase, this turn points from a Transcendental Analytic to a Transcendental Aesthetic; and perhaps more precisely, from the genius of Kant to the genius of Hume. [op cit, p 194] But can we still talk of constitution in the passive realm of prepredicative experience? This question echoes Fink’s distinction between those concepts of phenomenology which are thematized within phenomenology, and those operative concepts which remain un-thematized. Constitution is one such operative concept. We know, form the work of Klaus Held, that the most fundamental levels of ‘constitution’ cannot in fact be made present in phenomenological reflection. So much was already apparent in the discussions of the Absolute Flux in the 3rd Section of On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal-Time. There we saw that the fact that there are strictly speaking no things in the absolute flow leaves phenomenology bereft of anything to say. This problem is repeated, as we have seen, in the phenomenological reflection on the transcendental subject. In both these cases, the absolute subject of phenomenology, the most fundamental moment of consciousness, eludes the regard of phenomenological practice. As Landgrebe writes:

the living present cannot become a phenomenon for itself. It only becomes a phenomenon for itself when it is turned into an object of a reflection and therewith ‘ontified’.\(^1\) Reflection directs itself toward what has already happened, it is an awareness of the functioning of the ego after the fact. It cannot overtake the ego itself as it functions, for in

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the very moment of reflection the functioning has already become another, that is, it has become the performance [Vollzug] of its act of reflection, and thus it is not objective for itself. Here we reach a final limit to what is attainable in its self-being through the reflection. [Landgrebe (1978), pp 26-7]

A second limit is reached by phenomenology when we come to consider the necessary ‘matter’ which fills out the preconstitutive form of the flow of the living present. This is the matter which is provided by the associative syntheses, and in particular, the kinaesthetic syntheses (see the citation of C 7 I, 1932, p 18, which Aguirre uses as the epigraph for his *Genetische Phänomenologie und Reduktion*). For it is only in the coming together of all these passive syntheses that a datum can come to affect consciousness. But if this is the case, then we must begin to understand the *bodily* kinaesthiasas as being constitutive in the same way that the passive syntheses of temporality are constitutive. This indeed corresponds with Husserl’s argumentation in *Ideas* II, that it is through the discovery that my body is mine, that I can move it, that I have power over it, that I then come to discover my ego. [cf I2 270/Hua IV 258; and Landgrebe, *op cit*, pp 30ff] Can phenomenology provide an account of the body-feelings [cf PP 159/Hua IX 208f] prior to the development of ego-consciousness, and by which the world is first disclosed? Once again phenomenological reflection runs up against a limit here, to the very extent that the syntheses which reveal the world and our localization in it are of necessity prior to that ego which effects the reflection.

A further limit invoked by Landgrebe [*op cit*, p 33] directly echoes Fink’s problem, and that is that, to the extent that the realm of
passive constitution eludes conceptual oppositions, such as active and passive, inner and outer, subjective and objective, spiritual and material, form and matter, then the linguistic tools at phenomenology's disposal are wholly inadequate for the expression of what is found by phenomenology in this realm. Finally, we may also draw attention to the conclusions of the previous two sections. In both cases, there is a movement whereby Husserl attempts to render present that which can of necessity not be made present, namely the subjectivity of the other, and the experience of the 'historical' origin. In both these cases it seems that we can trace very clearly a certain limit within phenomenology. For on the one hand, there is the need to make present that which needs to be given phenomenological explication; while on the other, there is the need to retain a sense of absolute alterity whereby the sphere of transcendental ownness is not 'violated'. Can phenomenology respect both of these demands? In order to do so, would we not need to pass, as Husserl himself seems aware, from a phenomenology of Gegenwärtigung to a phenomenology of Vergegenwärtigung?

2. Throughout our text, we have also had cause to notice an irreducible tie between ideality and what Husserl has specified as the Idea in the Kantian sense. Husserl has had recourse to this Idea frequently when an irreducible element of infinity has stood in the way of the adequate givenness of phenomena to phenomenological reflection; while at the same time, these phenomena are necessary for what might be called phenomenological understanding (for instance the Idea of adequate givenness as the \( \tau \varepsilon \lambda \varsigma \) for knowledge). These two notions, of infinity and the Idea in the Kantian sense, surface most explicitly at the very end of Husserl's phenomenological journey, when he comes to reflect on the
task facing the phenomenologist, and indeed, all philosophers. A consideration of this thought of Husserl’s returns us to the text of Hegel with which this thesis began.

What is the essence of the crisis engulfing Europe, and European humanity? We have seen one manifestation of it in the crisis of the sciences, and philosophy; this can be understood if we pose the question of what science in general can, or could, mean for human existence. [C 5/Hua VI 3] The positivism and objectivism of contemporary sciences (from which contemporary philosophy takes its shape) entail that there is no room within the sciences for questions of the meaningfulness or otherwise of human existence, since such questions presuppose a freedom which is only compatible with the subjectivity which is excluded by the objectivist sciences. Husserl argues at the beginning of the *Crisis* that such had not always been the case – the Renaissance attempt by European humanity to remodel itself on Ancient Greece had, as one of its aims, a return to the Greek notion of philosophy as the science of all that is. The corresponding theoretical autonomy accompanying this aim leads ultimately to a practical autonomy based on freedom, and it is this freedom which characterises philosophy as reason, not simply understanding, to employ the Kantian distinction. The task of the philosopher, and in particular, the task that Husserl sets himself, is to reveal the teleology of the historical becoming of philosophy as reason, as the unity which runs through all philosophical thought. [C 70/Hua VI 71] This can only be achieved by an immanent reflection on philosophy, by which the unity of the *task* of philosophy can be brought to ‘perfect insight’. The goal of this task, the teleology of philosophy, returns to the “*teleologische Anfang*” of philosophy in Ancient Greece. The crisis for philosophy arises from the forgetting of
this task, which itself determines scientific endeavour as scientific.

Husserl reflects on the primal instituting of philosophy in Ancient Greece in “Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity”, in which he specifies that it is not just the sciences which are in crisis: “The European nations are sick; Europe itself, it is said, is in crisis.” [C 270/ Hua VI 315]. How are we to understand the sense of Europe, the sense of that spirit which informs the Umwelt of the European community? In order that this sense may be determined, “the philosophical idea which is immanent in the history of (spiritual) Europe” must be exhibited, that is, “the teleology which is immanent in it”; [C 274/Hua VI 319] for it is precisely the teleology which serves to unify the history of spirit, from its αρχη [Urstiftung] to its τελος [Endstiftung]. Husserl argues that there is an entelechy in European civilization, through which Europe progresses towards an ideal shape of life. Given that human spirit itself can never be complete as such, and can never be repeated, the τελος of European humanity “lies in the infinite, is an infinite idea toward which, in concealment, the whole spiritual becoming aims”. [C 275/Hua VI 321] As soon as this spiritual history is recognized in its teleology, then it at once becomes a practical matter, to be understood in terms of normative ideas. How does the τελος come to be understood in this way? We must turn to the spiritual birth of this history, at the moment, in Ancient Greece, when a new way of looking at the Umwelt resulted in the beginning of philosophy, as the science of all that is.

‘Reason’ begins when intentional life comes to be inhabited by directedness toward a norm, which results in the formation of ideas, ideas which have meaning-structures which contain intentional infinities
within them: the ideas of science can be experienced by anyone as exactly the same as they were by whomsoever produced them, and indeed, can lead to the institution of ever new ideas based on them. Through the movement of the communication of these ideas, "there grows a new sort of humanity, one which, living in finitude, lives toward poles of infinity", [C 277/Hua VI 322] such as science, which itself signifies the idea of an infinity of tasks. Not only is scientific truth infinitely repeatable, however, it also aims to be unconditioned, thus introducing another degree of infinity which takes the truths of science beyond all relativity. With the beginning of science and philosophy in Ancient Greece, the infinite task takes over from the merely finite tasks of 'everyday life'. On the basis of the irruption of the very Idea of infinity into finitude at this moment, other, non-scientific ideas can themselves take on the mantle of infinity – such as absolute values. It is thus that philosophy serves as the innate entelechy of the spirit of Europe: it is an Idea in the Kantian sense, an infinite idea which is at the same time a task – that is, the infinite pole of absolute knowledge of all that is. To say this is to bring out the two traits of the Idea, of totality and infinity. [cf Ricoeur (1967), p 153] The crisis, which Husserl has stressed from the beginning is not within the sciences, is thus in the very project of knowing: the reduction of this Idea of an infinite task of knowing to branches of mathematico-physical knowing. [ibid]

The task for the responsible philosopher, for the phenomenologist as philosopher, therefore remains universal definitive knowledge of the world. [C 335/Hua VI 269] The unity which binds all disparate philosophies is the "constant struggle of 'awakened' [erwachten] reason to come to itself, to an understanding of itself" [C 339/Hua VI 273] in an understanding of the world. "Rationality is an idea residing in the
infinite.” [ibid/Hua VI 274]. And since humans are ultimately the expressions of rationality, then the infinite idea of the ultimate understanding of reason “is the ultimate self-understanding of a person as being responsible for their own human being: their self-understanding as being in being called to a life of apodicticity”. [C 340/Hua VI 275] Ultimately, then, the phenomenologist’s reawakening of the institution of philosophy as infinite idea is an ethical task already determined by the very sense of philosophy. And in responding to the call of philosophy, the phenomenologist as philosopher can assume their archontic role as functionary of humankind. [cf C 290-291/Hua VI 338]

In the next chapter, we will consider this remarkable weaving of ethical responsibility and the task of reason as its is expressed through the infinite Idea of reason. What is the possibility of the presence of this infinite Idea? But here, let us conclude by drawing together Hegel’s expression of the need for philosophy, and Husserl’s of the task of philosophy. We have seen that for Husserl, the task of the philosopher is already inscribed in the primal instituting of philosophy, that the philosopher is responding to the call expressed at this moment. However, the further task, imposed due to the historical event of crisis, is to reawaken this idea, which has been forgotten. It is the infinite Idea of reason coming to self-understanding through universal knowledge of all that is. This infinite task has been subsumed however under the objectivism, the positivism of the natural sciences, which remain satisfied with facts, but can never hope to reflect on the understanding of facts, which is itself the only means by which facts can come to be.

This then is the ‘need’ for philosophy as understood by Husserl, a need which, in its double sense brought about by the crisis, can only be
answered by phenomenology. Hegel also believes that there is a single spirit which runs through all the expressions of philosophy. Furthermore, it is his contention that this spirit has been forgotten in the obsession with the forms which this spirit takes in different philosophical systems. This has happened through the diremption between spirit and the appearance of the Absolute, resulting in the presentation of the latter as being independent, and the concomitant essence of philosophy as reflection on the *understanding*. This manifests itself most clearly in the oppositional thinking of Kant which betrays the finitude of understanding. The task for Hegel, the need for philosophy, is to overcome finitude through the work of reflection as Reason, and thus to move to an infinity which is not opposed to finitude. In doing so, understanding becomes Reason, the appearance of the Absolute. The need for philosophy thus arises from the need for totality, the reuniting of what is split, which at the same time is the presence of the good infinite to consciousness, in which the opposition between Absolute Subjectivity and Absolute Objectivity is itself overcome.

The most striking of the similarities between the two philosophers is the role reason plays in overcoming the limits of finitude. In Hegel, this is to be achieved in the good infinite of the Absolute. But Hegel’s thought of the infinite is compromised at the limits of his philosophy, in the need to think these limits. For Husserl, reason’s coming to self-understanding is also marked by the imperative of the presentation of the infinite to consciousness. Can the infinite be so presented within the limits of phenomenology? Can phenomenology respect both the totality and the infinity of the Idea in a way which Hegel’s philosophy was ultimately unable to? Or does the expression of this demand already call, as it did in Hegel’s thought, for the responsibility of deconstruction?
The very horizon of phenomenology turns the gaze of the phenomenologist away from the real data that, on the other hand, define the true content of his reflection. More precisely, the real data appear only under their negative aspect in view of the fact that their signification has been suppressed.

Thao, *Phenomenology and Dialectical Materialism*

CHAPTER 3

THE OTHER OF PHENOMENOLOGY

§ 1. Phenomenology and Genesis and Deconstruction

1. We have followed Husserl’s development of genetic phenomenology, and the ultimate turn to a historical phenomenology, as he strives to give the fullest account of the constitution of objectivity. The questions which we must now ask, in this chapter, are whether this movement can be contained within the limits of phenomenology, and indeed, whether those aspects of temporality and indication which give rise to, and make possible, the genetic turn, can themselves be accounted
for within phenomenology. At the same time, we will pay close scrutiny to the decisive “intervention” [WD 167/ED 250] of the Idea in the Kantian sense, as used by Husserl, which both gives rise to phenomenology itself as an infinite task, and at the same time, enables what is infinite to be presented to consciousness.

In the following chapter, we will begin by looking at Derrida’s early essay “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” (and the subsequent additions made for the publication of the essay in Writing in Difference some eight years later, during which the distinctively deconstructive response to phenomenology had been developed), which serves to situate the place of Derrida’s readings of Husserl, with respect, in particular, to the “problem of genesis”. We will then turn to Derrida’s Introduction to Husserl’s ‘Origin of Geometry’, Voice and Phenomenon, and ‘Form and Meaning’. In the Introduction, Derrida concentrates on, among other things, language and writing, the Idea, and the metaphorics of delay/deferral which arise in the discussion of the possibility of a phenomenological history. In Voice and Phenomenon, the theme of language, and in particular, the sign, serves as Derrida’s point of departure. The twin themes which will guide our reading of these texts will be time and language.

In each of these cases, phenomenology comes up against its own limits, as determined by its principle. Is phenomenology able to respect the things themselves, or does its commitment to what Derrida will call the metaphysics of presence force Husserl to withdraw from a confrontation with what the movement towards genesis reveals of necessity? To what extent does Derrida’s text at this stage supplement, and thereby begin to ‘go beyond’ Husserl’s texts, in its dealings with
writing, the infinity of the Idea, and deferral (as well as other notions such as undecidability)? What we aim to show is that, even if Derrida’s reading does go beyond Husserl at this point, the possibility of such a movement has already been inscribed, and therefore made possible, in Husserl’s own text. Such a reading conforms to the double sense of *supplement* which was explicated in Chapter 1.1 above. In so doing, we will be developing the argument already begun in the previous chapter, where we saw that at each stage of Husserl’s attempt to ground objectivity, he confronted phenomenological ‘blind spots’, where the matter at hand was irreducible to a simple presence to consciousness. Depending on which hand of the double reading is being stressed, we can focus on the radical element which precipitates this move to phenomenology’s limits (the accounts of indication, history, temporality or of the other); or on the conservative moment exemplified by phenomenological silence, the *reduction* of indication, or by recourse to the Kantian Idea, as a ‘bad’ infinite.

We shall conclude the chapter by suggesting that Derridian notions such as *différance* indicate the deconstructive understanding of how the radical developments intimated by phenomenology can be retained without falling back into the metaphysical closure delimited by the dogmatic privileging of presence, and thereby respecting the positive aspect of the real data of the things themselves.

2. “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, Derrida’s first published text, as well as being his first to deal with Husserl, is an essay about, among other things, the opening and closure of phenomenology. It describes the phenomenological terrain to which many of his
subsequent texts return, and initiates a number of themes which become characteristic of the ‘deconstruction’ of phenomenology. Perhaps the most important thread which runs through the essay is that of the Idea in the Kantian sense, and the role it plays in Husserl’s phenomenology. It could be argued, indeed, to speak somewhat schematically, that the meditation on limits, which, it has been suggested, epitomises the ‘methodology’ of deconstruction, already has as its subject matter, in this text, the Idea in the Kantian sense.

The essay is remarkably dense, perhaps due to its allusiveness: it is evidently situated within contemporary structuralist debates, and it is certainly the case that the possibility of genesis within ‘phenomenological structuralism’ is decisive to the very extent that such a possibility is excluded by the structuralist methodology of, for instance, Levi-Strauss. But what is the possibility of the ‘inclusion’ of genesis within the structures ‘of’ phenomenology? Derrida suggests at the outset that, in fact, it is a debate, both within, and with the ‘outside’ of, phenomenology, which determines the sense which phenomenology ascribes to the ‘concepts’ of structure and genesis, and that, moreover, this debate forces the development of the genetic element in such a way that it appears to threaten to transgress the closure of phenomenology. 

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1. As well as having its overt subject-matter determined by the conference at which it was originally delivered – all other papers from the conference are also constrained by the same opposition between structure and genesis, and it is to the artificiality of these constraints that Derrida is referring, when he specifies the ‘foreignness’ of such a modus operandi to the phenomenological principle of respect for the Sachen selbst. Interestingly, however, having introduced this apologia, Derrida goes on to draw attention to two moments where Husserl himself enters into the fray of philosophical debate. We might be tempted to conclude that this is part of the general strategic concern with the closure of phenomenology, a conclusion backed up by the repeated references to the “borders” [frontières] of phenomenology. [cf WD 161 & 164/ED 239 & 244]

2. Developing the previous note, the clôturel ‘site’ of this text is further emphasised by the devoting of its (substantial) opening and closing analyses to the first and last texts of Husserl (the Philosophy of Arithmetic and the Crisis). The suggestion, then, is that there is a certain textuality of the essay which
The theme of closure is introduced by way of Derrida’s admission of doubt concerning the imposition of the predetermined opposing of the concepts of genesis and structure on a reading of Husserl. While such an approach is always potentially violent (to the ‘integrity’ of the text), this is all the more so for a philosopher whose first responsibility, to the matter at hand, of necessity precludes him from the more or less arbitrary application of concepts. It is this responsibility which compels that perpetual openness characteristic of phenomenological description. The application of concepts marks a form of decision \textit{[krinein]} which peremptorily closes, thus limiting, what, by necessity, should remain infinitely open. It is this very fecundity which is to enable phenomenology to reawaken the infinity which opens the task of reason, but which has been forgotten in the crisis \textit{[Krisis]} afflicting philosophy and the sciences. The second problem in the application of these concepts to a reading of phenomenology is the implicit assumption which is thereby made that the two notions are necessarily in opposition to each other. Can one say, on the basis of the former point, concerning phenomenology’s openness, that, with respect to the latter point, Husserl is:

...respectful of that which remains open within structure [?]

And even when one comes to think that the opening of the structure is ‘structural’, that is, essential, one already has progressed to an order heterogeneous to the first one: the \textit{difference} between the (necessarily closed) minor structure and the structurality of an opening – such, perhaps, is the unlocatable site \textit{[le lieu insituable]} in which philosophy takes root \textit{[philosophie s’enracine]}. [WD 155/ ED 230]

is interwoven with, and amplifies, the ‘central’ theme of the essay: namely, the extent to which genesis ‘opens’ phenomenology, the extent to which there can be a structure for genesis ‘within’ phenomenology, and the extent to which genesis ultimately transgresses the phenomenological closure.
At stake in phenomenology, then, is the structurality of genesis: can there be an essential account of genesis (as opening\(^3\)) from within the phenomenological closure which does not reduce genesis to the facticity of becoming? The delimitation of the beginning of phenomenology is determined at the moment that Husserl devotes the 1st Volume of *Logical Investigations* to the critique of the psychologism which characterises his first, non-phenomenological, and *genetic*, work on arithmetic – the volumes subsequent to this critique being the first which can be called ‘phenomenological’ in the pregnant sense of the word.\(^4\) Thus, there is a sense of genesis whose exclusion will mark the boundary of phenomenology, while there is to be a separate understanding of genesis from within phenomenology.\(^5\) How can the basis of this distinction be understood?

It will be in order to answer this question that Derrida will interweave the threads of the internal and external ‘debates’ carried on by Husserl. The ‘external debates’ are to be found in Husserl’s critiques of Diltheyism and Gestaltism. The ‘debate’ which is ‘internal’ to Husserl’s thought is that which seeks to balance the attempt to give a

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3. The double sense of ‘opening’ should be borne in mind: on the one hand, there is that openness which is opposed to closure, for instance, the openness of a dynamic process which of necessity cannot be reduced to a static structural account; and on the other hand, there is the sense of opening as beginning, as that by which, for instance, a process ‘gets under way’.

4. And whose subject-matter Derrida characterises as the description of “the objectivity of ideal objectivities in a certain atemporal fixedness, and in their autonomy as concerns a certain subjective becoming [devenir]”. [WD 155/ED 230-1]

5. Derrida stresses, as was stressed above [Ch. 2.4.2], that the phenomenology of genesis does not mark a break with phenomenology as such, with the phenomenology of static constitution, but rather, is a “deepening” [approfondissement], that is, a more profound investigation which digs underneath to get to the foundations of static constitution, while leaving it intact, and indeed, employing the same investigative tools, the aim being, therefore, to reveal the “structural a prioris” of genesis. In truth, therefore, within phenomenology, the notion of opposing structure to genesis makes no sense, since the one does not preclude the other.
‘total’ account of the structures of consciousness with the attempt to uncover the originary foundations of these structures.

3. Derrida begins with the ‘internal debate’. In *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, Husserl describes the *concrete genesis* of the objectivities which are numbers and arithmetical series. Husserl’s argument is that such objectivities have a subjective origin, and this is to be found in perceptual acts which have pluralities and totalities as their objects. Although the explanations of *Philosophie der Arithmetik* were subsequently rejected by Husserl, he did not simply replace them with a logicism which would erase all traces of subjectivity. That is to say, the phenomenological way will be to steer between two extremes: “logicizing structuralism”, whereby logical meaning is entirely independent of all constituting subjectivity, and “psychologistic genetism”, which cannot account for the ideality of number that is ultimately *normative*. Some tie has to be found between a *constituting* subjectivity and a constituted *objectivity*. The essence of this constitutive relationship must be such that it is “concrete but non-empirical”:

... *simultaneously* productive and revelatory, active and passive. The original unity, the common root of activity and passivity is from quite early on the very possibility of meaning for Husserl. And this common root will ceaselessly be experienced as the common root of structure *and* genesis which is dogmatically presupposed by all the *ulterior* problematics and dissociations concerning them. [WD 158/ED 235]

The possibility of gaining access to such constitution will be through the

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6. Because, as Derrida writes, “meaning, that is, ideal objectivity and normativity, is precisely independent from any *factual* consciousness”. [WD 158/ED 234].

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reductions, which bracket off the factual and the worldly, and all that might pertain to psychological genesis. Prior to any diffraction into structural or genetic methodology (and a concern for this moment will recur in Derrida’s later texts), it is the need for objectivity which motivates Husserl’s inquiries. Contrary to the naive acceptance of matters of fact by positivism (and the relativistic implications of historicism), what is initially required is a phenomenological critique of the ontological regions, in order to ascertain a priori what their essences are. Both the objectivist and geneticist approaches dogmatically assume the nature of the being of their subject matter, and hence are open to the charges of relativism and scepticism.

The ‘charges’ against geneticism (in the form of Diltheyist historicism) and structuralism (gestaltist psychology) are rehearsed by Derrida as a means of establishing the borders of the phenomenological space just indicated, that is, the place of constitution, which, understood in its fullest sense, will form the ‘common root’ of both the structural and genetic moments within phenomenology. Husserl’s critique of the historicism of Weltanschauungsphilosophie is found in the essay “Philosophy as Rigorous Science” published in 1911. In this essay, Husserl argues that historicism is rooted in the “factual sphere of the empirical life of the spirit” [PRS 122], leading to a relativism which Husserl suggests is analogous to that found in naturalistic psychologism, which echoes his own earliest work. Now, the problem with Weltanschauungsphilosophie arises when it lays claim to being a science with objective validity. [PRS 123] How can a science, which is a cultural phenomenon (with its corresponding changes in respect of what is considered ‘right’) as much as Weltanschauungsphilosophie, attain objective validity without succumbing to relativism? Husserl argues that
an empirical science (such as a *Weltanschauungsphilosophie*) will itself be unable to determine whether another science is a cultural formation or is in truth valid, [PRS 126] which means that any decision about the ultimate 'truth' of a discipline requires a different form of reasoning. (Husserl is here arguing against the position of the sceptic who doubts the possibility of any discipline with absolute validity.) Is *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* a science, thus condemning all sciences to relativism, or is there a way of distinguishing between science with objective validity and *Weltanschauungsphilosophie*? It is of necessity the case that a *Weltanschauung* belongs to a particular time and place,\(^7\) and the goal of the *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* could be expressed as a wisdom “achievable in accord with the measure proper to the respective phase in humanity’s life”. [PRS 133] The striving for such a goal marks out the philosopher of the *Weltanschauung* precisely as a philosopher.\(^8\) However, such a striving can be distinguished from the striving of the truly scientific philosopher, that is, the practitioner of ‘philosophy as rigorous science’, since such striving adds to a:

structure [which] is endless, by no means ever to be finished. *Weltanschauung*, too, is an ‘idea’, but of a goal lying in the finite, in principle to be realized in an individual life by way of constant approach, just like morality... The ‘idea’ of *Weltanschauung* is consequently a different one for each time... The ‘idea’ of science, on the contrary, is a supratemporal one, and here that means limited by no relatedness to the spirit of one time... Science is a title standing for absolute, timeless values. [PRS 135-6]

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7. Since it is based on experience [*Erfahrung*] which is the product of a particular intersubjective community, and which thereby constitutes the sense of the respective *Umwelt*. [cf Chap 2.7]

8. Such a striving has an essential ethical dimension: cf the discussions in the Chapter 2.8.

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As Husserl goes on to write, *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* should relinquish the claim to being a science due to the setting of its goals in the finite. [PRS 143]

The difference, therefore, between the historicist philosophy of Dilthey, and the rigorous science of phenomenology, lies in the fact that the former operates within a finite, factual totality, whereas the truth of rigorous science is an Idea, an infinite Idea in the Kantian sense. As we have seen, it is this Idea which, according to Husserl, is the origin of philosophy. On the other hand, the nature of *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* prohibits it from thinking such an Idea, and thus from thinking (itself as) philosophy, the *opening* of philosophy. As Derrida writes, “What I can never understand, in a structure, is that by means of which it is not closed.” [WD 160/ED 238] The boundary between historicist *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* and phenomenology is delimited along a line determined by the:

...*difference* between wisdom and knowledge; and by an ethical indictment and impatience. This irreducible difference is due to an interminable *différance* ⁹ of the theoretical foundation. [WD 161/ED 239]

Thus, whereas the *Weltanschauung* philosopher provides a practical response prior to an absolute science (upon which its theory might be based), in the same way that a technician might undertake a practical

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⁹ The appearance of *différance* here amounts to a self-interpretative gloss by Derrida, since the text as presented in 1959 reads merely *difference* at this point. Thus, what marks the *difference* between the grounds of phenomenology and *Weltanschauungsphilosophie* is the presentation in the one, and the *deferral* in the other, of the *arche* and *telos* of themselves as tasks. We might conclude, therefore, that Derrida has already, in his first essay, located, as *if by chance*, the ‘essence’ of phenomenology in the understanding of the Idea in the Kantian sense (which is the ‘opening’ of phenomenology) as *différance*. This will have to be confirmed.
task in ignorance of the pure theory underlying that task, the practical achievement of the goal is an impossibility in phenomenology. Such an achievement is always postponed, and the ethics of phenomenology arise precisely in (the striving for) this unachievable goal.

4. The "problème ‘structure-genèse’" not only determines the external boundary of phenomenology through differentiating it from historicism, the opening/closure of the contrasted philosophies being determined by a certain opposition between finitude and infinity, it also delimits an ‘internal’ boundary within phenomenology. The problem within phenomenology can, however, only parallel the problem as it has been discussed so far, in the same way that the psychology of phenomenologically reduced consciousness parallels the psychology of empirical/naturalistic consciousness. Derrida argues that static phenomenology is necessarily structural for two reasons: on the one hand, and in opposition to historicism as we have seen, Husserl excludes all genetic questions from his analyses, apparently understanding them at this stage to be essentially factual/worldly/etc (and thus suspended in the reductions). This results, secondly, in the definitive form of Husserl’s static investigations, namely, the concern with the essential relation between consciousness in general, and object in general. It will be on the basis of these investigations that subsequent genetic investigations can take place; that is to say, there is, as yet, no place in eidetic-transcendental phenomenology for genetic investigations.

At this point, Derrida complicates the seemingly clear-cut picture

10. How this parallelism is to be understood, the precise sense of the ‘nothing’ which separates the parallel lines so to speak, will be a recurrent question in Derrida’s readings of Husserl; and will return in the present essay when Derrida turns to Husserl’s critique of gestaltism in the Nachwort to Ideas I.
which has so far been drawn of the internal limit within phenomenology between the static-structural and the genetic. The complications arise in a consideration of the closure of the structures 'of' phenomenology, that is, both of the 'content' and the methodology of phenomenology. Can the structures of phenomenology ever be closed, thereby enabling the exclusion of genetic problems, or is there a necessary openness which leaves an irreducible trace of genesis in structural phenomenology? And, to echo the questions with which we began this section, if there is such an openness, is it, or indeed can it be, 'respected' by phenomenology?

Derrida turns firstly to the 'methodological closure', developing further our thoughts concerning the Idea in the Kantian sense. Although phenomenology claims to be a 'science', it can at best hope to be a rigorous science; it can never achieve the status of an exact science, like mathematics. This is because exactitude requires the determination of a totality. Thus, in geometry for instance, from a determinate set of axioms, it necessarily follows that any possible geometric proposition is either a consequence of the axioms or is analytically determinable as a contradiction. This decidibility of propositions marks the essence of geometry as a structurally closed totality (though with an infinity of possible propositions). The unity of this closure is already determined in the axiomatic origins of geometry.\(^\text{11}\) In Chapter 3 of Part I of *Formal...

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\(^\text{11}\) On the possibility of such closure in mathematical systems, cf Thao (1986), p 222, fn 2 (to Chap 4). In this important footnote, Thao draws attention to the impossibility of the closure being discussed which the work of Gödel on undecidability reveals. Derrida will develop this point in his *Introduction* to the 'Origin', and the notion of undecidability will ultimately become one of the most important within deconstruction. It is interesting to note that Gödel, whose 'second incompleteness theorem' was so damaging to Hilbert's formalist attempts to ground mathematics, a formalism which Husserl himself ultimately embraced, spent the last 20 years of his life at Harvard studying Husserl's phenomenology. One would be fascinated to know the results of this period of intensive study... On the relation between undecidability and ethical responsibility, cf Llewelyn's essay in Wood (ed) (1992).
and Transcendental Logic, on the Mannigfaltigkeitslehre, Husserl specifies that in the light of this, a science like geometry can be conceived of purely formally such that the Mannigfaltigkeit becomes the form of a province. [FTL 93/Hua XVII 96f] Husserl goes on to characterize the sense of this infinite province which is nonetheless formally closed as a “definiten Mannigfaltigkeit” saying that it is definite to the extent that it can be “completely explained nomologically.” [FTL 95/Hua XVII 99] Husserl carries on:

Multiplicity mean[s] properly the form-idea of an infinite object-province for which there exists the unity of a theoretical explanation, or, in other words, the unity of a nomological science... Such a multiplicity-form is defined, not just by any formal axiom-system, but by a ‘complete’ one. [FTL 95-6/Hua XVII 99-100]12

Husserl himself underlines that phenomenology does not yield itself to such a closure, and thus to such a determination. Phenomenology, unlike the abstract, formal, science of geometry, is a concrete, descriptive, science. From the phenomenological perspective, the concepts of geometry are ideals. The concepts of phenomenology, on the other hand, are descriptive concepts, essences which are drawn immediately from intuition. An ‘exact’ concept in this domain would be an Idea in the Kantian sense, an “ideal 'limit' which it is essentially impossible to find in any sensuous intuition”. [I 167/Hua III,1 155].

12. cf Bachelard’s excellent, detailed, discussion of these issues, especially the sense of completeness, in chap. 1.3 of A Study of Husserl’s Formal and Transcendental Logic. In his footnote to this discussion, Derrida refers to Ideas § 72, where Husserl specifies that a definite manifold: “is characterized by the fact that a finite number of concepts and propositions... completely and unambiguously determines to totality all of the possible formations belonging to the province so that, of essential necessity, nothing in the province is left open.” [I 163/Hua III,1 152; emphasis added]
Thus, the multiplicity of an exact science, and the ‘multiplicity’ of phenomenological science, are distinguished to the extent that the former is a closure [clôture]. There is, as Derrida writes, “principled, essential, and structural impossibility of closing structural phenomenology”. [WD 162/ED 242] But, once more, we are confronted by the question of how it is that phenomenology is to be a rigorous science, with objective validity, as opposed to a purely empirical science? This question echoes the one posed above with respect to the apparent relativism to which all science is condemned by Weltanschauungsphilosophie. In this previous case, as we saw, it was the origin in infinity which ensured that phenomenology would never simply be an empirical science; and, in this case, once again, the possibility of phenomenology as a rigorous science depends on the role of infinity – for it is the Idea in the Kantian sense (which above was said to characterize the limit to which an intuition would have to proceed in order to become exact) which will enable the ‘enclosing’, so to speak, of what remains infinitely open within phenomenology:

It is the infinite opening of what is experienced, which is designated at several moments of Husserlian analysis by reference to an Idea in the Kantian sense, that is, the irruption of the infinite into consciousness, which permits the unification of the temporal flux of consciousness just as it unifies the world by anticipation13, and despite an

13. Derrida would seem to be referring to the fact that the possibility of the Ideal givenness of all sides of the object is enabled by the anticipatory indication of non-present sides in the side which is presently given; however, there is also an intimation of the discourse to come on the givenness of the horizon, which serves to unify the world. All of these themes, and their relation to infinity as the origin of phenomenology (as task), will be returned to in the final two sections of Derrida’s Introduction; and in the discussion of the last pages of Voice and Phenomenon. It could be argued that one of the ‘axes’ of the double reading of Derrida’s deconstruction of Husserl occurs in the difference in conceptions of the Idea in the Kantian sense as presented in these two texts. In Voice and Phenomenon, this difference will be enunciated through a return to the Hegelian understanding of infinity.
irreducible incompleteness. It is the strange presence of this Idea which also permits every transition to the limit and the production of all exactitude. [WD 162 ED 242]

It could be said, therefore, that the Idea in the Kantian sense marks, at one and the same time, the opening and the closing of phenomenology: opening in the sense of the Idea as regulative [cf Chap 2.8], and closing in the sense that it enables the givenness as unified of what is infinite, which is in turn the possibility of the ‘exactitude’ of phenomenology as a concrete, descriptive, science. However, there is the further sense of opening, which stands precisely in opposition to this latter notion of closure, and which cannot simply be reduced by recourse to the Idea. It is this opening which Derrida merely alludes to at this stage, by his insertion of the questioning word ‘strange’ qualifying the presence of the Idea.15 If the point being made here is correct, then we would be further justified in thinking that, as was said before, it is the Idea in the Kantian sense which will serve as the focus of the meditation on the limits of phenomenology which, it was claimed, characterises the deconstructive ‘method-practice’. At this stage, for Derrida, the important point to note is that, despite the apparent opposition between structure and genesis, which would define the boundaries of static phenomenology, there is a ‘structural openness’ within static description whose presence is acknowledged every time Husserl turns to the Idea in the Kantian sense.

14. To develop further the point made in the previous note, the presence of the Idea has only become strange [étrange] in the version of the text published in 1967, that is, at the same time as the problematization of the givenness of the Idea in Voice and Phenomenon.

15. To state the matter schematically, if it is the infinity of the Idea which enables such infinities as the flux of temporality to be given to consciousness as a unity, then what is it that enables the infinite Idea ‘itself’ to be given to consciousness (as a unity)?
The second complication to the apparently simple internal limit between structure and genesis is posed by Derrida in terms of the opening and closure of the structures of consciousness. As Derrida notes, in Ideas I, the text most clearly epitomising static phenomenology, transcendental intentionality is described as an Ur-Struktur, [cf §§ 36 & 84] with four poles determined by two correlations: namely, the correlated structures of hyle and morphe, and noesis and noema. Now, Derrida wishes to argue that these structural correlations form not only the structure of consciousness as intentionality, but also the openness of consciousness to the "light of phenomenality" [WD 162/ED 242]. The closing (the "occlusion" Derrida writes perhaps suggesting the closing of eyes to the light) of this structure would, Derrida says, be "non-sens même". In what way does the very structurality of consciousness prescribe its openness, and how would the opposite of this openness of structure lead to non-sense?

If we consider the intentional moments of the structure, that is the noesis and the noema, then we find that the noema belongs to consciousness in a non-real [reell] way. That is, within consciousness, there is a part which is essentially not a really inherent part of it. The noema, which Husserl gives us to understand as the objectivity (as meant) of the object, that is, the objectivity intended of what is presented to consciousness by way of an Abschattung, is neither the real [real] object in the world, nor, qua something for consciousness, is it a part of consciousness. Which is to say that the noema: "is neither of the world nor of consciousness, but it is the world or something of the world for consciousness." [WD 163/ED 242] Crucially, although the noema is revealed through intentional analysis, it does not share the matter [éttoffe] of consciousness. The noema is anarchical, without place (of
origin). At the same time, however, it is this freedom from the tie of place which dissociates the noema from determinate relativity, which in turn enables the noema to found meaning as objective.

What are the implications of this conception of the noema? On the one hand, the fact that the noema belongs to no ontological region means that it can reveal the sense of Being 'as such' to phenomenology, in other words, it enables that which is presented to the phenomenological gaze, as transcendental clue, to be subjected to constitutional analysis (which is what is announced at the end of Ideas I, and fulfilled in the analyses of Ideas II). On the other hand, there is a sense in which the noema itself must elude transcendental description to the very extent that it does escape regionality. What sort of determination might the noema be given within phenomenology? For is not phenomenology limited to describing the world as it is given to consciousness, or consciousness (and its contents) itself, into neither of which realms, as we have seen, the noema falls? And yet the transcendental reflection does reveal the noema. Derrida suggests that for Husserl to have admitted the problems described here would have required him to alter the whole phenomenological procedure, either to accommodate the noema as 'real' in some sense, or to exclude it. In either case, however, phenomenology would be "condemned to silence" [WD 163/ED 243]16 since it is the very inclusion of the noema as non-real which enables it to function as the foundation of the objectivity which is the possibility of meaning. Thus, while it is the noema which precludes the need for the type of genetic analyses demanded, as understood by Husserl at this stage, by the

16. This silence echoes the silence to which irreducible subjectivity condemns phenomenology when it comes to describe the Absolute Flux and essentially occasional expressions; and here, of course, it is an absence of objectivity which is threatening to leave phenomenology mute.
red, and which thus guarantees phenomenology as a structuralism, it is also the case that for the noema to be understood in this manner, it must risk escaping phenomenological description. In a trope which will become more and more familiar in his subsequent work, Derrida summarises the apparent paradoxicality of this understanding of the noema when he writes that:

... the transcendentality of the opening is simultaneously the origin and the undoing, the condition of possibility and a certain impossibility of every structure and of every systematic structuralism. [WD 163/ED 243]

Whereas the noema is a non-real, but intentional, moment of the structure of consciousness, hyle is a real [reell] but non-intentional moment of experience. As we have seen [Chap 2.4.2], hyle represents (in static phenomenology), the “sensate (experienced and not real) material of affect before any animation by form”. [WD 163/ED 243] It is thus, within static-structural phenomenology, the “pole of pure passivity”. As such, it is the opening of consciousness on to anything which is other than consciousness, the possibility of consciousness receiving non-conscious data. Now, within static phenomenology, as expounded in Ideas I, Husserl remains on the level of the hyle-morphe correlation, retreating from any attempt to describe hyle as it is ‘in itself’.17 This is because, as he admits in § 85 [I 204/Hua III,1 192], in static phenomenology, he is constrained to work within constituted

17. As Derrida suggests, the problem lies precisely in the possibility of formless material being given to phenomenological consciousness – the parallel problem would be to describe pure morphe as such, that is, immaterial form – and it is noteworthy that it is the preconstitutive form (with all the attendant difficulties that such a notion brings to our understanding of the opposition between passivity and activity in phenomenology [cf Landgrebe (1978)]) ‘constituted’ by the passive syntheses which allows Husserl to discuss hyle.
temporality. It is notable, however, as Derrida points out [WD 322/ED 244] that Husserl himself already realises that the discussion of time in *Ideas* has not revealed an absolute which is in truth ultimate, but has remained of necessity silent [notwendig verschweigen] about the level of the pre-constitutive flux.

This delimitation of the static-structural discussion through its exclusion of hyle/pre-constitutive temporality is not as simply definitive of static phenomenology as it would appear. On the one hand, as Derrida continues in the important footnote, the retreat from an account of pre-constitutive temporality is repeatedly echoed in the great genetic works of Husserl’s final phase, whenever the task of a *transcendental aesthetic* is announced [WD 322/ED 244; cf CM 146/Hua I 173; EJ 68, 106, 167/EU 72, 116, 194; FTL 292/Hua XVII 297]. On the other hand, in being primarily temporal matter, hyle must be understood as the very possibility of genesis itself (at least to the extent that genesis is founded on temporal ‘becoming’).

Derrida concludes his discussion of the problematization of the delimitation of static-structural phenomenology in terms of its exclusion of genesis by saying that this understanding of the noema and of hyle as the opening of phenomenology (as the possibility of the givenness of what is other to consciousness, both as the pure possibility of such givenness, but also as the possibility of the ‘as such’ of what is thereby given) “within the very transcendental structure of all consciousness”.

18. From this remark it is clear that the work on the temporally constituting consciousness is, as we were suggesting in Chapter 2, already ‘genetic’, to the extent that it is occurring, so to speak, outwith the static structure of the hyle-morphe correlation. It should be pointed out that Kersten, in his otherwise excellent translation of Hua III,1, omits the crucial bracketed clause to which Derrida refers: “im ganzen – innerhalb der beständig festzuhaltenen Stufe konstituierter Zeitlichkeit”. [Hua III,1 192]
[WD 163-4/ED 244], announces thus from within the need for the transition to genetic analyses. In other words, the static account of the structure of consciousness bears within itself the trace of the need for genetic phenomenology. And yet, at the same time that this need is expressed, it is deferred [différé]. What is the nature of what would have been described within this transcendental aesthetic? Precisely the “thèmes de l’Autre et du Temps” which would have appeared in their “irréductible complicité”. In saying this, Derrida amplifies Ricoeur’s point, made at the end of his discussion of the Third *Cartesian Meditation*, that the apparently impossible possibility of the self-givenness of what is other to consciousness in transcendental idealism is made possible by the reduction of the presence of the other to the (temporally extended) present of consciousness. [Ricoeur (1967) pp 103ff] At the same time, he is pointing forward to the analyses of the C Manuscripts which develop at length the extent to which alterity is etched into the structure of constituting temporality. At this moment, therefore, Derrida is indicating the second theme which will become a focal point for his deconstructive reading of phenomenology. *Up to this stage, it has been a case of intimating a movement within static phenomenology which appears to complicate a basic understanding of static phenomenology as a structure which is closed to the extent that it excludes genesis*. Now, however, in an addition to the text made at the time of its publication in 1967 (again contemporaneous with the work done in *Voice and Phenomenon*, which we are suggesting forms in part the ‘negative axis’ of the double reading of Husserl), Derrida writes that this irreducible complicity of time and the other must necessarily be deferred by phenomenology because:

the constitution of the other and of time refers
phenomenology to a zone in which its 'principle of principles' (as we see it, its *metaphysical* principle: the *original self-evidence* and *presence* of the thing itself in person) is radically put into question. [WD 164/ED 244]

In Chapter 2, it was argued that the infinite task marked by the Idea in the Kantian sense was the opening and possibility of phenomenology. It was also argued that Husserl's analyses of time, which were needed to account for the possibility of synthetic consciousness, which, we saw, was the possibility of any experience whatsoever, contained within them the necessity of the move to genetic phenomenology, a move which, it was suggested, was itself made possible thanks to the earlier analyses of the indication relation by means of the indication sign. In Derrida's complicating of the apparently clear-cut distinction between structure and genesis, which delimits static phenomenology, we have the elaboration of two themes (both indicated by additions to the text as it originally appeared) which will inform the deconstruction of Husserl. On the one hand, there is the meditation on the *presence* of the Idea in the Kantian sense, and its role in determining the closure of phenomenology; and on the other hand, there is the reflection on phenomenology's simultaneous advertence to, and deferral from, an account of time and the other which would, if it were carried through, threaten to transgress the very principle which structures the phenomenological project; furthermore, the structural openness to the other enabled by the noema also threatens to condemn phenomenology to silence, for related reasons. Our task in the following pages will be to examine the way in which these themes (and the reading of Husserl's account of indication) are interwoven in a manner which is specifically deconstructive.
5. Derrida goes on to follow through the traces of genesis in static phenomenology into the development of genetic phenomenology. Firstly, however, he develops a point made earlier with respect to the parallelism between the structure-genesis problem which delimits the external boundary of phenomenology and which, on the other hand, delimits an internal boundary within phenomenology (a notion taken up again in the Introduction to *Voice and Phenomenon*). In developing this point, Derrida turns once again to a debate with the outside of phenomenology, in this case, the critique of gestaltism undertaken in the *Nachwort* to Husserl’s *Ideas*, originally written for the English edition of this work translated by W. R. Boyce Gibson.

