
LECTURE I

In earlier lectures I distinguished between science of the natural sort and philosophic science. The former originates from the natural, the latter from the philosophic attitude of mind.

The natural attitude of mind is as yet unconcerned with the critique of cognition. Whether in the act of intuiting or in the act of thinking, in the natural mode of reflection we are turned to the objects as they are given to us each time and as a matter of course, even though they are given in different ways and in different modes of being, according to the source and level of our cognition. In perception, for instance, a thing stands before our eyes as a matter of course. It is there, among other things, living or lifeless, animate or inanimate. It is, in short, within a world of which part is perceived, as are the individual things themselves, and of which part is contextually supplied by memory from whence it spreads out into the indeterminate and the unknown.

Our judgments relate to this world. We make (sometimes singular, sometimes universal) judgments about things, their relations, their changes, about the conditions which functionally determine their changes and about the laws of their variations. We find an expression for what immediate experience presents. In line with our experiential motives we draw inferences from the directly experienced (perceived and remembered) to what is not directly experienced. We generalize, and then apply again general knowledge to particular cases or deduce analytically new generalizations from general knowledge. Isolated cognitions do not simply follow each other in the manner of mere succession. They enter into logical relations with each other, they follow from one another, they “cohere” with one another, they support one another, thereby strengthening their logical power.
On the other hand, they also clash and contradict one another. They do not agree with one another, they are falsified by assured cognition, and their claim to be cognition is discredited. Perhaps the contradictions arise in the sphere that belongs to laws governing the pure predicational form; we have equivocated, we have inferred fallaciously, we have misconstrued or miscomputed. In these cases we restore formal consistency. We resolve the equivocation and the like.

Or the contradictions disturb our expectation of connections based on past experience: empirical evidence conflicts with empirical evidence. Where do we look for help? We now weigh the reasons for different possible ways of deciding or providing an explanation. The weaker must give way to the stronger, and the stronger, in turn, are of value as long as they will stand up, i.e., as long as they in turn do not have to come into a similar logical conflict with new cognitional motives introduced by a broader sphere of cognition.

Thus, natural knowledge makes strides. It progressively takes possession of a reality at first existing for us as a matter of course and as something to be investigated further as regards its extent and content, its elements, its relations and laws. Thus the various sciences of the natural sort (natürlichen Wissenschaften) come into being and flourish, the natural sciences (Naturwissenschaften) as the sciences of physics and psychology, the sciences of culture (Geisteswissenschaften) and, on the other side, the mathematical sciences, the sciences of numbers, classes, relations, etc. The latter sciences deal not with actual but rather with ideal objects; they deal with what is valid per se, and for the rest with what are from the first unquestionable possibilities.

In every step of natural cognition pertaining to the sciences of the natural sort, difficulties arise and are resolved, either by pure logic or by appeal to facts, on the basis of motives or reasons which lie in the things themselves and which, as it were, come from things in the form of requirements that they themselves make on our thinking.

Now let us contrast the natural mode (or habit) of reflection with the philosophical.

With the awakening of reflection about the relation of cognition to its object, abysmal difficulties arise. Cognition, the thing most taken for granted in natural thinking, suddenly emerges as a mystery. But I must be more exact. What is taken for granted in natural thinking is the possibility of cognition. Constantly busy producing results, advancing from discovery to discovery in newer and newer branches of science, natural thinking finds no occasion to raise the question of the possibility of cognition as such. To be sure, as with everything else in the world, cognition, too, will appear as a problem in a certain manner, becoming an object of natural investigation. Cognition is a fact in nature. It is the experience of a cognizing organic being. It is a psychological fact. As any psychological fact, it can be described according to its kinds and internal connections, and its genetic relations can be investigated. On the other hand cognition is essentially cognition of what objectively is; and it is cognition through the meaning which is intrinsic to it; by virtue of this meaning it is related to what objectively is. Natural thinking is also already active in this relating. It investigates in their formal generality the a priori connections of meanings and postulated meanings and the a priori principles which belong to objectivity as such; there comes into being a pure grammar and at higher stages a pure logic (a whole complex of disciplines owing to its different possible delimitations), and there arises once more a normative and practical logic in the form of an art of thinking, and, especially, of scientific thinking.

So far, we are still in the realm of natural thinking. However, the correlation between cognition as mental process, its referent (Bedeutung) and what objectively is, which has just been touched upon in order to contrast the psychology of cognition with pure logic and ontology, is the source of the deepest and most difficult problems. Taken collectively, they are the problem of the possibility of cognition.

Cognition in all of its manifestations is a psychic act; it is the cognition of a cognizing subject. The objects cognized stand over and against the cognition. But how can we be certain of the correspondence between cognition and the object cognized? How can knowledge transcend itself and reach its object reliably?