If we turn back to the problematics sketched above, we shall see that their aporetic status derives from their existence within the transcendental sphere. Now, an alternative approach, retaining the descriptive findings of phenomenology, but ridding itself of the (metaphysical) commitments of transcendentalism, might hope to avoid such problems. In other words, might not a structural psychology which shares the insights of phenomenology as descriptive psychology provide a means of escape from the aporias described? Such a psychology might be Gestalt Psychology, which would indeed escape charges of psychologism. Now we know that Husserl has described phenomenological psychology as existing in the relationship of a “thoroughgoing parallelism” [I2 414/Hua V 146] with transcendental phenomenology. The difference that the space between these parallels describes is that the whole theoretical content of psychology:

is utterly non-philosophical; whereas the ‘same’ content in the transcendental attitude, and consequently understood as
transcendental phenomenology, is a philosophical science.

[12 414/Hua V 147]

A descriptive psychology can at best hope to distinguish and classify the basic kinds of sense-data of inner experience, and the fundamental forms of their combination; and an explanatory psychology would then seek to explain the causal laws which regulate these forms of combination. However, and here Husserl focusses his attack on the Gestaltists, it makes not a bit of difference if these atoms of sense-data are thereby considered in their forms of combination; it is still the case that all such psychologies are forced to remain on the level of psychologistic naturalism. For it requires precisely the phenomenological methodology to reveal the objective being of intentional objects as they are meant. Thus, despite the apparent temptation of gestaltist psychologies, they will always, of necessity, be trapped on the level of naturalism.

The space between the parallels of descriptive psychology and transcendental phenomenology is the place of another of phenomenology's boundaries with its other. This boundary is established by means of the transcendental-phenomenological reduction which 'transforms', but without 'altering', the theoretical content of descriptive psychology (phenomenologically understood) into transcendental phenomenology. What enables this reduction? What constitutes the distance which separates the parallels of descriptive psychology and transcendental phenomenology, thereby allowing the nuance of a change in attitude [12 414/Hua V 146] which is the possibility of the transcendental reduction? In order to answer this question:

... one would have to examine the *nothing* which prevents

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them from coming together, the parallelism which liberates the space of a transcendental question. This *nothing* is what permits the transcendental reduction. The transcendental reduction is what directs our attention toward the *nothing* in which the totality of meaning and the meaning of totality permit their origin to appear. That is, according to Fink’s expression, the origin of the world. [WD 164/ED 245-6]

Once again, to speak schematically, this will be a question of the possibility of thematising *within phenomenology* that which makes phenomenology possible.19

Derrida proceeds to annotate the “diffraction” of the descriptions of genetic phenomenology into the three lines of logic [cf Chap 2.4.2], egology [cf Chap 2.4.2 & 2.5], and historico-teleology [cf Chap 2.7 & 2.8]. In passing, Derrida notes: the problems for the conception of passivity and activity within phenomenology posed by the analyses of passive constitution; the problem of the possibility of the universality of the ‘eidetic’ descriptions of the genesis of the ego;20 which is, it is suggested, ‘answered’ in the third line, to the very extent that the eidos

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19. Thus, in the same way that phenomenology cannot find words to describe the absolute level of constituting consciousness, since there is *no thing* which can be brought to presence, and hence ‘talked about’, so here the problem is of how to examine phenomenologically that which is literally *nothing*. And if we cast our minds back, it was a similar question which was asked when we wondered about the possibility of bringing the Kantian Idea to presence (which latter is also the possibility of phenomenology). We might say, therefore, that so far Derrida, in discussing the opening of phenomenology (eg the noema, hyle, the Idea) and the closure of phenomenology, its boundary with its outside (the Idea, the nothing between the parallels), that is, in discussing what, in a certain sense, *establishes the essence of phenomenology*, has each time come to a point where phenomenology appears to be condemned to silence due to the (metaphysical) restrictions imposed upon itself by its own principle of principles; while at the same time, it appears that each of these moments also threatens to transgress the very boundaries which they are ‘supposed’ to delimit. We are suggesting that Derrida’s deconstructions of Husserl are at least in part an attempt to find a way of ‘talking about’ these moments. Whether, in order to do so, this requires the displacement of the field of phenomenology, will have to be seen.

20. The meditating philosopher must begin with themselves, with their own ego: how is this ego to achieve the status of an eidos ego? This problem arises in that, at this moment, there is no alter-ego which would enable a free-variation on the meditator’s ego.
of historicity is already ensured by the irruption of the idea of infinite task of reason which determines the (historical) spirit. Derrida goes on to note that at one and the same time this irruption of infinity is both an unveiling (of the infinite task of reason) and a covering, since “the origin dissimulates itself immediately beneath the new domain of uncovered or produced objectivity”; [WD 165/ED 248]; hence the need for it to be re-awakened in the time of Crisis.

6. The telos of reason which runs throughout historicity at the same time provides the eidos both of reason and of history. As such, reason becomes the logos of history which is produced in history. Now, we saw above that the teleology which is immanent in the history of [European] spirit is the infinite idea towards which spiritual becoming aims. The philosophical understanding of this ideal is definitive knowledge of the world, the “constant struggle of ‘awakened’ reason to come to itself, to an understanding of itself” [emphasis added; C 339/Hua VI 273]. Reason therefore seeks “state itself and hear itself as logos”. [WD 166/ED 248]. In a line added for the 1967 publication of the essay, Derrida glosses this possibility as “la parole comme auto-affection: le s’entendre-parler”. This note explicitly refers us forward to analyses to be undertaken in Voice and Phenomenon [cf SP 78ff/VP 88ff], in which analyses, as we shall see, Derrida interweaves a specification of the metaphysical determination of the s’entendre-parler with the introduction of différence. At this stage (in 1959), Derrida is limited to noting the movement whereby reason is able to come to an understanding of itself: it emerges from itself “in order to take hold of itself within itself, in the ‘living present’ of its self-presence.” Another question to be posed of phenomenology by deconstruction will be what conception of the living present we must have in order that this movement be possible; and
whether or not the 'structure' of the living present which allows the first movement does not, of necessity, forbid the second. Once again these questions are intimated in the following passage, also added for the 1967 edition of the essay:

In emerging from itself, s'entendre-parler constitutes itself as the history of reason through the detour of écriture. Thus it differs from itself in order to reappropriate itself... An exposition indispensable to the constitution of truth and the ideality of objects, but which is also the danger to meaning from what is outside the sign. In the moment of writing, the sign can always 'empty' itself, take flight from awakening [réveil], from 'reactivation', and may remain forever closed and mute. [WD 166/ED 248]

The interweaving of the necessity of the detour through worldly inscription, and the concomitant danger that this poses to meaning – namely, the re-introduction into meaning of the worldly and thus of the non-objective, a threat prefigured in Husserl's exclusion of indication from the account of meaning, which would, once more, leave phenomenology 'mute' – will be examined when we come to read Derrida's Introduction to Husserl's 'Origin of Geometry' in the next section.

At this point, Derrida pauses to note the clear Hegelian ring that these notions of Husserl's have (that is of reason departing from itself in order to return to itself), a Hegelian connection which was made also in section 8 of chapter 2. However, as Derrida stresses, it is certainly not the case that Husserl himself intends such an echo of Hegel (even if it is subsequently found to be the case that Husserl is more Hegelian than he himself would accept). Here, Husserl's complex relation to metaphysics in general is raised: in §§ 60 and 64 of Cartesian Meditations, Husserl
distances phenomenology from all debased metaphysics, and from speculative metaphysics in particular, while admitting that phenomenology understood as philosophy is metaphysics 'as first philosophy'. This is the final determination of phenomenology's border with its other which is raised by Derrida.

The dominant themes of the deconstruction of Husserl, as described in this essay, have been characterised in terms of 1. the delimitation of phenomenology's borders, by which it differentiates itself from its other, which is achieved in the coming to presence of the infinity of the Idea in the Kantian sense, which is also phenomenology's opening; 2. the traces of a genetic movement within static phenomenology which overflows static phenomenology, and which calls forth the subsequent genetic investigations from static phenomenology. As we shall show, deconstruction is engaged in a double reading of these themes, which at one and the same time aims to respect these movements 'within' phenomenology while also calling into question whether such movements can ultimately be 'contained' within phenomenology. At the moment when phenomenology fails to contain these moments (by which it aims to distinguish itself from, for instance, naive metaphysics), is phenomenology thereby no longer distinguishable from, for example, metaphysics. *Can phenomenology maintain that which makes it possible by overflowing it; and indeed, is the very attempt to do so not already the inevitability of the failure of such a task?*
§ 2. The Place of Language and Writing in Phenomenology

1. Introduction to the problems

In the previous section, we saw that the place of genesis within phenomenology was more complex than had previously been thought. On the one hand, that to which Husserl has recourse in order to close phenomenology, namely the Idea in the Kantian sense, is, at the same time, that which opens phenomenology. On the other hand, the openness of consciousness to what is given to consciousness seems to resist the possibility of phenomenological analysis. In both cases, the aporias arise on the thresholds of a static-structural descriptive phenomenology, which seeks to 'exclude' genesis. The analyses, whose need these complications indicate, are deferred, Derrida argues (subsequently), because they would have required a treatment of the interweaving of the themes of time and the other which would have taken phenomenology beyond the closure described by its principle. This closure is defined, according to Derrida, by the privileging of the presence of the object itself within present consciousness. To what extent could these analyses, of time and the other, be enclosed within a phenomenology of genetic explanation? Does genetic phenomenology itself disrupt phenomenology's principle of principles? What we shall argue in the following pages is that, although themes of time and the other, of history and becoming, are all treated within genetic phenomenology, nevertheless, Husserl's adherence to the principle of principles prevents him from treating these themes with the full descriptive respect for the 'things themselves' that they require. It is in order to treat of these notions in their full radicality that Derrida will be forced to introduce such 'notions' as différence, trace, and archi-écriture. However, we shall
also try to show that, far from marking a break with phenomenology, the *supplementary* sense of these notions is seen to the extent that they are ‘made possible’ within phenomenology, that they ‘fulfil’ a movement already underway within phenomenology.

These themes are developed more fully in the Introduction to Derrida’s 1967 essay on Husserl’s theory of signs, *Voice and Phenomenon*. In this Introduction, Derrida indicates the specifically *deconstructive* sense that the difficulties introduced in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” will assume. As is well known, the phenomenological task has as one of its aims metaphysical neutrality, which is to be achieved through the employment of the various reductions. In so doing, there is a sense in which phenomenology is striving to go ‘beyond metaphysics’. However, in the Introduction to *Voice and Phenomenon*, Derrida wonders whether this very method of reduction does not itself “conceal a metaphysical presupposition.” [SP 4/VP 3] Such a presupposition, Derrida continues, would be seen to “constitute phenomenology from within.” [SP 5/VP 3] The mark of this metaphysical constitution of phenomenology can be:

... recognized as the source and guarantee of all value, the ‘principle of principles’: ie, the original self-giving evidence, the *present* or *presence* of sense to a full and primordial intuition. [ibid]

Derrida is interested in the way in which phenomenology, as a critique of metaphysics, betrays itself at the same time “as a moment within metaphysical assurance”.

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1. For a discussion of this aspect of phenomenology, with specific regard for the question of phenomenology’s relation to the hermeneutic circle of metaphysics, see the second chapter of John Llewelyn’s *Beyond Metaphysics*?
The type of metaphysics which Husserl's critique is aimed at is the degenerate form which displays a:

... blindness to the authentic mode of *ideality*, to that which is, to what may be indefinitely *repeated* in the *identity* of its *presence*, because of the very fact that it *does not exist*, is *not real* or is *irreal*. [SP 6/VP 4]

As with Hegel's critique of metaphysics, the rôle of infinity is of crucial importance. For the origin of this irreality/ideality:

... will always be the possible repetition of a productive act. In order that the possibility of this repetition may be open, *ideally* to infinity, one ideal form must assure this unity of the *indefinite* and the *ideal*: this is the present, or rather the presence of the *living present*. The ultimate form of ideality, the ideality of ideality, that in which in the last instance one may anticipate or recall all repetition, is the *living present*, the self-presence of transcendental life. [SP 6/VP 4-5]

As we have seen, the central question which occupies Husserl's interest is the possibility of the constitution of objectivity. Derrida has drawn attention to the Husserlian determination of the eidos of objectivity, namely the identity which persists through indefinite repetitions of that which is ideal. Indeed, objectivity is constituted the moment such repetition itself becomes possible, and the possibility of such identical repetition is ensured by the *form* of the living present. What is this form, and how does it enable the constitution of ideality?

We come here to the crux of Derrida's reading of Husserl – the very form that the living present must take in order to ensure the constitution of ideal objectivity is opposed to the metaphysical
determination of presence with which Husserl is working, and which informs his principle of principles:

Phenomenology seems to us tormented, if not contested from within, by its own descriptions of the movement of temporalization and of the constitution of intersubjectivity. At the heart of what ties together these two decisive moments of description we recognize an irreducible nonpresence as having a constituting value, and with it a nonlife, a nonpresence or nonself-belonging of the living present, an ineradicable nonprimordiality. [SP 6-7/VP 5]

Derrida goes on to specify certain instances of this nonpresence: with respect to temporalization, there is the “necessary transition from retention to re-presentation [Vergegenwärtigung]” which enables the constitution of temporal objects which, as objective, may then be repeated in their identity; and with respect to intersubjectivity, there is the appresentation of the alter ego, which, as Derrida notes, is itself a condition of objectivity, as we have seen [cf Chap 2.6 supra]. For Derrida, these cases of nonpresence are of primary importance since in each case, they describe a:

... modification of presentation (re-presentation, appresentation) (Vergegenwärtigung or Appräsentation) is not something that happens to presentation but rather conditions it by fissuring it a priori. [ibid]

2. This phrase provides a revealing insight into our understanding of the sense of deconstruction: what comes to contest the phenomenological principle is phenomenological description itself. To speak schematically, we could say that the two hands of deconstructive science work this precise moment of torment, on the one hand by ‘criticizing’ the metaphysical principle of Husserl’s text, and on the other, by emphasising the ‘radical’ descriptions, leading, ultimately, within the deconstructive text as supplement, to the reinscription of what phenomenology itself describes, but beyond the phenomenological closure delimited by its principle. It remains to be seen how Husserl’s descriptions of the movement of temporalization, the constitution of intersubjectivity (and others), break with the metaphysical determination of presence. We shall also have to see to what extent the genetic-descriptive status of these analyses is responsible for their radical status with respect to phenomenology’s principle.
The importance of this fissuring is that it reveals that foundational presence is itself founded on non-presence. It is this which deconstruction is striving to ‘talk about’, but which phenomenology, due to its self-determination, cannot help but strive to repress.

_Voice and Phenomenon_ is explicitly concerned with Husserl’s theory of signification. Derrida justifies this concentration on the first sections of the First _Logical Investigation_, and in particular, on the distinction with which the chapter opens (between the expressive and indicative functions of _signs_), by pointing out that the essential distinctions to which the chapter is devoted “rigorously command all the subsequent analyses.” [SP 4/VP 2] Upon what grounds, upon what phenomenological foundation, is this distinction made? What justifies Husserl’s subsequent treatment of the two functions? Not only does Husserl not provide answers to these questions, he also defers any reflection on the essence of sign in general prior to making the distinction. Thus, it could be asked, what is the essence of sign such that it permits such a distinction to be made? The fact that Husserl postpones such reflections has, as Demda writes, “limitless” consequences:

On the one hand, Husserl had to defer, from one end of his

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3. One of the ways in which this is the case returns us to the relation between static and genetic phenomenology explored in the last section. The distinction Husserl makes, and the subsequent ‘reductions’ performed, allow him to give an exemplary static-structural analysis of the essence of _Bedeutung_ and the meaning-giving act. What Husserl brackets is a treatment of the indicative function of the sign, which, as we have seen already, contains the seed of genetic phenomenology. Thus, this preliminary distinction in the first section of the First _Logical Investigation_, and Husserl’s subsequent treatment of what is thereby distinguished, already respects an unthematized _decision_. Within this understanding of the distinction, we may read Derrida’s text as a continuation of the task begun in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, in which it was argued that the place assigned to genesis by phenomenology was not as rigorously delimited as Husserl might have wished. At the same time, the thematization of the generality ‘sign’ prior to its bifurcation into expression and indication signs undertaken in the deconstruction could also be read as a thematization of the generality, and hence prior interweaving of the two, which precedes the division into static and genetic phenomenology.
itinerary to the other, all explicit meditation on the essence of language in general... And, as Fink has well shown, Husserl never raised the question of the transcendental logos, the inherited language in which phenomenology produces and exhibits the results of its reductive operations. The unity of ordinary language (or the language of traditional metaphysics) and the language of phenomenology is never broken. [SP 7-8/VP 6]

What Derrida will wish to argue is that Husserl assumes the essence of language "by taking the logical as its telos or norm" [à partir de la logicité comme de la normalité de son telos], and that this telos is of "being as presence" [l'être comme présence]. At the same time, however, Derrida will reveal the trace of a different conception of language indicated by Husserl's own descriptions, which the deconstructive reflection on the essence of language will attempt to supplement.

In the following three sections, we will concentrate on three 'axes' of Derrida's deconstruction of Husserl. These axes correspond to three fundamental moments in the constitution of ideality, a proper conception of which, as we have seen, is the mark of phenomenology's difference from "degenerate" metaphysics. At the same time they also correspond to the three dominant motifs of Derrida's deconstruction of Husserl; they correspond, that is, to the crucial moments of foundational non-presence. The three axes, then, are language/indication/writing, time and temporalization, and finally historicity and the Idea in the Kantian sense. In this section, we will concentrate on the first of these.

Although the theme of language and meaning remains a constant throughout Husserl's writings, it is notable that the earliest and latest
phenomenological texts (the 1st Logical Investigation and the ‘Origin of Geometry’), the texts which (along with the sections on language in Ideas I) form the basis for virtually all of Derrida’s writings on phenomenology after “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, have language as a predominant theme. As with the themes of temporalization and the Idea in the Kantian sense, language has an essential rôle to play in the history of the constitution of absolute Objectivity described in the ‘Origin’. Before looking at Derrida’s examination of the place of language in phenomenology, we will give a brief outline of the ideas developed in the ‘Origin of Geometry’.

2. The ‘Origin of Geometry’

In ‘The Origin of Geometry’, Husserl’s concern is with:

... the inquiry back into the most original sense in which geometry once arose, was present as the tradition of millennia...; we inquire into that sense in which it appeared in history for the first time - in which it had to appear, even though we know nothing of the first creators and are not even asking after them. Starting from what we know, from our geometry... there is an inquiry back into the submerged original beginnings of geometry as they necessarily must have been in their 'primally establishing' function. [C 354/Hua VI 366]

The possibility of such a regressive inquiry is the tradition (tradition being not merely causal connection, but rather the product of human activity, that is, spirituality) which exists between the primal establishment and the ‘ready-made’ sense of geometry which we have at this moment. Our understanding of this ‘ready-made’ sense of geometry
entails that we are aware of its having been acquired through a continual series of "spiritual accomplishments", [geistiger Leistungen] such that 'modern' forms of geometry refer back to those earlier forms out of which it has arisen, and with which they are synthesised. Thus do we understand the historicity of geometry, and indeed its continued future development (the project [Vorhabe] of geometry); and moreover, on this basis, we are necessarily led to postulate a "first acquisition." [ersten Erwerben] How is this first acquisition attained, and how does the tradition of geometry, as tradition, come to be established on its basis?

The first point which arises is that, of necessity, the 'first acquisition' occurs purely in the subjectivity of the inventor [C 356/Hua VI 367]. Thus, we must inquire initially into the passage of geometrical 'meaning' from pure subjectivity to (ideal) objectivity (which, as we have seen, entails availability of sense for everyone). By ideal objectivity, Husserl intends that 'once-and-for-all' aspect of the sense of geometrical truths, in the same way that a work of literature is unique, although it may have many physical instantiations (eg books). Husserl therefore distinguishes between the "spiritual form" of geometrical sense, which is the ideal object of geometry, and the "corporeal occurrences" [körperlichen Vorgänge] (in "sensible utterances") of geometrical sense.4 Language will be the possibility of the coming-to-objectivity of ideal geometrical objects, to the very extent that language itself is made up of ideal objectivities; it is through language that

4. This whole cluster of motifs brings together Husserl's discourses on the body and his analyses of meaning and language [cf Chap 2.2 & 2.6]. To anticipate, we might thus wish to compare Derrida's interest in the role of writing in the constitution of sense (as it is revealed in the 'Origin') with his problematizing of the distinction between expression and indication made by Husserl at the outset of the 1st Logical Investigation; while at the same time bearing in mind the crucial role indication plays in Husserl's account of the possibility of the constitution of the other in Ideas II. To speak schematically, in each of these cases, it is the physical, the worldly, the bodily, which serves as a condition of possibility for the 'spiritual'; to what extent would Husserl wish to accept such a reading?
geometric sense receives its "linguistic living body." [Sprachleib]

Husserl begins his account of the linguistic coming-to-objectivity of geometric sense with a brief review of the sense of the human horizon which stands out against the world horizon, [cf the discussion of the world as intermonadic community, Chap 2.7 supra]. It is to this Umwelt constituted by the intermonadic community that language and spiritual constructions (such as geometry) belong; [C 358/Hua VI 369] indeed, the possibility of there being such a world to an extent depends on the sharing of a common language. Thus, the findings of the "establishing [urstifrende] Geometer" find a first objective expression through the mediation of language. How does this come about? Husserl posits the following course of events: initially the event of the first acquisition has to be retained within the consciousness of the originary geometer, through the facility of the retentional stretch of consciousness, such that, as we have seen in Husserl's account of passive genesis, although it must finally fade away from consciousness, it is, so to speak, 'stored unconsciously', such that it may, in the future, be re-awakened. Through such recollection, the originary event can be lived through again, in a synthesis of identity with the originary act itself, thereby establishing the possibility of an (endless) chain of possible repetitions of the original sense.

Now, as Husserl points out, although this establishes a certain objectivity of sense, it is not yet a genuine objectivity, for we are still dealing on the level of the (intra-)subjectivity of consciousness. Secondly, therefore, and this move parallels that made at the beginning of the 5th Cartesian Meditation, Husserl turns from the constitution of intrasubjective objectivity to that of intersubjective objectivity. This, as
has been suggested, is made possible through the medium of language, whereby what is the ‘objective’ possession of one member of a linguistic community can be given to be actively understood by others through linguistic expression. [C 360/Hua IV 371] In such a case, the present mental content of the primal geometer is presentified in the other’s consciousness, along with a consciousness of the identity of both mental contents.5 Once again, however, Husserl argues that this objectivity, constituted through linguistic communication, does not yet achieve the full objectivity of the ideal geometric object. One further stage is required in order to establish the “persisting existence” of the ideal object, such that the sense of geometry can finally break from its tie to the existence of the primordial geometer, that is, such that the ideal object may persist beyond the death of the originary geometer. This possibility is enabled through the:

... important function of written, documenting linguistic expression [which] makes communications possible without immediate or mediate personal address; it is, so to speak, communication become virtual. [C 360-1/Hua VI 371]

At this stage, we reach the heart of this remarkable essay of Husserl’s. For writing’s ability to carry sense to its fullest objectivity is, at one and the same time, the threat which writing poses to sense in general. Here, Husserl returns to a certain ambivalence which has haunted his text already: for, as we have seen, although phenomenology is led inexorably to the need to give an account of passivity, at the same time, these very descriptions of passivity seem to challenge the boundaries of the phenomenological closure. In the ‘Origin’, this

5. Once again, the somewhat dense exposition at this point relies heavily on previous work, such as the analyses of the 1st Investigation, and in particular, the appresentation of the subjectivity of the other on the basis of apperceptive transfer described in the 5th Meditation.
ambivalence with respect to passivity is linked quite clearly with the threat of Crisis which we have been discussing before. [Chap 2.8] Husserl’s account of the way in which writing functions parallels exactly his account of passive genesis, as well as his account of the constitution of the other. Thus, written signs are firstly sensibly experienced as something *körperlich*; however, as linguistic, they awaken [wecken] their “familiar significations”. This awakening, Husserl says, is “something passive”, such that the awakened signification is given passively in the same way that something recollected is firstly given passively, by means of *associative awakening*, and in the same way that the other is first given passively by means of associative pairing. However, what is first given passively can then be ‘transformed’, such that it is lived through ‘actively’ – that is, the original sense is *reactivated*. However, such reactivation need not occur, in which case understanding remains on the passive level, and future active thinking takes place thereafter on the basis of this passive ‘understanding’. This acceptance of the state of passive understanding arises due to what Husserl calls the “seduction [*Verführung*] of speech”. In such cases, meaning gathered from reading is dominated by association. And yet, as we have seen, association is the very possibility of any communication (since it makes possible the indicative function of signs) as well as the possibility of the writing which enables the ultimate constitution of sense as ideal objectivity. However, the acceptance of meaning associatively has led to the moment of Crisis, where the findings of science are no longer meaningful to the vast majority, that is, they have lost their relevance for the life-world in which we all ultimately live. And yet, in order for science to progress at all, it is simply absurd to expect that every scientist reactivate evidentially each and every ideal objectivity with which they are working. Thus, as Husserl argues [C 364f/Hua VI
there is a need for the work of the logician who ensures the validity of the propositions in a science. The perpetual reactivation of the sense of sciences like geometry can only, therefore, ever be an infinite idea; and yet, as we have seen, it is as such that the very task of the responsible philosopher is instituted, that is, the striving after an infinite goal. In this case, the task for the responsible philosopher will be to reactivate the originary sense of geometry, a possibility which has been established by the Rückfrage outlined above. In doing this, the relation of the primal instituting act to the experience of the life-world will be reactivated, and thus the relation of ‘ready-made’ geometry to our own life-world.

3. Phenomenological Language

We now turn to Derrida’s analysis of how language and writing come to function in the phenomenological understanding of the historical constitution of ideal objectivity. Husserl argues that science has an archetypal position amongst cultural formations since its idealities have the status of validity, and that the history of acquisitions of geometric science maintain their validity, such that, at any given time, they make up the totality (the total premise) which provides the ground for all new acquisitions. [C 355/Hua VI 367]

This totalizing of the sum of previous geometric acquisitions is not, as Derrida notes, possible within “egological subjectivity”. Rather, the “absolute Present in which the acquisitions are totalized can only be that of a “subjective community” which thereby becomes responsible for the “historical system of truth”, thus founding the validity of that truth.
It is important to be clear about the nature of this communal subjectivity, however – its phenomenological sense is as:

...the common place of all egological subjectivities, whether actually present or possible, whether past, present, or future, whether known or unknown... Since the totality of [geometric] science is open, the universal community also has the unity of a horizon. Furthermore... the investigator's own subjectivity is constituted by the idea or horizon of this total subjectivity which is made responsible in and through them for each of their acts as a scientific investigator... Phenomenologically, the transcendental *we* is not *something other* than the transcendental *Ego*. [IOG 60-61/49-50]

It would be at this point, as Derrida acknowledges, that a reading of the 5th *Cartesian Meditation*, and particularly the later sections of that chapter on the constitution of the intermonadic community, would be necessary. Furthermore, this claim of Derrida's, that the transcendental *we* is not simply other than the transcendental ego, would appear to confirm Ricoeur's suspicion that despite Husserl's express intentions, the possibility of the imaginary variation which would enable the transition from empirical, meditating, ego to the 'eidos' ego, requires that the ego already be, to a certain extent, other than itself; or at any rate, that it must 'contain' its other.

Rather than simply providing such a reading, Derrida chooses to follow the path of a detour in Husserl's text, which both exemplifies the methodological metaphors of the *Rückfrage* (which we will examine in a subsequent section on the possibility of phenomenological historicity, and the Idea in the Kantian sense), and, in Derrida's reading, begins to reveal some of the 'philosophical' consequences at stake. These latter threaten to go beyond a space solely delimitable as 'methodological'.
The detour begins at the point that Husserl postpones the description of the ‘concreteness’ of the Urstiftung of geometrical sense. Rather, Husserl suggests that, suspending, so to speak, the content of the primal instituting act, we can know with certainty the form it must have had. This form, as Derrida underscores, exemplifies the principle of all principles discussed in Chapter 2.16 – namely, that the originating act must have been an intuition of either a natural reality or an ideal object “in the consciousness of its original being-itself-there”. [C 356/Hua VI 367]. Although the provisional [provisoire] deferral of the description of the content of originary evidence corresponds to a “methodological limitation”, this limitation itself respects a “profound philosophical decision.” [IOG 62/52] Rather than pursuing his inquiry into the origin of geometrical sense, through the ‘bracketing’ of the content of the originating act of geometry, which thereby reveals the pure formality of the originating act (i.e., as it is known a priori), Husserl decides to inquire into “the genesis of the absolute (i.e., ideal) Objectivity of sense”. [IOG 63/52] Thus, Husserl is no longer interested in geometrical sense, but rather in the constitution of Objective sense as such. That is to say, there is, at this point in Husserl’s text, a philosophical decision to privilege form over content. Since Objective sense entails what is intelligible not only to everyone, but also for all time, as Derrida writes, Husserl’s deferral of the description of the “historical content” has the aim of

6. And returns us to the point being developed in the Introduction to Voice and Phenomenon, where the living present was claimed to be “the ultimate form of ideality.” [SP 6/VP 4] Derrida continues: “The opposition between form and matter – which inaugurates metaphysics – finds in the concrete [emphasis added] ideality of the living present its ultimate and radical justification.” [SP 6/VP 5] To develop the point made above, the extent to which the Husserlian text is commanded by this metaphysical opposition, and the extent to which, in the deconstruction, phenomenological description seems to be at odds with it, will have to be seen. A sign of this can already be detected in the analyses of the four poles which determine the opening and closure of phenomenology, as described in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”. This argument reaches its fullest expression in “Form and Meaning”, where Derrida discusses the trace of expressive form in pre-expressive Sinn.
posing the question of sense's being launched "into history and its historicity".

The condition of the possibility of the appearance of historicity, and of Objectivity, is, first of all, language [IOG 66/56]. Language both moves in the realm of objectivities, and is also a pre-requisite for the expressibility/communicability of sense, that is, a condition of the possibility of subjective 'sense' becoming intersubjective. The imperative of this movement parallels that by which the content of a subjective moment attains a first degree of (intra-subjective) 'objectivity' (i.e., transcendence) through being 'retained' in consciousness at the same time as it is 'gone beyond' (a movement which will be discussed fully in the following section).

Although language moves in the realm of objectivity, and several elements of language can be dissociated in terms of their objectivity, nevertheless there are, so to speak, degrees of objectivity displayed within language. Firstly, there is the ideal Objectivity of the word, as a type of which each instantiation (e.g., each utterance) is a token. It is as if, in communication, we are perpetually involved in the activity of reducing the facticity of the appearing of language in order to deal with the 'eidos-language'. As indicated, the reduction here is the eidetic reduction. Despite this, however, Derrida suggests that the phenomenological reduction is not also thereby performed. Indeed, language presents a precise problem for the phenomenological reduction, and subsequently for phenomenology itself. Thus we return to the point announced above, concerning the limits of phenomenology.

The problem is that, despite the implicit eidetic reduction,
language would itself be reduced in the phenomenological reduction, to the extent that it retains a degree of worldliness. Derrida develops this point in the course of two long footnotes. In the first [IOG 68/59], Derrida draws attention to Husserl's careful account of the reduction of formal ontology, formal logic and universal mathesis from the realm of pure consciousness in Ideas I [I1 135ff/Hua III,1 126ff], but notes that although such notions as the law of non-contradiction can receive phenomenological clarification within the reduced sphere, nevertheless, Husserl is silent about the language in which the science of pure consciousness is to be carried out. Would not, as Derrida points out, any such language at least to an extent presuppose the formal logic just excluded by Husserl. That is to say, wouldn't the language used to express the science of pure consciousness re-introduce an element of worldliness into that realm which is constituted in the exclusion of worldliness? Far from demonstrating his customary vigilance at this point, in fact, it is clear that a not inconsiderable part of Husserlian phenomenology proceeds on the basis of distinctions which are made not only "within" but also "with the help of language itself". For Husserl, Derrida suggests, it is the "univocity of expression" which serves to guarantee the rigour and non-worldliness of such distinctions. However, as we shall see, Derrida, notably in Voice and Phenomenon, will come to call into question the possibility of such a univocity, and indeed the possibility of upholding distinctions precisely on the basis of an uncritical recourse to language. At this point, Derrida seems content to note that it is this univocity of expression which enables phenomenology to proceed without directly thematizing language as such, although, of course, specific linguistic problems are frequently returned to within

7. It will be recalled that it was such a degree of worldliness which was nominated as the focus for our interpretation of the relation between deconstruction and phenomenology.
In the following footnote [IOG 69f/60fl, Derrida develops further the implications of (the potential worldliness of) unthematized phenomenological-transcendental language, starting from the problem first formulated in Fink’s Kantstudien article of 1933, “The phenomenological philosophy of Edmund Husserl and its contemporary criticism”. Among Fink’s tasks in this article is to explain the sense in which the “phenomenological epoché is... a method for exposing the irreal presuppositions of the real”, [Elveton (1970), 104] in contradiction to the misunderstandings of the Critics of phenomenology. However, as Fink points out, phenomenology is always forced to confront the “unfamiliarity of the reduction”, the fact of its not being “a possibility for our human existence”. This is the case precisely because the reduction brackets human existence as such in order to investigate

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8. Without forcing the matter unduly, we would argue that a major part of Derrida’s strategy in his ‘deconstructions’ of Husserl is to develop the implications of the argument first developed in Fink’s famous article, namely that despite phenomenology’s undoubted critical rigour, there are nonetheless certain crucial concepts which remain operative without having been thematized. Language would therefore be such a concept, as would the concept of sign in general (cf SP 23ff/VP 23ff). Other such concepts would include that of genesis (as indicated in the reading of “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” above), constitution (cf SP 85/VP 94), the idea in the Kantian sense (as we shall go on to see), (transcendental) life (and its cognate death - cf the Introduction to Voice and Phenomenon, as well as the final chapter), origin, etc. [Fink also includes the concepts of phenomenon and achievement (Leistung) - cf Fink, “Operative Begriiffe in Husserls Phanomenologie”, Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung, XI, pp 321ff] In the following footnote, Derrida cites Fink’s argument to the effect that the imprecision in such operative concepts arises to the very extent that “Husserl does not pose the problem of a transcendental language”.

Thus, our argument could be schematized in the following way: following Fink, Derrida argues that an imprecision occurs in certain operative phenomenological concepts due to their not having been thematized, which lack results from phenomenology’s not having reflected on transcendental language itself. Derrida aims to ‘make good’ this lack by both reflecting on phenomenological language and thematizing certain of these operative concepts. The question which would then remain to be posed is whether such a reflection on its own language is indeed possible within the limits of the phenomenological closure? It seems to us that, on the contrary, this is a clear case of the way in which the deconstructive reflections, the operative concepts of phenomenology are displaced by ‘deconstructive notions’ such as différence, arche-écriture, etc.
the first foundation of its possibility: "because it is the suspension of the 'natural attitude' it cannot appear within this attitude and it therefore must be unfamiliar". [ibid] This leads to the apparently paradoxical situation (which nevertheless has a profound similarity with the 'paradox' whose metaphors Derrida is working out in the *Introduction*) "that the reduction is its own presupposition"; while at the same time, the exposition of the reduction has an irreducible "worldly point of departure". [op cit, 105]

Fink returns to this "unavoidable difficulty" as part of "a threefold paradox which continually obscures the phenomenological problematic" at the conclusion of his essay. [op cit, 142] Firstly, can phenomenological 'knowledge' be communicated? For to communicate with another, the phenomenologist must leave the transcendental realm and return to the natural world since the language of communication is necessarily worldly, that is to say, a language shared by the phenomenologist and their interlocutor. The alternative, that propositions about phenomenology remain within the transcendental attitude, runs the risk of absolute failure of communication, since the interlocutor is not within the transcendental realm. Fink goes on to develop the issue of the problematic of trying to express the non-worldly in language which is irreducibly worldly:

The phenomenologist must express themselves in the language of the natural attitude. The mundane meaning of the words available to them cannot be entirely removed, for their meaning can be limited only by the use of other mundane words. For this reason no phenomenological analysis, above all the analysis of the deeper constituting
levels of transcendental subjectivity, is capable of being presented adequately. Phenomenological statements necessarily contain an internal conflict between a word’s mundane meaning and the transcendental meaning which it serves to indicate. \cite{op cit, 143f}

Derrida suggests that Fink’s problem points to the need for a “renewed and rigorous philological ‘etymological’ thematic”, \cite{IOG 69/60} such as practised by Heidegger. However, even to undertake such a task would presuppose the resolution of “the prejudicial problem of history”, that is to say, whether historical sense can indeed be reactivated as such, which is of course the issue at stake in the ‘Origin’. Once again, Derrida argues that Husserl’s silence in this matter is based on the guarantee provided by the univocity of expression: “For Husserl

\begin{enumerate}
\item Undoubtedly a reference to Husserl’s problems in finding adequate language for expressing his findings about the Absolute Flux in the writings on inner time-consciousness, and subsequently to be explored in the C Manuscripts. The problem here formulated by Fink is at its most acute when what is to be described ‘occurs’ at the level of passive synthesis and passive genesis. This is why the analyses of Derrida, and Levinas as we shall see, which focus on these areas of the Husserlian text in particular, respecting the phenomenological hierarchy which reveals the foundationality of these ‘processes’, become specifically ‘linguistic’ at this point. Once more, it is a case of these later texts working at the thresholds of phenomenology, in this case, literally of what can be said by phenomenology.

\item The final moment of the threefold paradox worked out by Fink refers to the extent to which Husserl is justified in claiming, as he does in Ideas I § 59, that while constituted logic is excluded from the transcendental realm, nevertheless logical axioms which can be made evident as such through the observation of consciousness may remain. One such axiom might be that of identity. What identity exists in the reduced realm of pure consciousness? Such an identity would be that between the human and transcendental egos. But how could such an identity be demonstrated, or even made evident within the transcendental realm alone? For such identity subsists in its crossing between the realms of the worldly and the reduced. In order to solve this problem, in order to go beyond the transcendence of this relation, phenomenology “must posit a ‘transcendental’ relation which does not overlook man’s worldly human finitude, frailty, and impotence, but which comprehends it as a constituted meaning, thereby taking it back into the infinite essence of spirit”. \cite{op cit, 145f} At stake here would ultimately be the need to thematize the unitary ground prior to the diffraction of life into transcendental and empirical lives. This task will be confronted by Derrida in the series of ‘critical’ observations developed in the Introduction to Voice and Phenomenon, when he examines the possibility of the foundational rôle of the (operative) concept of life in phenomenology (Lebenswelt, lebendige Gegenwart, etc). These reflections are already intimated in the Introduction when Derrida, citing Suzanne Bachelard, wonders whether the expression ‘intentional life’ does not mark a “surreptitious return to psychologism”. \cite{IOG 69/60} This line of questioning reaches its head when Derrida comes to pose the question of whether phenomenology can make evident a transcendental sense of death.
\end{enumerate}
it would be absurd for sense not to precede – de jure (and here the de jure is difficult to make clear) – the act of language whose own value will always be that of *expression*. [IOG 69/61] It is this value of expression which will be successively called into question in terms of its possibility in *Voice and Phenomenon*, and then in ‘Form and Meaning’, where it will be a question of whether the transformation of (pre-expressive) *Sinn* into linguistic *Bedeutung* is exhausted by the function of *Äusserung* (ie, whether the ‘transformation’ is a case of *Einbildung* [productive enpicturing] or *Abbildung* [reproductive de-picting]).

The problem of the worldliness of the language to which phenomenology must have recourse stimulates a further reflection on the place of language in phenomenology as such. The circle in which the transcendental philosopher is caught is described by the fact that there would need to be the type of transcendental reflection on (and reduction of) language (which would make the transcendental enterprise possible as such) which is itself only possible on the basis of transcendental philosophy. Here, we are forced to confront a ‘zigzag’ movement which we shall return to in a subsequent section, whereby conditions of possibility come to be ‘conditions of impossibility’. These reflections on the place of language in phenomenology, and on phenomenological language, lead Derrida ultimately to a remarkable ‘conclusion’:

...an irreducible proximity of language to primordial thought is signified in a zone which eludes by nature every phenomenal or thematic actuality. Is this immediacy the nearness of thought to itself? We would have to show why that cannot be *decided*. [IOG 70/61]

This *undecidability* is ultimately concerned with the very possibility of phenomenology itself. Can thought think itself ‘immediately’, as the
same, or is there an irreducible differentiation/delay which determines the phenomenological act of reflection [cf Chap 2.4.1]? Can phenomenology ever attain the place of pure auto-affection, or is it always already hetero-affection? Or to pre-empt the work of ‘Form and Meaning’, does the expressibility of primordial thought (pre-expressive Sinn) indicate the fact that it already bears the trace of linguistic form within its matter? The undecidability to which Derrida draws attention results precisely because there is no ‘third realm’ from which to observe, thematise, the two elements of thought and object of thought in the act of reflection. We can always only reflect. Nevertheless, the very necessity of this undecidability marks an irreducible question mark, a doubt which Derrida will go on to formalize as différence. And although this question mark is in ‘opposition’ to the certainty which is claimed by phenomenology for the act of immanent perception, it is clear that the inscription of the question mark has not simply taken place in a space beyond the limits of phenomenology.

Language, to return to the argument of Derrida’s ‘main’ text, is the possibility of objectivity, and words themselves have a degree of ideal Objectivity. However, this objectivity is still limited, which becomes clear when it is compared to the intentional content which it expresses. Although each word-token is an instantiation of an ideal word-type (lexeme), the lexeme itself is bound to the spatio-temporal ground of its language: the lexeme <lion> is an empirical fact which differs from <Löwe>. However, these differing lexemes share a common intentional sense which transcends the empiricity of their languages. Yet this level of Objectivity is itself still bound. For it is an objectivity of receptivity as opposed to the understanding [IOG 71/63; cf EJ §§ 63f], which is to say that its givenness is dependent on its being
preconstituted “in the pure passivity of sensible receptivity”, whereas the latter have their original pregivenness through the productivity of the Ego. We have seen in Chapter 2 that the pregivenness which depends on passive genesis is such that consciousness’ understanding of objects as ‘familiar’ is determined by its situation within an intermonadic community (and hence a specific Umwelt). Thus, what is preconstituted in the pure passivity of sensible receptivity has a subjective tie to that which enables passive genesis.

The objectivity of the understanding, of which the ideal Objectivity of geometry is exemplary, is without limit – it is the ideality of the object itself. [IOG 72/64]11 Thus, Objectivity is the possibility of historicity to the extent that it is omnitemporal, and language is the first possibility of this Objectivity appearing because language itself is objective, though its objectivity remains bound. As Derrida notes, “the ‘theme’ ‘about which [something] is said’, and the object itself are identical”. [IOG 75/68; citing C 357/Hua VI 368]. At this moment, in the intending of the unity of the sense of the ideal object of geometry, the bound objectivity of language is surpassed, and free ideal Objectivity is reached. This free ideality is reached, therefore, through being “intended across and beyond” linguistic ideality. In this way, the essence of geometrical sense qua ideal Objectivity is revealed through language. It is now incumbent upon Husserl to show how language in fact furnishes geometrical ideality with its Objectivity. In order to do this, the possibility of language per se must first be made evident. It will be

11. Derrida draws attention to the source of the distinction between free and bound idealties (in Experience and Judgement § 65), and to the fact that, in this paragraph, Husserl goes on to specify that even free idealties are worldly. Thus the free ideality which is geometrical Objectivity has a worldly tie through its ‘being discovered’, and to the time and place in which it was instituted. As Derrida writes: “Thus [Husserl] states the crucial difficulty of all his philosophy of history: what is the sense of this last factuality?” [IOG 72/64]
language which will enable the transference of sense from the intra-subjective realm, to the realm of intersubjectivity. What is the possibility of this latter realm? In confronting this question, we will return to analyses begun in Chapter 2.7.1.