The unproblematic manner in which the object of cognition is given to natural thought to be cognized now becomes an enigma. In perception the perceived thing is believed to be directly
human cognition, bound up with human intellectual forms, and unfit to reach the very nature of things, to reach the things in themselves.

But at once another piece of absurdity arises. Can the cognitions by which such a view operates and the possibilities which it ponders make any sense themselves if the laws of logic are given over to such relativism? Does not the truth that there is this and that possibility implicitly presuppose the absolute validity of the principle of non-contradiction, according to which any given truth excludes its contradictory?

These examples should suffice. The possibility of cognition has become enigmatic throughout. If we immerse ourselves in the sciences of the natural sort, we find everything clear and comprehensible, to the extent to which they have developed into exact sciences. We are certain that we are in possession of objective truth, based upon reliable methods of reaching (objective) reality. But whenever we reflect, we fall into errors and confusions. We become entangled in patent difficulties and even self-contradictions. We are in constant danger of becoming sceptics, or still worse, we are in danger of falling into any one of a number of scepticisms all of which have, sad to say, one and the same characteristic: absurdity.

The playground of these unclear and inconsistent theories as well as the endless quarrels associated with them is the theory of knowledge, and metaphysics which is bound up with it historically and in subject matter. The task of the theory of knowledge or the critique of theoretical reason is, first of all, a critical one. It must brand the well-nigh inevitable mistakes which ordinary reflection makes about the relation of cognition, its meaning and its object, thereby refuting the concealed as well as the unconcealed sceptical theories concerning the essence of cognition by demonstrating their absurdity.

Furthermore, the positive task of the theory of knowledge is to solve the problems of the relations among cognition, its meaning and its object by inquiring into the essence of cognition. Among these, there is the problem of explicating the essential meaning of being a cognizable object or, what comes to the same thing, of being an object at all: of the meaning which is prescribed (for being an object at all) by the correlation a priori (or essential
correlation) between cognition and being an object of cognition. And this naturally applies also to all basic forms of being an object which are predetermined by the nature of cognition. (To the ontological, the apophantic \(^1\) as well as the metaphysical forms.)

Precisely by solving these problems the theory of knowledge qualifies as the critique of cognition, more exactly, as the critique of natural cognition in all the sciences of a natural sort. It puts us, in other words, in a position to interpret in an accurate and definitive way the teachings of these sciences about what exists. For the confusions of the theory of knowledge into which we are led by natural (pre-epistemological) reflection on the possibility of cognition (on the possibility of cognition’s reaching its object) involve not just false views about the essence of cognition, but also self-contradictory, and, therefore, fundamentally misleading interpretations of the being that is cognized in the sciences of the natural sort. So, one and the same science is interpreted in materialistic, spiritualistic, dualistic, psychonomistic, positivistic and many other ways, depending upon what interpretation is thought to be the necessary consequence of those pre-epistemological reflections. Only with epistemological reflection do we arrive at the distinction between / the sciences of a natural sort and philosophy. Epistemological reflection first brings to light that the sciences of a natural sort are not yet the ultimate science of being. We need a science of being in the absolute sense. This science, which we call metaphysics, grows out of the "critique" of natural cognition in the individual sciences. It is based on what is learned in the general critique of cognition about the essence of cognition and what it is to be an object of cognition of one basic type or other, i.e., in accordance with the different fundamental correlations between cognizing and being an object of cognition.

If then we disregard any metaphysical purpose of the critique of cognition and confine ourselves purely to the task of clarifying the essence of cognition and of being an object of cognition, then this will be phenomenology of cognition and of being an object of cognition and will be the first and principal part of phenomenology as a whole.

Phenomenology: this denotes a science, a system of scientific disciplines. But it also and above all denotes a method and an attitude of mind, the specifically philosophical attitude of mind, the specifically philosophical method.

In contemporary philosophy, insofar as it claims to be a serious science, it has become almost a commonplace that there can be only one method for achieving cognition in all the sciences as well as in philosophy. This conviction accords wholly with the great philosophical traditions of the seventeenth century, which also thought that philosophy’s salvation lay wholly in its taking as a model of method the exact sciences, and above all, mathematics and mathematical natural science. This putting philosophy methodologically on a par with the other sciences goes hand in hand with treating them alike with respect to subject matter. It is still the prevailing opinion that philosophy and, more specifically, ontology and the general theory of knowledge not only relate to all the other sciences, but also that they can be grounded upon the conclusions of those other sciences: / in the same way in which sciences are built upon one another, and the conclusions of one of them can serve as premises for the others. I am reminded of the favorite play of basing the theory of knowledge on the psychology of cognition and biology. In our day, reactions against these fatal prejudices are multiplying. And prejudices they are.

In the sphere of ordinary inquiry one science can readily build upon another, and the one can serve the other as a model of method even though to a limited extent determined by the nature of the areas of inquiry in question. But philosophy lies in a wholly new dimension. It needs an entirely new point of departure and an entirely new method distinguishing it in principle from any "natural" science. This is why the logical procedures that give the sciences of a natural sort unity have a unitary character in principle in spite of the special methods which change from one science to another: while the methodological procedures of philosophy have by contrast and in principle a new unity. This is also why pure philosophy, within the whole of the critique of cognition and the "critical" disciplines generally, must disregard, and must refrain from using, the intellectual achievements of the sciences of a natural sort and of scientifically undisciplined natural wisdom and knowledge.

\(^{1}\) Tr. note: In Husserl the word "apophantic" refers to predicative judgments or to the theory of such judgments.
To anticipate, this doctrine, the grounds for which will be given in more detail in the sequel, is recommended by the following considerations.

In the sceptical mood which critical reflection about cognition necessarily begets (I mean the reflection that comes first, the one that comes before the scientific critique of cognition and which takes place on the natural level of thought) every science of the natural sort and every method characteristic of such a science ceases to count as something we properly possess. For cognition's reaching its object has become enigmatic and dubious as far as its meaning and possibility are concerned, and exact cognition becomes thereby no less enigmatic than inexact, scientific knowledge no / less than the pre-scientific. The possibility of cognition becomes questionable, more precisely, how it can possibly reach an objectivity which, after all, is in itself whatever it is. Behind this lies the following: What is in question is what cognition can accomplish, the meaning of its claim to validity and correctness, the meaning of the distinction between valid real and merely apparent cognition; on the other hand, also the meaning of being an object which exists and exists as what it is whether it is cognized or not and which as an object is an object of possible cognition, in principle cognizable, even if in fact it has never been and never will be cognized, but is in principle perceptible, imaginable, determinable by predicates in a possible judgment, etc.

However, it is impossible to see how working with presuppositions which are taken from natural cognition, no matter how "exactly founded" they are in it, can help us to resolve the misgivings which arise in the critique of cognition, to find the answers to its problems. If the meaning and value of natural cognition as such together with all of its methodological presuppositions and all of its exact foundations have become problematic, then this strikes at every proposition which natural cognition presupposes in its starting-point and at every allegedly exact method of giving a foundation. Neither the most exact mathematics nor mathematical natural science has here the slightest advantage over any actual or alleged cognition through ordinary experience. It is then clear that there can be no such talk as that philosophy (which begins in the critique of cognition and which, whatever else it is, is rooted in the critique of cognition) has to model itself after the exact sciences methodologically (or even as regards subject matter!), or that it has to adopt as a standard their methodology, or that it is philosophy's task to implement and to complete the work done in the exact sciences according to a single method, in principle the same for all the sciences. In contradistinction to all natural cognition, philosophy lies, I repeat, within a new dimension; and what corresponds to this new dimension, even if, as the phrase suggests, it is essentially connected with the old dimensions, is a new and radically new method which / is set over against the "natural" method. He who denies <26> this has failed to understand entirely the whole of the level at which the characteristic problem of the critique of cognition lies, and with this he has failed to understand what philosophy really wants to do and should do, and what gives it its own character and authority vis-à-vis the whole of natural cognition and science of the natural sort.
LECTURE II

[THE BEGINNING OF THE CRITIQUE OF COGNITION; TREATING AS QUESTION-
ABLE EVERY [CLAIM TO] KNOWING. REACHING THE GROUND OF ABSOLUTE
CERTAINTY IN PURSUIT OF DESCARTES'S METHOD OF DOUBT. THE SPHERE
OF THE THINGS THAT ARE ABSOLUTELY GIVEN. REVIEW AND AMPLI-
FICATION: REFUTATION OF THE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF A
CRITIQUE OF COGNITION. THE MIDDLE OF NATURAL COGNITION: TRANSCEN-
DENCE. DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO CONCEPTS OF IMMANENCE AND
TRANSCENDENCE. THE INITIAL PROBLEM OF THE CRITIQUE OF COGNITION:
THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDENT COGNITION, THE PRINCIPLE OF
EPISTEMOLOGICAL REDUCTION.]

At the outset of the critique of cognition the entire world of
nature, physical and psychological, as well as one's own human
self, together with all the sciences which have to do with these
objective matters, are put in question. Their being, their validity
are left up in the air.

Now the question is: How can the critique of cognition get under
way? The critique of cognition is the attempt of cognition to find
a scientific understanding of itself and to establish objectively
what cognition is in its essence, what is the meaning of the re-
lation to an object which is implicit in the claim to cognition and
what its objective validity or the reaching of its object comes to
if it is to be cognition in the true sense. Although the έκπληκτη,1
which the critique of cognition must employ, begins with the
doubt of all cognition, its own included, it cannot remain in such
doubt nor can it refuse to take as valid everything given, in-
cluding that which it brings to light itself. If it must presuppose
nothing as already given, then it must begin with some cognition
which it does not take unexamined from elsewhere but rather
gives to itself, which it itself posits as primal.