The fact that language is the possibility of ideality's coming to Objectivity (as well as enabling the phenomenologist to make the sense of Objectivity evident) appears strange initially, since it has just been shown that language, unlike absolute Objectivity, is only ever bound objectivity. Does this not serve to bind the ideality of geometric objectivity once more? For Derrida, this move, on the contrary, is "the most interesting difficulty of this text". [IOG 76/70]. Why does Derrida make this claim?

It is because, as in the case of the reflection on the Urstiftung, where what is revealed is the necessary essence of the facticity of the originating act, the return to language reveals the empirical independence of Objectivity on the facticity of language and culture, but the transcendental dependence of Objectivity on language and culture in general. [IOG 76/70] What is the sense of transcendental here? It is that, without language as such, any sense constituted by the proto-geometer would literally be unnameable, "ineffable" and therefore condemned to the solitude of the proto-geometer, in 'his' facticity. As such, it would never attain the omnitemporal status which guarantees its Objectivity. Thus, as Derrida emphasises, we must be aware that in the constitution of geometrical sense, the fact that it can be talked about is not a mere contingency. For Derrida, the interesting difficulty lies in the fact that, while language is necessary for the constitution of the Objectivity of geometrical sense, it is, at the same time, the "apparent fall back into
language which... would alienate the ideal purity of sense”. [IOG 77/71]. The fact that, in order for sense to ascend from the level of the empirical, and become Objective, it must pass through language, and thereby history whose possibility language first is, has the following consequence: “Historical incarnation sets free the transcendental, instead of binding it. This last notion, the transcendental, must then be rethought.” [IOG 77/71] It seems as if the transcendental is here founded rather than founding; that rather than Objective sense founding the utterances of a subject, the opposite is the case. What is constitutive here, then, is a ‘transcendental language’, a “pure language in general”. [IOG 77/71]

How are we to understand this complex interweaving of constituted and constituting language, and founding and founded Objectivity? Derrida has already drawn attention to the fact that in taking geometry as paradigmatic for his investigation into the historical constitution of ideal sense, and further in highlighting Objectivity as being paradigmatic of geometric sense, Husserl is determining the “sense of sense in general... as object” [IOG 64/54]; and hence that the availability of ideal sense to consciousness is characterised as being for “a regard or gaze”.12 As Derrida continues here, “To constitute an ideal object is to put it at the permanent disposition [emphasis added] of a pure [emphasis added] gaze.” [IOG 78/72] The movement of constitution of ideality concludes when expression is a mere “auxiliary” to the truth of sense; prior to this ‘achievement’ however, the idealities of language, as detailed above, form the milieu in which the ideal object (to be) is

12. The privileging of the regard of the object conforms to the interpretation Levinas gave of Husserl 30 years previously, which had stressed the privilege of the theoretical attitude in phenomenology. Derrida returns to this point in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’ and Voice and Phenomenon.
deposited. In the following passage, Derrida exploits a series of economic metaphors, which call to mind his engagements with Freud, in which the economic metaphorics firstly of the Reality Principle, and then of the 'speculative progress' of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* are examined. Here again (and the same point will be made about the Rückfrage), in the reading of Husserl's text, what is at stake is the influence which the 'pay-off' has on the investment:

... the act of primordial depositing is... the production of a common object... Thus language preserves truth, so that truth can be regarded... but also so that it can lengthen that stay. For there would be no truth without the thésaurisation, which is not only what deposits and keeps hold of the truth, but also that without which a project of truth and the idea of an infinite task would be unimaginable. That is why language is the element of the only tradition in which (beyond individual finitude) sense-retention and sense-prospecting are possible. [IOG 78/72]

Sense, then, is invested in language, so that ultimately the whole community can reap the rewards of its accumulated interest, namely the permanent possibility of its being brought to presence for anyone. Thus, the ultimate ground of constituting/constituted language, and of founding/foundational sense, is transcendental intersubjectivity:

... the problem of geometry's origin puts the problem of the constitution of intersubjectivity on a par with that of the phenomenological origin of language. [IOG 79/73]

And, as with the question of the phenomenological origin of language, Husserl postpones the investigation into the constitution of intersubjectivity at this stage (although, as we have seen, this is partly undertaken in the 5th *Cartesian Meditation*).
It was suggested above that the stress on the economic metaphors pointed towards the question of whether the pay-off ultimately determined the nature of the investment. Derrida now goes on to look at the way in which the goal of the constitution of Objectivity comes to affect the essence of transcendental intersubjectivity, whose constitution Husserl has refrained from thematizing. Thus, how must Husserl be determining the essence of transcendental intersubjectivity such that Objectivity can be constituted as the permanent disposition of an ideal object to a pure gaze? In spelling out certain problems which would need to be confronted in answering this question, Derrida himself sows seeds which will eventually come to fruition in *Voice and Phenomenon*.

Husserl explains that common language belongs to the "horizon of civilization"; [C 358/Hua VI 369], a horizon of "‘my’ others":

One is conscious of civilization from the start as an immediate and mediate linguistic community. Clearly it is only through language and its far-reaching documentations, as possible communications, that the horizon of civilization can be an open and endless one, as it always is for men. What is privileged in consciousness as the horizon of civilization and as the linguistic community is mature normal civilization (taking away the abnormal and the world of children). [C 358-9/Hua VI 369]

In response to this passage, Derrida wonders whether the notion of normality does not pose "serious problems" for transcendental phenomenology, [IOG 80/74] for do not maturity and normality serve as empirical limits upon the transcendental realm? Are not madness and childhood and normality all "modification[s] of universal transcendental norms in the classic sense"? Derrida makes two points with regard to this question. On the one hand, Husserl has indeed made a radical step in
this case, for he has given “a sense to the idea of transcendental pathology”. This is the task undertaken in the essay ‘Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity’, where the crisis is interpreted as a sickness which has “the profound ethical sense of a fall into ‘passivity’, of an inability to be rendered ‘responsible’ for sense in an authentic activity or authentic ‘reactivation’.” [IOG 80/74-5] The interweaving of ethics/responsibility and passivity will be returned to below, where it will be interpreted as the point of departure for Levinas’ ethical reading of the deconstruction of phenomenology. On the other hand, however, to develop the point made above with respect to the economy of Husserl’s account here:

The notion of (adult normality’s) ‘privilege’ denotes here a telos’ meddling beforehand in the eidos. To have access to the eidos of mankind and of language, certain men and certain speaking subjects – madmen and children – are not good examples. [IOG 80/74-5]

Derrida will develop further the implications of this notion in his reading of Husserl’s account of essentially occasional expressions. Here, he limits himself to suggesting that at least one of the reasons why children and abnormals are not good examples is because they do not have “a pure and rigorously determinable essence.” But to say this immediately calls into doubt the possibility of determining the essence of adult normality, since the one begins where the other ends, so to speak. If there is a seepage between the two, then how is either’s essence to be determined in opposition to the other? As Derrida points out, we see here a case of normality changing from an essence into an index of ideal normativity. As we shall see, the relation between essence and ideal norm, and the slippage between the two, is of crucial importance in an
understanding of the ‘double’ functioning of the Idea in the Kantian sense in phenomenology.

Interestingly, the second problem Derrida outlines at this stage also points forward to his subsequent discussion of Husserl’s treatment of essentially occasional expressions. Let us continue our citation from Husserl:

In this sense civilization is, for every person whose we-horizon it is, a community of those who can reciprocally express themselves, normally, in a fully understandable fashion; and within this community everyone can talk about what is within the surrounding world of their civilization as objectively existing. Everything has its name, or is nameable in the broadest sense, i.e., linguistically expressible. [C 359/Hua VI 370]

What is the possibility of this “mediate or immediate horizon of universal language”? The problems faced by such a possibility are those which are familiar to the debate between linguistic relativists and realists (such as Donald Davidson and Jurgen Habermas; see, for instance, the former’s “On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme”). In other words, the condition of universal nameability presupposes the always, in principle, possible successful translation of languages; this in turn presupposes that any two subjects are able, in principle, to be “stand together before the same natural existent” [IOG 81/76], once it has been stripped of all cultural understandings (nb the natural existent as such would thereby stand as the arbitrator between any misunderstanding which would occur between the two subjects, which would arise, that is, on the basis of their different cultures, etc). Now, we know from Husserl’s account of the constitution of the intermonadic community,
and the central importance of kinaesthesias for this, that intersubjectivity is ultimately founded on this ability to see the same object from the other’s point of view, and to know that it is nonetheless the same object as seen from my point of view. However, as Derrida argues, this “same natural existent” stripped of cultural understandings, a “preculturally pure nature”, is in fact “always already buried”; it is, therefore, “a kind of inaccessible infra-ideal.” [IOG 82/77]. In this case, misunderstanding, as opposed to the sharing of an identical existent, would become “the very horizon of culture and language”.

This argument of Derrida’s has a number of consequences. Firstly, it prefigures a dominant theme in his subsequent work, namely that the process of language is founded not on identity, but on difference. Secondly, it also prefigures Derrida’s response in this text to the metaphors of the Rückfrage, to be discussed below, which, for Husserl, is a case of establishing a successful ‘connection’ between originating act and ready-made sense, but for Derrida, is in fact a case of perpetually running the risk of failure.13 Thirdly, it points to the profound fact of our ontological finitude as the reason for this always potential failure. The “infra-ideal” of absolute translatability would seem to confirm this fact. The cultural pre-forming of sense which results in the final failure of absolute translatability marks “the empirical subjectivity of an individual or society.” [IOG 82/77] As with the first two points, this has consequences which echo down through Derrida’s subsequent work. For what is at stake here is an irreducible aspect of language which itself does not refer to any objects. It is, so to

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13. cf Chap 3.4 infra; the failed connection, which is a necessary risk confronted by the epistolary process, the metaphor which Derrida uses to characterize the methodology of the Rückfrage, is another theme which Derrida returns to in his readings of Freud – cf La facteur de la vérité.
speak, a purely subjective moment. We have already had cause to mention this link between irreducible subjectivity, and a failure of phenomenology to find ‘names’ with which to talk about it. But, as Derrida goes on:

That fact would have no consequence within Husserlian thought, if his thought were not also the thorough investigation of subjectivity. Now subjectivity in general, as much empirical as transcendental, appeared very early to Husserl as inaccessible to a direct, univocal, and rigorous language. Subjectivity is fundamentally ineffable. [ibid]

Derrida then refers to further signs of the ineffability of subjectivity in Husserl’s thought – the identity of the constitutive flux of temporalizing consciousness, and the irreducible indicative function of essentially occasional expressions. These are themes to which we shall return below. The point here, however, is that this once again confirms the claim that for Husserl, the sense of sense in general is determined as object, as object before the regard. The problem is that Husserl’s descriptions push him into a realm where no objects can be presented to consciousness. However, this realm is, as Derrida has stressed, the very realm to which phenomenology commits itself from the beginning, namely the subjective realm in which objectivity is constituted. Once again, it appears as if subjectivity as such, prior to the phenomenological reduction which would enable a distinction to be made between empirical (bracketed) and transcendental subjectivity, which latter phenomenology in theory would be able to describe, remains unthematized. What is the nature of the subjectivity unthematized by Husserl, and for what reasons does it elude phenomenological description? And how will the deconstructive text be able to talk about it? We shall return to these questions below; we shall also suggest in the
final chapter that the subjectivity hereby indicated has certain ethical consequences, to be developed by Levinas.

4. Writing

Before turning to Derrida’s analysis of irreducible subjectivity and language in his examination of the initial distinction of the 1st Logical Investigation in Voice and Phenomenon, we will look first at the final stage in the linguistic constitution of Objectivity. So far, we have been concerned with immediate communication (within an intermonadic community), which is the possibility of intersubjective ideality. However, this communication is necessarily limited to a present moment and thus cannot constitute the perduring sense which is definitive of absolute Objectivity. The final reduction of all empirical subjectivity, and the constitution of absolute ideal objectivity in “the purity of its relation to a universal transcendental subjectivity” [IOG 87/84], is made possible by writing [écriture]. However, as we stressed above, the very quality of writing which allows the final step in the constitution of Objectivity, namely the fact that it is “communication become virtual”, has, as Derrida writes, “an ambiguous value: it simultaneously makes passivity, forgetfulness, and all the phenomena of crisis possible.”

How does the essence of writing enable this last step in the constitution of Objectivity? By giving a form to meaning which can, as such, perdure beyond all ties to particular times and places (the times and places of actual utterances), by making dialogue virtual, “writing creates a kind of autonomous transcendental field from which every

14. Derrida will go on to analyze this chiasmic sense of writing in the text of Plato, where, of course, writing is characterised as ἡγησία. [cf “Plato’s Pharmacy” in Dissemination]
present subject can be absent” [IOG 88/84]. That is to say, the crucial aspect of writing which founds the Objectivity of sense, corresponds to the rôle of a b s e-intercise so to speak, the final stage in a progressive series of transcendences of presence. The first stage, as we shall see in the next section, is the transcendence of the present instant which is made possible by the ‘stretching’ of present consciousness. The second stage is the transcending of my present subjectivity in intersubjective communication. In both these cases, a degree of non-presence, of alterity, is interwoven with subjective presence, in order to make possible the constitution of objectivity. Absolute Objectivity is constituted at the moment of the complete non-presence of subjectivity. The progress corresponding to each of these stages could be said to be from transcendental I to transcendental we to universal transcendental subjectivity. Thus, Derrida is able to write, apparently paradoxically, that a subjectless transcendental field is one of the ‘conditions’ of transcendental subjectivity. [IOG 88/85]

However, writing can achieve this, according to phenomenology, only through its “pure relation to a consciousness which grounds it as such”. The apparent paradox of Derrida’s formulation is explained by the fact that the absence of subjectivity in the transcendental field opened by writing is only “a factual absence”. In a remarkable passage, Derrida characterises the stakes of writing’s dependence on universal transcendental subjectivity:

But if the text does not announce its own pure dependence

15. The way in which sense becomes virtual in this transcendental field could be informatively compared with the way in which sense becomes ‘stored’ in the realm of the ‘unconscious’ when it has passed from present consciousness. As we stressed in our brief reading of the ‘Origin’ above, the subsequent process by which sense then becomes present again, is also clearly similar.
on a writer or reader in general (ie, if it is not haunted by a virtual intentionality), and if there is no purely juridical possibility of it being intelligible for a transcendental subject in general, then there is no more in the vacuity of its soul than a chaotic literalness or the sensible opacity of a defunct designation, a designation deprived of its transcendental function. The silence of prehistoric arcana and buried civilizations, the entombment of lost intentions and guarded secrets, and the illegibility of the lapidary inscription disclose the transcendental sense of death as what unites these things to the absolute privilege of intentionality in the very instance of its essential juridical failure. [IOG 88/85]

The equivalent situation, to develop a point made above, would be if we were to come across a body [Körper] and not experience it as a Leib, if the body, that is, did not indicate to us the spirit animating it, if we failed to make the apperceptive transfer which would allow the other to be appresented to us. That this is an essential possibility, which indeed it must be, otherwise Husserl would have no grounds for positing virtual intentionality as foundational here (ie, all inscription would be interpretable – the point parallels that concerning absolute translatability), depends on a failure of readability which itself is occasioned by this extraordinary notion of the transcendental sense of death. Can there indeed be such a thing? And if, as Derrida will argue in Voice and Phenomenon, both in the Introduction, and in the concluding chapter, on Husserl’s own terms, it is not possible, then what are the implications for our understanding of writing? Would we not be forced to say that in fact, what is marked by writing, which makes possible the final constitution of Absolute Objectivity, is indeed absolute absence?

How then are we to understand this transcendental sense of death which is the possibility of intentionality’s absence from writing? Clearly
animating intentionality must once have been present, otherwise that which is now an illegible lapidary inscription would never have been an inscription as such. To continue our analogy with the body, the corpse which we now do not recognize as a body must once have been a proper body \( \text{[Leib]} \), otherwise it would not now be a corpse \( \text{[Körper]} \). Furthermore, we must distinguish the absolute absence of intentionality with that ‘merely temporary’ absence of intentionality which calls for the reactivation of sense whose possibility the ‘Origin’ both describes and is an example (exemplary) of.

For Derrida, this problem constitutes the “most difficult” posed by the ‘Origin’. Writing enables the final stage of the constitution of Objectivity to the extent that it frees sense from any subjective, or intersubjective, possession whatsoever; it enables sense, or truth, to perdure even when that sense is not being actively thought. What is thereby done, however, runs the risk of sense being buried, of sense being lost. This would be the case if a virtual sense could not be reactivated, re-awakened, on encountering the graphic form in which it had been ‘stored’. But how can such a possibility be described by phenomenology? Does not such a loss of sense correspond to a contingency, a factual event occurring in the world? In other words, does this not correspond, as Derrida says, to those two motifs which delimit phenomenology’s boundary with its other, namely “\emph{l’empirisme et... la non-philosophie}”? For in the transcendental realm, once objective sense is constituted, how could it subsequently be lost? Consider the analogy with egology: in this case, the situation would be of a sense retained and then ‘stored’ in the ‘unconscious’, but which could not subsequently be recollected. How can this be a transcendental possibility
as opposed to a merely factual accident?\textsuperscript{16}

We are confronted, therefore, by the following problem: it appears as if there is a necessary risk run in the final stage of the constitution of Absolute Objectivity, a risk which is an essential moment of the very capacity of writing to make this last stage possible; but that this risk cannot, apparently, be described within the phenomenological closure, precisely because the risk bears the hallmarks of all that is reduced by phenomenology when it delimits its own, transcendental, field. When Derrida searches Husserl’s text for an account of how the disappearance of sense is possible, he writes that:

we were unable to find in Husserl an unequivocal response to a question which only makes that of phenomenology itself return: what is the sense of its appearing? [IOG 93/91]

Derrida therefore attempts to supplement this lack in the phenomenological text by thematizing the possibility of disappearance.

Firstly, disappearance, as we have said, cannot occur within the individual consciousness. In the unconscious, in which sense is deposited, sense has a virtual presence. [cf Formal and Transcendental Logic, Appendix II; and Chap 2.4.2] Rather, as Derrida writes, “this Objectivity is found threatened as truth in the world”.

Secondly, we can conceive of the factual destruction of the very bodiliness of the graphic sign which is the guarantee of Objectivity. Now although this does not constitute the disappearance of sense as such,

\textsuperscript{16} cf Fink’s Appendix to the Crisis on the “Problem of the ‘Unconscious’”.

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nevertheless, as Derrida points out: “Corporeal exteriority undoubtedly
does not constitute the sign as such but, in a sense that we must make
clear, is indispensable to it.” [IOG 94/93] This comment is of
fundamental importance in understanding Derrida’s response to
Husserl’s writings about language. For corporeal exteriority necessarily
carries with it an irreducible trace of worldliness, which the reduction
would seek to bracket, and thus a trace of that which cannot be made
fully present to consciousness. The point which we made above with
respect to the complex interweaving of language as both constitutive (of
Objectivity) and constituted (as secondary, auxiliary, to sense) attains a
more pregnant sense at this stage. For language as constitutive must, for
Husserl, be understood as spiritual. That is to say, as Rudolf Bernet has
pointed out,17 that the framing of this constitutive function of language
betrays a prior (metaphysical) decision on Husserl’s behalf, to privilege
that which is informed by a metaphorics of life [geist/Leib] as opposed
to death [Körper] in the determination of the essence of language (this
latter not having been thematized within phenomenology, as was argued
before). Language, and in particular, writing, does not attain its proper
status until it is spiritually informed, by a Sinn- or Bedeutungsintention.
However, the question Derrida wishes to pose, over and above this
revealing of a determining metaphorics in Husserl’s text, is whether or
not language, and indeed writing, can assume this constitutive (as
opposed to constituted) rôle without any corporeal exteriority, without
any worldliness. We shall see precisely the same question returning
shortly, when we come to read Voice and Phenomenon, where it is a
case of the exteriority of indication which Husserl is striving to reduce;
and finally in ‘Form and Meaning’, where Derrida inquires into whether

there is a trace of (linguistic) form in pre-expressive Sinn, whose ‘presence’ enables the sense to be expressed meaningfully. This last point corresponds to a line of questioning first intimated in ‘‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology’, and which we adumbrated in Chapter 2, namely whether it must not be the case that pre-constituted hyle already bares a trace of form through the work of passive synthesis. In each of these cases, the informing, constitutive, rôle of active consciousness seems to have been partly supplanted by that which would normally be opposed to form/presence – matter, worldliness, etc. Moreover, in each case, this trace of form in the constitutive formless corresponds with specific moves in genetic phenomenology: indication, passive synthesis, and now the necessary historicality [IOG 93/92] of the disappearance of sense interwoven with writing’s constitution of Objectivity. We are suggesting, therefore, that Husserl’s genetic texts reveal a constitutive ‘activity’ whose essence renders it incapable of presentation to phenomenology. There is, as revealed within the deconstruction, an irreducible excess in constitution, an excess which lies precisely beyond the border which phenomenology wishes to draw around itself, as delimited by the reductions. How is this excess to be talked about? We believe that the language of trace, arche-écriture, etc, represents the deconstructive attempt to ‘name’ that which phenomenology has shown to be indispensable in the constitution of meaning.

Be this as it may, Husserl himself would not countenance factual disappearance as a condition of possibility for the disappearance of truth. For the type of accident which could befall factual existents affects them precisely as bound idealities, in the sense discussed above, and not as the type of free ideality of which absolute Objectivity is an
example. That is because what binds idealities which are not of the status of Absolute Objectivity is precisely a degree of irreducible factuality. Writing, finally, only serves to free ideality from all ties. Thus, any contingency in the world could not, of necessity, affect Objectivity in any way; all actual inscriptions could be destroyed, but to the extent that Objectivity finally does not have any dependence on these, it would remain unaffected as such.

Undoubtedly, absolute ideality would be changed, mutilated, and overthrown in fact; perhaps it would disappear in fact from the surface of the world, but its sense-of-being as truth, which is not in the world – neither in our world here, nor any other – would remain intact in itself. [IOG 94/94]

The possibility of the disappearance of sense, then, rests neither in egological forgetfulness, nor in the factual destruction of the graphic sign which embodies sense. The general problem which is being confronted here is that the essence of ideality, of absolute Objectivity, is that it be indefinitely repeatable. Therefore, the disappearance of sense, the impossibility of its being reactivated, is not an accident which can befall sense as such. Derrida, therefore, describes Husserl as opting for a third path. This path parallels closely the descriptions of the 1st Logical Investigation which we are about to turn to.

As we have said, the metaphoricity of Husserl’s text reveals that writing’s constitutive capacity lies in its Leiblichkeit. Of necessity, it is also a Körper, however, in a sense similar to the way in which a communicative sign is always an indicative sign as well as an expressive sign. As we saw in the 1st Logical Investigation, in order to get at meaning as such, that is, as indefinitely repeatable, Husserl bracketed the
worldly function of indication by concentrating on the interior monologue. Husserl will have to perform a similar ‘reduction’, in order to ‘bracket’ the worldliness of the graphic signifier as Körper, “if he does not want to be reduced to equivocation, to choose silence, or to precipitate phenomenology into philosophy.” [IOG 97/98] As in the 1st Investigation, where it was the meaning-giving intention which was seen ultimately to found meaning, so here Husserl will:

track down the intention of writing (or of reading) in itself and in its purity; in a new reduction he is going to isolate the intentional act which constitutes Körper as Leib and maintain this act in its Leiblichkeit, in its living truth-sense. Such an analysis no longer has any need of Körper as such. [ibid; emphasis added]

In this case, the possibility of the disappearance of sense will occur in the case of “the failure of an act and the abdication of a responsibility” [IOG 98/98]. Such a forgetfulness can only be presented within an intentional history, as Derrida says, that is, within the boundaries of genetic phenomenology. Thus forgetfulness of sense, the possibility of sense’s disappearance will once more become a phenomenon of the ego “as one of its intentional ‘modifications’”.

As forgetfulness in this way, the disappearance of sense cannot be a total annihilation – it is always in principle possible for it to be reactivated. But what is the nature of this forgetfulness? Once again, there is an ambivalence to be found in Husserl’s text, one that again parallels closely the already noted ambivalence with respect to writing, but one that also follows the movement which we described above with respect to genetic phenomenology.
We saw in Chapter 2.7 above that one aspect of the Crisis was precipitated by the alienation of scientific theories from our experience of the Lebenswelt. A further aspect, detailed in the 'Origin', results from the type of rote-learning of mathematical symbol manipulation which is not accompanied by any correlative understanding of the meaning of the acts being undertaken. The sense of the signs whose use is learned is buried under sedimentations [IOG 98/99]. Husserl’s metaphor is geological/archeological – each new level of sedimentations corresponds to a new stage in the development of the science. So, when we said before that the accumulation of all the past propositions in a science form its premise, we were not strictly accurate; for this accumulation is a stratification, in which originary sense is continually being buried deeper and deeper. The metaphor is archeological to the extent that Husserl wishes to argue that the buried sense is always potentially excavatable [IOG 99/99].

The form that the failure of the act, the abdication of responsibility, can take, is passivity [ibid] This passivity is the necessary first stage in the experience of signs (as it is in the experience of others, and in recollection and passive genesis). It is by means of passive synthesis that a sign experienced initially as merely körperlich is then imbued with its original sense, that is, that this sense is reawakened, what was virtual becomes once more actual. Derrida emphasises two points with regard to this movement of associative awakening. Firstly, in a footnote, Derrida links up the theme of virtuality, by which Husserl has characterised writing, with those of passivity and sedimentation, two fundamental aspects of genetic phenomenology, and underlines the definitive way with which these are dealt by Husserl. The themes treated in genetic phenomenology:
derive all their seriousness from the fact that they are imposed [emphasis added] on a philosophy of actually present evidence whose ‘principle of all principles’ is the immediate and actual presence of sense itself. If reactivation is valuable and urgent, that is because it can bring back to present and active evidence a sense which is this retrieved out of historical virtuality. If, on the surface, phenomenology allows itself to be summoned outside of itself [emphasis added] by history, it has thus found in reactivation the medium of its fidelity [emphasis added]. [IOG 99/100]

This is a passage of central importance for the argument we are advancing. For here Derrida is claiming that, with regard to the closure of phenomenology delimited by its principle, a principle informed by the value of the metaphysical concept of presence, genetic phenomenology (as exemplified here by history) pulls phenomenology beyond itself. However, phenomenology countenances such a movement only so that it can then be mastered, put to the service so to speak, of a movement which returns what is found in genetic phenomenology back to the heart of the phenomenological closure. That is to say, the ‘absence’ which informs genetic phenomenology is tolerable to phenomenology (and its principle) only to the extent that it is in fact a potential presence, a potentiality which can be rendered actual by that process of reactivation of which the ‘Origin’ is itself exemplary. In this way, the place ascribed for genetic explanation by phenomenology, and the rôle it thereby plays, corresponds to the movement to be found in Hegel which was described in Chapter 1.2. The question which we wish to pose here is whether there is an excess of the beyond into which genetic explanation takes phenomenology which cannot, or is not, recuperated in this movement; an excess which would form the point of
departure for the supplementing deconstruction?\textsuperscript{18}

The second point which Derrida makes concerns the way in which passivity can lead to the forgetfulness which is the possibility of sense's disappearance. Reactivation, Husserl argues, is not in fact the "norm" when we encounter signs. Rather than actively reproducing primordial evidence, it is more usual that there is a passive comprehension of signs. One so to speak takes on board meaning, accepts it. As we said before, this must be the case, in the example of a science, otherwise progress would simply be impossible. In the counter-case, in active reproduction, one makes oneself "fully responsible for and conscious of the sense" one reactivates. As Derrida writes, reactivation is the very act of all responsibility. This is possible precisely because, in so doing, sense is no longer virtual, but is made dependent once again upon a sense-giving act. Thus what was passive is now made active once more. What Derrida is striving to point to here is a sense in which passivity is 'more primary' than activity, which latter has always tended to be privileged by phenomenology. Thus, Derrida writes that, in the light of this, we might have:

\textsuperscript{18} The question, which Derrida asks of Hegel, and which parallels the question we are asking here, is that found in \textit{Glas}: what remains \textit{[restance]} of Absolute Spirit? In asking this question of phenomenology, we believe that we can begin to respond to Donn Welton's argument, advanced in his excellent \textit{The Origins of Meaning}. In this book, Welton attempts to find a response to Derrida's deconstruction of Husserl from within phenomenology, and particularly, from within the move to genetic phenomenology. Ultimately, we think that in fact, Welton's Husserl is much closer to Derrida's Husserl than he perhaps imagines. They diverge at the point when Derrida begins to wonder if phenomenology can indeed be \textit{faithful} to the things themselves as revealed by genetic phenomenology. Is there not an irreducible absence exposed in genetic phenomenology, indeed, a \textit{constitutive} absence, which, in the final analysis, cannot be recuperated by phenomenology? And if this is indeed the case, which is what Derrida is arguing, can phenomenology, which is defined by its principle of all principles, have anything to say in this area? Is it not, literally, beyond phenomenology? And is it not phenomenology's failure here which calls for the response of deconstruction, to make good the failure, to respond to the things themselves which, at this stage, phenomenology can only 'point to'?
to conclude that phenomenology has only argued with the arbitrary sense of this couple of concepts, or indefinitely struggled with them, namely, with the most 'irreducible' heritage (and indeed thereby perhaps the most obscuring heritage) of Western philosophy. [IOG 100/101]

Derrida then goes on to refer to a passage in *Experience and Judgement* to which we have drawn attention already, where Husserl himself acknowledges that a strict distinction between activity and passivity cannot simply be made. Now, we could say that this is another example of an unthematized operative concept-pair at work in phenomenology. Here, however, Derrida is going further, and this is a move which becomes more common in his subsequent work. For he is arguing not only that the concept-pair has been unthematized by Husserl, but that, moreover, his understanding of the pair has been dictated in advance by the very metaphysics of which he is critical. The fact that phenomenology then has to 'struggle' with the concepts, as attested by Husserl's remark alluded to [EJ 108/EU 119], is a sign of their inadequacy for the task at hand; that is, that what is here revealed by phenomenology cannot be subsumed under the concepts which, on the one hand, define the metaphysical closure, and on the other, are definitive of phenomenology as well. Phenomenological evidence is, so to speak, at odds with its principle. There is, as revealed in genetic phenomenology, a 'passivity' whose work cannot simply be consigned to the 'secondary' opposite of activity. How are we to conceive of 'primary passivity' which is no longer the straightforward opposite of activity? And what are the implications of such a thought? We shall find an answer to these questions in the Ethics of Levinas.
5. Indication

The concept couple expression-indication also appears to have been imposed upon Husserl through an acceptance of the metaphysical heritage. That this is indeed the case seems to be demonstrated by the fact that the former is privileged by Husserl over the latter (which, Derrida argues, Husserl strives to ‘reduce’) precisely to the extent that it harbours an irreducible degree of absence, whereas this is not the case with expression. However, as we have seen, it is also the case that the indication relation provides Husserl with the seed for what will later grow into genetic phenomenology. Is it the case, therefore, as was being asked by Derrida in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, that static phenomenology can delimit itself from genetic phenomenology, that the trace of indication can be excluded from the working of the expression sign? In the last subsection, we looked at how language, and particularly writing, contribute to the constitution of Absolute Objectivity. We shall now turn to Derrida’s reading of Husserl’s ‘theory of signification’ in Voice and Phenomenon. What is the relation between signification and the understanding of ideality which informs phenomenology?

In Chapter 2.2.1, we presented Husserl’s account of meaning [Bedeutung] and its relation to the expression-sign [Ausdruck]; and announced there that, when we came to read Voice and Phenomenon, we would consider the procedure by which Husserl approaches this task. This is of concern because, in actual communication, the expression-sign is always interwoven with the indication-sign [Anzeichen]. As such, meaning can never be fully presented to consciousness, since the indication-sign’s function is always to point to a meaning which is
absent. Thus, if, in communication, the indication-sign is always present, it must be the case that meaning itself cannot be fully present. This is problematical since it, so to speak, ‘contravenes’ phenomenology’s principle of all principles, which demands that we only treat what is present to consciousness just as it is present to consciousness. How does Husserl ‘unweave’ expression and indication, and to what extent does the imperative of phenomenology’s principle come to pre-determine Husserl’s understanding of signs (contrary to phenomenology’s claim to respect the things themselves)? And finally, do the things themselves, as presented by phenomenology, allow the methodological procedures to be carried out?19

Derrida begins by underscoring that what distinguishes the indication sign from the expression sign, according to Husserl, is that it does not express, but rather indicates; and that, strictly, what is expressed is Bedeutung or Sinn [SP 17/VP 17].20 The indication sign, while being a sign, that is, while still signifying, is nevertheless bedeutschungslos. Thus, Husserl delimits the rôle of the expressive sign to the purely linguistic realm. However, in actual communication, the indicative function is always interwoven [verflochten] with the expressive function. The question that Derrida will ask of Husserl is whether the methodological techniques employed by the phenomenologist are adequate for unravelling this interweaving, or

19. In his Introduction to the ‘Origin’, as we shall see in a subsequent section, Derrida attempts to tease out the implications of the metaphors of Husserl’s methodological procedure in that text, i.e. the Rückfrage’s metaphors. It is a similar task which is undertaken in Voice and Phenomenon with respect to the metaphors which inform the methodological decisions of the 1st Logical Investigation. In particular, as was intimated above, the metaphors of life and death will be of interest to Derrida.

20. "Jedes Zeichen ist Zeichen für etwas, aber nicht jedes hat eine 'Bedeutung', einen 'Sinn', der mit dem Zeichen 'ausgedrückt' ist." [Hua XIX/1 30]
whether the indicative, non-linguistic and non-meaningful, function does not overflow its limits. As Derrida writes, for meaning to be “caught up” in the indicative system is for meaning to be infected, to be “contaminated”, by indication; that is, for meaning to be contaminated by non-meaning. [SP 20/VP 21] In such a state, it would be impossible for phenomenology to determine meaning’s essence.

Derrida’s aim here is to draw attention to a relation between a certain inside and outside, which outside is unquestionably undesirable; a polis, so to speak, of phenomenological interest, whose lines of demarcation can be more or less readily drawn. It is these lines, Derrida is suggesting, which inform the essence of the distinction that Husserl is making from the outset. Thus, in stipulating that the interweaving of the two functions of the sign takes place on the real communicative level, Husserl appears to be pointing to a different level where this is not the case, a level which would be distinguished from the ‘real’ level precisely in being ‘irreal’. This is, of course, the same distinction, as Derrida points out, which is operative in defining “the very space of phenomenology”. [SP 21/VP 21]. But this distinction, which opens the space of phenomenology, where is it met with if not in language? [ibid] This question repeats that asked in the two long footnotes in the Introduction which we discussed above, where Derrida, following Fink, wondered if it was not the case that phenomenology rested on distinctions made in a language which had not only not been thematized but was, moreover, worldly, and so bracketed from the phenomenological realm – which it appears here to open. Furthermore, does not the possibility of making a distinction between the worldly (de facto) and the non-worldly (de jure) itself depend on the possibility of distinguishing expression from indication (for if this latter were not the
case, how could we ever bracket worldly communication and dwell in the space of the pure objectivities of meaning?). There is, it would appear, therefore, a circle which, once more, arises from a certain non-thematization of language, and which defines both the methodological procedures of the text, and that which these procedures aim to deal with. As we have seen before, and will see again, what is supposed to be foundational for Husserl appears to rest on other grounds, grounds, indeed, which themselves are supposed to be being founded. However, as we shall also see, it is not just a case of an epistemological circle here. As we have already intimated, and as will come to be confirmed, conditions of possibility have a tendency to be, at the same time, conditions of impossibility. Thus, to anticipate, if the distinction between expression and indication is the condition of possibility for the space of phenomenology, then what are the consequences if the distinction cannot be maintained at the non-real level (whose opening this distinction enables)? This question parallels exactly the one posed by Derrida when he analyzed the internal boundary between structure and genesis in phenomenology. Thus we may formalize the question being asked of phenomenology by deconstruction – what is the nature of the other which phenomenology tries to exclude, how does it attempt to effect this exclusion, is it successful, and if not, if the other returns to ‘contaminate’ the phenomenological closure, what effect does it thereby have? The suggestion that we are here advancing is that such moments as those when phenomenology has recourse to the Idea in the Kantian sense; or where it has to admit to being unable to find names; these are moments which are indicative of the return of phenomenology’s other to the phenomenological closure. And it is here that the deconstructive text has its ‘supplementary place’, on the margins, on the thresholds, of phenomenology.
In real communication, then, the indicative and expressive functions of signs are always interwoven. Why is this the case, and is there any linguistic situation where it is not the case? As we saw in Chapter 2.2.2, indication serves to intimate the mental thoughts of one to another in communication. One form of communication where such intimation is not needed, where the thoughts which animate the signs are not absent, is in the interior monologue which is carried on in solitary mental life. Derrida notes a certain strangeness here, which he will go on to develop in 'Form and Meaning': for the 'outering' of expression, the taking of sense beyond itself into linguistic form, occurs "just at the moment when the relation to a certain outside is suspended" [SP 22/22]. However, this outside is the objective outside of ideality, as opposed to the 'real world', the ideality which is the intentional object of the Bedeutungsintention.  

Prior to looking at the moves by which Husserl will suspend the indication function of signs in the 'reduction' to solitary mental life, Derrida pauses to adumbrate two ways in which these initial paragraphs of the Logical Investigations may be read, two ways which define the two-handed practice which we claimed was typical of the strategy of deconstruction. These two readings, of the same movement in Husserl's text, would either uncover the radicality of Husserl's approach, or reveal the critical dogmatism of phenomenology. The relation between the two readings gives deconstruction its distinct character, and it is the deconstructive response to the perpetual struggle in phenomenology between its radical and conservative elements which we are striving to illuminate here.  

Firstly, then, it seems as if, in initially making this distinction
between indication signs and expression signs, Husserl has failed to thematize the sign \textit{[Zeichen]} ‘in general’. What is the essence of sign, such that it permits this diffraction into expression and indication; what is its prior unity? Has not Husserl merely dogmatically presupposed sign’s essence, in advance? To suggest that this is indeed the case, Derrida at this point will be satisfied to show the extent to which Husserl evades the question of what a sign in general is; the subsequent pages of the book will show more clearly the way in which certain presuppositions do indeed inform Husserl’s text, and that these presuppositions are themselves determined by the metaphysical tradition which phenomenology aims to ‘move beyond’. Thus, Derrida notes that Husserl, in claiming that all signs are \textit{für etwas}, does not attempt to thematize ‘standing-for’, does not put this ‘relation’ into question. What is the general sense of the \textit{für etwas}, of which the indication sign \textit{[Anzeigen]} is one exemplar, and the expression sign \textit{[Hinzeigen]} a different one? Derrida hints at this stage that a thematization of \textit{Zeigen} (which is what will be undertaken in his own text, as we have suggested certain other concepts, such as life, constitution, language, etc, are thematized in the deconstructions of phenomenology) will reveal the ‘roots’ of the oppositions that will go on to structure the rest of Husserl’s investigations, but at the same time, will also reveal why it may not be as easy as Husserl assumes to separate the two sign-functions \cite{SP 24/VP 24}.

Secondly, and on the other hand, this deferral of the question of what a sign in general is can be interpreted not as dogmatism, but exemplary critical vigilance. On such a reading, we could say that Husserl was indeed being faithful to the things themselves, in analyzing two types of ‘sign-function’ without presupposing that they share a
common essence, that there is a prior unity. Thus, Husserl might in fact reveal that there is a linguistic inadequacy exposed in using the same word to designate two quite heterogeneous functions. As Derrida notes, such a reading would be justified by the following remark of Husserl's: "Von den beiden dem Worte Zeichen anhängenden Begriffen" [Hua XIX/1 31]. Furthermore, if Husserl were to ask what a sign is in general, would that not be to privilege the ontological over the significational, and then, in a manner familiar enough from Heidegger, would that not commit Husserl to a position where truth is no longer constituted by signification, but that signification is simply in the service of truth? [SP 24/VP 25-6] Such would be the classically realist presupposition of a certain strand of metaphysics. But if the reverse were the case:

... if the sign in some way preceded what we call truth or essence, there would be no sense in speaking about the truth or essence of the sign. [SP 24/VP 26]

This movement would correspond, therefore, to that highlighted in the 'Origin', where, as Derrida has shown, there is a complex interweaving of founding and founded language, about which it can at least be said that, without language, and ultimately writing, there would be no ideality, no objectivity, and hence no truth. In this sense, it can be said that signification "produces truth or ideality, rather than simply records it." [SP 25/VP 26] However, as Derrida continues, "this last move is not simple", because, we think, there are certain necessary reasons why this movement goes beyond the limits of the closure defined by phenomenology’s principle. These could only be intimated in the last section, but they will be more fully developed in this section. Basically, it is a question of whether phenomenology could ever tolerate
foundational non-presence, of which writing is the archetypal example – it is that which is called upon to serve when all speakers and hearers are absent.

Having spelled out these two alternative interpretations of the opening paragraph of the 1st Logical Investigation, Derrida goes further: these interpretations are not limited to this particular paragraph, but describe the “historic destiny” of phenomenology:

On the one hand, phenomenology is the reduction of naïve ontology, the return to an active constitution of sense and value, to the activity of a life which produces truth and value in general through its signs. But at the same time, without being simply juxtaposed to this move, another factor will necessarily confirm the classical metaphysics of presence and indicate the adherence of phenomenology to classical ontology. [SP 25-6/VP 26-7]

For us what is crucial is that these two motifs in phenomenology are not simply juxtaposed. We are arguing that the second motif will always be seen to determine in advance the first motif, such that any radical breaks phenomenology might make with classical metaphysics are always ultimately brought back under the aegis of phenomenology’s principle. On the other hand, however, they are also not simply juxtaposed at the moment that what is exposed in phenomenology’s descriptive richness exceeds irrevocably phenomenology’s closure, that is, when the excess becomes no longer the other of phenomenology.21

21. In a remarkable footnote, which glosses the radical move just discussed, Derrida suggests that the phenomenological critique of metaphysics would share affinities with Nietzsche (who also argued that truth was produced by signs, rather than signs merely recording truth) – an extraordinary claim indeed – but that, from the perspective of Heidegger, as is the case with Nietzsche, the place of Husserl’s critique would not be beyond metaphysics, but at the end of metaphysics. For further discussion of this point, see Spurs. Derrida then goes on to hint that, in his opinion, Heidegger’s own texts perhaps uniquely escape the criticism that they are a continuation of metaphysics. Thus, the Heideggerian text labours
In *Voice and Phenomenon*, Derrida announces that he will concentrate on the metaphysical attachment in Husserl, which is first evidenced, he argues, by the privileging of ‘internal’ expression over ‘external’ indication in the account of meaning. Indication’s treatment is limited establishing its essence such that it may be bracketed from the discussion. Now, Derrida suggests that this suspension of the indicative function of the sign, which is interwoven with the expressive function in ‘empirical communication’, will in fact be an “infinite task”, and that Husserl’s whole enterprise would be threatened if “indication were not added to expression as an adhesion [adhérence], but inhabited the inside of its movement essentially” [SP 27/VP 28]. For instance, in a footnote, Derrida considers the case of writing. We have seen already the constitutive rôle which writing plays for Objectivity. Now, as Derrida says, writing is undoubtedly indicative, in its empirical sphere – empirical writing is indicative of an expression, and indeed, of the act which animates the graphic sign. However, this is only the case for phonetic writing. In hieroglyphs, or pictograms, writing is in immediate contact with meaning, without the intermediary of expressive discourse. The meaning [*Bedeutung*] is meant [*meint*] by the written sign. Does this not show that, if indeed writing is necessarily indicative (after all, it functions in the absence of a writer’s (animating) intentions), nevertheless, it can indicate the meaning directly, without absence, so to

under the need to replace what he perceives to be the metaphysical conception of subjectivity which still dominates Husserl’s thought. However, will not Derrida’s text demonstrate that such a conception of subjectivity simply does not survive in phenomenology? This is not only the case with regard to the genetic texts, where Husserl develops the idea of concrete, historically determined (and indeed determined by the intermonadic community) subjectivity; but also with regard to the implications of Husserl’s work on the temporalisirig level of constitutive consciousness, the so-called Absolute Subjectivity. Is this not the very reason that, in the final analysis, phenomenology finds subjectivity ineffable [IOG 82/77]? That is, ineffable because what phenomenology reveals is a ‘subjectivity’ ‘beyond metaphysics’, but is limited to utilising metaphysical language. We think this is Levinas’ point in *Otherwise than Being*, to which we will return in the final chapter.
speak? Yet this is the rôle which Husserl has strictly reserved for the expressive function of the sign. The implication is that it is only by restricting the phenomenological discourse to the concept of phonetic writing that Husserl is able to proceed. But this very restriction already bears a metaphysical heritage, namely that writing is only ever the (more or less unnecessary) adjunct to primordial speech, in which latter meaning is truly lived through.\(^\text{22}\) The privileging of phoneticism will be a constant theme of *Voice and Phenomenon*, leading, ultimately, to the thematicization of the voice which protects the phenomenological project undertaken at the beginning of *Logical Investigations*.