This primal cognition must contain nothing of the unclarity
and the doubt which otherwise give to cognition the character of
the enigmatic and problematic so that we are finally in the
embarrassing position of having to say that cognition as such is a
problem, something incomprehensible, in need of elucidation
and dubious in its claims. Or, to speak differently: If we are not
allowed to take anything as already given because our lack of
clarity about cognition implies that we cannot understand what

1 Tr. note: έποχή, the excluding of transcendences posited by the "natural
attitude."
about perception or having a vague intension or idea of it. Instead, perception itself stands open to my inspection as actually or imaginatively given to me. And the same is true of every intellectual process, of every form of thinking and cognizing.

I have here put on the same level the "seeing" [act of] reflective perception and [the "seeing" act of reflective] imagination. If one followed the Cartesian view, one would have to emphasize perception first; it would in some measure correspond to the so-called inner perception of traditional epistemology, though this is an ambivalent concept.

* Every intellectual process and indeed every mental process whatever, while being enacted, can be made the object of a pure "seeing" and understanding, and is something absolutely given in this "seeing." It is given as something that is, that is here and now, and whose being cannot be sensibly doubted. To be sure, I can wonder what sort of being this is and how this mode of being is related to other modes. It is true I can wonder what givenness means here, and reflecting further I can "see" the "seeing" itself in which this givenness, or this mode of being, is constituted. But all the same I am now working on an absolute foundation: namely, this perception is, and remains as long as it lasts, something absolute, something here and now, something that in itself is what it is, something by which I can measure as by an ultimate standard what being and being given can mean and here must mean, at least, obviously, as far as the sort of being and being given is concerned which a "here and now" exemplifies. And that goes for all specific ways of thinking, whenever they are given. All of these, however, can also be data in imagination; they can "as it were" stand before our eyes and yet not stand before them as actualities, as actually accomplished perceptions, judgments, etc.; even then, they are, in a certain sense, data. They are there open to intuition. We talk about them not in just vague hints and empty intention. We inspect them, and while inspecting them we can observe their essence, their constitution, their intrinsic character, and we can make our speech conform in a pure measure to what is "seen" in its full clarity. But this requires to be supplemented / by a discussion of the concept and cognition of essences.

For the moment we keep it firmly in mind that a sphere of the absolutely given can be indicated at the outset; and this is just the sphere we need if it is to be possible to aim at a theory of knowledge. Indeed, lack of clarity with regard to the meaning or essence of cognition requires a science of cognition, a science whose sole end is to clarify the essential nature of cognition. It is not to explain cognition as a psychological fact; it is not to inquire into the natural causes and laws of the development and occurrence of cognitions. Such inquiry is the task of a science of the natural sort, of a psychology which deals with the mental processes of persons who are undergoing them. Rather, the task of the critique of cognition is to clarify, to cast light upon, the essence of cognition and the legitimacy of its claim to validity that belongs to its essence; and what else can this mean but to make the essence of cognition directly self-given.

Recapitulation and Amplification. In its constantly successful progress in the various sciences, cognition of the natural sort is altogether self-assured that it reaches the object and has no cause to worry about the possibility of cognition and about the meaning of cognized objectivity. But as soon as we begin to reflect on the correlation between cognition and reality (and eventually also on the ideal meanings on the one hand and, on the other, on the objects of cognition) there arise difficulties, absurdities, inconsistent yet seemingly well-founded theories which drive one to the admission that the possibility of cognition as far as its reaching the object is concerned is an enigma.

A new science, the critique of cognition, is called for. Its job is to resolve confusions and to clarify the essence of cognition. Upon the success of this science depends the possibility of a metaphysics, a science of being in the absolute and fundamental sense. But how / can such a science of cognition in general get started? That which a science questions it cannot use as a presupposition. But what is in question is the possibility of all cognition in that the critique of cognition regards as problematic the possibility of cognition in general and its capacity to reach the object. Once it is launched, the critique of cognition cannot take any cognition for granted. Nor can it take over anything whatever from pre-scientific cognition. All cognition bears the mark of being questionable.

Without some cognition given at the outset, there is also no
advancement of cognition. The critique of cognition cannot, therefore, begin. There can be no such science at all.

I already suggested that in all this there is an element of truth. In the beginning no cognition can be assumed without examination. However, even if the critique of cognition must not take over any antecedent cognition it still can begin by giving itself cognition, and naturally cognition which it does not base on, or logically derive from, anything else as this would presuppose some other immediate cognition already given. It must rather base itself on the cognition which is immediately evident and of such a kind that, as absolutely clear and indubitabile, it excludes every doubt of its possibility and contains none of the puzzles which had led to all the sceptical confusions. I then pointed to the Cartesian method of doubt and to the domain of the absolutely given, viz., of absolute cognition which comes under the heading of evidence (Evidenz) of the cogitatio. It remained to be shown that the immanence of this cognition makes it an appropriate point of departure for the theory of cognition; that, furthermore, because of this immanence, it is free of the puzzlement which is the source of all sceptical embarrassment. Finally, it remained to be shown that immanence is the generally necessary characteristic of all epistemological cognition, and that it is nonsensical not only at the start but also in general to borrow from the sphere of transcendence, in other words, to try to found the theory of cognition on psychology or on any science whatever of the natural sort.

I may add the following: there is a plausible argument to the effect that the theory of knowledge cannot get started because it questions cognition as such and hence regards as questionable every cognition with which we might begin. Moreover, it is alleged that if all cognition must be a riddle to the epistemologist, so must any initial cognition with which epistemology itself begins be a riddle. I repeat that this plausible argument is a deception. The deception is due to the vague generality of the wording. Cognition in general "is questioned." Surely, however, it is not denied that there is cognition in general (such denial would lead to contradiction); rather, cognition presents a certain problem, namely, of how it can accomplish a certain task attributed to it, namely, the task of reaching the object: I may even doubt whether this task can be accomplished at all. But doubt as I
transcend itself? Immanent here means then genuinely (reell) immanent in the cognitive mental process.

But there is still another transcendence whose opposite is an altogether different immanence, namely, absolute and clear givenness, self-givenness in the absolute sense. This givenness, which rules out any meaningful doubt, consists of a simply immediate "seeing" and apprehending of the intended object itself as it is, and it constitutes the precise concept of evidence (Evidens) understood as immediate evidence. All cognition which is not evident, which though it intends or posits something objective yet does not see it itself, is transcendent in this second sense. In such cognition we go beyond what at any time is truly given, beyond what can be directly "seen" and apprehended. At this point we may ask: How can cognition posit something as existing that is not directly and truly given in it?

At first, before we come to a deeper level of critical epistemological reflection, these two kinds of immanence and transcendence run confusedly into each other. It is indeed clear that whoever raises the first question about the possibility of genuine (reell) transcendence is at the same time really also raising the second question: namely, how can there be transcendence beyond the realm of evident givenness? In this there is the unspoken supposition that the only actually understandable, unquestionable, absolutely evident givenness is the givenness of the abstract part genuinely (reell) contained within the cognitive act, and this is why anything in the way of a cognized objectivity that is not genuinely (reell) contained within that act is regarded as a puzzle and as problematic. We shall soon hear that this is a fatal mistake.

One may now construe transcendence in one sense or the other, or, at first even ambiguously, but transcendence is both the initial and the central problem of the critique of cognition. It is the riddle that stands in the path of cognition of the natural sort and is the incentive for new investigations. One could at the outset designate the solution to this problem as being the task of the critique of cognition. One would thereby delimit the new discipline in a preliminary fashion, instead of generally designating as its theme the problem of the essence of any cognition whatever.

If then the riddle connected with the initial establishment of the discipline lies here, it becomes more definitely clear what must not be claimed as presupposed. Nothing transcendent must be used as a presupposition. If I do not understand how it is possible that cognition reach something transcendent, then I also do not know whether it is possible. The scientific warrant for believing in a transcendent existence is of no help. For every mediates warrant goes back to something immediate; and it is the unmediated which contains the riddle.

Still someone might say: "It is certain that mediated no less than immediate cognition contains the riddle. But it is only the how that is puzzling, whereas the that is absolutely certain. No sensible man will doubt the existence of the world, and the skeptic in action belies his own creed." Very well. Then let us answer him with a more powerful and far-reaching argument. For it proves that the theory of cognition has, neither at the outset nor throughout its course, any license to fall back upon the content of the sciences of a natural sort which treat their object as transcendent. What is proved is the fundamental thesis that the theory of knowledge can never be based upon any science of the natural sort, no matter what the more specific nature of that science may be. Hence we ask: What will our opponent do with his transcendent knowledge? We put freely at his disposal the entire stock of transcendent truths contained in the objective / sciences, and we take it that those truths are not altered by the emergence of the puzzle of how a science of the transcendent is possible. What will he now do with his all-embracing knowledge? How does he think he can go from the "that" to the "how"? That he knows for a fact that cognition of the transcendent is actual guarantees as logically obvious that cognition of the transcendent is possible. But the riddle is, how is it possible? Can he solve it even if he presupposes all the sciences, all or any cognition of the transcendent? Consider: What more does he really need? That cognition of the transcendent is possible he takes for granted, even as analytically certain in saying to himself, there is in my case knowledge of the transcendent. What he lacks is obvious. He is unclear about the relation to transcendence. He is unclear about the "reaching the transcendent" which is ascribed to cognition, to knowledge. Where and how can he achieve clarity?
He could do so if the essences of this relation were somehow given to him, so that he could "see" it and could directly inspect the unity of cognition and its object, a unity denoted by the location "reaching the object." He would thereby not only know this unity to be possible, but he would have this possibility clearly before him. The possibility itself counts for him as something transcendent, as a possibility which is known but not of itself given, "seen." He obviously thinks: cognition is a thing apart from its object; cognition is given but the object of cognition is not given; and yet cognition is supposed to relate to the object, to cognize it. How can I understand this possibility? Naturally the reply is: I could understand it only if the relation itself were given as something to be "seen." As long as the object is, and remains, something transcendent, and cognition and its objects are actually separate, then indeed he can see nothing here, and his hopes for reaching a solution, perhaps even by way of falling back on transcendent presuppositions, are patent folly.