Derrida then goes on to look at Husserl’s characterisation of the indication relation, of which the indication sign is a specific type. We recall that in making this characterisation, Husserl was led to observe a certain generality in the indication relation, which motivated him to draw a distinction between *Hinweis* and *Beweis*. Once again, however, and in common with what was said of *Zeigen* in general, Derrida notes that there has been no thematicization of the unity prior to this diffraction into *Hinweis* and *Beweis*, that is, no thematicization of *Weisen* [showing] in general. Furthermore, what would be the relation between ‘showing’ in general, and ‘standing-for’ in general? At any rate, what characterises indication in the ‘strict sense’ is that it falls beyond the realm of ideal objectivity. [SP 30/VP 31]\(^\text{23}\) Thus, Derrida draws attention to the

\(^{22}\) The origins of this metaphysical heritage are examined in ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’ in *Dissemination*; and also, among other places, in ‘The Pit and the Pyramid’, in *Margins*, and in *Of Grammatology*.

\(^{23}\) However, if *Beweis*, which functions on the level of idealities, is itself a form of *Weisen*, as *Hinweis* is, would that not demonstrate that the indication sign shares a ‘prior unity’ with what is strictly analogous with the expression sign, ie that which works on the level not of the worldly but the non-worldly/irreal/ideal? The relation between this question, and the one posed at the end of Derrida’s previous chapter is clear: Husserl is wanting to claim that the interweaving of indication and expression is a mere entanglement on the empirical level of actual communication, where the former is needed to
central rôle which *exteriority* plays in the initial distinction, and indeed, in all further reductions – what is reduced by phenomenology is always the external, the worldly, the empirical, the real, the contingent. The indication relation, as exemplified by *Anzeichen*, is a perfect example of this, for, in opposition to the demonstrative relation between idealities, the indication sign always functions on the level of reality, and does so by means of an associational relation which itself is typical of the psychologistic geneticism which Husserl attacks in the *Prolegomena* [cf §§ 21ff], and which Derrida, in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, shows to be definitive of the border phenomenology draws with its other. In a footnote [SP 30/VP 31]24 Derrida draws attention to the place of association of ideas here. In Chapter 2, we stressed that for Husserl, the treatment of association to be found in the discussion of indication in *Logical Investigations* provides the seed for the genetic phenomenological analyses of passive synthesis which the work on time-constituting consciousness made necessary. In *Cartesian Meditations*, Husserl is still careful to point out that although

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24. As is already apparent, much of the general sense of the deconstruction of Husserl, especially in this text, is to be found in the 'parenthetical' remarks appended to the 'main body' of the text in footnotes. The footnotes, so to speak, provide an interpretation or running commentary of the arguments developed in the text. Is this one way in which Derrida is manipulating a stylistic device, for reasons adumbrated in Chap 1.2.3 supra? That it is only a small step from the footnote interpretation to the vertical column accompanying *Tympan* is indicated by the structure of the text of ‘Living on: Borderlines’.  

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"Association is a fundamental concept belonging to transcendental phenomenology" [CM 80/Hua I 113-4], it has to be distinguished from the notions of association of ideas developed by Hume and later thinkers, which remain "naturalistic distortions". Yet it is precisely for this reason, namely its naturalism, that indication, founded on the association of ideas, is being suspended by Husserl. Now the question for Derrida is whether, in genetic phenomenology, an account of indication could be given, based on the transcendental notion of association; and if this were indeed possible, would not the distinction between expression and indication once again be impossible to make with the rigour determined by lines of division based on the essential/irreal – contingent/worldly distinction? In other words, is the distinction between indication and expression, upon which Derrida is arguing so much hangs, limited to the static-structural-objectivist realm of phenomenology? But, as we have seen already, the lines of demarcation between static and genetic phenomenology are prone to seepage. Once again, these questions arise because, as Derrida says, this first essential distinction was never subsequently thematized.

The whole line of questioning which we have presented Derrida as engaged in so far gets an important strategic gloss at this point: the types of questions to which we have been pointing, he says, bring us from "commentaire à l'interprétation" [VP 32]. Here, Derrida echoes the point made above with respect to the order of hierarchy in the making of the distinction between expression and indication, and de jure and de facto, and also the point made in the Introduction which suggested that, in language, we were always in the business of performing the eidetic reduction (although not, it seemed, the phenomenological reduction), when he writes that this move to
interpretation would be “against the express intention of Husserl” if it led to the conclusion:

that even before becoming a method the ‘reduction’ would already be at work in the most spontaneous act of spoken discourse, the simple practice of the spoken word, the power of expression. [SP 31/VP 32]

In making this move, however, although it is indeed against Husserl’s intentions, it nevertheless would constitute, for Derrida, in a certain sense, the ‘truth’ of phenomenology [ibid]. Is language involved in the pre-linguistic level to which the reductions aim to take the phenomenologist? And if so, what are the consequences? This question had already been posed in the long footnote in the Introduction, which we discussed above; and will be discussed again in ‘Form and Meaning’. The ‘truth’ which the deconstruction reveals, at these moments, is that while Husserl wishes to preserve a stratum of rigorously pre-expressive sense, phenomenological descriptions reveal that it is at least undecidable, for necessary reasons, whether such a realm can be preserved. Here, the same would be the case if the distinction between realms were made possible by language, which would thereby be the unity which was prior to the diffraction into the realms of empirical consciousness/indication and transcendental consciousness/expression. And if this were the case, it would once more seem that indication inhabits those places from which it is supposed to be excluded.

Derrida now turns to the realm of interior monologue from which the indication sign can be excluded, and in which, Husserl will argue, the essence of the relation between meaning as pure ideality and the linguistic expression of that meaning may be brought to light. Here,
it is a case of clarifying the way in which expressions are "meaningful signs" where indicative signs are non-meaningful signs. First, there is the outside, which, as involved in the indicative sign, refers to the real world, but which, in the case of the expressive sign, is the ideal object to which the expressive sign is 'directed'. Furthermore, what distinguishes the two signs is that the expressive sign is produced intentionally, 'voluntarily'. As we saw when looking at Husserl's account of writing in the 'Origin', what distinguished the mere physicality of the written sign from its being as a 'true' sign was that what, in the former case, was a \(Körper\), is in the latter case a \(Leib\), an animated body, so to speak. That Derrida is justified in introducing the notion of voluntarism here,\(^{25}\) is clear from the fact that Husserl will distinguish between so-called bodily-'expressions' (eg facial-'expressions') and the expressions of speech \([\text{Rede}]\) on the basis that the former are not intended. Bodily-expressions, although not intended, can be interpreted as indications of the subjectivity of the other, on the basis of accumulated experience. Such expressions share a similar phenomenological status to those written signs in which sense is at best virtual (and at worst, lost, in the case of the illegible inscription), awaiting reactivation by an interpreting subject. In both cases, this act of interpretation is required to the extent that the originary animating act is not, or is no longer, present. However, they differ to the extent that, in the case of writing, there is still the virtual intentionality, the spectre, so to speak, of the original animating act. Thus, when the written sign is interpreted, it re-assumes its expressive status. This is not the case in the interpretation of bodily

\(^{25}\) With all the metaphysical implications it entails; Husserl was always at pains to keep the phenomenological notion of intentionality separate from the intentional modification of willing, of 'intending' in the sense of intending to do something. It is at this point that Derrida finds textual justification for giving the strong reading proposed for his translation of \(bedeuten\) by the (normal) French phrase \(vouloir-dire\).
gestures, for with these, it is the interpreter “who expresses himself about them” [SP 37/VP 39]. Would we therefore be justified in thinking that: “In the relation to the other perhaps there is something that makes indication irreducible[?]” [ibid] We shall have to go on to see what the precise relation between alterity, non-presence, the Other, and indication is; for now, we shall only note that this sentence will have resonances in Levinas’ work.

So far then, Husserl has limited expressiveness to “Rede” alone. However, the converse, so to speak, is not also the case; ie, not all the constituents of Rede are themselves expressive. In further limiting the sphere of the expressive, and making more clear the sense of what has just been said, Derrida will now begin to confront the core of the deconstruction. From the perspective of Rede, the non-expressive aspect is that which corresponds to the need to intimate one’s thoughts to another, that is to say, precisely the communicative aspect of speech (and, it will be remembered that is in communication that expression and indication were said to be initially entangled by Husserl). Once again, the grounds for establishing this premise as the basis for the distinction between expression and indication reveal the “the metaphysical tenor of this phenomenology”. On the basis of the distinctions that seem to underlie that between expression and indication, Derrida is led to postulate that what separates these two is the “immediate non-presence of the living present”. All of what has been grouped so far on the side of indication has this shared characteristic of nonpresence. It is always a case of an irreducible relation with some other, whose alterity marks an essential absence. Then, in a sentence whose consequences will resonate throughout the rest of the text, Derrida claims that this:
... nonpresence to itself of the living present will at the same time qualify the relation to others in general as well as the relation to the self in temporalization. [SP 37/VP 40]

The non-presence of the living present is, schematically therefore, that moment when, in speech, the living-present, which is the source of the animation of the signs, and about which the communicator is trying to express themselves, is not present, which is, of course, the case for the interlocutor. This is why the living present needs to be indicated, why speech has its “kundgebende Funktion”. This is the raison d'être of communicative speech – to communicate one’s thoughts to another. In all speech which has this aim, therefore, the indication function of signs will always be an essential moment of it. We reach, as Derrida concludes, the core of indication:

... there is indication whenever the sense-giving act, the animating intention, the living spirituality of the meaning-intention, is not fully present. [SP 38/VP 41]

Husserl devotes further analysis to this in Ideas I, which is analyzed by Derrida in ‘Form and Meaning’. Here we can say the following: all pre-expressive Sinn can, in principle, be expressed linguistically; whenever, in this process, there is an absence of the pre-expressive stratum, when it is not fully ‘reproduced’ on the expressive stratum, there will be a need for the indication sign to intimate what is not present. Clearly, as we have said, the need for the intimating function of the indication sign will always be necessary when I am communicating with another. But when there is the ‘full’ presence of the pre-expressive sense in the expression, there is no communication with another; the absence of the indication function of the sign marks the fact that meaning has not gone out into the world, towards another. Thus:
... *pure expression* will be the pure *active* [emphasis added] intention (spirit, *psyché*, life, will) of an act of meaningfulness (*bedeuten*) that animates a speech whose content (*Bedeutung*) is present. It is present not in nature, since only indication takes place in nature and across space, but in consciousness. Thus it is present to an 'inner' intuition or perception... The meaning is therefore present to the self in the life of a present that has not yet gone forth from itself into the world, space or nature. All these 'goings-forth' exile the life of self-presence in indications. [SP 40/VP 44]

Thus, in order to preserve the purity of expression, it will be essential that all relations with the other, all transcendings of the present of the living present, must be suspended. This is the crux of the matter. If Husserl is unable to protect the realm of the living present, if the other in some way interrupts the solitude of the self-presence of the living present; then the original distinction between expression and indication will no longer be able to be made rigorously, and, by implication, all the subsequent distinctions which are based on this initial distinction, and which define the phenomenological space, will be equally suspect. So, can there be the pure transfer of pre-expressive sense to linguistic expression without loss, or without transgression of the self-presence of the living present? Can the relation with the other be completely suspended?26

If we think back to what was said in the *Introduction*, then at least one level of worldliness is immediately reduced in the interior monologue, namely the worldliness of the physical instantiation of signs. In the interior monologue, 'speech' can work solely with the (bound) idealities of the word, the *lexemes*. However, the more important point

26. As Derrida notes, the same question can be effectively asked of the reduction to the 'sphere of ownness' success at the beginning of the 5th *Cartesian Meditation.*
is whether, in fact, I *communicate* anything in the interior monologue. Does my monologue intimate something which I do not know, something which is not present to me? Do signs need to be employed in their indicative function? Husserl’s answer is that they do not, although in saying this, he makes a slip which for Derrida is informative of a movement which has been surreptitiously underway, perhaps since the start of the *Investigation*. For Husserl writes: “*Sollen wir sagen, der einsam Sprechende spreche zu sich selbst, es dienten auch ihm die Worte als Zeichen, nämlich als Anzeichen seiner eigenen psychischen Erlebnisse?*” [Hua XIX/1 42] Are we to take it from this that in fact signs are synonymous with indications? Is the argument Husserl is employing that in the solitary mental life one simply has no need for signs whatsoever? Does the undecidability which Derrida denoted of the proximity of language and thought, in the *Introduction*, have the following significance – that for Husserl, ultimately, signs are to be excluded as such from the realm of pure thought; but that, in spite of this, his descriptions reveal their irreducibility; and that, furthermore, he wishes to suspend them precisely because of the alterity that is thereby introduced into the heart of the living present, whose mark is the trace of indication’s irreducibility? Once again, we are confronted by the need to thematize the generality of sign as such, the relation of the *für etwas*. Could we not say already, that this very relation, this, so to speak, standing-in-for, this ‘representing’ we might be tempted to say, is indicative of an absence, the absence of what is being represented?

In Husserl’s text [ibid], something of the sort does seem to be the case. For he argues that rather than using words in fact, in reality so to speak, we only ‘imagine’ ourselves doing so. There is only a *Phantasievorstellung*, an imaginary (re-)presentation of the word. Thus,
in the interior monologue carried out in the immediacy of the self-presence of the living present, language undergoes a type of reduction. Signs are present to consciousness purely as imagined, that is, the word is there for an imagining consciousness. And as such, that is, as opposed even to the word's being internally perceived, the word does not exist, only the imagination of the word exists [SP 44/VP 48].

Before going on to consider the grounds for the claim that we learn nothing in the interior monologue, that there is nothing absent which would therefore need indicating, Derrida pauses, in a footnote, to reflect on this distinction between perceived and imagined object. Traditionally in philosophy, this distinction would be made on the basis of the 'intensity' of the contents of consciousness (as by Hume for instance, in making his distinction between impressions and ideas). Husserl, against the tradition, will draw the distinction along the lines of Gegenwärtigung and Vergegenwärtigung. As we know, Husserl's principle of all principles directed him towards sole concentration on the former; the latter can only be studied phenomenologically on the basis of the former. Thus, although what is imagined/remembered/signified is not present, its means of presentification, for instance, the memory-act, can be reflected upon, and as such, is retained as present (even though its correlative object is not). The distinction then is between bodily [leibhaft] givenness and what is given in the mode of 'als ob'. Will Husserl be able to maintain this distinction? Furthermore, as a basis for his critique of the psychologism of such as Hume, is the theme of presence sufficient? Does not the privileging of presence as the ground for distinguishing originary from non-originary givenness betray phenomenology's common metaphysical stock with psychology? What Derrida will show, rather than demonstrating this last point, is
that, of necessity, this privileging of presence fails, and that ultimately, there is no perception in the sense of its understanding by metaphysics. That which is secondary is in fact 'primary'; but in order to say this, an insight which, as we shall see, is derived from Husserl's own description, deconstruction will have to find new names. Thus, what is 'primary, cannot be designated 're-presentation', since the 're-' here always designates the derivative. As Derrida writes: "we are here designating the prime intention – and the ultimate horizon – of the present essay." [SP 46/VP 50]

In the interior monologue, Husserl argues in § 8, I can only imagine myself as communicating something to myself; moreover, I never in fact do communicate, because there is no need – the only thing that could be communicated, namely my own thoughts, is in fact fully present in my interior monologue at the moment that it is 'pronounced', hence there is no 'room' for the indication function.27 Derrida’s discussion will be framed in terms of a series of distinctions around 'representation': effective-indicative speech is distinguished from pure expression in the interior monologue, since only the latter is a Vorstellung; however, as such, it is present in consciousness as 'imaginary', that is, as Vergegenwärtigung. In turn, both of these types of representation are themselves to be distinguished from Repräsentation, which designates the relation of 'in the place of'.

27. "One of course speaks, in a certain sense, even in soliloquy, and it is certainly possible to think of oneself as speaking, and even as speaking to oneself, as, eg, when someone says to themselves: 'You have gone wrong, you can't go on like that.' But in the genuine sense of communication, there is no speech in such cases, nor does one tell oneself anything: one merely conceives of oneself as speaking and communicating. In a monologue words can perform no function of indicating the existence of mental acts, since such indication would there be quite purposeless. For the acts in question are themselves experienced by us at that very moment." [LI 279-80/Hua XIX/1 43]
Can these distinctions, by which the initial distinction between expression and indication is to be upheld, be observed within the sphere of language, within, we might say, the realm of the sign in general? In order to answer this question, we shall have to return to that notion which Husserl claims is definitive of phenomenology – a proper understanding of ideality. We know from the ‘Origin’ that signs, meanings, and ultimately, Objectivities, all have the status of ideality. What does this entail? Ultimately, that which is ideal remains identical through all possible (empirical) repetitions. Ideality is the infinite capacity for repetition as the same. Idealities, furthermore, unlike Platonic Ideas, do not exist in some heavenly realm, but are constituted by human subjectivity. It is the task of the ‘Origin’ to give an exemplary account of one such constitutive genesis, the constitution of the ideal truths of geometry.

Signs, as we saw, are themselves (bound) idealities. Of necessity, a sign can never be an event. “A sign which would take place but ‘once’ would not be a sign.” [SP 50/VP 55] The only possibility of a sign’s being understood as such is this structure of repeatability – that is, the fact that a sign can, indefinitely, be re-presented as the ‘same’. Indeed, as such, the sign exemplifies all three types of representation:

as Vorstellung, the locus of ideality in general, as Vergegenwartigung, the possibility of reproductive repetition in general, and as Repräsentation, insofar as each signifying event is a substitute. [SP 50/VP 56]

This affirmation of the essence of the sign as representation has been done using precisely Husserlian notions, Derrida argues; and yet, according to Husserl, only pure expression can function on the level of
Vorstellung. Even more importantly, Husserl would also want to argue that the expressive sign is ‘cut off’ from the other forms of representations. But in both cases, Husserl’s descriptions would warrant him arguing the opposite. In this case, it seems, Husserl has given us a means of determining the essence of the sign in general as representation, but not of making the subsequent, rigorous, distinction between indication and expression signs. As signs, all signs are representative, and representative in each of the three senses.

Why then has Husserl wanted to argue the opposite, in direct contradiction to what his own descriptions have revealed? Derrida suggests that it is because he wishes to save “save presence, and to reduce or derive the sign, and with it all powers of repetition” [SP 51/VP 57]. And this desire is itself only the manifestation of Husserl’s metaphysical heritage, which has always wanted to give signs a status which is derivative on a pre-signifying presence to itself of thought. Here we are in the double bind outlined by Derrida at the end of the 1st Chapter of Voice and Phenomenon. We can either lay stress on Husserl’s metaphysical bias, or we can concentrate on the radical descriptive findings, which have yielded a concept of sign in general which breaks with the whole tradition of philosophy, despite Husserl’s own arguments, through making it non-derivative. If this is to be the case, however, then we cannot speak of a ‘sign’, for the very meaning of this word is the meaning it has got from its metaphysical heritage. [SP 51/VP 57] The same, mutatis mutandis can be said of the concepts of representation, repetition, and difference, all derivative within the classical tradition, but all taking on a ‘primary’ rôle in Husserl’s descriptions. Once again, it is a question of how to write on the margins of philosophy, as Derrida noted in the strategic remarks attached to the
Heidegger essays. A way must be found of allowing these words, which still bear the irreducible mark of their history, to describe a series of fissures in the “clôture de la métaphysique”. [SP 52/VP 57] This is the first task of the deconstruction, as we have construed it. This task, the stage of, so to speak, ‘auto-deconstruction’, has allowed the descriptions of Husserl’s phenomenology to work against the imperatives of the phenomenological – we could now say ‘metaphysical’ - principle. So much corresponds to what Ricoeur had already described. So much, also, we have observed in our previous chapter, where we followed phenomenology’s necessary movement towards those realms where its principle would, of necessity, have to be contravened.28 The subsequent stage for deconstruction, having begun to show the ‘presence’ of the other within phenomenology’s closure, is to constitute this other in such a way that its status is no longer simply derivative, so that, for instance, what is marked as excessive in genetic phenomenology, is not given to be understood simply as the other of phenomenology. At this point, the supplement that is the deconstructive text can be said to ‘move beyond’ the phenomenological text. Thus there needs to be some way, “against Husserl’s express intention” [SP 52/VP 58], of thinking representation as primary, and Vorstellung, presence, as derivative, if we are to respect

28. Necessitated by the demands of constitutional analysis: thus, the first possibility of transcendence, of the givenness of objectivity (already an Ideal if that givenness is to attain the state of evidence) to a subjective consciousness, was the stretched structure of temporal consciousness (which, on the one hand necessitated the employment of the Idea in the Kantian sense to conceive of the flow of temporal consciousness as a unity; and on the other, with the analyses reaching the absolute level of the constituting flux, found phenomenology bereft of language – in both cases, therefore, a certain failure in the presentation of an object for phenomenological scrutiny); however, this stretching of consciousness had two consequences – firstly, the certainty of the reflective act of immanent perception was jeopardised, and secondly, the need for genetic analyses of passive synthesis and passive genesis were called for. Once again, further problems were encountered however – the transcendence so far constituted was still not a true Objectivity; this latter required the constitution of Others, and then the confrontation with the need to constitute both a community of others, and also the history of communities (a task already intimated in the turn to passive genesis). In all of these last cases, phenomenology moves into realms where that which is to be analyzed is necessarily un-presentable to consciousness, and yet has a fundamental constitutive rôle to play.

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the constitutive rôle of repetition, and the founding rôle of ideality, as demanded by phenomenology. How, then, can we think "la présence-du-présent" as derived from repetition [ibid]? This question will come to be answered when we turn to look at temporalization.

6. Trace

In the next section, we will consider Derrida's readings of Husserl's account of temporality, and in particular, how the temporal structure of consciousness makes objectivity and ideality possible. At that point, we will return also to the overall question of the possibility of distinguishing between indication and expression. Prior to that, however, we shall conclude this section by looking at an essay which we have had cause to mention already. The problem with which 'Form and Meaning' is concerned is how pre-expressive sense can take on linguistic form.

Derrida specifies at the outset of 'Form and Meaning' that the Husserlian critique of metaphysics only ever had as its goal the restitution of 'pure' or 'first' metaphysics [M 157/187; this aim could be compared instructively with Hegel's aim, as outlined in Chap 1.2]. This observation is founded on the final paragraphs of the Cartesian

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29. In a footnote, once again, some pages later, Derrida glosses this 'task' of deconstruction in terms which are informative for the deconstructive strategy with respect to Husserl, as we are trying to describe it: "if the re- of this re-presentation does not signify the simple - repetitive or reflexive - reduplication that befalls [survenu] a simple presence (which is what the word representation has always meant), then what we are approaching or advancing here concerning the relation between presence and representation must be approached in other names [emphasis added]. What we are describing as primordial representation can be provisionally designated with this term only within the clôture whose limits we are here seeking to transgress by setting down and demonstrating various contradictory or untenable propositions within it, attempting thereby to institute a kind of insecurity and to open it up to the outside, which can only be done from a certain inside." [SP 57/VP 64]
Meditations, and can also be found in the guiding thoughts of the Crisis. The implications of this aim of Husserl’s are doubtless contributive to that in his text which gives rise to the deconstruction; at any rate, in his 

*Epoché* article ‘*La PhénoménoLOGIE et la ClÔture de la MÉtaphysique*’, Derrida reflects on this imperative of Husserl’s, and remarks:

The entire Husserlian programme is affected by this ambiguity: it holds us in the field and in the language of metaphysics by the gesture itself which carries it beyond the metaphysical closure, (beyond) the limits of all that which is in fact called metaphysics. [MS p 3]

This seems to us to be the source of the deconstructive response to phenomenology: that which is radical only ever has the imperative of reconfirming, of being subjugated to the metaphysical tradition. For Derrida, we believe, that which is radical in Husserl is ultimately irrecoverable by metaphysics. The metaphysical closure has been irreparably transgressed by the phenomenological descriptions whose destiny phenomenology itself fails to confront, precisely because of its metaphysical imperative.

As we have seen, one of the concepts which Husserl would wish to restore to its metaphysical purity is *idea* (or *ideality*); another is *form* (*morphé*). In ‘Form and Meaning’, however, Derrida argues that, rather than producing a metaphysically pure notion of form, Husserl’s descriptions reveal a notion of ‘form’ which cannot be subsumed under the metaphysical yoke (where it would be typically harnessed to its opposites *content* and *matter*). Rather, the notion of ‘form’ found in Husserl’s theory of linguistic expression belongs to a radical tradition exemplified by Plotinus (who is cited in the epigraph to the essay).
Derrida’s task will be to find a means of thinking that which Husserl’s descriptions have revealed, and which can no longer be thought as ‘form’.

The paramount concern of Husserl’s philosophy of language is to delimit the sphere of signification from what founds this realm, which, in Ideas I § 124, Husserl specifies as the stratum of pre-linguistic Sinn; which is thus to be distinguished from the subsequent stratum of expressive Bedeutung. As we shall see in the Introduction, and as we have already noted with regard to Voice and Phenomenon, the metaphorics of Husserl’s text can be insightful. Here, the, as Husserl himself admits [I, 297/Hua III/1 288], rather forced metaphor of ‘stratification’ has certain problematic consequences. Is this because the metaphor is not entirely adequate? Or, on the contrary, do the metaphor’s problems point to a failing of phenomenological language which is necessary rather than contingent? This latter suggestion concurs, of course, with the argument we have been developing to date. As in Voice and Phenomenon, Derrida’s concern will be with whether Husserl can maintain this strict separation between Sinn and Bedeutung. This problem is indeed very close to that being worked out in Voice and Phenomenon. For there, as we have seen, Derrida is approaching the point of claiming that, rather than simply observing a distinction between indication and expression signs, Husserl is in fact moving to a position of observing a distinction between signs and ‘non-signs’, that is, spheres were signs either are, or are not, present. And, as we have noted, this whole problematic has already been intimated in the long

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30. In an essay to be published in October 1995, by Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, I trace the genealogy of this transgressive thinking of form, through Plotinus, back to the Timaeus, and ultimately to Democritus. I then use the acquired concept of (arche-)rhythm to interpret ideas of time and temporalization to be found in Nietzsche and Freud.
footnote in the *Introduction* dealing with ‘Fink’s problem’. Finally, Derrida will assert that, for Husserl, discourse’s essence will have been determined in advance as *logical* in order to facilitate the distinction. Again, this is a point to which we will return.

The central metaphor, then, of Husserl’s text at this point is of the stratum. Derrida, however, also notes the first phrase of the section: “Interwoven with all the acts considered before are the expressive act-strata”. [I I 294/Hua III/I 284] We have already seen that this metaphor of *Verflechtung* has had a rôle to play in *Logical Investigations*; once again, it will be a question here of whether what is interwoven can be subsequently unravelled, or whether thought is, finally, irreducibly *textual* [M 160/191]. And, if this latter is the case, the subsequent question, to be asked of phenomenology, is whether, in reflection, what is given to consciousness can indeed be given as a pure presence, the demand of phenomenology’s principle [M 161/192].

In § 124, Husserl begins by suspending the ‘bodiliness’ of sign, as being extrinsic to the essence of signifying – as we have seen, for Husserl, it is the intention animating the sign which is irreducible to the sign’s meaningfulness, whereas the husk of the sign can always be considered as a meaningless object in the world. As Derrida notes, the possibility of the union whereby this husk comes to be animated by the intention is never explicitly reflected upon by Husserl, and is indeed explicitly deferred at this point [I I 294/Hua III/I 285]. How might we think a pre-formed matter? Can this be done in the metaphysical tradition? And if it can be, how then does this matter come to ‘accept’ form, take on form? This is a question which has been anticipated in
“‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, where *hyle* was being discussed; and is also anticipated by Husserl himself – for, as we have seen, in order for active constitution to be possible, that matter which is thereby informed must itself already be formed, by passive synthesis. The question being asked here could be focussed explicitly on this precise moment. What is the nature of the ‘form’ which pre-formed matter bears (through the work of passive synthesis)? This is problematical for a number of reasons, beginning with the fact that form, presence, and activity, are, if not synonymous in the history of metaphysics, then certainly grouped on one side, so to speak, consistently opposed to their opposites, matter, absence and passivity. Thus, if form is what is imposed on matter by active consciousness, thereby rendering an object present to consciousness, can we still use ‘form’ to describe what is achieved by *passive* syntheses on a matter which, as such, cannot be presented to consciousness?

Husserl begins to distinguish between the two strata by analyzing the differences in essence between what is expressed and what is not expressed, what the relation between the two is, and what change the latter undergoes when it becomes expressed. This is the problem which we considered in Chap 2.1.3 above, in our reading of the 1st Chapter of the 6th *Logical Investigation*. Crucially, Husserl argues that the stratum of pre-expressive sense overflows, and pre-empts, the stratum of expression. Expression always comes along after, so to speak, pre-expressive sense. As Husserl says, anything “meant, as meant” is subsequently expressible, and expressible as such. [I₁ 295/Hua III/I 286] Crucially, Husserl then goes on to specify the relation between pre-expressive *Sinn* and the stratum of expression:
Apart from the fact that it confers expression precisely on all other intentionalities, the stratum of expression – and this makes up its own peculiarity – is not productive. Or, if one wishes: *its productivity, its noematic production, is exhausted in the expressing* and with the *form of the conceptual* which is introduced with <the expression>. [I₁ 296/Hua III/1 287]

What is the possibility of this non-productive transfer of sense to the expressive stratum? For Derrida, the metaphorics of Husserl’s explanation take us back to the phenomenology of writing. Previously, however, writing had been considered from the point of view of its intentionality; now, the materiality of writing will have to be considered. One has a perception. The having of this perception is quite independent of its being expressed. This is the case considered form both strata, for as we have seen, language, of necessity, can function in the absence of intuitive fulfilment. Thus, the sense of what is perceived as it is perceived is already ‘complete’, it need have nothing added to it through expression. Rather, through expression, this sense is raised to a new level, which makes its conceptual form explicit. This raising occurs when the original intuition is “‘thought’ or asserted”, [I₁ 295/Hua III/1 286] by which the “noematic ‘core’ is raised to “the realm of ‘Logos’, of the ‘conceptual’”. This happens through the noematic core being “‘conceptually’ stamped” on the noematic correlate on the expressive level. As Derrida writes, “the pre-expressive noema, the prelinguistic sense, must be imprinted in the expressive noema”. [M 196/164] However, it must do this without *altering* the sense as such. The expressive layer is like a blank page, or virgin tablet, upon which, when it has been ‘written’, the sense attains (conceptual) legibility. But if sense has nothing thereby brought to it, if it is not a case of expression imposing itself upon sense, then, as Derrida writes:
... sense in general, the noematic sense of every experience, is something which by its nature already must be capable of imprinting itself in a meaning, leaving or receiving its formal mark in a Bedeutung. Thus, sense already would be a kind of blank and mute writing redoubling itself in meaning. [M 164-5/197]

This argument parallels precisely that by which it is determined that hyle must already bear the mark of form in order for it to be actively constituted (which was the step Husserl effectively took when he abandoned the Auffassung-inhalt schema in his writings on time; cf Chap 2.3.3). Does this not mean, therefore, that there is an irreducible trace of conceptuality, of Logos, in the stratum of pre-expressive sense? And is this not to confirm implications which are to be found in the 'Origin', namely, that in the sense-history of the constitution of Objectivity, writing plays an irreducible rôle, as indeed does speech and language in general? For if, as Husserl claims, the expressive level is indeed entirely unproductive, how could it bring anew to sense conceptual form?

This problematic is confirmed further by a second interweaving of metaphors to which Derrida directs his attention. What is the nature of the neutrality of the expressive stratum?

An appertinent intentional medium is present which, according to its essence, has the distinction, so to speak, of mirroring every other intentionality according to form and content, depicturing it in its own colours and hence imprinting on it its own form of 'conceptuality'. [I1 295/ Hua III/1 286]

As Derrida notes, there seems to be a contradiction between these two metaphors which Husserl employs: on the one hand, a copy, a pure
reflection, an *Abbildung*, which de-picts the sense as such. [M 165/198] On the other, however, a colouring, which imprints the form of conceptuality *on to* sense, yet without, supposedly, adding anything. This, then, is language as *Einbildung*. [M 166/198] Does this apparent conflict of metaphors, seemingly coincidental, in fact reveal the necessary shortcoming which phenomenology exposes when it tries to talk of an *unproductive productivity*? Husserl’s discomfort at this point (echoing his discomfort over the metaphor of the stratum) is pointed towards the employment of *Bildlichkeit* at all. But once again, in a move which is by now familiar, the essence of *bilden* in general is not thematized by Husserl prior to its diffraction into *Abbilden* and *Einbilden*.

Is there not a link between the unthematized *Bildlichkeit* and the very notion of a *medium* of expressive form which is nevertheless unproductive? What is at stake for Husserl is the imperative, demanded by the telos of logicality, that sense as such be univocally transparent in language. This is the central thematic of the ‘Origin’s’ task, for the possibility of reactivating originary sense ultimately depends on this univocity, if the sense is to be reactivated as such. We shall return to this below. Here, however, let us pay regard to Derrida’s final point. Having noted Husserl’s admission that there can be more or less accidental incompleteness of expression, Derrida then goes on to draw attention to an admission of expression’s limitations which threatens the whole discourse of the unproductive reproduction of pre-expressive sense in the expressive stratum. For part of the ideality which is necessary for language, and is a necessary component of conceptual form as such, will lead, inexorably, to a loss of a certain degree of pre-expressive sense [I1
It seems as if the expressive layer does in fact 'deform' what comes to it of sense, and this due to the "essence of expression as expression". The universality of language, the ideality of expression, which is, of course, what comprises the essence of language, means that "the stratum of signifying is not, and of essential necessity cannot be, a kind of reduplication of the substratum". [I1 300/Hua III/1 291] Whole rafts of pre-expressive sense cannot be reduplicated, including the "modifications of relative clarity and distinctness, the attentional modifications", etc. [ibid]

Thus, on the one hand there seems to be a loss of the content of sense when it takes on the conceptual form of expression; however, this loss only corresponds once again to a certain metaphysical imperative. For there is a certain type of sense which can be reduplicated in its fullness, and this is the sense which already bears the trace of conceptual form in it. Thus, sense which is already of the form of the logical proposition can in fact be fully captured by expression; whereas, on the other hand, sense which bears the mark of irreducible subjectivity, in order to be expressed, must have that mark erased. This latter, therefore corresponds to that element of colouring typical of Einbildung mentioned above. What can be reduplicated unproductively can be done so only on the basis that it already con-forms to conceptual form. What requires the stamp of form to be impressed upon it is what does not bear this trace. The difficulty here, and Derrida takes great pains to delimit the deconstructive strategy at this point, is how to carry on thinking what is revealed by phenomenology here. How does one think the trace of form in the formless and at the same time think the subjectivity of what evades conceptual form?
necessity that, in the interior monologue of solitary mental life, there is no need for communication. That is because the pure expression of the interior monologue is a *Vorstellung* as opposed to a *Vergegenwärtigung* or *Re-präsentation*. And yet, signs 'in general' exemplify all three notions of representation [SP 50/VP 56]. Thus, the distinction upon which indication was to be differentiated from expression did not appear clear cut. There is a similar problem with regard to time. Once again, Husserl wishes to distinguish between re-presentation and, in this case, retention or primary memory. However, as is the case with signs, in which we saw that a prior 'unity' preceded the diffraction into the three senses of 'representation', so with time: although there are undoubted phenomenological differences between retention and re-presentation (primary and secondary memory), nevertheless, do they not share a common root, namely, the possibility of the repetition of a previous present? This possibility of repetition in its most general form, the possibility of the constitution of ideality, Derrida calls “trace in the most universal sense”. [SP 67/VP 75] The trace as the common root of retention and representation (and, we would say, of the sense of 'representation' prior to its tripartite diffraction):

is a possibility which not only must inhabit the pure actuality of the now but must constitute it through the very movement of differance it introduces. [*ibid*]

As Derrida carries on, the trace must be more primordial than what

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7. As Derrida says, to the extent that a thought of the trace attempts to go beyond metaphysics, then it is inappropriate to talk in terms of its primordiality/foundationality, etc, due to the metaphysicality of such notions; hence the need, in explaining the 'function' of what is 'named' by such terms, of writing *sous rature*, as first practised by Heidegger. On the workability of this strategy, cf Wood (1989), pp 293ff. Such a strategy complies with the necessity of resorting to a certain paleonymy, in conformity with the double science described in chap 1: deconstruction is obliged to borrow its terms from metaphysics, however much these may be subsequently 'warped'.
§ 3. Time and the Constitution of Ideality

1. Time comes to play a crucial rôle for two reasons at this stage. On the one hand, as we have had cause to note, the structure of temporal consciousness allows the possibility of repetition which is the first step in the constitution of ideality. Also, time is of importance since it is the notion of the instant, as a full presence, which guarantees that I do not need to use (indication) signs in the interior monologue since there is nothing I could learn. This latter point bears an echo of the importance of presence in uniting that group of concepts which characterize the phenomenologically reduced sphere, as opposed to the notions characteristic of what is suspended by phenomenology. In this section, therefore, we shall turn to Derrida’s readings of Husserl in which the theme of time is of central importance; and then in the next section, we will tie up the themes of language, writing and indication with time, when we come to look at the historicity of the constitution of Objectivity, and the place of the Idea in the Kantian sense.

If we turn to the *Introduction* to the ‘Origin’, we find Derrida reiterating the argument of “Philosophy as Rigorous Science”, discussed in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, that axiomatic geometry is a part of the cultural *Weltanschauung*, either as a form among others, or as the archetypal form, of traditional culture; and in doing so, he explains the idea of science as cultural form as beyond “the subjective immanence of the *Weltanschauung*” [IOG 57/45]. The idea of science, with its traditional development, does not have a causal genesis however, but is transmitted in an analogous fashion to the process whereby, in the consideration of inner time-consciousness from the noematic viewpoint, “the present appears neither as a rupture with, nor
as an effect of, the past.” [IOG 57/45] Rather, the present appears as the retention of a “present past”. But since the retentional power of consciousness is finite, as we have seen, the content of consciousness is ultimately stored as “habitualities” and “sediments”. In the communal world, the sedimentations of tradition will serve to go beyond the “retentional finitude of individual consciousness”. As such, sedimentary retention enables that protentional aspect of consciousness which Husserl introduced under the rubric of the “double genetic after-effect” in Appendix II of Formal and Transcendental Logic. The general form of protention, Derrida continues:

is itself conceived under the absolutely unique and universal form of the Living Present. The latter, which is the primordial absolute of temporality, is only the maintenance [emphasis added] of what indeed must be called the dialectic\(^1\) of protention and retention, despite Husserl’s repugnance for that word. In the movement of protention, the present is retained and gone beyond as past present, in order to constitute another primordial and original Absolute, another Living Present. Without this extraordinary absolute alteration [emphasis added] of what always remains in the concrete and lived form of an absolute Present, without this always renewed originality of

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1. Although Derrida’s use of this word here might appear to be in conflict with what was argued in Chap 1.2, it can perhaps best be explained by the continuing influence of Thao on his work at this stage. As Derrida writes in an Avertissement written for the publication of Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl in 1990, his interest then was in the complication of an initially simple origin, the contamination of what is originary, most often by what is opposed to it – thus, the contamination of the transcendental by the worldly, of the eidetic by the empirical, of the intentional by the non-intentional, of the active by the passive, of the present by the non-present, of the originary by the ‘derivative’, etc. However, across all the moments of this ‘law’ of the contamination of the originariness of the origin, Derrida finds that the word dialectique “returns insistently, page after page” [VII], a word which bears the influence of the critique of phenomenology undertaken from the position of dialectical materialism by Thao, and also Cavaillès, but a word whose use he now regrets, and which has almost totally disappeared from his subsequent Husserl texts. What is at stake now, we believe, is precisely the extent to which the complication, most evident in the structure of temporalising consciousness, is not subsumable under a dialectical movement, but indeed exceeds such a movement, such that there is an irrecuperable excess of alterity. This seems to us to conform with the argument advanced in the ‘Tympan’.
an absolute primordiality, always present and always lived as such, no history would be possible. [IOG 58/46]

Derrida had already referred briefly in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” to Husserl’s account of temporality, intimating there the apparent paradox which informs his subsequent readings: namely, that the ‘structure’ of the living present allows Reason to unveil itself (as the logos which is produced in history) by means of speech as auto-affection. “It emerges from itself in order to take hold of itself within itself, in the ‘living present’ of its self-presence.” [WD 166/ED 248] This movement within self-presence is to be contrasted, however, with Derrida’s earlier observation that the problem of a phenomenological transcendental aesthetic, while repeatedly announced by Husserl, is always deferred, until the working out of the genetic turn in the C Manuscripts, “within which the themes of the Other and Time were to have permitted their irreducible complicity to appear.” [WD 164/ED 244] As Derrida writes, the s’entendre parler “differs from itself in order to reappropriate itself”. [WD 166/ED 248]

It is this self-differentiation, which nonetheless does not go beyond the self-presence of the living present (indeed, which the very structure of the Living Present seems not only to enable, but in a sense to make necessary), which serves as the focus of Derrida’s interest. The formulation of “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” makes it clear why Derrida is still tempted to evoke the movement of dialectic in describing Husserl’s account of the flow of the Living Present. The question is whether the perpetual constitution of successive primordial and original Absolutes can indeed be contained within the closure of self-presence. Thus, we must ask whether the very structure of absolute
temporality which makes (phenomenological) history possible is not at
the same time what transgresses the metaphysical closure of
phenomenology? In beginning to answer such a question, Derrida’s
remark in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology” is of the
utmost importance: “In emerging from itself, hearing oneself speak
constitutes itself as the history of reason through the detour of writing.”

[WD 166/ED 248] Can we not say that the detour of writing marks an
irreducible trace of absence which is inscribed in the very ‘structure’ of
the movement of the Absolute Flux of the Living Present?

2. We shall return to this question in our subsequent discussions of the concluding paragraphs of §§ VI & X of the Introduction below, and also of Chapter 6 of Voice and Phenomenon.

We may start to answer the question posed above by reference to Nancy’s interview with
Derrida, reprinted in Cadava et al [1991]. In this interview, Derrida describes the affirmation without
closure in a subject’s responsive-responsible relation to itself as being only possible as “difference, that
is to say alterity, or trace”. At this point, Derrida hints at ethico-political themes that could be
developed out of the interweaving of responsibility with this thinking of subjectivity, but Nancy
chooses to interrupt this chain of thought with the observation that for him, “the subject is above all,
as in Hegel, ‘that which can retain in itself its own contradiction’.” Such a formulation of the subject
would of course return us to the topos of the deconstruction outlined in Chap 1.2, where the possession
of that which is supposed to be other is shown to pose fundamental problems for the Hegelian claim to
the ‘good’ infinite. Does Derrida’s recourse to the notion of ‘dialectic’ in his description of the
movement of the Husserlian flux of Absolute Subjectivity indicate that phenomenology would be here
susceptible to a parallel deconstruction?