However, if he is to be consistent with these views, he should give up his starting point: he should acknowledge that in this case cognition of the transcendent is impossible, and that his pretense to know is mere prejudice. Then the problem is no longer: How is cognition of the transcendent possible? But rather, How do we account for the prejudice which ascribes a transcendent feat to cognition? And this exactly was the path Hume took.

Let us emphatically reject that approach and let us go on to illustrate the basic idea that the problem of the "how" (how cognition of the transcendent is possible and even more generally, how cognition is possible at all) can never be answered on the basis of a prior knowledge of the transcendent, of prior judgments about it, no matter whence the knowledge or the judgments are borrowed, not even if they are taken from the exact sciences. Here is an illustration: A man born deaf knows that there are sounds, that sounds produce harmonies and that a splendid art depends upon them. But he cannot understand how sounds do this, how musical compositions are possible. Such things he cannot imagine, i.e., he cannot "see" and in "seeing" grasp the "how" of such things. His knowledge about what exists helps him in no way, and it would be absurd if he were to try to deduce the how of music from his knowledge, thinking that thereby he could achieve clarity about the possibility of music through conclusions drawn from things of which he is cognizant. It will not do to draw conclusions from existences of which one knows but which one cannot "see." "Seeing" does not lend itself to demonstration or deduction. It is patently absurd to try to explain possibilities (and unmediated possibilities at that) by drawing logical conclusions from non-intuitive knowledge. Even if I could be wholly certain that there are transcendent worlds, even if I accept the whole content of the sciences of a natural sort, even then I cannot borrow from them. I must never fancy that by relying on transcendent presuppositions and scientific inferences I can arrive where I want to go in the critique of cognition — namely, to assess the possibility of a transcendent objectivity of cognition. And that goes not just for the beginning but for the whole course of the critique of cognition, so long as there still remains the problem of how cognition is possible. And, evidently, that goes not just for the problem of transcendent objectivity but also for the elucidation of every possibility.

If we combine this with the extraordinarily strong inclination to make a transcendentally oriented judgment and thus to fall into a μεταθέσις εἰς ἄλλο γένος; [a change into some other kind] in every case where a thought process involves transcendence and a judgment has to be based upon it, then we arrive at a sufficient and complete deduction of the epistemological principle that an epistemological reduction has to be accomplished in the case of every epistemological inquiry of whatever sort of cognition. That is to say, everything transcendent that is involved must be bracketed, or be assigned the index of indifference, of epistemological nullity, an index which indicates: the existence of all these transcendencies, whether I believe in them or not, is not here my concern; this is not the place to make judgments about them; they are entirely irrelevant.

All the basic errors of the theory of knowledge go hand in hand with the above mentioned μετάθεσις, on the one hand the basic error of psychologism, on the other that of anthropologism and biologism. The μετάθεσις is so exceedingly dangerous, partly...
because the proper sense of the problem is never made clear and remains totally lost in it, and partly because even those who have become clear about it find it hard to remain clear and slip easily, as their thinking proceeds, back into the temptations of the natural modes of thought and judgment as well as into the false and seductive conceptions of the problems which grow on their basis.

By these considerations what the critique of cognition may and may not use has been precisely and adequately determined. What is especially puzzling for such a critique is the possibility of transcendence, but it may never under any conditions exploit for its purposes the actuality of transcendent things. Obviously the sphere of usable objects or of cognitions is limited to those which present themselves as valid, and which can remain free of the marks of epistemological vacuity; but this sphere is not empty. We have indubitally secured the whole realm of cogitationes. The existence of the cogitatio, more precisely the phenomenon of cognition itself, is beyond question; and it is free from the riddle of transcendence. These existing things are already presupposed in the statement of the problem of cognition. The question as to how transcendent things come into cognition would lose its sense if cognition itself, as well as the transcendent object, were put in question. It is also clear that the cogitationes present a sphere of absolutely immanent data; it is in this sense that we understand "immanence." In the "seeing" pure phenomena the object is not outside cognition or outside "consciousness," while being given in the sense of the absolute self-givenness of something which is simply "seen."