That this is not simply the case, and that he has indeed moved away from what is signified by
that word whose use in his Memoire he now so regrets, is affirmed in Derrida’s response to Nancy’s
remark, in which he draws attention to a trend in reading Husserl which was more or less prominent in
France in the 1960’s; where Husserl’s genetic analyses of the ego, and passive synthesis, “of time and
the alter-ego lead back to a pre-egological and pre-subjectivist zone”. The particular interest of these
texts which Derrida stresses lay in those places “where the egological and more generally the subjective
form of the transcendental experience appeared to be more constituted than constitutive – in sum, as
much grounded as precarious. The question of time and of the other [emphasis added] became linked to
this transcendental passive genesis...” (These remarks allude to the important footnote on pp 84f of
Speech and Phenomena [VP 94]) Derrida continues, in a paragraph which could serve as a palimpsest
for the reading which we are developing in this work:

It is within, one might say (but it is precisely a question of effraction of the within)
the living present, that Urform of the transcendental experience, that the subject
conjoins with nonsubject or that the ego is marked, without being able to have the
originary and presentative experience of it, by the non-ego and especially by the alter
ego. The alter ego cannot present itself, cannot become an originary presence for the
ego. There is only an analogical a-presentation [appréäsentation] of the alter ego. The
alter ego can never be given ‘in person’, it resists in principle the principles of
phenomenology – namely, the intuitive given of originary presence. This dislocation
of the absolute subject from the other and from time neither comes about, nor leads
beyond phenomenology, but, rather, if not in it, then at least on its border, on the
very line of its possibility. [Cadava et al (1991), p 102]
At the conclusion of the 6th section of the *Introduction*, where he is reflecting on the possibility of the constitution of transcendental intersubjectivity, which is intimately interwoven with the possibility of language, Derrida notes that if the possibility of language is already given to the primally instituting geometer, as would be necessary if they were to be able to communicate their idea to others, then the prior stage, of sense’s being constituted for the proto-geometer, must have been achieved. That is to say, the proto-geometer would first necessarily have been able to recognize something as the ‘same’, within their own

What is most interesting in this account of the trace of alterity, of the *alter ego*, which supplements the ego, *of necessity*, while yet remaining unrepresentable to the ego, is that it transgresses the principle of phenomenology without thereby going beyond the limits of phenomenology. Rather, the simultaneous presence/non-presence of the *alter ego* to the ego occurs on the threshold of, the line of possibility of, phenomenology. Which might be to say that phenomenology’s very possibility is at the same time the condition of impossibility of what lies at its centre.

Derrida locates this reading of Husserl in the texts of himself, Levinas and Thao, among others. We will turn to the implications of these thoughts in Levinas’ text in our concluding chapter. Here, however, we will take the opportunity of underscoring Thao’s influence on Derrida’s understanding of Husserl’s ‘theory’ of temporality, which, as we have seen, traces the possibility of history back to the *dialektical* movement of the Living Present. (See also the reference to Thao in “The time of a thesis: punctuations”, where Derrida suggests that it was phenomenology’s [metaphysical] commitment to its principle which limited the scope of thematizing the problems of writing and the trace, even though it was within phenomenology that the necessity of such a problematic was delimited; and that it is in the *Introduction* that he is first able to discuss “the irreducible otherness that divides the self-identity of the living present”. Once again, what is of the utmost importance in these remarks is the *double handed response* to Husserl’s texts.)

In a remarkable footnote [Thao (1986), pp 227ff], Thao draws attention to the developments of Husserl’s theory of temporality, first begun in the texts collected in *Husserliana* X, in the C Manuscripts. Thao emphasises that the movement of the living present is able to constitute time, though not being in time, to the extent that its comet’s tails of temporalizing protentions and retentions remain present to itself: what is retained still is (that is, is still ‘in the present’), what is protended already is. Thus, the living present is able to pass through its phases constantly renewing itself while remaining identical with itself. The living present temporalizes without itself being temporal because it is not a succession, since retention, unlike the past, is not that which is no longer, and protention, unlike the future, is not that which is not yet.

Now the difficulties encountered by phenomenology in trying to find names for this movement of Absolute Subjectivity find their first solution, according to Thao, in the account of the Living Present in the C Manuscripts. After a number of citations from the C Manuscripts [C1 (1934), p 4; C2, III (1932), pp 8-9; C2, I (1932-3), pp 12-3, 15-6, 21-2], Thao suggests that Husserl’s solution bears an unmistakably “*dialektical* character”. [230] “The movement of the Living Present consists in repeatedly going forth beyond itself by retaining within itself its past in terms of its *annulled, preserved and elevated* moment. “ As Thao suggests, it is such a movement by which the “Hegelian concept of *Aufhebung* acquires all of its concrete value”. [cf also fn 1 above]
consciousness. The possibility of this identity synthesis is, as we have seen, enabled by the retentional capacity of consciousness firstly, and then, founded on this, by re-productive/re-collective acts of consciousness. Ideality is produced in the passage from passive retention to memory or the activity of recollection. At the same time as this passage produces idealities, it enables successive origins to appear as such (that is, each new now is experienced as a new now, which is possible through its being different from, though ‘connected to’, interwoven with we might say, past presents now retained, and now passing the limit-point into unconscious). This movement is, therefore, the possibility of the present, which is the space of phenomenology. However, as Derrida writes, the structure of retention’s relation to recollection is always described as a given by Husserl, and thus remains unthematized:

Perhaps this source is not questioned by phenomenology because it is confused with the possibility of phenomenology itself... It can also be the thematic site of what today is called an ‘overcoming’. Here phenomenology would be ‘overcome’ or completed by an interpretative philosophy. [IOG 86/82]

As Derrida continues, this is the point of Thao’s dialectical materialist overcoming of phenomenology, an overcoming which begins from the problems which arise in the phenomenological account of retention and recollection. However, as Derrida stresses, it is only in phenomenology that these notions can get their “rigorous sense”. To develop points made above, we think that deconstruction’s difference from Thao’s interpretation can also be sited here, for, whereas Thao seeks to overcome and complete phenomenology (a movement explicitly mirroring that of the Aufhebung), deconstruction exposes the structural
necessity of *incompleteness* at these self-same problem areas. Once again, however, Derrida would undoubtedly agree that this was only possible due to the rigour of phenomenology's sense-analyses, which correspond to what we have styled the descriptive fecundity of phenomenology, after Ricoeur.

Thus, as Derrida argues, prior to sense being an ideality for other subjects, it must first be an ideality for *other* moments of my own *subjectivity*. Then in a remarkable passage, Derrida begins to spell out some of the implications of this view, implications already intimated by Husserl himself in the C Manuscripts, as Derrida notes.3

Intersubjectivity is first the non-empirical relation of Ego to Ego, of my present present to other presents as such; ie, as other and as presents (as past presents), of an absolute origin to other absolute origins, which are always my own, despite their radical alterity. [IOG 86/82]

It is on the basis of this alterity within my identity that the same can be identified through what is radically other, which is, as Sokolowski's felicitous phrase indicates, the extraordinary structure of the living present, of *temporalization*, as a movement of othering and gathering. It is the *movement* of this structure which: "permits the reduction, without negation, of all alterity. The Living Present constitutes the other as other in itself and the same as the same in the other." [ibid] As we have seen, and as Derrida notes, this movement of the constitution of what is other within the structure of what remains the same (while its content is

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always changing) is cited by Husserl as an instructive comparison of the movement by which the other comes to be constituted within my monad [Cartesian Meditations, § 52]. We may wonder at this stage what the implications are for the phenomenological understanding of temporalisation entailed by these comparisons, and in particular, the comparison with *depresentation* [Entgegenwärtigung] in the Crisis, and finally, with what was said above about the notion of *Spaltung* connected with phenomenological reflection [cf 2.4.1]. Is the comparison merely felicitous, or is the alterity within the movement of the Living Present radically irreducible?

2. For instance, what are the implications for the procedure by which Husserl aims to establish a realm from which (the indication) sign can be excluded? What is the relation between *presence* and the possibility of repetition which, it has been suggested, is the ground of ideality?

In the *Introduction* to the 'Origin', Derrida underlined the progressive stages in the constitution of ideality – from the intra-subjective repetition of the same, based on the structure of temporalising consciousness, through the inter-subjective constitution of the same, based on speech within the intermonadic community, to the final stage of writing, and the virtualising of sense. At each stage of this process, it is a case of an ability to identify, to repeat, as the same, across consciousness, then across a community, and finally across all spatio-temporal subjectivity whatsoever, which has founded the ideality. Thus Derrida writes in *Voice and Phenomenon*: "ideality, which is but another name for the permanence of the same and the possibility of its
repetition” [SP 52/VP 58] The being of an object, ultimately, is ideality, Derrida goes on to claim, by which we take him to mean that in order for something to be what it is, it must be recognisable as such, both by me, and by others, that is, identified as the same. Ultimately this constitutes the object’s objectivity as such (which was stated by Husserl himself at the beginning of the 5th Meditation – cf Chap 2.6.2). Now, in an apparently contradictory move, which assumes the same trope that was noted above with respect to the fact that the reduction appears to be at work in language, Derrida goes on to write:

Now (and here again the commentary must take its bearing from the interpretation) this determination of being as ideality is paradoxically one with the determination of being as presence. [SP 53/VP 59]

This is both because pure ideality is always the ideality of an object which is present before a gaze, but also because it is the temporality of the living present as the source of ideality which ensures ideality’s infinite repeatability as the same [ibid]. Derrida ties this up with the principle of phenomenology: the principle privileges presence as the source of evidence by confirming what has always been a metaphysical certainty, namely that experience, life, always are in the present. One lives through the present, so to speak, and this is at least one reason that phenomenology is talking of the lebendige Gegenwart. Thus, being is at once both ideality and presence – and the thinking of this at once marks the moment that we move from mere empiricism to phenomenology. Beyond my life and death, the present still is [SP 54/VP 60].

4. cf C 7, I (1932), p 5: “I am actual and concrete as the enduring present, that is my concrete being” [cited in Sokolowski (1974), p 169]; and C2, III (1932), PP 8-9: “My living and moving Present, my Present in its primordial mode, bears within itself all conceivable being... I, undoubtedly, can have a ‘first awakening’ and a ‘last awakening’. But can I have a beginning as ‘Living Present’?” [cited in
relation with my death is, as we have seen in the *Introduction*, an important notion in the constitution of ideality (as Derrida writes here: "the possibility of the sign is this relationship with death"), and we shall return to it once more when we look at the conclusion of *Voice and Phenomenon*. Here, we must be content with posing the question already posed in the *Introduction* – what is the transcendental sense of death? Can phenomenology think death other than as an accident? What is the sense of the relation between my being as presence, and the necessity of my death for the being of ideal meanings? What would the sense be of the impossibility of the proposition *I am immortal*? [ibid]⁵

If we return to the argument we were following in the previous chapter, we had reached the point where Husserl was arguing that there was no need for (indication) signs in the interior monologue of the solitary mental life due to the fact that there is nothing that I can thereby learn of myself, of my own thoughts. As we saw when we looked at Husserl’s analysis of phenomenological reflection, immanent perception differs from transcendent perception precisely to the extent that whereas the latter is always of necessity inadequate, the former always has the status of certainty due to what is being reflected upon’s being fully present. This presence refers not only to the ‘spatial’ immediacy of my thoughts to myself; but also to the fact that my meaning-intention and the speech which it animates are instantaneously present. There is simply no room for indication signs here, no time for them. The

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Thao (1986), p 229).

⁵. Amongst the fun that he has here, trying to sort out the implications of the relations between ideality, presence and life, which evoke the Poe citation which serves as the epigraph to *Voice and Phenomenon*, Derrida slips in a somewhat sacrilegious aside, noting that the phrase "Je suis celui qui suis" must have been uttered by a mortal!
“Zwecklosigkeit” of indication signs here is a mark of the “nondifference in the identity of presence as self-presence” [SP 58/VP 65]. There is no time for indication signs because, as Husserl says, I live through my meaning-giving intentions and my interior monologue im selben Augenblick. [LI 280/Hua XIX/1 43].

Is the conception of time which this last argument presupposes at odds with the temporal structure of consciousness, and the temporalising structure of Absolute Subjectivity, which have been described previously, and which have been characterised as the possibility of ideality? Does not that aspect of alterity, of ‘othering’, in the temporalising structure of consciousness, which encouraged Husserl to cite it as an instructive comparison with the means by which the other comes to be ‘presented’ to consciousness, in fact correspond more or less exactly to what has been determined by Husserl as the need for indication? This latter would surely seem to be the case, given the fundamental interweaving of the notions of constitutive temporality/passive synthesis, indication, and the constitution of the other, which we have been following above. It would be tempting to conclude, in advance, that these analyses once more correspond to a descriptive movement which overflows that metaphysical principle which motivates Husserl’s recourse to a traditional notion of the present at this stage. At any rate, as Derrida says, in order for Husserl’s argument to hold, he must presuppose:

... the identity of experience instantaneously present to itself. Self-presence must be produced in the undivided unity of a temporal present so as to have nothing to reveal to itself by the agency of signs. [SP 60/VP 67]
If the opposite is the case, if the temporal present is not simply a unity, if the “presence of the self-present is not simple, if it is constituted in a primordial and irreducible synthesis”, [SP 61/VP 68] then this final argument would be cast into doubt, and with it, the ultimate possibility of observing the distinction between indication and expression, of protecting the space of the phenomenological closure. We would then have to ask what the relation is between a temporality not founded on the privileging of the self-identical present, and an understanding of signification which sees indication as irreducible. How are we to think the irreducible non-presence at the heart of our new concepts of ‘signification’ and ‘temporality’?

That this might be the case is suggested by the following remark of Derrida’s, where he talks of the admirable analyses of the lectures On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal-Time, and cites Heidegger to the effect that Husserl is the first to have broken with a conception of time determined on the basis of the now as point, as instant. We may make two points with regard to this remark. In the first place, the citation of Heidegger here chimes with the earlier footnote, at the close of the first chapter of Voice and Phenomenon, when Heidegger is named in the context of the radical reading of Husserl (as a critic of naïve ontology).6 Secondly, in framing the argument thus, Derrida is, implicitly, accepting that what contradicts the traditionality of Husserl’s conception of the present at this point are precisely Husserl’s own

6. Although in fact Heidegger does not say so much, we may perhaps hear an echo of this misremembered comment in the Note to Sein und Zeit which forms the point of departure for Derrida’s ‘Ousia and Gramme’ in which, after discussing Aristotle and Hegel’s theories of time (which former is characterised by its tendency to confound the νυν, ὁρος, στημιη ν άξινθ σθαινα), Heidegger goes on to write: “So far as anything essential has been achieved in today’s analyses which will take us beyond Aristotle and Kant, it pertains more to the way time is grasped in our Zeitbewußtsein.” [cf M 37/41; Heidegger, Being and Time, p 501].
descriptions. Therefore, the implications that Derrida will go on to draw can clearly be seen to be the conclusions that Husserl himself should have drawn if he had respected the content of his own descriptions rather than subsuming them under a metaphysical principle. Once again, we can see that the event of deconstruction occurs at the moment of letting one movement in the text play against another (the organizing system).

Derrida turns, then, to the Time-Consciousness Lectures (and in particular, the sections there on representation) to find if there are grounds there for Husserl’s presupposition of the undivided unity of the temporal present. Although, as we have seen, and as Derrida admits, Husserl’s analyses are directed towards the temporal spread of consciousness, Derrida points out that this spread is still conceived on the basis of the now as a Quellpunkt [PCIT 29/Hua X 28]; this is temporality’s “non-displaceable centre”. [SP 62/VP 69] Derrida then goes on to cite a number of instances where Husserl refers to the now as “something punctual”. This, Derrida suggests, is the conception of time which Husserl has in mind when he is thinking of the im selben Augenblick. Now, for Derrida, this should not be surprising, for just such a conception of the present, of the now, is definitively characteristic of the metaphysical tradition. Indeed, to think the present in any other way, to question its privilege as the source of all conscious certainty, would be to “get at the core of consciousness itself from a region that lies elsewhere than philosophy” [SP 62/VP 70]. Now it is clear from what has been said that Derrida does not conceive of Husserl as having departed philosophy to another region. So we must qualify the interpretative remarks made above, by saying that although Husserl’s own descriptions might be at variance with the metaphysical principle of
his work, this is finally because to have accepted them as such would
have been to effect the kind of radical break which was certainly not
Husserl’s intention (as the conclusion of *Cartesian Meditations* made
clear). It will, ultimately, be a sign of the extraordinary rigour of
Husserl’s thought, the absolute fidelity to the things themselves, that such
radical descriptions are entertained. The task for the deconstruction is,
then, to respect their radicality at those moments when it is
compromised by phenomenological *philosophy*. We have reached one of
these moments here, in the confrontation between the privileging of the
present as now-point in ‘philosophical’ phenomenology, and the analyses
of the temporal spread of present consciousness in ‘descriptive’
phenomenology. This is a confrontation, Derrida writes, which is
necessarily unlike any other:

... between philosophy, which is always a philosophy of
presence, and a meditation on non-presence – which is not
perforce its contrary, or necessarily a meditation on a
negative absence, or a theory of non-presence *qua*
unconsciousness. [SP 63/VP 70]

This is a crucial passage for our understanding of the deconstruction of
phenomenology: what Derrida is interested in is not a simple re-
inscription of the opposite of presence, because this would still be to
remain trapped within the opposition which is definitional of
metaphysics. For it is not presence as such which is privileged by
metaphysics, but presence precisely in opposition to absence. The two
are inseparable within philosophy. For Derrida, what is interesting is an
overflow of this oppositional pair, an excess which is unthinkable by a
metaphysics which is determined by the pair, that is an excess which
could be reconciled with neither one nor the other, nor, in the Hegelian
sense, with the sublation of the two.

What is the nature of this non-presence, how is it to be thought, and how does it differ from absence? In order to approach these questions, we follow Derrida who, after showing the value which Husserl attaches to the present as now-point, turns to those descriptions where Husserl shows primary memory and expectation to be foundational to present consciousness. In these texts, Derrida writes, in showing the foundationality of, in particular, primary memory (and retention), Husserl exposes the "irreducibility of re-presentation (Vergegenwärtigung, Repräsentation) to presentative perception (Gegenwärtigung, Präsentieren)". [SP 64/VP 71]

According to Derrida, the primary memories and expectations with which a present perception is interwoven, and which are the possibility of the present as present (for what is the present if not a limit between what has just passed and what is just about to come?), are moments of "nonpresence and nonperception". This last point must be qualified, for, as we have seen, Husserl wants to say of primary memories that in fact they are perceptions, although, and this is the crucial point, they are uniquely perceptions which do not have as their object something which is present. And yet, Husserl also wants to claim that perception is an originarily constituting act. [PCIT § 17] What is constituted in primary memory is the just having been in its just-passedness, that is, the just having been is originarily presented as such rather than being re-presented. Thus, the non-present is presented in primary memory. This is precisely what enables it to be distinguished from secondary memory, which, we saw, was the focus of Husserl's critique of Brentano.
However, this account of the originary givenness of what has just passed seems to be at odds with what Husserl says in the previous section, namely, with respect to the givenness of temporal objects. In the case of these, Husserl claims, primary memory is antithetical to perception, and indeed, marks the moment whereby perception passes over into non-perception. As David Wood argues [(1989), p 124], Derrida is not strictly accurate in his argumentation at this point, to the extent that he might wish to claim that there is a contradiction in Husserl’s text here. What we can say on the basis of §§ 16-17 of the Lectures on Time-Consciousness is that, while primary memory is indeed perceptual in that it is originarily giving, nevertheless what is thereby given is given not as present but as past. In this sense, and this is Wood’s point, the latter is to be distinguished from the impressional moment of the flow, which, of necessity, constitutes the now-ness of the perception of the object as now. Within the present, it is retention which constitutes the just-pastness of the present consciousness of what just was as it just was. The confusion, if confusion there be, would appear to have arisen from an understandable inattention to an hierarchical distinction which Husserl is observing here, but which the history of the text (as noted in Chap 2.3) has muddied. One way or another, Wood is certainly right when he agrees that in spite of Derrida’s mistakenly detecting a contradiction in Husserl’s text, his more general point stands, that is, that the complex structure of temporalising consciousness finally makes the rigorous distinguishing of now and not-now impossible.

All of this will have been clear enough from what was said in Chapter 2.3, and in particular, with respect to the complex movement of the constitutive flux. Derrida’s point, here, is not to criticize Husserl as such. Rather, we think, his aim is twofold. On the one hand, what are
the implications for the possibility of enacting the distinction between indication and expression if the presence of the conscious present is not reducible to a now-point? And on the other hand, given that Husserl's desire to make this distinction stems from a metaphysical source, the same metaphysical source which would have him privileging still the now as originating instant, despite the descriptive fidelity to the things themselves which shows that such a privilege cannot be sustained, how are we to conceive of the movement of time as phenomenology has described it. For, as Derrida will want to claim, time is an irreducibly metaphysical concept, and, moreover, a concept which determines that what 'time' names is precisely an understanding of the present as now-point. We shall find that, in developing a response to these two points, the deconstruction shall find them to be importantly interwoven.

Thus, what is at stake here is a matter of 'interpretation'. How are we to interpret the interweaving of the now, of presence, with the not-now, with primary memory and retention (and primary expectation and protention)? For Husserl, in Derrida's presentation, the necessity is to interpret the structure of temporal consciousness in accordance with phenomenology's principle. For the deconstruction, on the other hand, which, as we have seen already, aims to 'radicalise Husserl's intention', the question is whether the interweaving of now with not-now leads to the need, in solitary mental life, for (indication) signs. But what would be at stake in this case? Nothing less than the calling into question of the phenomenological closure per se. For the phenomenological principle demands that phenomenology deal only with what is presented to consciousness just as it is presented. The guarantee of certainty afforded by this presence could no longer be depended upon by phenomenology.
At this point, therefore, there arises the need for the deconstruction to think ‘anew’ what has been yielded up for scrutiny by phenomenological description. If presence, metaphysically understood, is no longer foundational (but to say this is to collapse into analytical absurdity), how are we to think consciousness’ possibility, and in particular, the possibility of the consciousness of objects? In answering this question, Derrida has in mind what Husserl has claimed is the mark of phenomenology’s difference from naïve metaphysics, namely its genuine conception of ideality.

Ideality is ultimately the phenomenological thought of the possibility of the re-presentation, the repeatability, of the same, which is in turn the possibility of the presentation to subjective consciousness of that which is objective. Throughout this work, we have taken the constitution of ideality as our guiding thread, and we have seen that Husserl was forced, following the realization of the implications which were forced by the conception of temporal consciousness necessitated by the need to account for identity syntheses, to develop the genetic strand of phenomenology, and to deal with the need for the constitution of others and of history. It is this movement that Derrida has focussed on, choosing to concentrate on the rôles of temporality and language (and writing) in the constitution of ideality. From the perspectives of temporality and language, therefore, how are we to think re-presentation?

We have seen that, as part of the ‘ultimate scope’ of Voice and Phenomenon, Derrida wishes to begin to think ‘re-presentation’ as ‘primordial’ [SP 45-6/VP 50]; and that, for Husserl, the possibility of distinguishing between expression signs and indication signs is the
phenomenology understands as primordial, namely the present, to the extent that it enables the present as such – that is, what is infinitely repeated as the same, but which is spontaneously generated, which is to say that, as such, it is not simply a product of what goes before it. This is what is definitive of the ideality of the form of presence. What returns is both the same but also absolutely other.

This is the first time that the deconstruction has effectively supplemented phenomenology. Up until this point, it has been a case of examining the tensions in Husserl’s text. Now, however, Derrida confronts the need to find a language to describe what the phenomenological text has stopped short of. In the last chapter, we repeatedly saw phenomenological description arrive at places where phenomenological language was found to be inadequate, where phenomenological distinctions broke down (such as between active and passive), or where Husserl had recourse to the ‘enigmatic presence’ of the Idea in the Kantian sense. In each of these cases, however, phenomenological inadequacy went hand in hand with the most fundamental levels of phenomenological description, the crucial moments on the ‘thresholds’ of phenomenology.

The language that Derrida uses to supplement phenomenological silence at these points has a complexity which is imposed upon it by the complexities of what is being ‘named’. We shall return to différence shortly. For the moment, how are we to understand the notion of trace? We may refer to two sources. Firstly, as we saw in our reading of ‘Form and Meaning’, Derrida wished to begin to think form as a trace of non-presence, and trace, as that which exceeds metaphysical oppositions such as presence/absence, form/amorphous, as the possibility
of such distinctions. [M 172/206] In the case at hand, it is the form of
the present (in its ideality) which is made possible by the trace; in ‘Form
and Meaning’, as in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”,
Derrida wished to think the trace of ‘form’ in the pre-constitutive, that
is, the pre-formal, levels of consciousness: pre-expressive ‘form’, and
hyletic ‘form’; *sinnliche form* in both cases, we would be tempted to
say. The second ‘source’ of the deconstructive thought of the trace
would be Levinas, whose essay ‘The Trace of the Other’ was written in
between the original publication of ‘Violence and Metaphysics’ in 1964,
and its re-publication in *Writing and Difference*. 8 In our final chapter,
we shall return to Levinas’ thought of the trace as a past which was
never a present, in relation to the notions of passivity and awakening [cf,
for instance, ‘Meaning and Sense’]. For economy’s sake, we may think
schematically, at this stage, of the trace as the mark of what is
unpresentable in the present, and which nevertheless effects the present.

Thus, the trace marks the *movement* of temporality (notice
already that, as movement, time will always already be (over)flowing)
whereby the present is always the *return* of the same as other. This
possibility, we might say, of the return of the same (the identical form
of the present) as a perpetually new ‘other’ present, is enabled by the
double intentionality of retention, as it was described above. In this
sense, the scandal of self-constitution can be rethought in terms of the
trace. If we remember, the flow was constituted as a unity due to the
double intentionality of retention which intends both the temporal object
which is just past and the impressional intending of the just past, which

8. The changes which this essay undergoes in the intervening years are detailed in works by Robert
Bernasconi and Simon Critchley. We have described a certain ‘genealogy’ of the trace elsewhere,
returning to Plato’s ontologizing of Democritean *rhythmos* in the *chora* of the *Timaeus*. 295
is itself now just past. This latter intentionality, which Husserl calls the "Längsintentionalität", constitutes the return of itself (that is, a return of the present of which it is a part) but as other, as past. It is the possibility of the 'self'-differentiation of the unity of the present, a differentiation on the basis of which the 'new' present can appear. That Derrida is not wrong to stress the elision of re-presentation with retention here is underlined by the fact that the manuscript in which Husserl discusses the horizontal intentionality of retention [No 54] says that retention vergegenwärtigt [re-presents; or "holds-back" - zurückhält] what had previously been intended in the impression [PCIT 387/Hua X 376]; and later, that retention is a continuous "Reproduktion" of the continuously preceding phases:

... there extends throughout the flow a horizontal intentionality that, in the course of the flow, continuously coincides with itself. In the absolute passing on, in the flowing process, the first primal impression becomes changed into a reproduction of itself, this reproduction becomes changed into a reproduction, and so on. But together with the first reproduction there is a new 'now', a new primal, sensation; and the latter is combined continuously with the former in one moment in such a way that the second phase of the flow is primal sensation of the new now and reproduction of the earlier now. [PCIT 391/ Hua X 379-80]

In reading this passage, it is indeed clear that the possibility of the flow of ever new presents as such depends on: "the bending-back of a return, [du pli du retour] from the movement of repetition, and not the reverse". [SP 68/VP 76] But if this is the case, if we cannot think of presence as primordial, if we have to think of the trace (and of
différance, as we shall see)⁹ as 'older' than presence, and as opening the space of the present, is it not the case, as Derrida argues, that all that Husserl wished to protect by recourse to the im selben Augenblick is compromised by what the instant is claimed to exclude? Is not indication, the mark of non-presence, inscribed in the interior monologue of solitary mental life after all? As Derrida argues, temporalizing consciousness, which was to ground the possibility of the fulfilment of a certain metaphysical desire for Husserl, in fact marks the necessarily infinite deferral of this fulfilment, of this closure; and hence the need for it to be thought under another heading.

3. But perhaps more than the collapse of a distinction, which has only ever served as a guiding thread for Derrida, the inscription of primordial representation in terms of trace (and différance) leads us to ask more fundamental questions of phenomenology. The answers to these questions will interweave the notions which we have just come upon with a radicalisation of the notion of writing. Let us follow the attempt by Husserl to provide the grounds for a distinction between expression and indication a bit further.

It has been stressed throughout that the self-presence of solitary mental life has been guaranteed in the interior monologue in which nothing is, or need be, communicated. What is the rôle of the voice in self-presence? If it is not communicative, what is the nature of the

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⁹. Provisionally we can say that différance is Derrida's attempt to name the movement whereby the present of the present is only finally constituted in the passing into this reproductive retention. Thus, at one and the same time, the present is only constituted in its difference from the not-present/not-now that is reproductive retention, and in the delay/deferral that it has to undergo in passing into retention. Thus, the pli is both a bending back of the other on the same, and the delay of a detour.
interior monologue? As we have seen, the transition of pre-expressive sense to the expressive stratum is achieved through an 'unproductive' mirroring-depicturing, which is in fact a de-formation, to the extent that sense is expressed in terms of pure generality. This is the generality which corresponds to the ideality of language discussed above, which enables the repetition of the same. In particular, there is phonological ideality of the voice of the interior monologue in which one imagines oneself speaking.

For the phonologized voice represents the guard of self-presence to the very extent that, like the noema in general, it is non-worldly, irreal, finally (bound) ideality. Furthermore, and in a sense which is admirably encapsulated in the French double entendre, when one speaks to oneself, one not only hears oneself speak, one also, and at the same time, understands oneself: s'entendre parler is both to hear oneself speak, and to understand one's speech. [SP 76/VP 85] As one speaks, and hears oneself in the immediacy of the 'utterance', one lives through, at the same time, the intention which informs and animates the utterance. The voice as heard by oneself is thus the limit of the closure of self-presence. There is, beyond the level of the expressive layer, no further exteriorization, no departure into the world. The reduction of worldliness which accompanies phonologization is paralleled by the bracketing of worldliness enabled by the voice.

As Derrida goes on to stress, the rôle of the voice here could not be replaced by, for instance, the grapheme. For the grapheme is irreducibly spatial, whereas the voice, qua temporal reduces all spatiality, and hence all worldliness. The parallel is the difference between hearing oneself and seeing, or touching, oneself. In the later
case, instructively as we saw, one lives through the body subjectively, but also, and at the same time, objectively [cf Chap 2.6.1]. In the *s'entendre parler*, there is no departure into the body. One need not pass from the realm of pure transcendental subjectivity. As Derrida goes on, it would appear, therefore, that the phenomenological value of the voice lies in:

... transcendent dignity with regard to every other signifying substance. We think, and will try to show, that this transcendence is only apparent... One cannot attempt to deconstruct this transcendence without descending, across the inherited concepts, toward the unnamable. [SP 77/86]

This apparent transcendence arises from the complicity between voice and ideality in presence – the ideality of *Bedeutung* is ‘co-present’ with the ideality of the signifier, which means that the ‘body’ of the sign is eclipsed. This is the phenomenological character of the self-presence of expressed meaning. The self-presence of the voice and the ideality of the phoneme arises from the fact that in hearing myself speak, the meaning-intention which animates the sign is experienced by me immediately, and at the very moment that it animates the sign. There is no *pause*, there is no *showing* [*Zeigen*]. The voice is the “pure phenomenon”, the “self-presence of the animating act in the transparent spirituality of what it animates”. [SP 78/VP 87] The noesis (the meaning intention) and the noema (the voice) are self-present, both ‘spatially’ (there is no gap between them, no worldliness) and temporally (no pause). Thus, Derrida continues, the *s'entendre parler* is an “auto-affection of an absolutely unique kind”. There is at one and the same time pure ideality and pure subjectivity, ideality without passing beyond the *propre*. 

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It is with this notion of auto-affection that Derrida pauses. Here, as Derrida says, we could go on to say that the auto-affection which is understood in the purity of the voice would be the possibility of the subjectivity that has always been understood by metaphysics. Prior to the distinction between the worldly and the transcendental, to the extent that it can be produced as both at one and the same time, it is what, as Derrida suggests, makes this very distinction possible [SP 79/VP 89]. Furthermore, it is this absolute proximity between signifier and signified in the s'entendre parler which enables the unproductive bridge between pre-expressive and expressive strata, as discussed in 'Form and Meaning'. And yet, as we have seen, this very unproductivity, this absolute proximity, implies, in the final instance, that there is so little of a difference between the expressive and the pre-expressive, that the latter must already bear the trace of the form that will be accorded to it in the subsequent layer; and that, moreover, on this basis, Husserl can finally erase the expressive, the significatory, and indeed, language as such, from the primordial sphere investigated by phenomenology [SP 80/VP 90].

It is at this point that what was noted above with respect to the metaphoric of signification (in terms of Körper and Leib) comes back to the fore. For this reduction of language described by Derrida seems to be in contradistinction to the centrally constitutive rôle accorded to language by phenomenology. But, as we have seen, it is always the case that phenomenology has denoted the animating act, the Leib, as indispensable, rather than the worldly opacity of the body of signifiers. This was precisely the point with respect to the difference between phonetic and non-phonetic writing – for the former is indeed always secondary to a speech which is itself always secondary to a pre-
constituted meaning; whereas non-phonetic writing would have an irreducible relation with the meaning it ‘expresses’ [SP 80-1/VP 90-1]. Writing serves its rôle in the constitution of ideality only to the extent that it preserves animating sense, and, as we saw, to reactivate writing was only ever to reawaken sense. The crisis, the crisis which is always denoted by the irreducibility of written and indicative signs, occurs when sense is not, or cannot be, reawakened. [SP 81/VP 91] There is thus, in a manner which mirrors exactly classical metaphysical thought, an absolute privilege of the soul over the body.

However, and on the other hand, the radical hand so to speak, the classical metaphysics reproduced in this account of the phenomenological voice, and the self-presence of consciousness which it enables and protects, is ‘opposed’ in Husserl’s writings by the need, ultimately, to recognize the physical incarnations of signs because the:

underlying motif was disturbing and contesting the security of these traditional distinctions from within and because the possibility of writing dwelt within speech, which was itself at work in the inwardness of thought. [SP 82/VP 92]

The recognition of this motif brings to fruition, so to speak, the differential movement of temporalizing consciousness, the irrecoverable delay revealed in the act of phenomenological reflection, the constituting rôle of passive synthesis and passive genesis, the openness to alterity within the sphere of Eigenheit which is the initial possibility of the analogical appresentation of the other; moments when phenomenology seemed to back away from what is revealed in phenomenological description.
Before we saw that Derrida had recourse to the notion of the trace to name what serves as the mark of the other, of the relation to the other which makes repeatability possible and which is indicated by retention’s elision with reproduction, of irreducible alterity, in the interior monologue which excluded signs [cf Wood (1989), p 125]. How are we to name the work of ‘primordial’ non-presence which Derrida has drawn attention to? Auto-affection is crucial here to the very extent that it acknowledges the place of difference at the origin of sense and presence, despite the fact that it was difference which, as the mark of alterity, Husserl had been striving to exclude in the series of distinctions the making of which Derrida has been analyzing. However, just as the non-presence which Derrida named trace could not have been called sign because of the metaphysical determination of that concept, so also primordial difference cannot be so-called due to the irreducible inscription of this concept in the oppositional pair identity-difference. What is of importance is that the rôle of the voice allows a form of monologue, purely expressive, without the need for indication signs. Without this monologue, Husserl would have been unable to establish his first distinction, which ultimately describes the space of phenomenology. But in order that this interior monologue be possible, some ‘communication’ must be going on, even though nothing is learned; that is, some talking must be going on. The possibility therefore of this final move of Husserl’s is enabled by the pure auto-affection which is guarded by the voice. Husserl wants, if we understand Derrida’s interpretation of him, to allow a pure difference at the heart of self-identical consciousness, a difference which is primordial, and therefore allows the constitution of the solitary mental life of subjectivity.

However, this would be a ‘non-differing’ difference, a difference
which does not threaten the closure of identity. But can this be so? On the one hand, could the Husserl of the metaphysical principle of phenomenology countenance such a difference, particularly if it were foundational? But on the other hand, does not this difference correspond precisely with what we described in Chapter 2: the differential structure of the othering and gathering of the Absolute Flow, which is Absolute Subjectivity; the difference between the subjective and objective egos in the Spaltung of reflection; and the implications of this differential structure for the possibility of the constitution of the other ego. Furthermore, do not the notions of founding and founded, active and passive, which auto-affection here begins to call into question, already come into question in Husserl’s own move to genetic phenomenology as we have seen? Do not all of these moments in phenomenology stand fore-square against what metaphysics determines as the effects of the privileging of presence?

How, then, is the deconstruction to name these primordial differences in their primordiality? For instance, the fact that the possibility of animation, of the constitution of intentional form, is enabled by the prior constitution of form in passive synthesis, which is, so to speak, before presence? Or, and in parallel to this last point, that the present moment of consciousness is only constituted as such in the temporal flow in the passage to the retentional-reproductive phase beyond the now? And finally, that the possibility of the subject’s knowledge of itself, which our description of the rôle of the voice (as metaphysically understood) would have us believe is a matter of the immediacy of self-presence, is in fact only possible in terms of the subject as active and passive, affecting and affected, differentiated not only thus, but also, as we saw, through the irrecuperable lapse involved
in reflection which denies the possibility of fulfilling identification?

All these moments in phenomenological description justify, we think, Derrida's claim that contrary to Husserl's intentions, the auto-affection by which the voice is able to close self-presence is in fact not pure; but rather, that what Husserl would have hoped to exclude is allowed to re-enter the space of self-presence – "space, the outside, the world, the body, etc" [SP 82/VP 92]. As Derrida continues:

As soon as it is admitted that auto-affection is the condition for self-presence, no pure transcendental reduction is possible. But it is necessary to proceed along the way of the transcendental reduction in order to recover again this difference as close as possible to itself – but not in its identity, its purity, or its origin, for it has none. We come closest to it in the movement of différance. [ibid]

This forms the 'conclusion' of the argument we have been formulating with regard to Derrida's deconstruction of Husserlian phenomenology. It is only through the way of phenomenology that 'primordial' difference can be revealed, that is, that the work of founding difference can be described. However, and at the same time, for structurally necessary reasons, phenomenology cannot recognize, or name, this difference as such. Nor could any other discipline to the extent that it is constrained by the language of metaphysics, which has always determined difference as the opposite of identity. Thus, Derrida will rename this foundational difference as (the movement of) différance.

In thinking différance, we have to bear a number of things in mind. As Derrida describes elsewhere, the silent a through which it is distinguished from différence is a mark borne only by writing; it is a
written sign. It is, moreover, through the employment of its -ance ending, middle voiced, suspended between active and passive voice. Finally, and most importantly, it is the interweaving of primordial deferral and differing (as its deformation of its own differing French roots makes clear). This, then, is the primordial differing-deferring which we noted above, for instance, the fact that the presence of the subject is only, so to speak, constituted after the fact, and in difference with itself. And as Derrida carries on, we must not think of différence as an accident which befalls an already constituted subject:

This movement of differance is not something that happens to a transcendental subject; it produces a subject. Auto-affection is not a modality of experience that characterizes a being that would already be itself (autos). It produces sameness as self-relation within self-difference; it produces sameness as the non-identical. [ibid]

We have seen Derrida introduce the ‘words’ trace and différence to try to name the movement of primordial non-presence and non-identity which Husserl’s phenomenological descriptions have revealed to be primordial and ‘constitutive’ despite his own metaphysical interpretation of his work. This movement of constitutive auto-affection which can never be pure, and which Derrida calls différence, does not lie solely in the realm of the voice, as we have been arguing ourselves, and as Derrida now goes on to claim. The difference of auto-affection corresponds intimately with the deferral of temporal constitution (already described, as we have indicated, by Yvonne Picard). And this intimacy is further revealed when we come to realize that the privilege of the voice rests entirely on the fact of its being a temporal phenomenon; but the movement of temporalization, as we have been stressing, is itself a movement of auto-affection, of differing as well as
deferring. As Derrida notes, referring at the same time to what Heidegger has already shown us [cf *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, pp 129ff/182ff], the primal impression is itself always already produced by auto-affection. It can be forever new only to the extent that it differs from what has just been, which is enabled by the same double intentionality of retention which enables it to be recognized as the same. Thus, it is only through the passing into retention/reproduction that the othering and gathering work of the movement of temporal consciousness can be achieved. Thus, in what was for Husserl a scandal, we can see that movement which already anticipates what Derrida will call *différance*.

All of this is further signalled in the remarkable footnote to be found on page 84 of *Voice and Phenomenon* [VP 94]. Here, Derrida refers us to what he describes as the admirable descriptions of § 36 of *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Inner-Time*, where, it will be recalled, Husserl finally admits that the movements of absolute constitutive temporalizing consciousness cannot be found names within phenomenology. Once again, at this crucial point, and even given the extraordinary nature of Husserl’s descriptions, Derrida writes: “We would still have to radicalize Husserl’s intention here in a specific direction.” [SP 84/VP 94] For, as Derrida notes, it is precisely as absolute subjectivity that Husserl declares this movement as unnamable; that is, what results in the failure of phenomenological naming here is the absence of any present object which could be named. Therefore, finally, as is clear, even this passage in Husserl is determined at the interpretative level by his metaphysical commitment, this time to the subject-object distinction. As Derrida continues:
This determination of ‘absolute subjectivity’ would also have to be crossed out as soon as we conceive the present on the basis of differance, and not the reverse. The concept of subjectivity belongs a priori and in general to the order of the constituted. This holds a fortiori for the analogical appresentation that constitutes intersubjectivity. Inter-subjectivity is inseparable from temporalization taken as the openness of the present upon an outside of itself, upon another absolute present. This being-outside itself proper to time is its espacement: it is an archi-scène. This scène, as the relation of one present to another present as such, that is, as a non-derived re-presentation (Vergegen-wärtigung or Re-präsentation), produces the structure of signs in general as ‘reference’, as being-for-something (für etwas sein), and radically precludes their reduction. There is no constituting subjectivity. The very concept of constitution itself must be deconstructed. [SP 84/VP 94]

This movement, then, which is constitutive of the subject, is the auto-affection of the now on itself, whereby it remains the same, the eternal present which is lived through, in being acted upon by what it is not, or is not yet. The stakes involved are to ‘name’ this remarkable ‘movement’ without falling into the trap which Husserl has so admirably pointed towards, namely, of having recourse to ontic metaphor. Thus, as Derrida notes, to call this movement time is already to cover up what is primordial in it through the use of a metaphysical metaphor which has always named the privilege of the form of the present.

However, and this is where the deconstruction supplements most clearly phenomenology, to name, as Derrida does, the movement of ‘temporalisation’ ‘differance’ is to introduce into what is thereby ‘constituted’ all that phenomenology wishes to exclude from what it has understood to be the constitutive realm. Derrida now ties together all the themes that have gradually begun to work his text – trace,
differance, writing – in the unravelling of the interweaving of temporality and language:

The living present springs forth out of its non-identity with itself and from the possibility of a retentional trace. It is always already a trace. This trace cannot be thought out on the basis of a simple present whose life would be within itself; the self of the living present is primordially a trace. The trace is not an attribute; we cannot say that the self of the living present ‘primordially is’ it. Being-primordial must be rethought on the basis of the trace, and not the reverse. This *archi-écriture* is at work at the origin of sense. [SP 85/VP 95]

The movement of *différence* produces the ‘constituting subject’ of phenomenology. It does this through temporalisation’s self-differentiation, and self-deferral. The possibility of this movement of temporalisation (*mouvance*, as Derrida terms it, in an again middle voiced expression which at one and the same time designates both a movement and an actuating force) is itself the work of the retentional trace which enables the return of the other as the same, for temporalisation to bend back on itself. At the same time, the work of this trace as *archi-écriture* is the writing of the subject, the *espacement* of what has been thought by metaphysics as purely temporal. This archi-writing is also the origin of sense to the extent that it marks that non-presence which is itself the mark of the need for what has been called the indication sign by phenomenology. At the heart of consciousness, the *für etwas* relationship, marked by signification, and in particular, the indication sign, is already the possibility of consciousness – and it is so to the very extent that consciousness can never be simply present (to itself).
§ 4. The Metaphoricity of Phenomenological Historicity

1. The 'zig-zag' of the epistolary Rückfrage

In the previous sections we have developed the remarks first made by Derrida in "'Genesis and Structure' and Phenomenology", indicating the field of the deconstruction of Husserlian phenomenology, and we have seen that, contrary to what might be called Husserl's metaphysical desire, phenomenological description, and particularly the descriptions connected with time and subsequently genetic phenomenology, but also in the account of language, has strayed beyond the boundaries of its own closure, as determined by its metaphysical principle. At these moments of (necessary) excess, we have seen the deconstruction striving to supplement the phenomenological text by attempting to name the constitutive moments of primordial differance, trace and archi-writing. In each of these cases, the privileged phenomenological notion of the self-present, active, constituting subject was seen to have been deconstructed, as much constituted as constituting. However, to think this way required an abandonment of the very language of phenomenological constitution, which is placed in analytical contradiction by such notions as constitutive difference.

We have been concerned, therefore, with the deconstruction of what it is that phenomenology describes. In this section, our concern will turn to phenomenological methodology as well. As we shall see, the same movement of différences, and the work of the trace, can be seen to work phenomenological methodology. In order to show this, we shall return to the Introduction to the 'Origin of Geometry'.

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As we have seen, the *Introduction* is concerned with the steps by which Husserl claims ideality is constituted. There are, as Rudolf Bernet describes, five stages in the constitutive passage to objectivity, and, as we have seen, each of these stages introduces a further degree of absence into the process.\(^1\) Firstly, there is the evident grasping of a state of affairs. As we have seen, however, this can only be possible on the basis of a passive genesis which introduces whole dimensions of history, and culturality, into the apparent simplicity of an originating act. The next two stages comprise retention and memory (or secondary recollection) by which this originary sense can be ‘stored’ intra-subjectively, and represented as the same. The final two stages involve intersubjective communication and ultimately the virtualising of sense made possible by writing. Thus, these final two groups of stages correspond to our last two sections, on time and temporality, and on language and writing.

For Husserl, the crisis has arisen in the passive acceptance of sense through a reading which fails to re-awaken originary sense, and it is the task of the phenomenologist to reactivate that sense, which is at the same time to rediscover the sense of the infinite task inscribed in the originating sense of geometry. This infinite task is also the mark of the need for phenomenology. In order to achieve this aim, Husserl undertakes an investigation of the sense-history of geometry.

The question of the *possibility* of this type of sense-history described in the ‘Origin’ is firstly a question to be posed of phenomenological methodology. What is the possibility, within phenomenology, of the *Rückfrage*? What is the possibility of the *Abbau*

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1. cf Bernet, “Presence and Absence of Meaning”, in *Phenomenology of Temporality, Time and Language*. 310
of the sedimentations of ready-made geometry which indicate the hidden subjective experience of the Lebenswelt? And on the basis of the sense thereby revealed, what is the further possibility of the phenomenological investigation of the prior sense-giving activity? [cf Chap 2.7]

These questions, posed in the early sections of Derrida’s Introduction, find the following answer: the possibility is found in “a spiralling movement [movement en vrille] which is the major find of our text”. [IOG 33/14] It is this spiralling movement, which Derrida also describes as the historical phenomenological method’s “zigzag way of proceeding” [IOG 50/36] which, as the “pure form of every historical experience”, will be the Introduction’s “metaphorical focus”. At stake here will be the same sense of delay which we have seen Derrida examining in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, and above all in Voice and Phenomenon. Furthermore, the zigzag seems to us to correspond to the notion of the pli, the retentional trace which is the possibility of the return which is constitutive of presence. Thus, the present, or the origin, is always already ‘constituted’ (as opposed to being constitutive, as it has always been understood by phenomenology) by that which it follows.

The Crisis in the sciences has occurred to the extent that the necessary freeing of scientific procedures from their bases in the subjective experiences of the Lebenswelt has led to an “objectivist alienation” whereby the instituting origins of science have become strange and inaccessible; [IOG 31/10] rendering the sciences, and ultimately, our world, unintelligible. The phenomenologist who aims to reinvigorate this originary sense thus takes on a responsibility for the sense. The possibility of the historical investigation which aims to
reawaken originary sense-giving activity will require an overturning of the scientific reversal [Umkehrung] which has rendered geometry/science primordial. This will need to show the dependence of geometry on the “constitution of the ideal objectivities of logic and language in general, [and] the correlative constitution of intersubjectivity.” [IOG 32-3/12-13] It is this order of dependence that Derrida’s reading of the ‘Origin’ seeks to complicate, revealing the “bold clearing” of historicity which “is brought about within the regional limits of the investigation and [which] transgresses them toward a new form of radicality.” [IOG 34/14]

The task of repeating the origin of geometry necessitates that the historical method cannot be satisfied with a reflection on “ready-made, handed-down geometry”, [C 353/Hua VI 365] for this only has meaning in virtue of the sense of geometrical science, which in turn marks its dependence on the originary sense, which gave rise to geometrical sense as such. On the other hand, although “the juridical priority of the question of phenomenological origin is therefore absolute”, [IOG 38/19] of necessity, this very question “can be asked only secondarily and at the end of an itinerary which, in its turn, enjoys a methodological and rightful priority.” [IOG 38/19-20] That is to say, although the question of the origin has juridical priority, and ready-made geometry has a wholly dependent status, nevertheless, the historical reduction to originary sense must, of necessity, begin with the facticity of ready-made geometry. Thus Derrida writes:

There must already have been the fact of a history of geometry, so that the reduction can be performed. I must already have a naïve knowledge of geometry and must not begin at its origin. Here the method’s juridical necessity
overlaps history’s factual necessity... Both the necessity to proceed from the fact of constituted science and the regression towards the nonempirical origins are at the same time conditions of possibility. [IOG 38/20]

Although the ‘backwards inquiring’ phenomenologist must begin with the fact of an historically constituted geometry, the developments undertaken in the turn to genetic phenomenology enable an historical inquiry which is rigorously distinct from the type of historicism which was criticised during the static-structural phase of phenomenology. Rather, just as every conscious act bears within itself its own passive genesis, and hence its own sense-history, which can be investigated within genetic phenomenology [cf FTL 207f/Hua XVII 215; & Chap 2.4.2 supra]; so the ideal objectivity (which is necessarily “produced by an act of concrete consciousness” [IOG 42/25 emphasis added]) “has a history”. This history is already announced in the primal instituting act, and it is this history which grounds the constituted truth of (in this case) geometrical science. Husserl is able to ground geometrical truth in this history without thereby descending towards a “primordially instituted finitude”, and thus the empiricism of historicism, because this:

... history will take its sense from an infinite Telos... It is true that this infinite, which is always already at work in the origins, is not a positive and actual infinite. It is given as an Idea in the Kantian sense, as a regulative ‘indefinite’ whose negativity gives up its rights to history. Not only the morality but also the historicity of truth itself would here prevent this ‘falsification’ of the actual infinite into an indefinite or an ad infinitum, a falsification of which Hegel accused Kant and Fichte. [IOG 45/29, fn]

The crucial point, then, which enables the phenomenological investigation of the sense-history of geometry without reducing this

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history to an empiricist historicism, is the infinity which is already at work in the primal instituting act, and which is therefore retained in handed-down geometry, to the very extent that this handed-down geometry retains its sense from the primal instituting act. Of absolutely fundamental importance for our understanding of Derrida’s deconstruction of Husserl is the extent to which this infinite, which is given as a regulative Idea in the Kantian sense, escapes the Hegelian critique [outlined in Chaps 1.2.1 and 2.8.2]. It is clear therefore, that the reading of the intrusions of the Idea in the Kantian sense into phenomenology at its most crucial moments, announced in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, has the following determination: there will be the falsified infinite, the ‘bad’ infinite, which is simply the indefinite or *ad infinitum*, an infinite which is merely the negation of finitude; and there will be a ‘good’ infinite, informed by a certain ‘morality’ and ‘historicity’. To speak schematically, the deconstruction will ‘depart’ from phenomenology when it has recourse to the former, and will emphasize the radicality of phenomenology when it engages with the morality and historicity of the infinity of the Idea in the Kantian sense. The question to be posed here is how this latter sense of the infinite is to be presented within phenomenology, in contrast to the mode of presentation of the former, and we shall return to this question below.

Not only must historical phenomenology begin with the facticity of ready-made geometry before it can reawaken the primal instituting act; but a further facticity seems of necessity to define the originary act. We have seen that there is an apparent problem for phenomenology in constituting the eidos ego, since the meditating phenomenologist must begin with themselves, and thus have no possibility of performing an
imaginary variation on the ego. So with the originary act, it has the status of the invariable, and thereby of fact as opposed to eidos. And yet the originary act, qua originary, must have happened as such, de jure. Thus, the de facto and the de jure here appear indissociable, [IOG 46/31] a failure of distinction the consequences of which would be profound for phenomenology.

However, this indissociability is not so much a problem for historical phenomenology (though it would clearly be so for static phenomenology), as its focus of interest. For it is the very one-off-ness/first-time-ness [Erstmaligkeit] of the primal instituting act which interests Husserl. Thus the essence of the Erstmaligkeit is that it has the infinite potential for iteration, whatever that factuality of its content; and this much is evident from the fact of handed-down geometry, whose historicity is an eidetic component which presupposes a primal instituting act. Indeed, we can also say, independently of the contents of its history, that geometry must necessarily have had the history it has had. This amounts to saying that if it did not have, then it would be other than it in fact is. Once again, therefore, the possibility of access to the essence of the originary act depends on the factuality of ready-made geometry.

Thus the phenomenological method of historical investigation mirrors, so to speak, the historical development of geometry, whereby the phenomenologist must begin with the factuality of ready-made geometry and return back to the originary sense-giving act, while the

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2. Derrida will return to the stakes involved in phenomenology’s claim to be able to investigate the essence of the one-off-ness of the primal instituting act at the conclusion of the Introduction. To anticipate our own concluding Chapter, we may ask: What are the implications of a phenomenology of the essence of the event, especially if the event is the interruption of the Other?
history of geometry begins with the event of the primal instituting act and proceeds towards what is now understood as geometry. It is this double movement whose metaphors interest Derrida:

Thus, both thanks to and despite the sedimentations, I can restore history to its traditional diaphaneity. Husserl here speaks of Rückfrage... [which] we have translated by return inquiry [question en retour]. Like its German synonym, return inquiry is marked by the postal and epistolary reference or resonance of a communication from a distance. Like Rückfrage, return inquiry is asked on the basis of a first posting. From a received and already readable document, the possibility is offered me of asking again, and in return, about the primordial and final intention of what has been given me by tradition. [IOG 50/36]

It is the working out of the implications of the metaphors of epistolary communication at a distance; the readability of the document which is so 'sent'; and the accessibility of the simultaneously primordial and final intentions; which will now interest us. To highlight just one, what is the relation between communication at a distance, deferral, and the historicity of the Idea in the Kantian sense (which is opposed to the bad infinite criticised by Hegel)?

If we go forward a few pages, we find Derrida drawing attention to the fact that, in the methodological order of the 'Origin', Husserl defers describing the 'content' of the originating act of geometry, preferring to concentrate on the form this act must have taken. At this stage, the stakes of Husserl's methodological approach become clearer, for, as Derrida explains, sense only becomes historical once it has broken with its ties to empirical history, that is, once it has become Absolutely Objective. Thus the deferral of the inquiry into the content
of the originating act of sense-constitution respects more than just an apparently methodological limitation. Rather, the sense of the originating act, the *subjective praxis* from which geometrical sense emerges, cannot be known as such, since it is not yet historical, that is, not yet Absolutely Objective. Instead, and of necessity, the content of the originating act will only be decipherable in the traces it has left in the resultant, constituted, Objectivity. Thus, we must begin with what is constitut-*ed* in order to inquire into the constitut-ive.

And this necessity is not an external fate, but an essential necessity of intentionality. The *primordial* sense of every intentional act is *only* its *final* sense, i.e., the constitution of an object (in the broadest sense of these terms). That is why a *teleology* [emphasis added] can open up a passage, a way back toward the beginnings. [IOG 64/53-54]

Thus there is not, in fact, an originary evidence (of geometry) which would then become Objective; evidence only begins with ideal objectivity.

Given that this is the case, Derrida is led to wonder whether in fact the “language of genesis could well seem fictive at this point” [IOG 65/55]:

Does this not return us to a classic transcendental regression? And is not the interconnecting of transcendental necessities, even if *narrated* according to how it develops, at bottom the static, structural, and normative schema for the conditions of a history rather than history itself? [ibid]

3. It is in this way that we can understand Derrida’s remark that: “The conditions of Objectivity are then the conditions of historicity itself.”
Derrida is suggesting that the sense-investigation of the origin of geometrical sense cannot, due to what initially appeared to be simply methodological restrictions, be understood as an example of genetic phenomenology, despite what the metaphorics of the text may suggest. After all, Husserl is not concerned, precisely at this moment, with the constitution within a subject of sense. Rather, what Husserl is involved in is a classical investigation into transcendental conditions of possibility. The question which is being implicitly posed here is the following: given that the 'sense-history' which is supposedly the ground for all history is not in fact historical at all, but really transcendental, can there be a history which is not facto-empirical; especially given that history itself is of necessity unique, and, moreover, could not have been otherwise? And in the light of this question, is it merely accidental that Husserl appears not to respect a rigorous distinction between Historie and Geschichte? [cf IOG 27/5 fn] Given that what makes history possible is only present when history begins, and not before, it becomes all the more imperative that Husserl should make the distinction between the (apparently fictional) Historie and Geschichte. As a type of stratification, it is really this latter with which Husserl is concerned, and hence it is not so much an historical-genetic investigation as, as Bernet says, an archeology. [Silverman (1989), 143] On the other hand, as we shall see shortly, the nature of this transcendentalism cannot be contained within a Kantian understanding of this term.

That this is not simply a genetic investigation is further confirmed

4. That the foundation of history should not itself be historical parallels the non-temporality of the temporalizing absolute flow of constituting consciousness described above. The point about archeology could be informatively compared with Derrida’s analyses of the metaphorics of stratification in ‘Form and Meaning’. What will finally be at issue, in both of these cases, is whether an account informed by the metaphorics of stratification could ever be adequate for the genetic movement of ‘growing-out-of’.
when we reflect on the philosophical decision by which Husserl has come to privilege form over content, and on the fact that the conditions of historicity are also the conditions of Objectivity. For what is thereby revealed is a familiar difficulty confronting phenomenology. Derrida stresses that the object has been privileged as the model of sense for phenomenology. [IOG 64/54] And we have seen that it is precisely the object (qua ideal Objectivity) which remains unconstituted until the beginning of history. Thus the phase leading up to this moment of beginning cannot be described as such, for there are no objects there to be described. Phenomenology is once more condemned to silence with regard to the content of this ‘pre-historical’ development, and is forced into discussing it in transcendental terms instead. The problems which Derrida is exposing here, which conform to the motivation of the profound philosophical decision mentioned before, are problems to do with phenomenological language, rather than simply phenomenological method as such. What language could phenomenology use to describe the ‘pre-objective’?

This is why, at the crucial moment of his historical investigation, Husserl defers radical historical investigation, and lapses instead into transcendentalism, exemplified already in phenomenology’s static-structural phase. Where, in “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, Derrida had examined the extent to which genesis pervaded non-genetic moments of phenomenology, here he is revealing the extent to which the philosophical commitment of phenomenology, to a metaphysics of the presence of the object to the gaze (as determined in the principle of all principles), forbids it from fulfilling the radical task upon which it has embarked. It would appear that, within the limits of phenomenology, the process of the constitution of idealities cannot be
described *as such*. It can only be evoked in its formality, and then filled in 'roughly', by means of a 'what it must have been like'.

2. The Horizons of Historical Phenomenology

When discussing writing’s rôle in the constitution of objectivity, it was suggested that for Husserl, the act of responsibility performed in the reactivation of sense was a response to the sedimentation of originating sense. This can occur due to the passivity before writing discussed already; but it can also occur through the *equivocity* of expression [IOG 100/101]. Derrida argues that all of Husserl’s ‘theory of language’ is directed towards the reduction of both contingent and essential equivocity, such as arises in, for instance, culturally influenced understanding of signs. It is the task of science and philosophy to express themselves in such a way as to legislate against such misinterpretation, that is, to aim at *univocity* of sense. Thus, equivocity occurs in the realm of natural languages, whereas univocity will always be confined to the type of ideal language aimed at by phenomenology [IOG 101/102].

As Derrida notes, this again removes sense from history, in a manner now familiar, to the extent that univocal sense is not subject to the vicissitudes of historical fortune. Furthermore, the telos of univocity corresponds to that presence of sense which lies behind Husserl’s reduction to the expressive stratum, since “nothing is hidden or announced” of sense in univocal expression; that is, in the transferral to univocal expression, nothing is added to or taken away from sense. Univocity ensures the “exactitude of translation” and hence the “purity of tradition”. In this way, the removal of sense from history at the same
time makes history possible, as the successful transmission and recollection of sense. [IOG 102/103] However, as such, univocity would also represent the death of history, so to speak, that is, its replacement by “indefinite iteration”.

Derrida compares, at this point, the two projects of Joyce and Husserl, both in a sense anti-historical, the one which aims at pure equivocity, the other at pure univocity. However, the former is not possible to the extent that a degree of univocity is required in order that sense be understandable at all. Nor, on the other hand, is the latter possible as such. Its possibility would be the reduction of all cultural differences. Alternatively, its possibility would lie in the designation of an absolutely ideal object. [IOG 103/106] This would conform to what was said above about bound and free idealities: the possibility of pure univocity in either of the two instances just cited would be the pure correlation between absolute ideal object and ideal expression, which would be to transform the latter bound ideality into a free ideality. However, this is, in fact, never possible, since such a transformation could never occur. At best, then, univocity remains accessible only as an *Idea in the Kantian sense*, an infinite idea [IOG 104/107; C 363/Hua VI 373]. In making univocity an infinite task, Husserl demonstrates the realization that univocity is both “the apriori and the teleological condition for all historicity” [IOG 104/107]. Moreover, a degree of univocity remains necessary for the possibility of reactivation. A lack of univocity would correspond to that disappearance of sense found in the illegible lapidary inscription evoked previously [IOG 88/85]

But if univocity is the possibility of pure history, and at the same time, is always only relative, or limited, does that not call into question
the possibility of the type of pure history of sense being undertaken by Husserl? [IOG 105/107] Furthermore, the possibility of reactivation is itself obviously finite, as Husserl admits, so the reactivation of originating sense can never be total. Should this finitude, therefore, Derrida asks, not be the focus of Husserl’s inquiry into history, rather than the possibility of reactivating origins? [IOG 105/108] That is to say, should not the inquiry into history take as its point of departure the realization that without the concealment of origins, without the departure from indefinite iteration, there would be no history as such?

On the contrary, as we saw in Chapter 2.7, the possibility of any reactivation, and thus of finite reactivation, is only possible on the basis of the infinity which informs the constitution of the Absolute Objectivity of geometry, the infinity of the task of science, that is, ultimately, the “Idea of an infinite history”. The ideal of total reactivation itself, then, corresponds to an infinitisation of our own finitude, a removal of the limits of our capabilities [IOG 106/109; C 365/Hua VI 375] This idealisation of our capacities, Derrida argues, parallels that by which the flow of immanent time is known as a unity or the unity of the world’s infinite horizon is constituted, through the work of the Idea in the Kantian sense. Most importantly, as we shall go on to see, it also parallels that movement by which what is given in sensible intuition to the proto-geometer comes to be idealized into the absolutely objective morphological forms corresponding to geometrical exactitude – for, as will be seen, Derrida argues that finally the transition from sensible intuition to geometrical ideality remains a ‘leap’, whose possibility (namely the Idea in the Kantian sense) needs to be further investigated. As Derrida writes in a passage echoing that from “‘Genesis and Structure’ and Phenomenology”, and which confirms observations
which were repeatedly made in Chapter 2, these idealizations of the reactivating-responsible sense investigator and of the original institution of geometrical objectivity, have as their correlate “an infinite Idea, [which] always decisively intervenes in the difficult moments of Husserl’s description”. [IOG 106 109] As Derrida continues, the evidence which the intervention of the Idea ‘guarantees’ is of a peculiar [eigentümlich; C 365/Hua VI 375] status given that the content of the Idea can never be adequately determined:

... the certainty of what can never immediately and as such present itself in an intuition should pose some serious problems for phenomenology (problems similar to those, for example, of the constitution of the alter ego by an irreducible mediate intentionality). [IOG 106/109]

At this crucial stage in the phenomenological inquiry into sense-history, which has as its ultimate purpose the reactivation of sense, therefore, it appears as if the principle of phenomenology, that it accept as evidence only that which is presented to consciousness as it is presented to consciousness, is ‘contravened’ through the intervention of the infinite Idea (an intervention which is not, as has been noted, unique). Thus, we have the two decisive themes in Derrida’s reflection on the methodology of historical phenomenology – the metaphoric of the ‘zig-zag’ described previously, and the rôle of the Idea in the Kantian sense in the constitution of Ideality and in the reactivation of originating sense.

What is problematical for phenomenology is precisely the possibility of the ‘givenness’ of the Idea as infinite. At the same time however, a certain infinity plays a decisive rôle when we return to the
question of the transcendentalism of the 'Origin', which, it was argued, was the method of this text rather than being simply genetic phenomenology. What is more, this infinity corresponds to that movement which we have suggested the double science of deconstruction 'respects' in phenomenology. Derrida has argued that the possibility of sense-history only begins once sense has become non-historical, that is Absolutely Objective; and that what has been revealed by Husserl are the transcendental conditions of history, rather than history as such. What is remarkable about the middle way that Husserl has steered between Kantian transcendentalism and the factual history which parallels that criticized in 'Philosophy as Rigorous Science', is that the conditions of the possibility of history which phenomenology reveals are concrete [IOG 117/123]. The point which Derrida makes here is intimately related to the issue of the givenness of the infinite Idea. For the conditions for the possibility of history are concrete because they are originally “experienced under the form of horizon”. As was seen in Chapter 2.7, the crucial point about the horizon is that it is not something which can be given as such, but rather, is something which accompanies all lived experiences in their concreteness, and only as such.

Horizon is the always-already-there of a future which keeps the indetermination of its infinite openness intact (even though this future was announced to consciousness). As the structural determination of every material indeterminacy, a horizon is always virtually present in every experience; for it is at once the unity and the incompleteness for that experience – the anticipated unity in every completion. [ibid]

The connection between the horizon and protention was already noted in Chapter 2.7, where it was described as 'anticipational pre-
knowledge’, the possibility of the intention’s going beyond what is immediately present to consciousness. It was also noted that the ‘internal horizon’ corresponded to the symbolic indication of the other sides of the object as described in Logical Investigations. Thus, at this stage, we see the clear interweaving of a number of themes which have become the focus of this work – horizontal consciousness, indication, the Idea in the Kantian sense, and the protentional (and retentional) stretching of consciousness. All of these moments mark what could be described as transcendences of sense, the overflowings of what is given to consciousness. In their very openness they serve to ‘complete’ apperception. It is this movement of completion-incompletion, along with the zig-zag of the historical inquiry’s method, which we wish to study now. To what extent does phenomenology adequately describe these essential moments of openness/transcendence? Will phenomenology privilege the completing aspect of these marks of openness or the incompleteness that they signify?

There is a clear resonance of Heidegger’s thought in this understanding of the crucial rôle played by the horizon of consciousness, by protentionality, a resonance which in turn echoes in the repeated citations of Heidegger at moments of potential ‘double readings’ in Voice and Phenomenon. And, as was said in Chapter 2.7, the possibility of the Rückfrage into subjective constituting acts is the traces of historicity left as sediment in the present Leistungen which indicate that act, a notion which is also clearly reminiscent of Heidegger.5 Although, as we have already said, Husserl cannot go into

5. We might also add that this notion of trace would form another source for Derrida’s own employment of this term in Voice and Phenomenon and elsewhere, as discussed above; cf the discussion of Heidegger’s essay on the Anaximander Fragment at the end of ‘Differance’.

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the concrete substance of the originating act of geometry, but must be content with a generalist outline of ‘what it must have been like’, there is still a reflection on the relation between pre-geometrical praxis and the geometrical sense which is now our own which would call into question the nature of the original understanding of this sense. Nevertheless, there is nothing comparable to the type of questioning prompted by Heidegger’s realization that the Aristotelian notion of praxis has been more or less obliterated by poiesis in the history of philosophy, a questioning of the pre-philosophical experience of praxis which would have informed Aristotle’s use of the term; an experience which would have left its trace in the philosophical use of the term. Rather, Husserl is content to outline certain “invariant structures” [IOG 122/130] of the world experienced by the proto-geometer, which the Abbau and subsequent Rückfrage can reveal. That is to say, there is no apparent awareness in Husserl that the pre-geometrical experience (which would be a pre-philosophical experience) would in any way differ from how it would be understood by an historical inquirer working at the end of the history of metaphysics. We must be aware, therefore, that, in spite of the many admirable virtues of Husserl’s inquiry, and despite the apparent affinities with the Heideggerian project which can be emphasized, Husserl’s work is in no way hermeneutical.

Derrida goes on to list those features of the proto-geometer’s experience of the world which Husserl claims we can know a priori to have been the case, on the basis of handed-down geometry. Thus, the world must have contained things, which in turn must have been corporeal, have had shapes and stoffliche qualities related to these shapes by supplementary eidetic determination [IOG 122/130-1]; and finally, that certain of these shapes had a particular use value which would lead
to their being perfected (flatness of surface, for instance) [IOG 123/132; C 375-6/Hua VI 383-4]. How do we get from this experience of certain repeated morphological types to the constituted idealities of geometry, which are only available to the understanding, as opposed to being able to be given in sensible intuition? To ask this question is, ultimately, to pose the question of the origin of geometry – for geometry only begins with this movement to mathematical idealities, as was seen in Chapter 2.8.2. Moreover, to ask this question is to come to the final stage in the inquiry into the possibility of the constitution of Absolute Objectivity. We have stressed that for Husserl, what distinguishes phenomenology from philosophy is its respect for the genuine sense of ideality. We shall now turn to the complex interweaving of phenomenological method and the origin of the need for phenomenology, with the process of idealisation which phenomenology reveals.

3. The process of Idealisation and the Idea in the Kantian sense

The possibility of the leap from the constitution of sensible morphological types to idealities of the understanding is a profoundly philosophical act [IOG 127/137]. As Derrida says, it is the philosopher who, for Husserl, "inaugurates the theoretical attitude". As we saw in Chapter 2.8.2, philosophy, and reason, begin when intentional life comes to be inhabited by infinities, which leads to the constitution of ideas which are understood as infinite, both as infinitely repeatable and as unconditioned. These infinities can subsequently be built upon, creating ever new infinities, and in this process science is born. We thus have the scientific community which lives in its own finitude, but lives towards infinite poles, the infinite tasks of the scientific community. Science begins when the infinite task takes over from the finite tasks of
everyday life.

Philosophy begins when reason begins, and its task, as we have seen, is informed by the Idea in the Kantian sense in the double trait described by Ricoeur, of infinity and totality. Philosophy begins with the irruption of the infinite task, the infinite pole which guides the task, of absolute knowledge of all there is. The science of geometry can spring up, so to speak, only within the (intersubjective) consciousness which is already inhabited by this infinite Idea. It is only with the pre-having of the infinite Idea of Absolute Knowledge that the proto-geometer can make the leap from observing repeated sensible idealities to instituting these idealities as infinite Ideas of the understanding, Ideas which are infinitely repeatable and which are inscribed within the infinite task of absolute knowledge. Thus, Derrida writes that the theoretical attitude which is instituted by the philosopher:

is only the spirit’s radical freedom, which authorizes a move beyond finitude and opens the horizon of knowledge as that of a pre-having, ie, of an infinite project or task (Vorhaben). Thereby, the theoretical attitude makes idealisation’s decisive ‘passage to the limit’ possible. [ibid]

Thus, the conditions for the origin of geometry are the pre-geometrical Umwelt as described, and the philosophical understanding of the infinite task. It is on the basis of the latter that the experiences of the former can be transformed into geometrical science. [IOG 132/144] Thus, we again come up against the imperative of thematizing the Idea with which philosophy begins, and which is the possibility of the process of idealizing which institutes geometry. However, within phenomenology, the very institutive capacity of the Idea has meant that this is “an
idealizing operation whose activity has never been studied for itself and whose conditions are never to be so studied". [IOG 133/144] The crucial point to be understood about the distinction between morphological ideality and geometrical ideality is that the latter "has been produced without the essential aid of sensibility or imagination; it broke away by a leap from every descriptive mooring". [IOG 133/145] Geometrical ideality is ultimately produced when it is pure thinking which is constitutive rather than sensibility. This is why Derrida stresses that the instituting act of geometry is a leap of "radical and irruptive freedom". [IOG 134/145]

What then is the possibility of this leap of theoretical freedom? As Derrida's citations make clear, the origin of the ability to idealize is always presented by Husserl as the passage to the limit which begins in the anticipatory (ie horizonal/protentional) structure of intentionality [ibid]. However, this only pushes the problem a stage further back, for in order for the intentional anticipation to make the leap to the infinite it must itself already be ideal. What is the possibility, then, of the ideality of anticipational intentionality? It is the "presence for consciousness of an Idea in the Kantian sense". [IOG 135/147] The Idea is an object for consciousness as the object of an ideation, which is to be distinguished from a Wesenschau. The former "one can constitute an object as a creation, the other can determine it in an intuition". That is to say, it is only ideation in the former sense that is productive or creative, and thus able to bring about something which did not exist previously, such as a geometrical ideality. This productive act can then be repeated in the ideation of the Wesenschau, determining the same object which was created previously by the act of idealising ideation. On the other hand, and in a movement whose form echoes one we have had cause to notice
before, the idealising ideation itself can only proceed in its passage to
the limit if it is guided by an essence which is anticipated during the
idealisation, and then recognizable as a truth of pure space \textit{ibid}. Thus,
there is a sense in which the ideation of the \textit{Wesenschau} comes \textit{both
before and after} idealising ideation.

The fundamental moment in the movement of idealisation is,
therefore, the openness of the anticipational-protentional horizon which
allows intentionality to be directed towards a \textit{potentially infinite}
repetition of the sense being constituted, the repetition over and over
again as the same. This openness is to be contrasted, as Derrida stresses,
with the infinity of adumbrations of perceptual givenness of a material
thing which can never be mastered adequately \cite[136/148]{IOG}. It is to be
contrasted precisely to the extent that, in order for the ideality to be
created in this act, the infinity must be given, the limit point, so to
speak, of the repetitions must be reached. The essence represented by
the Kantian Idea is presented to consciousness, is intelligible \textit{for}
consciousness, as a telos of (or as the rules which govern) the infinite
process \cite[149]{Bernet (Silverman, 1987)}. It is only thus that the Idea
of infinity would finally be able to enter consciousness and so enable the
constitution of the ideal objects of science and geometry.

Once more, therefore, we must ask what the possibility of the
givenness of the Idea as an object for consciousness is, what the
possibility is of the givenness of a telos of an infinite process. In what
way does the protentional-horizontal structure of anticipational
intentionality enable this givenness of the infinite Idea? There are a
number of points which can be made with regard to this question.
Firstly, we need to think the relation between the structure of primordial temporality and the infinitely idealising Idea. The "ethico-teleological prescription" of the infinite task presented by the Idea parallels the again and again of the Absolute Flux. Both are made possible by the retentional and protentional stretching of the Living Present. However, this possibility is itself grounded only if the flow can be thought as a unity, that is, if the infinity of returns of the primordial now can be thought as one. As we have seen, the initial possibility of the constitution of the flow as unified is the double intentionality of retention. However, in order that the 'totality' of the flow be thought of as a unity, it requires to be given as an Idea in the Kantian sense [cf I § 83]. Thus, are we not forced to say that the possibility of the givenness of the structure of consciousness which makes possible the presence of the Idea in the Kantian sense is itself the Idea in the Kantian sense. Is this not a fundamental sense in which the Idea could never be thematized by phenomenology, since it is always already operative in phenomenology's opening, that is, always already operative in determining phenomenology's thresholds? That this is the case is confirmed when we come to think the possibility of the structure of temporalising consciousness where what Derrida calls the Maintenance, the holding of the nowness so to speak (and the -ance ending denoting the middle voice should be noted here, echoing the fact that différ-ance is neither active nor passive), is only possible in the unity of an indefiniteness. This is the thought which motivates Husserl's reflection on the impossibility of the death of the living present in those passages from the C Manuscripts to which we have referred before. The unity, the closure, of this infinite movement, can therefore never appear as such – which again bears a certain similarity to the thought of Heidegger with respect to the possibility of the experience of our own death. At any rate, what is
crucial is that the Idea which is the possibility of the appearing of the Idea can itself never appear phenomenally to consciousness [IOG 137/150].

Derrida here draws attention to the remarkable analyses contained in the C Manuscripts where the apparent paradoxes alluded to here receive a doubtless preliminary treatment. Does not the fascination of these texts lie, as Derrida suggests, in the fact that there Husserl returns to the:

... most profound region of phenomenological reflection, where darkness risks being no longer the provision of appearing or the field which offers itself to phenomenal light, but the *forever nocturnal source of the light itself* [emphasis added]. Are not the Idea and the idealizing ability, which exemplarily occupy us here as the origin of mathematics, kept back in this essential darkness? [*ibid*]

As Derrida continues, it is notable that “Husserl never made the Idea *itself* the *theme* of a phenomenological description”. That is to say, the type of evidence which the Idea yields is never made the subject of phenomenological scrutiny, no doubt because the principle of phenomenology demands that what counts as evidence for phenomenology is always the thing in its phenomenal givenness, that is, as it is presented to consciousness, which is what can never be the case for the Idea. We thus have an exemplary case of that tension which we have been exploring throughout. The phenomenological principle is in conflict with that which makes phenomenology (in all its descriptive fecundity) possible:

Phenomenology would thus be *stretched* between the
finitizing consciousness of its principle and the infinitizing consciousness of its final institution, the Endstiftung indefinitely deferred [emphasis added] in its content but always evident in its regulative value. [IOG 138/151]

Thus, at the same time that phenomenology’s methodological principle condemns the Idea in the Kantian sense to being forever hidden from phenomenological seeing, nevertheless, the telos of phenomenology (which is also its arche, as we have seen – cf 2.8.2) can be made evident in its practicality, as ethical task. As such, what is thereby known is the possibility of evidence and of the openness of seeing [ibid]. The Idea is therefore the unique moment in phenomenology of an intention without an object (once again, can we be deaf to certain Heideggerian echoes here?). As is clear from Ideas I § 143, the sense of the givenness of the Idea is that of the infinite determinability of an object, that is, the infinity of its possible modes of givenness. To say this is to come close to the ‘essence’ of the Idea – for what we are thereby told is that the Idea is the possibility of the object’s appearing as such. This is the essence of the consciousness of transcendent objects, the regulative possibility of their appearing. The possibility of a perceptual object as such appearing to consciousness is that it appear in one of an infinity of possible adumbrations. Thus, the consciousness of the Idea, as the unique consciousness which has no object, is in fact the revelation of the “being of the intention: intentionality itself” [IOG 139/153; cf the ‘Introductory Part’ of Heidegger’s History of the Concept of Time, where the being of intentionality is also at issue]. The appearance of the Idea is the appearance of the possibility of appearing.

For all these reasons, in the frequent recourse to the Idea in the Kantian sense, Husserl is admitting that “phenomenology cannot be
grounded as such in itself, nor can it *itself* indicate its own proper limits" [IOG 140/154]. What is remarkable, and it is in this that we think the profundity of the deconstructive double reading lies, is that, according to Derrida: “without wanting or being able to describe it, Husserl nevertheless recognizes, distinguishes, and *posits* this intentionality as the highest source of value.” [ibid] **What seems to us remarkable here is that at the very moment that Derrida reveals the ultimate impoverishment of phenomenology, understood from the point of view of its metaphysical principle, he, at the same time, reveals phenomenology’s ultimate radicality.**

Thus, as we have seen, the grounding of the possibility of the Idea’s givenness is the ‘unified structural openness’ of the temporalizing flow which is only possible given the presence of the Idea. Secondly, this Idea can only be given in an empty intentionality, which is to say, its evidential status can never be given over to phenomenological clarification/intuition. For these reasons, this operative concept of phenomenology, the concept which opens phenomenology, cannot be thematized by phenomenology. In this way, therefore, the Idea in the Kantian sense occupies a similar position in phenomenology to phenomenological language, as we have seen. Thus, in a manner which we have indicated before, the totality of phenomenology eludes what was called a ‘phenomenology of phenomenology’. And yet, the phenomenological understanding of the Idea, as the institution of the task which calls for phenomenology’s *response*, is an understanding of that which overflows phenomenology’s own limits. Thus, phenomenology may not be able to represent the Idea, but it has access to it precisely to the extent that the Idea *announces itself* from *beyond* phenomenology, but, as we have seen, in the concreteness of a lived
experience as such, that is, in its horizontality. *And in calling phenomenology from beyond phenomenology, the Idea institutes phenomenology as a response to this call, as a response to the alterity of the call.* It is in the horizontal-protentional structure of consciousness which phenomenology has revealed that the call of the Idea is able to sound. The horizontal-protentional structure of temporalizing consciousness is the openness to the call of the other as infinite Idea.

At one and the same time, therefore, deconstruction respects this phenomenological respect of transcendence, but appreciates also the need for the supplement of the phenomenological description of the temporalizing consciousness, such that it can be described in the possibility of its openness to the call of the infinite Idea. This is the work undertaken by the notions of *différance*, trace and *archi-écriture*. All of these notions indicate the ‘primordial’ openness, the ‘originary’ spacing, of the temporalizing flow, which could enable the response to the other, as a response to the interruption of the other, to be ‘originating’ for, and of, consciousness (and phenomenology) rather than secondary and derivative. Furthermore, if we return to our opening chapter, we can see that what is hereby respected by the deconstruction is a moment in phenomenology which decisively marks it off from the Hegelian thought which seeks to gain mastery over the infinite and over its other. For we are claiming, finally, that Husserl *accepts* that what founds phenomenology, what opens phenomenology, lies beyond phenomenology, is the other of phenomenology without being phenomenology’s other. The transcendence which phenomenology respects, therefore, is the transcendence of the infinite Idea in its very ethicality.
That the possibility of an openness to the other is to be found described within phenomenology will be a theme returned to in the final chapter. Prior to that however, we must return to the aspect of deconstruction which supplements phenomenology.

How does the Idea establish historicity? How can the Idea be responded to? It must be borne in mind that although the Idea is in a sense the excess of phenomenology, nevertheless, it would be nothing were it not created by historical-transcendental consciousness: “The Absolute of the Idea as the Telos of an infinite determinability is the Absolute of intentional historicity” [IOG 142/157] where this genitive is both subjective and objective. At this moment, Derrida is arguing, both subject and (absolute) object(ivity) are engendered. Thus, this genitive marks the possibility, in both directions so to speak, of the givenness of an object to consciousness. It is the opening of consciousness as such prior to its diffraction into activity and passivity [IOG 143/157]. It is opened, that is to say, in the primordial movement of temporalization. The relation between the Idea and primordial temporalization is made that much closer when we realize that Husserl says of them both that they are both supra- and omni-temporal (while these are themselves still modes of temporality) [IOG 148/165].

As the omni-temporal mode of temporality, the Idea and temporalization are the possibility of historicity to the extent that they enable le passage d'une Parole. Historicity, sense-history, the Absolute of history, is only possible to the extent that there is a communication,
between what was past and what is present [IOG 149/165]. Derrida then returns finally to the metaphorics of the Rückfrage and of history. There is no history if sense remains, as we have seen. History, and its reciprocal movement as historical sense-investigation, are only possible on the basis of the movement of communication, of sending and receiving, the risk of misunderstanding which is run when one responds to a call. There is only historicity when sense is despatched, when it is trusted to writing, when it becomes virtual in its going away, so to speak. The responsibility of phenomenology is displayed in its responding on behalf of, speaking on behalf of, this original sense. To make oneself accountable for originary sense is to be historical in the moment of responding [IOG 149/166].

And this movement parallels the movement of temporalization, which also consists in a going forth beyond of the self, in order to return to the self – the othering and gathering of the self [IOG 150/166]. Derrida is careful to stress that this movement so understood does not return phenomenology to Hegelian speculative metaphysics, where the original going forth would not really be a going forth beyond, a going forth in which a risk was taken. In order that phenomenology not be reduced to speculative metaphysics, it must be read as the first possibility of what Heidegger will go on to call Ontology and Levinas Ethics. That is to say, in order that there be not only historicity, which is as yet only the non-historical condition of history, there must be the possibility inscribed within phenomenology for describing the pure event.

The necessary possibility of the disappearance of sense was discussed above in terms of the transcendental sense of death. Now it
must be asked whether within phenomenology there can be access to being as opposed to sense which is, as we know, irreal. What is the sense of an event? How does history follow on from historicity? To begin to think this possibility is not simply to return to empiricism or non-philosophy, as Derrida stresses; rather, it is to complete philosophy [IOG 151/169]. Only phenomenology can lay the grounds for this completion; but the description of the event of Being ultimately requires the supplementation of phenomenology [cf IOG 151/169 fn]. It is only phenomenology that can reveal that History as the possibility of the emergence of Being is the retard of Discourse. This is so in the double sense of the historical destination of sense whose originary institution is its sending to its infinite destination, where it can never arrive ultimately; and also in the delay in auto-temporalization which reveals that the present is only ever constituted after it has passed.

The possibility of the Origin as such is its sending beyond itself, and the possibility of the Idea which enables this sending is the openness of temporalizing consciousness where the present is only constituted in its communication with the non-present (which is also the ground of the possibility of intersubjectivity) [IOG 152/170]. Only phenomenology can reveal this movement. But ultimately, phenomenology’s principle cannot allow phenomenology to respect this movement of communication between what is originary and what is not as being foundational. Phenomenology cannot allow the delay which is necessary for such communication to be ‘primordial’, as little as it could allow indication (whose mechanics are being evoked here) to be foundational. That is to say, phenomenology could never think Delay [le retard] as the philosophical Absolute [l’absolu philosophique]. Phenomenology, finally, cannot think the origin of both Sense and Being together (the
prior unity of the de jure and the de facto – of expression and indication we might have said) since that origin lies in the “impossibility of resting in the simple maintenance of a Living Present”, [IJO 153/171] an impossibility which is as little thinkable to phenomenology as is the fact that the Absolute of the Living Present is present only in being “différant” [ibid].

The possibility of the event is inscribed in this ‘primordial’ spacing which can finally not be thought as such by phenomenology. It is the primordial risk of the failure of closure, of sense’s reaching its destination, which must be run in order for History and Being to emerge. In the Introduction, phenomenology’s inability to think this risk-différant as primordial is not the cause for an explicit call for deconstructive supplementation. The grounds for that call are only being sketched, it seems. However, the same problems are taken up in similar form at the conclusion of Voice and Phenomenon. Here, the need for the deconstructive supplement to think what, in the Introduction, is signalled as primordial, is made clearer.

In Voice and Phenomenon, the metaphysical value of the ideality of presence is a much more prominent concern for Derrida, as we have seen. In the Introduction to Voice and Phenomenon, Derrida indicates that the reading of the Idea in the Kantian sense forwarded in the Introduction will be departed from. For here, the work of the Idea in which Derrida is interested is performed when it intervenes to announce full presence as a telos, whenever the value of presence is threatened [SP 9/VP 8]. In the Introduction, the Idea marked the ethicality of an infinite openness; here, the Idea is the mark of the metaphysical desire for full presence. In the Introduction, the Idea served to open consciousness to
infinite repetition as the possibility of idealization. In *Voice and Phenomenon*, what is at stake is not the infinite openness, but the guarantee offered by the Idea that what will be re-presented will be the same. This is the mark of presence as the identical, the stress on the *form* of temporalization as an always identical present, as opposed to the *mouvance* of that form, which is, as we have seen, as much othering as gathering. As such, therefore, the presence which is at stake here, and which the intervention of the Idea strives to protect, is the presence of *nothing existing in the world* [SP 10/VP 9]. In order to think this through, Derrida will pose the question of the relationship between existential death and transcendental life. At stake, then, will be the *nothing* which separates the parallels of transcendental and empirical consciousness.\(^\text{17}\)

In the concluding chapter of *Voice and Phenomenon*, Derrida follows through the supplementary work of *différence*. In particular, Derrida wishes to draw together the *für etwas* structure of all signification (prior to its diffraction into expression and indication) with the auto-affectory constitution of consciousness, which is only possible through the self's differing from itself, and through the movement of retentional return which we have already discussed. He will think these together in the form of the supplement which was introduced in Chapter 1, and which characterises, as we now know, the relation of the sign to what it designates; which is to say, that it is not merely added on afterwards.