But here we need assurance through epistemological reduction, the methodological essence of which we now want to examine in concreto for the first time. We need the reduction at this point in order to prevent the evidence of the existence of the cogitatio from being confused with the evidence that my cogitatio exists, with the evidence of the sum cogitans, and the like. One must guard himself from the fundamental confusion between the pure phenomenon, in the sense of phenomenology, and the psychological phenomenon, the object of empirical psychology. If I, as a
If we restrict ourselves to the pure phenomenology of cognition, then we will be concerned with the essence of cognition as revealed in direct "seeing," i.e., with a demonstration of it which is carried out by way of "seeing" in the sphere of phenomenological reduction and self-givenness, and with an analytical distinction between the various sorts of phenomena which are embraced by the very broad term "cognition." Then the question is as to what is essentially contained and grounded in them, from what factors they are built up, what possibilities of combination can be found while remaining purely within their essential natures, and what general interrelations flow from their essences.

And it is not merely concerned with the genuinely (red) immanent, but also with what is immanent in the intentional sense. Cognitive mental processes (and this belongs to their essence) have an intentio, they refer to something, they are related in this or that way to an object. This activity of relating itself to an object belongs to them even if the object itself does not. And what is objective can appear, can have a certain kind of givenness in appearance, even though it is at the same time neither genuinely (red) within the cognitive phenomenon, nor does it exist in any other way as a cogitatio. To explain the essence of cognition and the essential connections which belong to it and to bring this to self-givenness, this involves examining both these sides of the matter; it involves investigating this relatedness which belongs to the essence of cognition. And just here lie the puzzles, the mysteries, the problems concerning the ultimate meaning of the objectivity of cognition, including its reaching or failing to reach the object, if it is judgmental cognition and its adequacy, if it is evident cognition, etc.

In any case, the whole investigation into essence, is in fact,
obviously a general investigation. The particular cognitive phenomenon, coming and going in the stream of consciousness, is not the sort of thing about which phenomenology establishes its conclusions. Phenomenology is directed to the "sources of cognition," to general origins which can be "seen," to general absolute data which present the universal basic criteria in terms of which all meaning, and also the correctness, of confused thinking is to be evaluated, and by which all the riddles which have to do with the objectivity of cognition are to be solved.

Still, are real universality, universal essences, and the universal states of affairs attaching to them capable of self-giveness in the same sense as a cogitatio? Does not the universal as such transcend knowledge? Knowledge of universals is certainly given as an absolute phenomenon; but in this we shall seek in vain for the universal which is to be identical, in the strictest sense, in the equally immanent contents of innumerable possible cases of cognition.

Of course, we answer, as we have already answered: to be sure, the universal has this kind of transcendence. Every genuine (real) constituent of the cognitive phenomenon, this phenomenological particular, is also a particular; and so the universal, which certainly is no particular, cannot be really contained in the consciousness of the universal. But the objection to this kind of transcendence is nothing more than a prejudice, which stems from an inappropriate interpretation of cognition, one which is not based on the source of cognition. Thus one has to get especially clear about the fact that we accord the status of absolute self-giveness to the absolute phenomenon, the cogitatio which has undergone reduction, not because it is a particular, but because it displays itself in pure "seeing" after phenomenological reduction, precisely as absolute self-giveness. But in pure "seeing" we find that universality no less displays just such an absolute giveness.

Is this actually the case? Let us now consider some cases in which a universal is given, i.e., cases where a purely immanent consciousness of the universal is built up on the basis of some "seen" and self-given particular. I have a particular intuition of redness, or rather several such intuitions. I stick strictly to the pure immanence; I am careful to perform the phenomenological reduction. I nip off any further significance of redness, any way in which it may be viewed as something transcendent, e.g., as the redness of a piece of blotting paper / on my table, etc. And so now I fully grasp in pure "seeing" the meaning of the concept of redness in general, redness in specie, the universal "seen" as identical in this and that. No longer is it the particular as such which is referred to, not this or that red thing, but redness in general. If we really did this in pure "seeing," could we then still intelligibly doubt what redness is in general, what is meant by this expression, what it may be in its very essence? We truly "see" it; there it is, the very object of our intent, this species of redness. Could a deity, an infinite intellect, do more to lay hold of the essence of redness than to "see" it as a universal?

And if now perhaps two species of redness are given to us, two shades of red, can we not judge that this and that are similar to each other, not this particular, individual phenomenon of redness, but the type, the shade as such? Is not the relation of similarity here a general absolute datum?