In order to fulfil this task, Derrida turns to Husserl's account of

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7. cf the discussion of the *Nachwort zu meinen Ideen* above in this respect; and also Derrida's review of *Husserliana* IX in *Les Études Philosophiques*, 1963, pp 205-6.
essentially occasional expressions. As we have seen, it is a fundamental component of Husserl’s account of meaning that the ideality of the *Bedeutung* is only assured if it is able to ‘function’ not only in the absence of a speaking subject, but also in the absence of any object to which the meaning refers. Both of these ties would effectively bind ideality. Derrida is interested in thinking the possibility of the absences which enable meaning to function in its ideality, particularly when they coincide; as happens in the case of the personal pronoun *I*, which would, interestingly enough, be the word which would be most likely to occur in the interior monologue of solitary mental life.

Derrida notes that the common *racine* of occasional expressions lies in “the zero-point of the subjective origin, the *I*, the *here*, the *now*”. [SP 94/VP 105] Husserl claims that there is a difference in *Bedeutung* of a phrase in which *I* is used, for the speaker and the hearer. As Derrida points out, this observation of Husserl’s is most surprising, on the basis of what his theory gives us to understand – does he mean to say that the *Bedeutung* is different? We may take it that this is a clue that the separation of meaning from intuitional fulfilment is not as clear cut as Husserl might have us believe. Furthermore, however, would Husserl even be right to claim that the meaning of *I* would be realized for one who uses this expression? Shouldn’t, on Husserl’s own terms, this word, like any other, remain the same for any *I* (-here-now) in general? [SP 95/VP 106] For instance, shouldn’t the expression “*I am*” [a *sum* which could be preceded by an *ergo!*] be understandable in the absence of the object which would fulfil the meaning intention? After all, is this not the condition of all meaningful speech as such? In particular, what difference would be made by observing the distinction between the interior monologue and communication?
And when Husserl goes on to claim that 'I' names a different person every time it is uttered, and does so by means of "an ever altering Bedeutung", Derrida is undoubtedly right to question whether it is not the case that:

speech and the ideal nature of every Bedeutung exclude the possibility that a Bedeutung is 'ever altering'? Does not Husserl contradict what he has said about the independence of the intention and the fulfilling intuition? [SP 95-6/VP 107]

What Derrida is aiming to show is that essentially occasional expressions should not in theory provide any difficulty for Husserl's theory of the ideality of meaning, even though the practicality of working out its implications might be somewhat strange. In particular, Husserl would seem to have no grounds for claiming that if one were to read the word I in the absence of the person who wrote it, then it would be estranged from its normal meaning. Indeed, as Derrida stresses, "Husserl's premises should sanction our saying exactly the contrary". [SP 96/VP 107] After all it is the possibility of non-intuition which constitutes the ideality of the meaning which is the meaning as such.

Evidently, therefore, this need not be a problem in communication. The ideality of the meaning of I corresponds simply to the death of the author, the author's absence understood as an event. My death is a structural necessity for the meaningfulness of any phrase I might utter in which I refer to myself using the first person pronoun – such as "I am alive". The fact that I am indeed alive comes as a secondary contingency, and has no bearing on the meaning of I in the
phrase whatsoever. That all of this, and the playful extensions Derrida gives it [SP 96-7/VP 107-8] may sound like the kind of thing one would find in a Poe story, such as is cited as an epigraph to Derrida’s essay, does not detract from the fact that it is simply the apparent oddness of applying Husserl’s theory of meaning to one particular example. It is Derrida’s belief that Husserl himself finds all of this more than odd, indeed, goes so far as to treat occasional expressions as a possible threat to his general theory of meaning, because of “the theme of full presence, the intuitionistic imperative” which commands phenomenology. For in this case, the project of knowledge to which this imperative would conform, would determine a contradiction in the fact that the possibility of the meaningfulness of “I am alive” is that I am dead. Thus, at this crucial point, meaningfulness is replaced by truth as the deciding factor in the descriptions. A norm is imposed by the theory of knowledge, which determines here, in an echo of a point made in the Introduction, that there are certain examples which are not good examples.

The decisive moments which reveal the intrusion of a metaphysical-theoretical telos determining Husserl’s project of a pure logical grammar, are the interweavings of life and death. What is seemingly offensive to Husserl in the example of I, is that the possibility of its ‘normal’ meaningfulness is the absence of the subject, the death of the subject, the contradiction of the living present which is the “conceptual foundation of phenomenology as metaphysics” [SP 99/VP 111]. This is the understanding of the present, as evoked in phenomenology’s principle, which is at odds with the conception which we were highlighting above, whose openness (ie non-presence) was the possibility of the givenness of the Idea which was itself the possibility of the process of idealization. While the living present is thought in the
former manner (the absolute proximity of self-identity, the immediate
givenness of the object, the maintenance of the temporal present), the
‘true’ sense of the living present is deferred [différé] ad infinitum.

This différence, Derrida continues, is effectively between the
ideal and the non-ideal, as is verified by the fact that the distinction
between occasional expressions and normal expressions is one between a
lack of objectivity and full objectivity; and that the latter can be brought
to presence in the case of the former through the intervention of the
Idea in the Kantian sense as the infinite ideal (always deferred) of
substituting objective expressions for essentially subjective expressions.
Ultimately, therefore, for Husserl, the possibility of distinguishing what
is designated in the function of the occasional expression, namely
indication, from expression, and subsequently, of distinguishing between
a realm where signs are needed and a realm where they are not needed,
is only ever a telos, which, as Derrida shows, is never attained (thereby
confirming the conclusion of the previous section). Phenomenology is
trapped in the circle whereby what occurs of necessity in reality, namely
the interweaving of indication-reality and expression-ideality, cannot be
excluded from the phenomenological realm, since the condition of
possibility of establishing this realm is in fact the possibility of making
the distinction which is impossible [SP 101/VP 114]. The life of the
living present is the infinite différence of all these distinctions.

In a double reading which shifts the emphasis of what we said
above, Derrida attempts to think the relation between this infinite
différence and phenomenology, and in doing so, returns us to the
Tympan with which we began. All that has been said about the Idea as
the mark of the infinite as the indefinite, which is the possibility of
ideality and presence (when this latter is threatened in phenomenology), would lead us to believe that Husserl himself does not derive the Idea as difference from the fullness of presence (which the Idea always intervenes to guarantee). Although difference is never thematized, the nature of the work of the movement of temporalization reveals the necessity of its rôle. On the other hand, however, phenomenology, as we have seen time and again, has recourse to the Idea precisely to the extent that this can make up for a lack in presence, the fullness of which commands phenomenology. Thus phenomenology will always strive to show the derivativeness of difference, in opposition to Hegelianism; in which, as we saw, the imperative was to retain difference, as sublated. Thus, contrary to the interpretation we gave above, at this point Derrida suggests that the Hegelian enterprise is in fact more radical than that of Husserl, not least when it attempts to think the positive infinite. Would not the Hegelian critique of the Kantian thinking of the bad infinite hold here for Husserl’s conception of the Idea as infinite prolonging of a series, the ‘and so on’ [SP 102/VP 114]? After all, the only aim of the Idea in this sense would have been to make present to consciousness as a unity what is indefinite and open-ended. Thus, contrary to the sense above in which the Idea would have been the opening of phenomenology as such, and the opening of phenomenology to what is beyond phenomenology, the Idea here would be the closure of phenomenology.

One way or the other, however we are to read the infinite in Husserl, the possibility of the appearing of the Ideal as infinite différence, is the relation to my death. Whether it is a case of the ideality of meaning just discussed, or the process of idealization, the differing-deferring which is the possibility of such constitution requires going beyond my living present, and that is only possible in the event of
the death of my living present. And as we know, such a death is strictly speaking not possible, or is possible only as an empirical accident rather than a transcendental possibility. A certain finitude would then be the possibility of infinite différance, if such words were still appropriate.

The task of the deconstruction is to respond to, to supplement, to make up for, the silence of phenomenology at the moment when that which it describes reaches the limit imposed upon it by its own metaphysical principle. Beyond the absolute knowledge, which, as we saw in Chapter 1.2 and 2.8.2, is what is finally sought by, and which is determinative of, both phenomenologies; the absolute knowledge which is the closure of the infinite opening of phenomenology; "unheard-of thoughts are required" [SP 102/VP 115] of the deconstruction. New signs, "autres noms", are required to designate the primordiality of what phenomenology reveals, but conceals in its primordiality, and tries to section off as accidental and derivative. All of what Derrida writes in terms of the trace, of archi-writing, of différance, of supplementarity, is the deconstructive response to the following demand: "It remains, then, for us to speak, to make our voices resonate throughout the corridors in order to supplement the break up of presence." [SP 104/VP 117] The deconstruction begins the response to the call of the other which lies beyond the thresholds of phenomenology, but which phenomenology has allowed to sound in its openness. This is more or less as far as Derrida's deconstruction of phenomenology goes. However, as we have seen, the deconstructive response to the moment of radical openness in phenomenology is a response to an ethical moment. In our concluding chapter, we shall outline the way in which the thought of Emmanuel Levinas thinks the profound ethicality of the response to the other which phenomenology makes possible.
I do not know if what I might have to say is unsaid because it is unsayable (the unsayable is not buried inside writing, it is what prompted it in the first place).

Georges Perec, W or The Memory of Childhood

CHAPTER 4

THE OTHER OF DECONSTRUCTION

1. Towards the end of the previous Chapter, we argued that deconstruction was employing ‘other names’ with which to designate a certain movement of overflowing on the thresholds of phenomenology. This movement revealed that what phenomenology had taken to be foundational was in fact founded, and that, furthermore, what the deconstruction shows to be foundational cannot, as such, be spoken of by a phenomenology enclosed by its own self-determining principle. We suggested that the deconstruction could be understood as a response to the call of an irreducible alterity in the heart of the phenomenological text, an alterity which, nevertheless, phenomenology cannot help but strive to silence, or cover over. In this Chapter, we wish to conclude
our examination of the relationship between deconstruction and phenomenology by asking whether, in so seeking to respond to the call of alterity, deconstruction has been attentive enough to its own strategic situation. What we wish to examine is whether such a response to the other inscribed within phenomenology's text, an other doubtless only revealed as such through the deconstructive reading itself, is fully understood within the limits of deconstruction. Does deconstruction itself need to be supplemented, as we have seen that phenomenology does, when it seeks to respond to the call of the other, and if so, with what implications for our understanding of the deconstructive text? In other words, is the deconstructive response to this call fully adequate, or does it in turn perpetrate a violence to the other, a violence certainly of a lesser degree than that perpetrated within phenomenology, but a violence nevertheless?

In order to pose these questions, it will be necessary to reflect explicitly on what is at stake in deconstruction's supplementation of phenomenology. We have seen that phenomenology, despite its claim to respect the things themselves, to return to them precisely as they show themselves, as they give themselves, rather than determining them in advance as they conform to a theoretical principle, has, in fact, deferred an account of certain fundamental matters, because, as we have been arguing, to have attended to them as such would have forced the phenomenologist to countenance alterity or non-presence as having a founding role, which opposes directly what Derrida has shown to be the operative, organising, structures of the phenomenological text. In disclosing foundational alterity, deconstruction has revealed a degree of vulnerability in the text of phenomenology. It is vulnerable to the extent that it is rendered powerless in the face of the matters at hand, hence its
silence, a mark of its inability to comprehend. However, beyond this sense of vulnerability, it is vulnerable also because what is revealed is a founding alterity at the very heart of phenomenology and what phenomenology is ultimately concerned with, the transcendental ego. The ego, which Husserl in Ideas II specifies in its regional ontology as Geist, is defined by its very power, the freedom of its I can. The vulnerability to which we are here drawing attention is the limit of the 'I can'. But this limit in fact marks the possibility of the 'I can', to the extent that the possibility of the ego as such is shown to be founded on alterity rather than the plenitude of self-presence. Thus, the 'I can' of the ego is always already following this prior founding, a response to this founding. In this case, the 'I can' is not a freedom at all, but a responsibility to a command. 'I can' becomes 'here I am' as the response to an accusative. To what extent has deconstruction understood the full sense or implications of what its supplementation has revealed about founding the subject of phenomenology? What we propose to undertake in this concluding chapter is a reflection on the implications of this disclosure of vulnerability with respect to the deconstructive text itself. In pursuing this reflection, we shall return our discussion to the issues raised in our first Chapter concerning the strategy of deconstruction, and the response to the operating structures of philosophy which underpins this strategy.

In Chapter 1, we claimed that the deconstructive text supplements the text which is being read, a supplement which, as Derrida explains in Voice and Phenomenon, lies in its relation to the text somewhere between a doubling commentary and interpretation (where this latter notion would be characterised by the desire to thematically fix the text’s meaning, thereby closing it off). The supplement to the text is produced
by a reading which is a non-identical repetition of the text, a repetition which produces an elliptical displacement of the text. This displacement shakes the operating structures which govern the text’s formal philosophical organization. The deconstructively supplemented text thus transgresses the self-imposed limits of the text prior to the deconstruction. As we saw with Husserl, the limits of phenomenology are determined by its own governing principle, the principle which states that, in returning to the matters themselves, phenomenology should restrict itself only to what gives itself in intuition to consciousness, just as it gives itself. That is to say, phenomenology is to be limited to what presents itself to a present consciousness. The deconstruction, in causing this principle, or organising structure, to tremble, would displace phenomenology’s reflection, leading to a change of terrain. We can interpret this notion in terms of a change from the terrain of metaphysics, which, following Heidegger, Derrida takes to be formally governed by the principle of presence, as we have seen phenomenology to be. To protect the new-found terrain from being engulfed within the metaphysical terrain, it is then necessary for deconstruction to describe the concepts and notions appropriate to this new terrain in a language or style which itself has, to an extent, marked its distance from the language of metaphysics.

Thus, the deconstruction aims to write otherwise of what is other to the history of metaphysics as it understands itself. What it will write about will itself not be governed by the principle of full presence. As Derrida specified in Margins, what is at stake in the deconstruction is to put in question, in a style and movement alien to philosophy, unheard of by philosophy, “an other which is no longer its [philosophy’s] other”. [M xiv/VII] Our question now, therefore is whether the deconstruction has
managed fully to respect the very alterity which it is striving to write about, the other which it has *revealed* in its shaking of the phenomenological principle? What is the *significance* of the concepts with which deconstruction supplements phenomenology, thereby enabling phenomenology to retain a more profound respect for the matters at hand? In asking this question, we are therefore inquiring into whether in fact the movement of deconstruction manages to establish its distance from philosophy’s traditional styles. We take our cue in asking these questions from a line of questioning to be found in Levinas’ essay on Derrida, ‘*Tout Autrement*’ [‘Wholly Otherwise’], where he writes:

... is not the attempt at a positive utterance of this failure of presence to itself still a way of returning to the presence with which this positivity merges? To say that this failure is still within Being is to revolve in the circle of Being and nothingness... is there no way out of ontology? [Bernasconi & Critchley (1991), *7/L’arc* (1973), 36]

Thus, Levinas is asking whether in fact Derrida has managed to avoid the pitfall adumbrated in ‘*Ousia and Grammé*’, of merely repeating that which is being purportedly deconstructed, a question which, as we shall see, echoes directly a line of questioning directed to Levinas in Derrida’s ‘Violence and Metaphysics’. For Levinas, that risk is made concrete in the form of failing to break free from philosophy understood as ontology.

The lack which Levinas espies in the deconstructive supplement is not the “*surplus*” itself, the residue of ontology, [Bernasconi & Critchley (1991), *7/L’arc* (1973), 37] but rather, a suitable way of responding to the significance of the transcendence of this surplus of ontology, a way of responding, that is, which doesn’t reduce the surplus once again to
ontology. This is the heart of the issue which governs the argument of this Chapter, and so what is required in our questioning of deconstruction at this stage is a meditation on the precise way in which the supplementary notions of deconstruction in fact transcend the limits of philosophy as ontology, that is, presence.

As we saw in Chapter 2, phenomenology, in accounting for the constitution of objectivity, and while being governed by the principle of principles, had a necessary recourse to the regulative Idea in the Kantian sense to ensure the adequate givenness of the thing itself as well as the stream of the living present as a unity. On the other hand, phenomenology is reduced to silence when attempting to describe the absolute flux of constituting subjectivity, a silence echoed in phenomenology’s attempts to reduce the subjectivity interwoven into a theory of signs which is compelled to account for the indication function of the sign and essentially occasional expressions. Finally, in the successive stages of genetic analyses into the constitution of objective sense, phenomenology uncovers moments of constitution where no object is present as such, including the passive syntheses, intersubjectivity and the history of the intermonadic community. In each of these cases, therefore, we can say in the strict sense that there is no phenomenological givenness as such, that is no originary givenness of what can be disclosed in the light of phenomenological scrutiny.

Derrida’s deconstructive reading of phenomenology, we argued in Chapter 3, highlighted the movement in phenomenology which these moments already bare evidence of, strategically exposing their need for being supplemented. The supplementation described in the deconstruction is double handed to the extent that it is making up for a
lack inscribed into phenomenology, due to its own methodological limitations, while on the other hand responding to the matters at hand which phenomenology has uncovered. However, in so responding to these matters, the theoretical underpinnings of phenomenology are transgressed. Thus, already in 1959, Derrida was calling into question the possibility of an account of genesis, which phenomenology has revealed to be necessary, being given within the closure of phenomenology. At the same time, Derrida questions whether the recourse to infinity, in the form of the Idea in the Kantian sense, is itself possible within phenomenology, or whether the infinity of the Idea is itself transgressive of phenomenology’s closure, to the extent that, *qua* infinite, it cannot be given as such to consciousness, a theme again returned to in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’. In both cases, of genetic phenomenology and the Idea in the Kantian sense, Derrida suggests that they serve to *open* phenomenology, in that they enable its analyses to take place; while at the same time having the effect of not allowing phenomenology to achieve its structural closure. Such a resistance to totalising closure may be interpreted as a first indication of an ethical trace within the phenomenological text. This openness pertains not just to methodology alone, however. It also pertains to the concreteness of the consciousness which phenomenology is striving to describe. What are the effects of an irreducible openness in consciousness?

As was specified in Chapter 3, the irreducible openness has the consequence that the presence of consciousness always has a moment of non-presence which is constitutive of presence as such. It is the analysis of this moment of constitutive non-presence which phenomenology’s principle forces phenomenology to defer. In particular, Derrida is concerned to focus on the non-presence which is interwoven within the
present of the constitution of the living present, when he writes that:

the constitution of the other and of time refers phenomenology to a zone in which its ‘principle of principles’ (... its *metaphysical* principle: the original *self-evidence* and *presence* of the thing itself in person [*leibhaftig*]) is radically put into question. [WD 164/ED 244]

It is in this zone that the deconstructive supplementation takes place, a zone which, as Derrida’s quote makes clear, can no longer simply be understood as metaphysical. The most clear indication that this is a zone beyond metaphysics is given by the fact that the foundational moment of non-presence reveals that constituting consciousness is not self-identical, but, in its very constitutiveness, differs from itself. This self-differing Derrida names *archi-writing*, thereby drawing attention to the notion of *spacing* [*espacement*] which informs his account of writing, and which receives further extended analysis in ‘The Double Session’ [in *Dissemination*].

The spacing of the living present of consciousness by what cannot be enclosed by consciousness, and the opening of consciousness by the infinite, Derrida names *trace*. Trace names the mark or imprint of the non-present, for instance the past, as a moment of the present. However, this is a past which has never been present as such – it is the always already past. The movement by which the living present differs from itself, such that the achievement of its self-present is always deferred, Derrida names *différance*. In Chapter 3, we saw how Derrida’s analyses of indication and temporalization, of the originary, primordial, modification of presence which Husserl names *Vergegenwärtigung* and *Appresentation*, disclose the fact that this modification is not an accident
that befalls consciousness, but rather is productive of the conscious subject at the very moment that it prohibits the presencing of a self-present subject, as would be desired by phenomenology.

Our question is how well deconstruction has understood the stakes involved in disclosing what has thus been named by the words 'trace', 'différence', 'espacement' and 'archi-écriture'? We have seen that Derrida is aware that, in so supplementing phenomenology, he is moving into a zone which transcends metaphysics. But in such a zone, what do these words signify? What is the significance of a consciousness which is opened by infinity, of a consciousness which is founded on irreducible non-presence or alterity (whose presence is in fact a trace of non-presence), of a subject that is produced in the flowing mouvance of difference/deferral? What is at stake in employing deconstruction's "other names" to respond to the break-up of presence?

What is of critical importance is Derrida's realization that these names work in a zone beyond metaphysics. The issue at stake must therefore be how they can have meaning, and what their meaning might be, given that the structure of meaning is bound to the metaphysical logos. The issue of the supplementary reading of Husserl's text which indicates a semiology beyond metaphysics has already been raised by Derrida, as we have seen, in the concluding paragraphs of Chapter 1 of Voice and Phenomenon. However, Derrida chose not to pursue such a reading. Nevertheless, the notion of a radicalised indication, an indicating function of the sign which is not governed by the principles of truth, intuition or the presencing of meaning, but is rather accorded its foundational status, is revealed within the text. Derrida chooses to employ the name trace to signify the foundational work of radicalised
indication in semiology specifically, in keeping with his use of the word to name movements of founding non-presence.

So now it is a case of giving an account of trace in general, and trace as the specific name for the foundational indication sign in particular, and thus an account of the meaningfulness of indication as trace,¹ an account which precisely respects the fact that such a meaningfulness cannot be explicated in terms of metaphysics or ontology, or more generally, of presence. It seems to us that at this stage in his writing, Derrida himself does not go far enough in achieving this task.² One reason for the failure to engage fully with this task may indeed be, as suggested by the passage from ‘Tout autrement’ cited above, the fact that Derrida’s text still at this stage remains trapped within a certain ontology of presence.

2. The possibility of significance beyond metaphysics, and in particular, of the meaning of originary non-presence, is an issue which

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1. We specify ‘indication as trace’ to highlight that this notion is now to be taken as working beyond metaphysics; indication as such would, of course, remain a metaphysical notion, to the extent that it remains subordinate to expression, with all the metaphysical values that this implies.

2. Nevertheless, in texts more or less contemporaneous with those which we are here discussing, Derrida does attempt to reach an understanding of the significance of writing, as spacing, or the trace of spacing, which is beyond the tradition of Platonism: see in particular “The Double Session” in Dissemination. At issue in this text is a certain traditional question of the limit which differentiates literature from philosophy, a limit normally drawn by taking into account a text’s relation to reality. In approaching the issues from this perspective, this text is not obliged to confront the questions which we are here raising. Furthermore, however, the precise issues at stake in our questions are doubtless familiar to Derrida, as can be seen in the final footnote to ‘Ousia and Gramme’ in Margins, where Derrida cites Plotinus’ claim that the presence of form is the trace of the nonpresence of the amorphous, a claim repeated in the epigraph to ‘Form and Meaning’, and returned to in the final footnote of that text. Once again, the full implications of the issues raised in Plotinus’ name are not worked out by Derrida – but the resonance of this proper name with its occurrence in the precise texts of Levinas to which we are about to turn is not insignificant for the argument we are developing.
occupies Emmanuel Levinas in texts written in the years immediately following the publication of *Totality and Infinity*. The decisive importance of these particular texts for the line of questioning which we are developing here is that Levinas’ inquiry is conducted specifically in terms of a discussion of the notion of *trace*. In ‘The Trace of the Other’ [1963], ‘Signification and Sense’ [1964] and ‘Enigma and Phenomenon’ [1965], Levinas is concerned with how transcendence, that is alterity or irreducible non-presence, can signify. For Levinas, this transcendence has only ever been hinted at in certain transgressive moments in the history of philosophy, such as Plato’s notion of the *beyond being* found in the *Republic*, or the One in Plotinus, which transcends Being and from which Being comes [Enneads 5.V.v]. Now what is of importance for Levinas is that these moments where philosophy has named as foundational that which is beyond being and presence, are moments of ethics. Thus, for example, the beyond being in Plato is the Good. [cf Chapter 9 of the *Republic* in Waterfield’s translation, ie 502ff] So it appears as if what has significance beyond metaphysics is ethics. Clearly, however, this claim cannot be straightforward, for ethics has always played its own, subordinate, role within metaphysics. So Levinas’ task, the task already undertaken in *Totality and Infinity*, is the radical reconception of ethics, a reconception which breaks with the history of metaphysics, and which accords to ethics its foundational status. For Levinas, the fundamental moment in ethics is the moment of infinity, of the infinite overflowing of finite consciousness by that which consciousness cannot contain/comprehend. In being so transcended, consciousness is called to responsibility, as is the case in the exemplary ethical event of the coming of the face of the other, described in Section III. B of *Totality and Infinity*. The alterity of the other, the Other’s infinity, is apparent from the fact that the “face is present in its refusal
to be contained [contenu]”, [TI 194/168] which is to say that the Other’s presence as face is beyond my comprehension, beyond my powers of constitution as a subject. In thus overflowing my constituting subjectivity, the face enters into an ethical relation with the I (as opposed to an epistemological, or ontological, relation, where the sense of the other would have been constituted by me), and thus “puts the I in question”. [TI 195/169] In exceeding the powers of me as a subject, and thus calling me into question, the Other, resisting my powers, calls on me to make up for the break-up of my powers. The Other “concerns” me, confronts me by appealing to me, and thus “promotes my freedom, by arousing my goodness.” [TI 200/174] The presence of the Other in the face promotes my freedom in arousing my goodness precisely by calling my freedom to responsibility, and thereby founding my freedom. [TI 203/178] Thus, the first moment of the I can, the freedom which Husserl, in Ideas II among other places, claims is definitive of my spiritual [geistige] being, is not primary, but is in fact founded in the ethical event.

What bothers Levinas in the texts published so soon after Totality and Infinity is the question of how the transcendent Other, who is signified in the face, and who, in overflowing my consciousness calls on me to respond ethically, comes to concern me – how can the face of the Other have significance ‘for’ me, since it is precisely non-sense (for sense is always that which is constituted by me). [TA 347/EDE 190] In ‘Enigma and Phenomenon’, Levinas makes clear that the issue of the disturbance of subjectivity by the Other consists in the fact that it is the radical alterity of the Other which calls me to responsibility; but the Other would seem not to be able to appear to me, to have sense for me, to concern me, without renouncing this radical alterity, that is, unless
s/he is constituted/given sense by me. [CPP 64/EDE 206]

Thus, at this point in Levinas' questioning, we have arrived at the same stage as we had reached in our own questioning of Derrida, namely, of how foundational non-presence, which is thus beyond metaphysics, can have significance, a significance which does not thereby bring the non-present to presence. [cf CPP 63/EDE 205] Such a significance, which does not enter into the order of presence, the synthesis of constitution, where the alterity of the Other is not reduced to the identity of the same, Levinas formulates as "a signification that would signify in an irreducible disturbance." ["dérangement irréductible"; ibid]

What is the possibility of such an irreducible disturbance? What is the nature of the heteronomous experience of the face of the Other, which disturbs me? The significance of the Other who disturbs me, while resisting identification into a meaning or being which is present, in linguistic terms, the heteronomy of a saying [le dire] which does not reduce to the identity of a said [le dit], as Levinas already writes in 1965 [cf CPP 65/EDE 207], prefiguring the language of Otherwise than Being, is a significance which he terms signifyingness, ["significance"; TA 348/EDE 190] by which he means a signifying of that which does not come to presence in being so signified. The signifyingness of the Other disturbs me to the extent that it does not come from any order or context which I have constituted, or which would normally be the ground of sense for any signification. [TA 351/EDE 194; CPP 65/EDE 207] In this way, the signifyingness of the face of the Other is an-archic,

3. Such a signification, where the other is not made manifest, presented, in experience, Levinas terms a "heteronomous experience". [TA 348/EDE 190]
ab-original. The phenomenon of the approach of the face of the Other signifies to the extent that it comes to me, “making an entry”. [“à faire une entrée”; TA 351/EDE 194] In interrupting me so, I am disturbed to the extent that the Other does not thereby become present, a form.

Thus, the movement of the signifyingness of the face which Levinas is describing, a signifyingness which disturbs me rather than reducing to the present of a signified, a meaning or present being, consists in the coming or presencing, the entryism, of a face, and the simultaneous non-presence of the Other who is indicated by the face. I am disturbed precisely to the extent that what interrupts me does not subsequently yield a presence. As the epigraph from Ionescu to ‘Enigma and Phenomenon’ suggests, it is as if, while writing, we were to be interrupted by the ringing of the door-bell, but were never able to tell if there was anyone there. Such a ringing would indeed be most disturbing, not least because it would never be within our power either to permit or refuse entry!

The face manifests the Other, but the presence of the Other thereby manifested is such as to be divested of any form (by which s/he might be presenced). The coming of the face thus consists in an opening of consciousness,4 a disruption of the closure of consciousness by that which remains a surplus of consciousness, which is not gathered up into consciousness’ fold. [TA 351-2/EDE 194] The non-presence which nevertheless signifies in the face, in the signifyingness of the face, calls to mind an order of signification already familiar from Husserl, namely the indication sign. That this may indeed be the sign-function which

4. cf the opening of consciousness discussed in our reading of “Genesis and Structure” and Phenomenology” in Chapter 3.1.
Levinas has in mind is suggested by Derrida’s highlighting of the irreducibility of the indication sign, that is, an indication which cannot be reduced to expression, which is not exhausted in the service of expression. The mechanism of the indicating sign is to motivate belief in the existence of something which is not present. However, as Levinas writes at this stage (ie in 1965), the indication sign still serves to conjoin the present with the absent – if we recall, the motivation for the belief in the existence of what is absent is made possible through an association relation. Thus, the indication sign so understood is not radical enough to fulfil the task of signification. However, as we shall see, Levinas returns to the indication sign in works written after a reflection both on certain questions posed of him in Derrida’s ‘Violence and Metaphysics’ and on Derrida’s texts on Husserl. In these later works, Levinas calls into question whether in fact this conjoining association exhausts the work of the indication sign.

The relation of the signification to which Levinas is directed, a relation beyond metaphysics and the ontology of presence, is one which would have to refer to the absence, the hollowed out depth from which the signifying comes. This depth, Levinas writes, is “an irreversible, immemorial, unrepresentable past. [passer]” [CPP 65/EDE 207] It is this past which cannot be brought (back) to presence, a past which transcends all possibility of presencing, which is to be signified, but signified in a way which does not present. Thus Levinas writes:

What would be needed would be an indication that would reveal the withdrawl [accusant la retraite] of the indicated, instead of a reference that rejoins it. Such is a trace, in its emptiness and desolation. [emphasis added; Ibid]
The face disturbs me because it bears the trace of the withdrawal of the Other, the mark of this withdrawal. I am disturbed precisely due to this absence which is thereby impressed upon my consciousness, which my consciousness cannot comprehend, the lack which consciousness cannot make up for.

This notion of the trace, introduced here by Levinas, bares the same name as that notion which Derrida himself employs, in accounting for the irreducible mark of non-presence which founds the living present of consciousness, the non-presence which necessitates the use of indication signs even in the apparent solitude of auto-affection, the non-presence which is the possibility, as we have seen, of the primordial work of temporalization. How does Levinas’ use of this notion enable him to account for a signifyngness beyond metaphysics? The trace achieves this through signifyng what is non-present without thereby bringing it to presence. Such a signifyngness, the heteronomous experience of the trace, is beyond metaphysics because it is ethical. In order to grasp the import of this claim, we must reflect further on what Levinas means by ‘trace’.

The trace is not a sign, even an indication sign, as would be recognized by metaphysics, because although signs certainly tend to function in the absence of their referent, their purpose is to call that referent to presence, and Husserl’s own semiology is ultimately governed by this goal, as Derrida argues when he describes the intuitionistic imperative of Husserl’s semiology. The trace, on the other hand, signifies:

... the very emptiness of an irrecoverable absence. The
gaping open of emptiness is not only the sign of absence. A mark traced on sand is not part of a path, but the very emptiness of a passage [la passée]. And what has withdrawn is not evoked, does not return to presence, not even to an indicated presence. [emphasis added; CPP 65-6/EDE 208]

What is signified by the trace is always already pass-ed. This is a past, an absence, which is no longer governed by presence, by the presence-absence opposition which governs metaphysics’ limits, since it is a past which never was, and never will, or can, be made present (again). Strictly speaking, therefore, it is not an absence at all, for this word is always to be understood within its metaphysical parameters.

Levinas will call this withdrawl of what is signified by the trace in the face the enigma of the Other, in direct contrast to what is, or can become, a phenomenon, thereby attempting to capture the sense of what manifests without being manifested, that is to say, without becoming a phenomenon for consciousness. [CPP 66/EDE 209] In describing the enigma specifically as what breaks with all possible phenomenality, Levinas is most explicit in marking his own break with phenomenology, the phenomenology, exemplary of the metaphysics of presence, which, he writes, this thinking of the trace interrupts. [cf TA 356/EDE 199; CPP 61/EDE 203] The enigma of the Other who is signified by the trace is, as such, beyond metaphysics and phenomenology, even a phenomenology of indication. The trace of the Other is, as Levinas writes, a way of meaning [façon dont un sens] which is both beyond meaning – as it is understood metaphysically – and yet still a meaning, still significant, not simply non-sense. [ibid]

What is of importance for the reading we are developing here is
that Levinas has attained the notion of the trace through an analysis of the phenomenology of signification which has gone beyond the limits of what Husserl determined as the closure of what can legitimately be called signs. Here is a form of signification which signifies outwith the principle of bringing to presence either a referent or an ideal meaning, a form of signification which Husserl simply wouldn’t recognise as such. At the same time, Levinas’ account focusses on exactly the same themes and issues as Derrida had in exposing the excess of phenomenology to be found within phenomenology’s own descriptions. It should therefore be no surprise that Derrida employs the same term, namely trace, to designate what Levinas also designates by trace. However, as we know from the essay ‘Différance’, Derrida’s own genealogy for the notions indicated by trace reveals that he is as much evoking Heidegger as Levinas. What Levinas’ remarks make clear however, is that his thinking of the trace is itself resolutely anti-Heideggerian, to the extent that the signifyingness of the trace is ultimately beyond anything that could be thought under the headings of manifestation, disclosure or presencing, and finally, as heteronomous experience in opposition to conjunctive association, in opposition to any gathering, all of which notions are still, ultimately, for Levinas, metaphysical, since they are governed by an ontology of presence and presencing. It is because Derrida hasn’t managed fully to go beyond this closure marked by Heidegger’s thought that he hasn’t been able to give an extra-metaphysical sense to the surplus of notions beyond the closure of phenomenology which the deconstruction of phenomenology has exposed.

It remains now to determine the ethical sense of the trace of the withdrawal of what is signified by the trace. In order to do this, we shall
have to develop our understanding of the trace beyond the limits of the radicalisation of a certain semiology within which we have understood it so far. In doing so, we shall find that Levinas has already thought through the trace within the context of temporalisation, the further context in which Derrida utilises this notion in his deconstruction of Husserl.

We have noted that for Levinas, the effect of the trace is to disturb me. This disturbance results from the fact that nothing is represented in the signifyingness of the trace – no sense is constituted by consciousness. I am disturbed by the signifyingness of the trace of the Other in the face which comes to me because I am not responsible for this coming. Rather, it is “imposed on me”. [TA 352/EDE 195] I am disturbed by the face because I am no longer myself, I am no longer what phenomenology determines the essence of subjectivity to be, namely the freedom of the ‘I can’. Since consciousness strives to bring to presence, to constitute the sense of the object which lies before me, consciousness is overwhelmed by the face, which signifies an Other whose sense is not constituted by me. I am intentionally directed towards the physical manifestation of the face, but what affects me is what is signified by the trace inscribed in the face, and this is what will always already have overflowed the potential of my constitutive capabilities – and yet still it affects me, and has significance for me. Thus, what affects me without thereby coming to presence for me is that which I am not responsible for (I do not originate) but which I can only respond to. [TA 353/EDE 195]

This event Levinas insists is the opening of my conscious subjectivity. This results from a double movement. On the one hand, I
am opened in my subjectivity since the Other has come to me without my first having constituted this possibility. Indeed, I myself am constituted in this moment, a moment which consists solely in welcoming the Other. [ibid] But, on the other hand, because I am not responsible for the Other, but, in so welcoming the Other, am only able to respond to the Other, to the call of the Other, I am identified in my subjectivity, since it is I, and I alone, who am so able to respond. I am in the accusative for the Other, and stand accused by the Other. This is the point at which Levinas begins to tie in the event of the trace of the Other who calls on me with a specifically ethical sense, founded on the inadequacy of my intentionality.5

The points which are of importance here in a reading which bares on Derrida are the possibility of the welcome, and how Levinas interprets this inadequacy of intentionality. The overwhelming of intentionality which nevertheless still calls for a response by intentionality Levinas understands in terms of the overflowing of consciousness by an infinite idea (not the idea of infinity!), an overflowing which demands a response. So much has already been noted as familiar from Derrida’s Introduction. But, as we saw, in Derrida’s reading of Husserl, the responsibility was called on by a certain discovery of reason, and the task was the task for reason, guided ultimately by the Kantian regulative Idea. But the infinity which overwhelms consciousness, the face of the Other, is an infinity beyond all possible reason. It is beyond reason, and furthermore, beyond even the extra-philosophical thinking of Heideggerian ontology, because what

5. At this point, Levinas’ discourse relies heavily on the account of desire and infinity, which have been worked out in Totality and Infinity, and the books and essays leading up to this work. The defining phenomenological quality of desire is the absence of any hunger for the presence or comprehension of that which is desired, as opposed, for instance, to the case of need.

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is signified by the trace, and which overflows consciousness, is beyond any modality of "revelation and dissimulation". [TA 355/EDE 198] The Other is not an absence which is currently hidden, but which could, even conceivably, be discovered.

The 'other way' of signifying marked by the trace, beyond the presence/absence of any beings, calls us to rethink the notion of 'beyond' itself, a task indicated in the 'Tympan' to Margins, but which, at this stage, remains to be worked out fully by Derrida.6 Levinas has stressed in both 'The Trace of the Other' and 'Enigma and Phenomenon' that the Other comes from a beyond, which is signified by the trace, but that this is a beyond which itself does not constitute an order or context, for as such, the beyond would always bare the possibility of a future interpretation. It is because of the nature of the Other, as beyond, as transcendent, that it signifies as a trace. [ibid] This seems to us to mark the point where Levinas' thinking of the trace goes beyond Derrida's. Derrida, in his deconstruction of Husserl, has been content to describe the working of the trace, without thinking its relation to what is signified by the trace. Levinas now attempts to account for why it is the Other signifies as a trace, and not as any more traditional sign. It is because the Other is beyond presence/absence, beyond all that is thought by metaphysics under the heading of this opposition, that the metaphysical notion of the sign is inadequate to its mode of signifyingness.

Within being, a transcendence revealed is inverted, the extra-ordinary is inserted into an order, the other [l'Autre]

6. Although the various strategic remarks to be found scattered throughout Margins, such as in 'Tympan', 'Ousia and Gramme', 'The Ends of Man', etc, all bear witness to Derrida's acute awareness of the difficulties and stakes involved in any attempt to think the beyond.

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is absorbed into the same. In the presence of the Other [d'Auruid] do we not respond to an ‘order’ in which signifyingness remains an irremissible disturbance, an utterly bygone past? Such is the signifyingness of the trace. The beyond from which a face comes signifies as a trace. A face is in the trace of the utterly bygone, utterly passed absent... No memory could follow the traces of this past. It is an immemorial past. [ibid]

The absence of the beyond signified by the trace is nothing like a spatial beyond, which could be discovered. The beyond is a transcendence ‘within’ immanence, an absence ‘within’ presence, where we must understand this ‘within’ in terms of a surplus, an overflowing which is an overwhelming.

In trying to think this notion, we return to the ‘welcome’ which was mentioned above. Not only does the signifyingness of the trace signify a beyond which is beyond all possible presence, it also serves to disrupt, to disturb, the presence of consciousness, understood both as self-presence and as the present of the living present. We saw that Husserl’s account of the movement of temporalisation of the flux served ultimately to gather up the passing phases of the flow. Derrida employed the notion of the trace in his reading of Husserl’s account of primordial temporalisation to denote the irreducible otherness which served both as the condition of possibility of the movement of the flow’s self-differentiation, and the condition of impossibility of this differentiation being fully gathered up or synthesised in the present. The flow begins as such in Husserl’s terms through the movement of the double intentionality of retention. For Derrida, this means that re-presentation, or what would normally be determined as secondary by metaphysics, is in fact primary, and constitutive of presence. The constitutive fold of
re-presentation is what Derrida signifies by the use of the word trace. [cf pp 292-6 supra]

This use of the trace is still subordinate, however, to a thinking of presence, even if it is the (traditionally expressed) ‘modification’ of presence that is representation. Levinas, it seems to us, begins to go beyond even this recourse to the present.7 For the welcoming of the transcendence within immanence, a transcendence which, as an utterly past, is not only what is not present, but what was never present before, nor will be again, is a disturbance of consciousness, because the event of transcendence within immanence requires “a fissile present... ‘destructuring’ itself in its very punctuality.” [CPP 68/EDE 210] As he goes on, this fissuring does not amount to the type of difference which is gathered up in a comparing consciousness, and is therefore beyond Husserl’s account of passive syntheses, where even the heterogeneity contributing to the passive synthesis of a sense field was founded on a degree of homogeneity which in turn was the possibility of the syntheses of association. “Alterity occurs as a divergency and a past which no memory could resurrect as a present.” [ibid] The transcendence within temporal immanence Levinas describes not as a present between the non-presences of past and future, nor as past or future modalities of the not-now-present, modalities of the before or after. The transcendence within immanence breaks up this continuity of presences, either just having been or about to come, through being a “meanwhile”. [entretemps; the literal translation of ‘between-times’ would better capture the sense of the anachronistic which Levinas is working with

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7. At this stage, it is still not clear that Levinas has fully worked out the precise determination of how he is going beyond any thinking of presence – this will only be fully achieved in the texts of a decade later, as we shall see below.
here; interestingly, Derrida, in *Grammatology*, refers to a similar notion by the expression “*le temps mort*”; G 68/99] In this between-times, the event of the visitation of the other affects me without becoming present for me. Thus, we have an event affecting consciousness which consciousness, even at its most basic level, cannot account for, cannot be responsible for. There is an “irretrievable delay” [*le retard non-rattrapable*; CPP 69/EDE 212] which consciousness can never make up. In this interruption of the temporal flow of consciousness, this *disturbance* of consciousness’ (synthesising) capacities, the other is welcomed.

This transcendence within immanence, therefore, is more radically disruptive of the flow of consciousness than that which Derrida had thought under the notion of the trace. While Derrida still conceives of the trace in terms of a (to metaphysics, undoubtedly) paradoxically primordial re-presentation, Levinas goes beyond all metaphysics and ontology of presence, in thinking the beyond of presence as the ab-solute disruption of the flow of the living present. In this difference between the thoughts of Levinas and Derrida, we can see why, according to Levinas, Derrida has not finally managed to break with metaphysical discourse, or to give a sense to transcendence or foundational non-presence which is beyond metaphysics. Levinas, in thinking the transcendence within immanence of the entry and visitation of the other, as the disturbance of consciousness and the overwhelming of intentionality, moves beyond metaphysics to radical ethics. The passing of the other, the other’s “passing beyond being”, [*passant au delà de l'être*; CPP 70/EDE 212] which disturbs consciousness by tracing a transcendence in its immanence, is a disturbance precisely because a *past* is inscribed which is unlike any past in the flow of intentional
consciousness. This is because it is an immemorial past, a past that was never present, and can never be re-presented. It is thus completely without ties to any present, and so imposes on philosophy:

... a completely different version of time... in the enigma, the synchronism falls out of tune, the totality is transcended in another time. This extravagant movement of going beyond being or transcendence toward an immemorial antiquity we call the idea of infinity. The infinite is an inassimilable alterity, a difference and ab-solute past with respect to everything that is shown, signalled, symbolized, announced, remembered, and thereby ‘contemporized’ with him who understands. [CPP 71/EDE 214]

In ‘The Trace of the Other’, in language which will be echoed almost verbatim in subsequent texts by Derrida, Levinas writes that the “trace is an insertion of space in time... This time is a withdrawl of the other”. [TA 358/EDE 201] And further on, Levinas continues:

A trace qua trace does not simply lead to the past, but is the very passing toward a past more remote than any past and any future which still are set in my time – the past of the other. [ibid]

This radicalisation of temporalisation, the opening of the space in the flow of consciousness, into which the other is welcomed, this disturbance of consciousness, is ethical, Levinas writes, because “through a trace the irreversible past takes on the profile of a ‘He’.” [II; TA 356/EDE 199] The other who is welcomed in the openness of consciousness, an opening itself opened by the entry of the trace, is an Other person. The relationship I have with the other then is not an epistemological relation or even an ontological relation. What signifies

8 cf SP 86/VP 96; M 8 & 15/8 & 16; G 68/99
in the trace is "beyond being and entities", transcends being, precisely because it does leave a trace, a trace of its irretrievable passing. No thing, no entity can leave a trace in this radical sense. No thing is presented or represented, or even indicated, and therefore I enter into no relation with any thing, either present or re-presented. It is a relation with the Other person, who has withdrawn, and is hence signified by the trace of the Other in the face which visits me.

This relationship is ethical, since I am obligated by the signifyingness of this trace. I have become vulnerable, as opposed to the normal totality of the power of my intentional consciousness. The trace, and the ethical relation which it establishes, interrupts phenomenology because nothing appears into which I can enter into relation. [ibid] The passing we have evoked above, a passing which is beyond being, which is an immemorial past, is the passing of someone. [TA 357/EDE 200] This passing of someone, and the irretrievable past which is the between-times in the flow of consciousness, Levinas describes as a lapse. [ibid] The disturbance created by the passing of the personal other in the lapse of the between-times of consciousness, which resists being gathered up and represented to consciousness, is ethical rather than epistemological-ontological, because it provokes a desire which can neither be satisfied nor yearns for satisfaction. It is a desire which goes towards the infinitude of radical alterity, an approach alien to the approach to the infinite task described by Husserl. The response to the call of the infinite in Levinas' text is other to the response to the call of the infinite in Husserl's text, because it is not a movement from a subject to an object. Rather, the desire which constitutes the ethical response to the infinity of the transcendence which is both within and overflowing consciousness, has the following movement:
... the I approaches the infinite by going generously toward the you, who is still my contemporary, but, in the trace of illeity,9 presents himself out of a depth of the past, faces, and approaches me. I approach the infinite insofar as I forget myself for my neighbour who looks at me; I forget myself only in breaking the undephasable simultaneity of representation, in existing beyond my death. I approach the infinite by sacrificing myself. Sacrifice is the norm and the criterion of the approach. And the truth of transcendence consists in the concording of speech with acts. [CPP 72/EDE 215]

The relation with the infinite, opening of consciousness, is ethical, and beyond metaphysics, in a way in which Derrida’s thinking is not, because it is not a cognition, but an approach. [CPP 73/EDE 216] I can only approach the personal other who withdraws. Therefore, this relationship is, ultimately, in a way which again Derrida’s deconstruction of Husserl fails to think through, one which:

... no longer has the structure of an intentional correlation. The supreme anachronism of a past that was never a now, and the approach of the infinite through sacrifice – is the enigma’s word. A face can appear as a face, as a proximity interrupting the series, only if it enigmatically comes from the infinite and its immemorial past. And the infinite, to solicit desire, a thought thinking more than it thinks, cannot be incarnated in a desirable, cannot, qua infinite, be shut up in an end. It solicits across [a travers] a face, the term of my generosity and my sacrifice. A you is inserted between the I and the absolute He. Correlation is broken. [ibid]

It is this break up of any possible correlation which marks the ethicality of what Levinas is describing.

9. ‘Illeity’, a term used by Levinas in contrast to the ipseity of the self-identical subject, designates the personal alterity which the trace signifies, and which is beyond being. It is derived from the masculine form of the third person personal pronoun, Il. [cf CPP 71/EDE 214 & TA 356/EDE 199]
3. We have been asking what meaning or significance can be given to the thought of foundational non-presence, a thought which must, of necessity, be beyond metaphysics. We have suggested that Derrida has, at this stage in his work, failed to respond adequately to this question, perhaps for the reasons that Levinas gives, namely that he has not sufficiently managed to break with ontology. For this reason, he seems not to have been able to think through the full implications of breaking with a thought enclosed by the presence-absence dichotomy, despite his use of the language of the trace. On the other hand, we have argued that in the work of Levinas, the thought of the trace enables a significance to be given to foundational alterity, an alterity which affects the subject without being presented to, or comprehended by, the subject. This significance comes from the ethical thought of the transcendence within immanence marked by the signifyingness of the trace, an ethicality which consists in the fact that all the traditional tropes of epistemology or ontology are inadequate to this alterity, since it is an alterity which falls outside the space governed by revelation-dissimulation. I am called to respond by the heteronomous experience of the Other, to be responsible to the Other, to sacrifice myself, as an autonomous and self-sufficient subject, in radical generosity. [TA 349/EDE 191]

The question we now wish to ask is whether, in fact, Levinas’ own ethical thought manages to break with metaphysics. We shall pose this question from the perspective of Derrida’s essay on Levinas, ‘Violence and Metaphysics’. The findings of this essay are doubtless only

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10. Once again, it is at least apparent that even in 1967, Derrida is not unaware of this point, as is clear from a comment he makes en passant when discussing the reasons behind his adoption of the word trace, admitting that his use of the concept, while derived no doubt from Levinas, is nevertheless "reconciled here to a Heideggerian intention - as it is not in Levinas’ text." [G 70/103]
provisional, not least because it was written without the chance for a sustained engagement with Levinas’ thinking of the trace in the essays which we have been reading. Nevertheless, the implications of the essay are of some importance for the reading we are giving of both thinkers’ attempts to go beyond metaphysics from the perspective of phenomenology. This is because, in response to Derrida’s essay, Levinas is motivated to think even more carefully about the possibility of an ethical significance for his thought which breaks from the rational logos of metaphysics, while in doing so, returning to Husserl’s phenomenology. This rather closer rapprochement with Husserl contrasts strongly with his thinking of the signifyingness of the trace in the mid-’60’s, a thinking which, Levinas writes, "interrupts" phenomenology. [TA 356/EDE 199]

Derrida’s essay confirms the reading of Levinas which we have been proposing, that his thought is an attempt to break from the totalising gestures of the Greek logos of metaphysics, which are still described in Husserl and Heidegger, despite these thinkers’ attempts to “overcome metaphysics”. Derrida argues that Levinas aims to dislocate the Greek logos by going beyond the determining themes of metaphysics, the same, identity, the light of Being and phenomenality, through thinking ethically the opening to transcendence, the ethical relation to the infinite as infinitely other [autre], the Other [l’Autrui]. [WD 82-3/ED 122-3] Derrida’s question for Levinas will be whether this ethical radicalisation of metaphysics is possible, whether it avoids the risks of collapsing back into metaphysics on the one hand, or losing all sense by veering off into the realms of either mysticism or empiricism on the other hand. What is critical in this line of questioning of Derrida’s, is that he appreciates that the break which Levinas is
attempting to describe has been "understood from within a recourse to experience itself." [ibid] Thus, the importance of Levinas' claim that the thought of the signifyingness of the trace is to be understood as an interruption of phenomenology gains an important resonance, for just as Derrida, in Grammatology, argues that the deconstructive thinking of the trace can no more break with phenomenology than it can be reduced to phenomenology, [G 62/91] so Levinas' own break with metaphysics by means of the trace, can be seen to be accessible only through a meditation on the metaphysical limits of phenomenology.

Now, the lines of questioning to which we wish to limit ourselves in our reading of Derrida's essay are two-fold, though as we shall see, in the texts of Levinas to which we will turn, his response to these questionings interweaves both themes. On the one hand, as we have said, Derrida wishes to determine whether Levinas' discourse itself manages to effect the break with metaphysics as described. On the other hand, however, there is a question even more closely related to the concerns we have been raising in this work. That is, how are we to understand the experience which itself disrupts or interrupts the metaphysical closure? How can such an experience be understood "beyond metaphysics"? Given that, as we have seen, this experience can only be approached through phenomenology, but given that, as such, it is an experience which cannot be revealed phenomenologically, how are we to describe the experience 'of' the between-times which is the openness to the transcendence of the infinitely and radically other? In what space of experience can this event be understood, or resonate? [WD 83/ED 124] The issues at stake in this second line of questioning are substantially similar to those resulting from the first. However, they return us to the strategy of deconstruction, and in particular, to how this strategy relates to
phenomenology. Can Levinas’ own methodology in fact describe the break with phenomenology that the interruption of the light of phenomenality by the enigma aims towards? Must not a more nuanced relation with phenomenology’s margins be established, as in the deconstruction, if the risks of non-sense or mere confirmation of metaphysics are to be avoided? If Levinas is to avoid these risks, must he not allow phenomenology itself to open the spaces which he is describing, such that he can then give ethical sense to these openings? If this is indeed the case, then what we are proposing is that, in the strategic aims of both Levinas and Derrida, both of which are achieved through meditations on phenomenology, then it is necessary for the deconstruction to be supplemented by ethics, to become ethical, while, on the other hand, it is necessary for Levinas’ ethics to be supplemented by deconstruction, for his texts to become deconstructive.

As we know from the exemplary work of Robert Bernasconi, as well as John Llewelyn and Simon Critchley, Derrida’s response to Levinas is as two-handed as we have argued his response to Husserl is. The ultimate focus of Derrida’s questioning of the possibility of Levinas’ enterprise, and specifically of the possibility of the ethical signifyingness of the trace, is concentrated in the following passage, to be found at the end of a section of the essay which questions Levinas’ reading of Husserl:

The notion of a past whose meaning could not be thought in the form of a (past) present marks the impossible-unthinkable-unsayable not only for philosophy in general but even for a thought of being which would seek to take a step outside philosophy. [WD 132/ED 194]

11. see in particular Bernasconi’s ‘The Trace of Levinas in Derrida’, ‘Levinas and Derrida’, ‘Deconstruction and the Possibility of Ethics’ and ‘Levinas: Philosophy and Beyond’.
The risk for Levinas, which this passage highlights, is that in attempting to say or think the trace, Levinas runs the risk, already adumbrated in Derrida's own strategic reflections on deconstruction alluded to above, either of too heavy a reliance on the language of the Greek logos, that is, of classical ontology, or of renouncing that language to such an extent that he ceases to make any sense. [cf Bernasconi (1985b), 22f]

And yet, as we have already seen, these are questions and problems with which Levinas himself is already familiar, as he makes clear in the opening paragraphs of the essays which we have been reading in the preceding pages. Thus, might not a more persuasive reading of this passage be aware of its crucial nuance – that the thought of the signifyingness of the trace would indeed fail within a philosophy of being, even when such a philosophy itself tries to take a step outside of philosophy. On the other hand, Levinas' project would appear, from the form of this question, to be that much more radical – namely an attempt to think what a philosophy of being finds unthinkable, through taking an ethical step beyond philosophy. Crucially, the possibility of such a step is that one begins from within, that is, steps out from, philosophy. As Bernasconi makes clear, understood in this way, Levinas' thought appears particularly close to the strategic aims of deconstruction, that is, "to change ground in a discontinuous and disruptive fashion." [M 135/163; Bernasconi, op cit, 23] Thus the new form in which we can understand Derrida's questioning of Levinas at this point, which doesn't simply reduce the reading to a critique, arises from another passage in 'Violence and Metaphysics' cited by Bernasconi: [op cit, 24-5]

And, if you will, the attempt to achieve an opening toward the beyond of philosophical discourse, by means of philosophical discourse, which can never be shaken off.
completely, cannot possibly succeed within language – and Levinas recognises that there is no thought before language and outside of it – except by formally and thematically posing the question of the relations between belonging and the opening, the question of closure. [WD 110/ED 163]

This is precisely the type of meditation which Derrida offered in the passages on strategy, especially in the ‘Tympan’, which we analyzed in Chapter 1. There, as we saw, Derrida demonstrated that the only possibility of opening the closure of metaphysics, and thus of avoiding the risks to which we have alluded, lay in the type of double-handed meditation on the margins of philosophy, which we have been tracing in his reading of Husserl’s phenomenology. If Levinas’ text lacks such a motivation, then the ethical interruption of phenomenology and philosophy might succumb to precisely the same fate which befalls Hegel’s attempt to master the limits of philosophy, as discussed in our reading of ‘Tympan’ in Chapter 1.

Thus, if Levinas is to avoid the same risks, should we not derive from Derrida’s questioning here the implication that Levinas must return to his thinking about Husserl, concentrating less on the way in which the trace interrupts phenomenology, but rather, and deconstructively, showing how the space of the trace is opened on phenomenology’s margins, a space which, in turn, overspills the closure of phenomenology into the beyond of phenomenology (a beyond which, let us recall, we are arguing that Levinas is giving sense to in a way in which the deconstruction has thus far failed to do). Such an excess would be revealed, vis-a-vis the trace, in the type of elliptical reading suggested in the closing lines of ‘Form and Meaning’, to which we have referred above. [cf Bernasconi, op cit, 33-4] In this way, the deconstruction would differ from Levinas’ own interruption of
philosophy to the extent that it locates the beyond of philosophy as already located, reflected, or *opened* within philosophy. That such is the case is the only possibility of deconstruction. The task of the deconstruction, which is exemplified in Derrida's rereading of Husserl, is to find the names for what is exposed within philosophy-phenomenology, but which cannot be named by philosophy-phenomenology.

Let us turn now to our second line of questioning, indicated above. As we shall see, this line of questioning is aimed at discovering whether there is indeed, as the texts devoted to Husserl have suggested, such an opening within Husserl's text, an opening which a deconstructively supplemented ethical text would be more attentive to. Derrida poses four questions of Levinas' rejection of the Husserlian phenomenology of light(ing), a phenomenology which is limited to the foundational subject-object correlation, and which is thus constrained by a defining theoretism (the Heideggerian critique of Husserl taken up in Levinas' *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*). These questions centre on the issue of the necessity of a phenomenological opening for the experiencing of the Other, even if this has the apparently contradictory meaning of the experiencing of the withdrawl of the Other. Does phenomenology provide a recourse for such the opening of such an experiencing, and indeed, can such a possibility exist outwith phenomenology?

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12. Despite this formulation of Levinas' critique of Husserl, Derrida is attentive to the first signs of Levinas' own questioning of the strict lines of this formulation, to be found in the reflections on the stretching of the subject-object correlation of intentionality revealed in the analyses of "sensibility, passive genesis, the movement of temporalization, etc" [WD 85/ED 126], which are studied in a series of essays by Levinas on Husserl dating from the late 1950's, and included in the middle section of the 1974 edition of *En Découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger*. 

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First, does the fact that the step beyond philosophy has been “understood from within a *recourse to experience itself*, [WD 83/ED 123] a fact which requires Levinas to employ the phenomenological method, enable Levinas at the same time to engage in the critique of phenomenology found in *The Theory of Intuition*, and carried on in later works? Can the method of phenomenology simply be separated from its content? [WD 118/ED 174] Indeed, is it not the case that the very practice of phenomenology itself opens up the space of transcendence within philosophy? At any rate, this would certainly be the conclusion to be derived from the deconstructive supplementation of phenomenology.

The second question which Derrida poses of Levinas’ reading of Husserl is whether he has been attentive enough to a thinking of infinity in phenomenology which is not subordinate to finitude. Thus, there is the fact that Husserl is more concerned with the value of apodicticity than adequacy as the ground for philosophical certitude, and the fact that the infinity of perspectives of an object not only do not constitute a threat to the phenomenological enterprise, but indeed constitute one of its most worked over themes (from the account of symbolic indication in the 6th *Logical Investigation*, to the discussion of horizons in the later work). Moreover, as Derrida stresses, [WD 120/ED 176] this theme in phenomenology amounts to the fact that perception is always inadequate. As we saw, in reading Derrida’s *Introduction*, what is distinctive of the horizon is the way in which it is always concretely founding of any intentional act, while yet overflowing the intentionality of the act itself. As Derrida says, there is “never a constitution of horizons, but horizons of constitution.” [ibid] Even in the apparently adequate givenness of immanent perception, an adequacy guaranteed, as we have seen, by the
self-presence of the flux of constituting temporality, there are still the inadequacies betrayed in the reflection on reflection (cf 2.4.1 supra), as well as the need to go beyond the inadequacy of the givenness of the flux itself. As we have seen, Derrida’s thinking regarding Husserl’s recourse to infinity was never stable. However, this lack of stability can be attributed to the fact that Husserl’s own thought is not simply ensnared within the bad infinite, a point again borne out by the ethical element attached to the thinking of the infinite task in the texts of the Crisis period. As we suggested in the concluding part of Chapter 2, is not what is decisive about the infinity of the task that it takes consciousness beyond itself, thus opening consciousness as such? The two hands of Derrida’s reading here would correspond to two possible interpretations of Husserl’s use of the Idea in the Kantian sense. [ibid] On the one hand, the Idea serves to totalise, by closing what can never be presented as an object. On the other hand, it opens in its very overflowing, an opening towards the task. On the one hand, then, the Idea seems to be interpreted from an epistemological perspective, on the other hand, from an almost ethical perspective, and these two perspectives are differentiated on the basis of whether the Idea is a finite Idea of the infinite, or an infinite Idea itself. In turn, these two possible interpretations would correspond to the metaphysical and the radical Husserl, the two Husserls revealed in Derrida’s two-handed deconstruction. Derrida’s question here is, to the extent that we choose to read Husserl with our ‘radical hand’, so to speak, are we not obliged to accept that the presence of the infinite Idea which overflows the horizons of intentionality is an indication of Husserl’s respect for the infinite transcendence and exteriority of what is other to consciousness, a mark of his realisation of consciousness’ inability to comprehend adequately what is other to it? Furthermore, does not this inadequacy provide the very phenomenological grounding
of what Levinas will radicalise as the experience of the other? That is to say, does not our inadequacy in the face of the Other only find significance on the basis of this more fundamental sense of inadequacy? Derrida’s final remark in this line of questioning can serve as a summary for the reading we proposed in Chapter 3, while also expressing why Levinas’ text should bare a deconstructive rather than interruptive relation to phenomenology:

... ethics not only is neither dissipated in phenomenology nor submitted to it, but... finds within phenomenology its own meaning. Moreover, it seems incontestable to us that the themes of non-presence (temporization and alterity) contradict that which makes phenomenology a metaphysics of presence, working it ceaselessly. [WD 121/ED 178]

Derrida’s third question relates to Levinas’ critique of Husserl’s alleged theoretism, and the possibility of Levinas’ being able to distance himself from Husserlian phenomenology on the basis of this critique. Derrida questions whether in fact Husserl’s refined conception of objectivity, as the noematic possibility of any appearing or meaning whatsoever – without thereby reducing the appearing to the sense of objectivity constrained as theoretical – is not necessary even for the appearing of the irreducibly non-theoretical, such as the ethical. Is not the possibility of such an appearing a necessary condition for my having

13. Levinas’ answer to this question would, we think, be two-fold: first, the inadequacy described by Husserl is still essentially metaphysical-epistemological, an inadequacy of knowledge, and hence not really an ethical inadequacy at all; and second, the inadequacy of the subject in the face of the Other is more ‘original’ than the inadequacy of consciousness with regard to the givenness of objects. Nevertheless, this would not preclude the possibility that a certain openness, a certain thinking of the inadequacy of consciousness, apparently in contradiction to the traditional interpretation of phenomenology, already works Husserl’s texts.

14. The syntax of this phrase is revealingly similar to that of the phrase concerning the trace and phenomenology from Grammatology, cited above.
any regard whatsoever, even for what cannot be regarded as a thing or object, such as regard for the face of the Other? Thus, Levinas has argued that the trace, borne doubtless in the face which is a phenomenon itself, nevertheless exceeds phenomenality, signifying in its very self-erasure, [TA 357/EDE 200] its very non-appearing, what is transcendent and exceeds all revelation or dissimulation. Derrida’s point, however, is that the trace cannot be untwined from the manifestation of that which bares the trace, any more than expression could be untwined from indication. There is a materiality to the trace, a materiality of what is traced, which must be taken into account, and which phenomenology allows to be taken into account, without thereby reducing the radicality of the trace. Once again, therefore, there is already the trace of openness within Husserl’s text, which Levinas’ text neither should, nor, more importantly, can, simply break away from.

Finally, Derrida inquires into whether Levinas’ account of the visitation of the Other, which respects the radicality of the Other, does indeed mark an absolute break from Husserl’s own accounts of the constitution of the Other, which we studied in Chapter 2.6. As we saw, the main difficulty working Husserl’s texts was to respect the alterity of the Other within the constraints of phenomenology. After all, is not the conclusion of Husserl’s investigation, particularly in the 5th Cartesian Meditation, that the Other’s mode of givenness to me is as originary non-presence? [WD 123/ED 181; cf CM 94, 108-9/Hua I 126, 139] The difficulty, as Derrida admits, is that Levinas is balking at the notion of the constitution of the Other. But, as Derrida makes clear in a footnote, it may well be the case that the notion of constitution which Levinas is working with is too limited. After all, have we not seen, that the possibility of the experience of the Other, the appresentation of the
Other, is ultimately founded on a motivated analogizing apprehension itself founded on passive associative pairing. Should not Levinas be more aware of the fundamental importance which Husserl here grants to passive syntheses, and the role that they play in constitution? Moreover, does not the fact that Husserl here talks of *appresentation*, a mediate intentionality, as the mode of givenness of the Other, indicate his own awareness of the “original non-phenomenalization” of the Other? [WD 123/ED 181] For, as we have seen, not only do the horizons of perception indicate that all such experience remains necessarily open, such that the very sense of the inadequacy of perception has already gained sense within even a phenomenology of objects, but that what distinguishes the inadequacy of my experience of the Other over and above even the inadequacy of normal perception, is that the Other can *never* be presented to my consciousness, unlike those sides of the object which may presently remain unperceived. Derrida’s point here is to emphasize once again that the sense of non-presence in each of these cases is informed by the other, rather than simply being separable – the inadequacy of my experience of the Other gains sense from the inadequacies of my experiences of all bodies; while on the other hand, as we saw, Husserl stresses that the very experience of objectivity itself is founded on the sense of ‘objective for everyone’, and thus, nothing as such can precede the experience of Others. [WD 316, fn 44/ED 181]

Once again, therefore, Derrida is arguing that there is an openness to transcendence in Husserl’s text which is never simply marginalised, and yet which runs counter to phenomenology’s metaphysical self-determination. This is further evident in the fact that, as we have seen, non-presence is constitutive of the flux of the living present, the non-presence of depresentation, and that, furthermore, this
constitutive alterity is at one with the constitutive alterity of the Other which we have just been describing.¹⁵

Thus we have seen Derrida's general line of questioning of Levinas, that is, of whether or not Levinas' interruptive ethics can avoid the strategic pitfalls analyzed by Derrida in *Margins*, exemplified in his reading of Husserl and Levinas' attempt to describe an absolute break with phenomenology. Derrida's implicit point is that Levinas needs to engage in a double-handed reading of Husserl. At the moment, he is limited to a *critique* of Husserl, which limits Husserl's text to its metaphysical boundaries. In ignoring the moments of openness in Husserl's text, those moments named in the deconstructive supplement of phenomenology, and without undertaking the kind of meditation of limits to be found in the deconstruction, Levinas' attempts to find an ethical signifyingness for the trace, a signifyingness whose sense is to be found in the *step beyond* phenomenology, runs the risk of collapsing back into metaphysics, and therefore being subject to all the criticisms which are levelled against metaphysics in Levinas' text, or, on the other hand, descending into a type of empiricism, which is to say, *non-philosophy.* [WD 152/ED 226] In order to avoid these risks, in order to enable the ethical sense of the signifyingness of the trace to have meaning beyond metaphysics, Levinas' text must establish a more nuanced, 'deconstructive', relation with phenomenology. In responding to Derrida's general line of questioning, as we have called it, we find that this is precisely what Levinas does, in returning to Husserl's texts in a series of texts in the 1970's and '80's.

¹⁵. As Derrida notes, although temporalization and constitutive alterity are only linked by analogy in *Cartesian Meditations* and the *Crisis*, the substance of much of the *C Manucripts* is concerned with the inseparability of these themes. [WD 132-3/ED 194-5]
4. Levinas' receptiveness to the full implications of Derrida's questionings in 'Violence and Metaphysics' is evident from the fact that, immediately after the questions that he poses to Derrida, cited above, regarding whether or not Derrida has himself managed to break free from an ontology of presence, in 'Wholly Otherwise', he notes that if one were simply to rest with such a form of criticism:

... one would risk missing the incomprehensible non-simultaneity of the Said and the Saying, the dislocation of their correlation. A dislocation which, although minimal, would be wide enough to swallow up sceptical discourse, but without stifling itself in the contradiction between what its said signifies and the very fact of articulating a said. As if simultaneity were lacking from the two significations, so that the contradiction broke the knot that tied them together. As if the correlation of the Saying and the Said was a diachrony of that which can't be brought together. As if the situation of the Saying was already a 'memory retention' for the Said, but without the lapse of the instants of the saying letting themselves be recuperated in this memory. [Bernasconi & Critchley (1991) 5-6/L'arc 35]

It is in this complex interweaving of the Saying, indication, the memory trace and the lapse, or 'between-time' as it was called previously, that Levinas' return to Husserl can be discerned. If we turn to the final section of 'Wholly Otherwise', 'The Chiasmus', we find that Levinas praises Derrida for his reading of Husserl's theory of time-consciousness, and for "liberating time from its subordination to the present" [op cit 6/36]. Furthermore, in Derrida's reading of Husserl's theory of language, the rôle of the 'bodyliness' of language is reinscribed – meaning, the signified, cannot simply be hived-off from the physicality of the signifier, from indication or from writing.16

16. Levinas here also draws attention to his own reflections on discourse and the face, from Totality and Infinity, a discourse with close affinities to that form of expression reduced by Husserl in §5 of the 1st Logical Investigation, and discussed above in relation to bodily communication in Ideas II.
Levinas then goes further, seeing deeper implications in Derrida’s response to Husserl which Derrida himself would, thinks Levinas, perhaps not fully go along with, for the reasons, doubtless, which we have been discussing above, namely, that Derrida has yet to fully break with an ontology of presence. Thus, in the implications of Derrida’s thought, Levinas sees for the first time a possibility for the thinking of the Being of the creature. This would be the possibility of a thought which did not have to fall back on impoverished empirical descriptions of the event\(^1\) and which would thereby remain purely contingent; nor with having to be content with enunciating what is not. Thus, we could argue that at this point, Levinas is offering something like a deconstructive supplement of Derrida’s own text, a supplement inscribed in that moment of vulnerability in the deconstructive text which has opened up the space of the ethical, but, because it has as yet failed to take the step beyond ontology, is unable to give sense to.\(^2\)

Before considering what he means by the ‘creature’, we can follow Levinas in describing the manner in which his Ethical path might diverge from the deconstructive path of Derrida. In response to the general line of questioning to be found in ‘Violence and Metaphysics, the means by which this will be done is through an analysis of language. This will no longer be language as understood by the tradition, but language ‘after deconstruction’:

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17. Again, a direct response to ‘Violence and Metaphysics’, in which Derrida poses the question of Levinas’ relation to empiricism.

18. We could profitably compare the notion of the being of the creature, the ethically constituted subject, with Derrida’s own thought of the constitution of the subject in phenomenology – in both cases, what is at stake is to show that the being of the subject is in fact founded on irreducible non-presence or alterity. However, for Levinas, unlike Derrida, this foundation of the subject amounts to an ethical creation of the subject.
... one must seek for the operative concept of the sign which supplements a failed presence, another referent than the failure of this presence, and another site than the Said of language – oral or written; a site other than the language which, entirely at the disposal of the speaker, feigns synchrony itself, the presence *par excellence* of a system of signs which is already presupposed by any empirical simultaneity. [ibid]

What is not at issue is an attempt to return language to full presence, nor to announce, in the failure of the attempt at the positive utterance of the ‘beyond being’, the inevitable return to metaphysics. The attempt is, rather, in the meditation on language after deconstruction, to see if there is a ‘way out of ontology’. In other words, is there, *after deconstruction*, the possibility of a language for ethics? That is to say, after deconstruction, can the task of finding an ethical signifyingness for the trace be accomplished? Levinas suggests that if there is an excessive Saying which is not reducible to a Said, if there is a signifyingness whose ‘aim’ is not merely to provide a window on meaning, then this might provide such a possibility. What is the Saying which is not exhausted by the Said? What is the sign which is like such an excessive saying? What does Levinas mean when he describes the sign as the:

extraordinary event – against the flow of presence – of exposure and subjection to the other person, the event of subjectivity. It’s the one-for-the-other. It’s the signification which does not exhaust itself in simple absence of intuition and presence. We ask: whence comes the sign which produces a presence deficient to itself or the diachrony, which cannot be brought together, which produces creaturality? [op cit 7/37]

What we now wish to argue, developing a hint in Bernasconi’s
"Levinas: Philosophy and Beyond", is that Levinas is prompted, not only by the general line of questioning in "Violence and Metaphysics", but also the specific questioning pertaining to Levinas' alleged break with phenomenology, to return to Husserl's text, offering a reading which bares evidence of the deconstructive supplementing of phenomenology. In particular, we wish to suggest that the sense of the sign evoked by Levinas here derives from Derrida's deconstructive thinking of the indication sign in *Voice and Phenomenon*. This would be the case to the extent that Derrida reveals a radicalised function of the indication sign which breaks from the semiology which is governed by truth, presence and intuition. Clearly, an indication sign which is limited to the closure of such a semiology would indeed be inadequate for the task required of it by Levinas. Such an argument is confirmed by turning to 'La pensée de l'être et la question de l'autre', in *De Dieu qui Vient a l'Idée*. Once again, in this essay, Levinas speaks approvingly of Derrida, but this time in the context of the question of how transcendence has meaning, a question already posed in 'Idéologie et Idéalisme', as well, as we have seen, as in the essays on the trace from the 1960's. Further he asks once more whether there is a meaning other than that recognised by philosophy (or indeed, even in asking this question, whether one does not fall back into philosophy). [DVI 173] Once again, Levinas repeats the charge that Derrida has not managed fully to break with a metaphysical understanding of meaning because his critique of has taken its point of departure from an exclusive thinking of presence. Because of this, Levinas claims Derrida has not appreciated the full implications of a thinking of indication.

How does indication fulfil its rôle of designation, of 'standing-for'? Levinas stresses that in indication, nothing is presented to
consciousness, there is no signified as such. But he asks whether there is not something more at work than the merely formal association relation which has been described previously. Does not indication have a ‘meaning’, but, as radically extrinsic meaning, ie a meaning which cannot be presented in consciousness, is this meaning not profoundly beyond metaphysics? Levinas describes the affect of indication as an:

... affection by that which does not enter into structure, which, with that which it affects, does not come together, as the intentional object would enter there assembly in co-presence with the intention where it is seen or meant. [emphasis added; DVI 183]

This affection, then, is affection by the radically and irreducibly extrinsic, that which cannot be reduced to, or assembled in, consciousness as an intentional object, that is to say, that which affects without being constituted, a possibility to which we will return below. “Indication [is]... a relationship of absolute difference”, but this relation of absolute difference does not signal the demise of intuition as such, or as Levinas writes in ‘Wholly Otherwise’, it is a “signification which does not exhaust itself in simple absence of intuition” [cited above]. Rather, it is intelligible as transcendence elle-même; it is an affection, a non-in-difference, an affection which is the “absolute difference of transcendence.” [DVI 183] An affection, that is to say, by that which of necessity can never be presented to consciousness. Therefore, in being thus affected, by the absolute difference, by the transcendence, of indication (as understood in its radicalised, deconstructed, sense), consciousness, in not being able to posit an object, is absolutely passive.

19. The same question can be posed in parallel of the possible ‘meaningful’ givenness of the Other to me other than by means of the association relation which founds analogical appresentation. Thus, it might be asked, can we ‘think’ the ‘meaningfulness of the Other’ indicatively? This would return us to the thinking of ‘God and Philosophy’, where Levinas discusses the remarkable word signijiance which already has the meaning of a mark of attention given to someone prior to Ethical thinking [DVI 125].
Intentionality would be postponed, deferred, held back in much the same way, as Levinas says, as one holds one's breath.

But this is not the held-breath of anticipation: rather, it is "waiting without anything waited for, or hope where nothing is hoped for". The activity of consciousness is deferred by indication, in a "passivity more passive than all passivity endured". Levinas continues, explicitly re-introducing Derrida's own thought at this stage, and much in the way that we have argued that Derrida's own thought goes 'beyond' Husserl's in re-inscribing indication at the heart of phenomenology:

In the deferral or the incessant *différance* of this pure indication, we suspect time itself, but as incessant diachrony: proximity to the infinite, the always and the never of an already-interestedness, and the to-God [*de l'à-Dieu*]. Being affected but without contact: affectivity. Proximity in the fear of the approach, traumatism of the awakening. [DVI 184]

What does Levinas mean by the 'traumatism of awakening'? In 'God and Philosophy', Levinas describes the "passivity of someone created" [CPP 161/DVI 107]. This is the *creation* of subjectivity itself. The moment here is analogous to awakening from sleep, and the moment of pure passivity just prior to this, which Husserl attempts to describe phenomenologically in the C Manuscripts, but also in *Phenomenological Psychology* [PP 159-160/Hua IX 209]. For Levinas, however, there is a more profoundly ethical slant to this thinking of the

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20. This held breath of anticipation where nothing is anticipated can be informatively compared with what Levinas had already written of the 'between times' in 'Enigma and Phenomenon': "Self-consciousness is kept breathless [*tient haletant*] with tension or relaxation, in the before or the after. In the between-times the event expected turns into the past without being lived through." [CPP 68/EDE 211]
passivity of creaturality. It is at this point that the themes of *significance* and indication become interwoven with a reading of Husserl’s lectures on time-consciousness. Once again, at this point, we see Levinas responding to the specific line of questioning from ‘Violence and Metaphysics’, that Levinas should be more sensitive to the notion of founding passivity, as opening to transcendence without the reduction of the alterity of transcendence, since this is a passivity which does not lead to the subsequent constitution of that which affects in passivity.

Levinas’ most frequent reference when talking of creaturality is to the presencing of God in Descartes 3rd *Meditation*, where the ego’s subjectivity is created by the insertion into finite consciousness of the infinite Idea of God. This moment of passivity marks an exposure, an openness, of the subject to the outside, to the *other*. At the same time, this openness 'breaks up' the essence of the subject as substance, as self-present and in its determination as ‘I can’, as found in *Ideas* II. It is precisely this break up which Levinas, in *Otherwise than Being*, calls Ethics. [OBBE 14/AEAE 17]. Levinas asks how this substance is broken up, and whether, in being broken, it does not *last*, thus becoming *be-ing*. Here then, Levinas is acutely aware of the possible problem, adumbrated by Derrida, of his own text succumbing to the very critique of metaphysics which it carries out.

He accepts Husserl’s account of the ‘being’ of absolute subjectivity as temporalization; however, Husserl, in stressing the retentional capacity of temporalization, is always tending towards an account of consciousness as gathering/synthesizing. Even when stressing the foundationality of the retentional trace, the trace of non-presence, would not Derrida also be susceptible to the same tendency, no doubt
due to his Heideggerian leanings at this stage? In the othering and gathering of the Living Present, would there be a lapse, a passing of time which is not recuperated, which is not re-presentable? This non-representability would indicate precisely what is non-objectifiable, and, as we have seen, the Absolute Flux does not intend objects as such. What then does the flow mean here? Levinas suggests that speaking of the flow is to begin to speak of time in terms of time – and in a crucial footnote, he asks:

_Do we lack names, or is the thing itself beyond the nameable? Do we not in fact find the non-thematizable flow of time by reduction from the said? [OBBE 188/AEAE 43]21_

The flow is, Levinas says, the verb to be (in its in-finitive form). It is the verbality of the verb which comes to its verbalness by ceasing to name. This verbality of the verb of the being of temporalization marks the passing of time [se passe]. The passing, which Levinas calls ageing, which is irrecuperable dia-chrony, and as such is the very temporality of our experiencing time (an ageing similar to Husserl’s own notion of abiding by which we become aware of the flow as ‘phenomenon’), is our being as absolute passivity (though a passivity which is not simply the passivity of receptivity, as Levinas makes clear in ‘God and Philosophy’ – that is, it is a passivity which is not ‘collecting’ [CPP 160/DVI 106]). Once again we can note the fact that Levinas has returned to Husserl, aware of a radical potential in his texts which was not apparent in the texts claiming to interrupt

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21. The return of the unsaying in the said, of a pre-linguistic ‘saying’ prior to the saying-said in pre-predicative experience [OBBE 189/AEAE 45], the irreducibility of the rhythm of unsaying the said, is what Levinas will call the lapse/diachrony of the saying. It is the ‘linguistic’ parallel of the between-times of the event of the visitation of the other, a visitation which, in never being lived through, never experienced in the (living) present, can never be represented, or signified.
phenomenology. Absolute passivity is a passing which has always passed, lapsed, a pass-ed which was never a present and can thus never be recuperated as a present, which is to say that it can never be represented. This passing, or ageing, is precisely what Levinas had earlier named the 'between-time' of the event which is never lived through or recuperated. This temporalising of time as an absolute passivity would correspond to what Derrida names as différence, the irreducible delay/spacing which is 'constitutive' of subjectivity, and which cannot be represented in the language of being or of agency.

But Levinas takes this moment further still. For in this passivity, which is a passivity beyond any passivity subsumable under the form of subject-object, my being is created. And thus the lapse, the 'essence' of this created subjectivity is broken-up without ever becoming being. Moreover, as passivity and break-up, this lapse of the passing of the passed also marks the trace of vulnerability of the subject, the very subjection of the subject. As Levinas says, “in the form of the time of ageing, is the patience, the passivity, the exposedness to the other” [OBBE 190/AEAE 68]. The passivity of ageing, which creates the subject in the moment of its exposedness to the other, is then the very possibility of what Levinas calls Ethics, and of the possibility of our being Ethical:

Subjectivity, locus and null-site of this break-up, comes to pass as a passivity more passive than all passivity. To the diachronic past, which cannot be recuperated by representation effected by memory or history, that is, incommensurable with the present, corresponds or answers the unassumable passivity of the self. ‘Se passer’ – to come to pass – is for us a precious expression in which the self figures as in a past that bypasses itself, as in ageing without 'active synthesis'. The response which is responsibility,
responsibility for the neighbour that is incumbent, resounds in this passivity, this disinterestedness of subjectivity, this sensibility. [OBBE 14-15/AEAE 18]

The response resounds in passivity because the lapse in the diachrony of the flow is the spacing in which the trace of *significance* is inscribed, a *significance* which, Levinas writes, is ‘older’ than its exhibition, the trace of the infinite which awakens us, an awakening which is a ‘demand’. [exigence; CPP 161/ DVI 108] Thus we see that Levinas has not only, once again, given an ethical supplement to Derrida’s text, through exposing the ethical significance of what is described in the deconstruction, he does so through an explicit return to Husserl, locating this ethical moment in a space of openness in Husserl’s text revealed as such by the deconstruction.22 Thus, Levinas is able to respond to Derrida’s general questioning in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’ through a response to the specific questioning, while at the same time supplementing a moment of vulnerability in the deconstructive text itself, a vulnerability borne of deconstruction’s own inability to break with the Heideggerian legacy.

22. One further example of Levinas’ renewed respect for Husserl can be found in the essays of *Hors sujet*, and in particular, the paper delivered in memory of Alphonse de Waelhens, ‘On Sensibility’. There, Levinas pays close attention to the “admirable effort” of the “inimitable pages” of §56 of *Ideas II*, an analysis which he describes as beautiful. In these pages, Husserl has argued that far from my own ego being the origin of myself as a person, I in fact only gain the sense of myself as a person “by way of the comprehension of others.” [I2 254/Hua IV 242] In order to discover myself in my spiritual being, I first have to apprehend the Other as Other, and in so doing I lose my privileged constituting position in the world. These lines amply back up the point being made in Derrida’s fourth question to Levinas concerning his departure from phenomenology in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’. However, Levinas’ response to this thinking in Husserl is radically different in this essay than it had been in the earlier texts. Now, he does not choose simply to interrupt Husserl’s text, but rather wonders whether Husserl has been attentive to the full radicality opened out at this point. Does not the relationship with the Other whereby I discover myself as a person: “already resonate like a sympathy, a friendship and almost a kind of filial compassion, that is, a taking upon oneself of the ‘undergoing’ [subir] of the other person? Its excellence in intersubjectivity is measured, not by the adequation of the perceived with the real, but by the generosity of the ‘I borrow myself from others’, [this phrase is from Merleau-Ponty’s *Signs*, p 159] by the ethical value of the gift.” [Outside the Subject, 113/Hors sujet, 169] Thus, in this text, Levinas finds a way into his own thinking of radical generosity which we have already seen in ‘The Trace of the Other’.

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The demand of the awakening is the first moment of ethical responsibility. The awakening calls on me, demands me to respond, and in doing so, creates my subjectivity. I awaken – but my awakening is my exposure to the other. I give myself over to the other. Levinas carries on:

Saying makes signs to the Other, but in this sign signifies the very giving of signs. Saying opens me to the Other before saying what is said, before the said uttered in this sincerity forms a screen between me and the other... Saying bears witness to the Other of the Infinite which rends me, which in the saying awakens me... Saying as testimony precedes all the said. Saying, before setting forth a said, is already the testimony of responsibility. [CPP 170/DVI 121-2]

In this sense, we can understand what Levinas had said in ‘Wholly Otherwise’ about the dislocation of the Saying and the Said, and can understand his account of the Saying as a trace, and of the relation between the two which marks their inability to be brought together as dia-chrony. The saying which awakens me is always a prior trace – I am awakened from my passivity by a diachronic Saying, which can never be presented to consciousness as such. Read ethically, the différence of indication, described by Derrida in Voice and Phenomenon, is also dia-chrony. Diachrony is proximity to the infinitely other, which is the always already prior trace of the awakening, that is being awakened by the Other, which in turn is the first coming of responsibility.

The ‘meaning’ of indication therefore, as diachronic, is the possibility of the meaning of my relationship, my ethical relationship, with the Other. It is a meaning which is indeed beyond philosophy. Levinas writes in ‘La pensée de l'être et question de l'autre':

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The pure indication of Husserlian analyses: the one evoking the other without any 'hunger' for the other, and which, in the element of the knowledge of being (that is the identification of the identical and the world) is a deficiency without extra, belonging to a completely other element than ontology, and signifying in another sense, which, in ethics, would be its hypotypose. An ethic which does not understand itself as the corollary of a vision of the world, as founded upon being, or knowledge, or have the categories, or existents. [DVI 187]

5. Levinas describes the Saying, which we have here been interpreting as an ethically rich interpretation of indication as Derridean différance, as a sign which is: “in its decisive suspension of the for-itself, the for-the-other of my responsibility to the other person.” [Bernasconi & Critchley (1991), 7/L’arc (1973), 37]

And this is why Levinas concludes his reading of Derrida not by simply differing from him. Rather, the paths of Levinas and Derrida have met in the heart of the intersecting unequal lines which describe a χ the Greek chiasmus. The possibility of his meeting has been the shared response to the Husserlian thinking of indication and temporalization, and to the foundational non-presence which each of these themes have opened in phenomenology. In the heart of the chiasmus, the Derridean deconstruction of these notions (which we have said has only been a radicalised fidelity to what is described in phenomenological description, but which cannot be described as such within the phenomenological closure determined by its metaphysical principle) has enabled Levinas to give a meaning to his Ethics, to answer the questions posed in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’, concerning the possibility of the ‘saying’ of the Ethical encounter with the Other, and indeed of the very
possibility itself of such an encounter.

Just as in deconstruction, the other of phenomenology is announced, so in the heart of the chiasmus, the Other of deconstruction is described: what Derrida calls archi-écriture is given fundamental Ethical significance in the Saying of Levinas. The supplementation of deconstruction by the ethical text of Levinas, which itself has been supplemented by the deconstruction, a supplementation which has been accomplished through a return to the Husserlian text opened by deconstruction, has revealed a vulnerability in the deconstructive text. This vulnerability marks its own openness to transcendence, just as the deconstruction had opened to transcendence the phenomenological text. This need not be interpreted as a philosophical or strategic weakness in the deconstructive text. On the contrary, what this reading of Levinas has shown is that deconstruction itself does not succumb to the totalising desires which would betray itself as a metaphysical text. Its very openness to the ethical supplement offered by Levinas’ text is a mark of its own step beyond metaphysics. What is encountered in the heart of the chiasms between Derrida and Levinas’ texts is the ethical significance of the deconstructive supplement of the opening to transcendence in Husserlian phenomenology. The effect of this encounter is to be discerned in the ethico-political discourse which is characteristic of Derrida’s most recent work.
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### Abbreviations

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<td>AEAE</td>
<td>Autrement qu’être ou au-dela de l’essence</td>
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Titles marked with an asterisk are keyed by the same abbreviation (for both translation and original); in all cases, the translation reference is given first.