Again, this givenness is also something purely immanent, not immanent in the spurious sense, i.e., existing in the sphere of an individual consciousness. We are not speaking at all of the act of abstraction in the psychological subject, and of the psychological conditions under which this takes place. We are speaking of the general essence of meaning of redness and its givenness in general "seeing."

Thus it is now senseless still to raise questions and doubts as to what the essence of redness is, or what the meaning of redness is, provided that while one "sees" redness and grasps it in its specific character, one means by the word "red" just exactly that which is being grasped and "seen" there. And in the same way it is senseless, with respect to the essence of cognition and the fundamental structure of cognition, to wonder what its meaning is, provided one is immediately given the paradigmatic phenomena and the type in question in a purely "seeing" and eidetic (ideieren- der) reflection within the sphere of phenomenological reduction. However, cognition is certainly not so simple a thing as redness; a great many forms and types of it are to be distinguished. And not only that; their essential relations to one another need to be investigated. For to understand cognition we must generally
clarify the teleological interconnections within cognition, which amount to certain essential relations of different essential types of intellectual forms. And here belongs also the ultimate explanation of the principles which, as ideal conditions of the possibility of scientific objectivity, function as norms governing the whole enterprise of empirical science. This whole attempt at the explanation of principles moves throughout in the sphere of essence, which is repeatedly built up (konstituiert) on the basis of particular phenomena through phenomenological reduction.

At every point this analysis is an analysis of essences and an investigation of the general states of affairs which are to be built up in immediate intuition. Thus the whole investigation is an a priori one, though, of course, it is not a priori in the sense of mathematical deductions. What distinguishes it from the "objectivizing" a priori sciences is its methods and its goal. Phenomenology proceeds by "seeing," clarifying, and determining meaning, and by distinguishing meanings. It compares, it distinguishes, it forms connections, it puts into relation, divides into parts, or distinguishes abstract aspects. But all within pure "seeing." It does not theorize or carry out mathematical operations; that is to say, it carries through no explanations in the sense of deductive theory. As it explains the basic concepts and propositions which function as principles governing the possibility of "objectivizing" science (but finally it also takes its own basic concepts and principles as objects of reflective explanation), it ends where "objectivizing" science begins. Hence it is a science in a completely different sense, and with completely different problems and methods. The procedure of "seeing" and aesthetic abstraction within the strictest phenomenological reduction is exclusively its own: it is the specifically philosophical method, insofar as this method belongs essentially to the meaning of the critique of cognition and so generally to every sort of critique of reason (hence also evaluative and practical reason). But whatever is called philosophy in addition to the critique of reason in the strict sense, is intimately related to this: metaphysics of nature and metaphysics of all forms of mental life, and thus metaphysics in general in the widest sense.

In such cases one speaks of seeing something evident, and in fact those who recognize the pregnant concept of evidence and take a firm grip on the essence of such evidence have these kinds of occurrences exclusively in mind. The basic point is that one must not overlook the fact that evidence is this consciousness which is truly [a] "seeing" [consciousness] and which has a direct and adequate grasp of itself and that signifies nothing other than adequate self-givenness. The empiricist epistemologists, who speak so much about the virtues of investigating origins, and with all this remain as far from true origins as the most extreme rationalist, would have us believe that the whole distinction between judgments that are evident and those that are not consists of a certain feeling through which the former are marked out. But what can a feeling do to give us an understanding of this matter? What is it supposed to accomplish? Is it, so to speak, supposed to call out to us: "Stop! Here is the truth?" But why then do we have to trust this call? Must this trust also carry its credentials in feeling? And why does a judgment with the meaning 2 times 2 equals 5 never have this mark in feeling? and why is it impossible for it to have such a mark? Exactly how does one come to the theory that the mark of truth resides in feeling? Well, one says to oneself: "The same judgment, in the logical sense, e.g., the judgment that 2 times 2 equals 4, can at one time be evident to me and at another time not; the same concept of 4 can at one time be given to me in luminous intuition (intuitiv in Evidenz) and at another time in a merely symbolic representation. Thus with respect to content, on both occasions we have the same phenomenon, but on the one occasion there is a feeling which marks it out and thereby lends it a superior status, a character of validity." Have I in fact the same object on both occasions, except that on one occasion a feeling is given along with it, on the other not? But if one directs his attention to the phenomenon, he will notice at once that in actuality it is not the same phenomenon which lies before him on these two occasions, but two essentially different phenomena, which have only one feature in common. If I see that 2 times 2 equals 4, and then assert it in a vague symbolic assertion, in the latter case I am referring to an equality; but to refer to equality, that is not to have that phenomenon. The content of the two is different. One time I "see," and in "seeing" the interrelation itself is given; the other time I perform a symbolic reference. One time I have intuition; the other time I have an empty intention.