

## FIRST MEDITATION

### THE WAY TO THE TRANSCENDENTAL EGO

#### § 3. *The Cartesian overthrow and the guiding final idea of an absolute<sup>1</sup> grounding of science*

And so we make a new beginning, each for himself and in himself, with the decision of philosophers who begin radically: that at first we shall put out of action all the convictions we have been accepting up to now, including all our sciences. Let the idea guiding our meditations be at first the Cartesian idea of a science that shall be established as radically genuine, ultimately an all-embracing science.

But, now that we no longer have at our disposal any already-given science as an example of radically genuine science (after all, we are not accepting any given science), what about the indubitability of that idea itself, the idea namely of a science that shall be grounded absolutely? Is it a legitimate final idea, the possible aim of some possible practice? Obviously that too is something we must not presuppose, to say nothing of taking any norms as already established for testing such possibilities — or perchance a whole system of norms in which the style proper to genuine science is allegedly prescribed. That would mean presupposing a whole logic as a theory of science; whereas logic must be included among the sciences overthrown in overthrowing all science. Descartes himself presupposed an ideal of science, the ideal approximated by geometry and mathematical natural science. As a fateful / prejudice this ideal determines philosophies for centuries and hiddenly determines the *Meditations* themselves. Obviously it was, for Descartes, a truism from the start that the all-embracing science must have the form of a deductive system, in which the whole structure rests, *ordine geometrico*, on an axiomatic foundation that grounds the deduction absolutely. For him a role similar to that of geometrical axioms in geometry is played in the all-embracing science

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<sup>1</sup> Supplied in accordance with Typescript C and the French translation.

by the axiom of the ego's absolute certainty of himself, along with the axiomatic principles innate in the ego — only this axiomatic foundation lies even deeper than that of geometry and is called on to participate in the ultimate grounding even of geometrical knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

None of that shall determine our thinking. As beginning philosophers we do not as yet accept any normative ideal of science; and only so far as we produce one newly for ourselves can we ever have such an ideal.

But this does not imply that we renounce the general aim of grounding science absolutely. That aim shall indeed continually motivate the course of our meditations, as it motivated the course of the Cartesian meditations; and gradually, in our meditations, it shall become determined concretely. Only we must be careful about how we make an absolute grounding of science our aim. At first we must not presuppose even its possibility. How then are we to find the legitimate manner in which to make it our aim? How are we to make our aim perfectly assured, and thus assured as a practical possibility? How are we then to differentiate the possibility, into which at first we have a general insight, and thereby mark out the determinate methodical course of a genuine philosophy, a radical philosophy that begins with what is intrinsically first?

Naturally we get the general idea of science from the sciences that are factually given. If they have become for us, in our radical critical attitude, merely alleged sciences, then, according to what has already been said, their general final idea has become, in a like sense, a mere supposition. Thus we do not yet know whether that idea is at all capable of becoming actualized.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless we do have it in this form, and in a state of indeterminate fluid generality; accordingly we have also the idea of philosophy: as an idea about which we do not know whether or how it can be actualized.<sup>3</sup> We take the general idea of science, therefore, as a precursory presumption, which we allow ourselves

<sup>1</sup> The passage beginning "Obviously it was ..." marked for deletion.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence marked for deletion.

<sup>3</sup> Reading, with Typescript C, "*als unbekannt ob und wie zu verwirklichende*" instead of "*als einer unbekannt ob und wie zu verwirklichenden*". Thus the published text (unlike either Typescript C or the French translation) relates the phrase to *philosophy* rather than to *idea*.

tentatively, by which we tentatively allow ourselves to be guided in our meditations. We consider how it might be thought out as a possibility and then consider whether and how it might be given determinate actualization. To be sure, we get into what are, at first, rather strange circumstantialities — but how can / they be avoided, if our radicalness is not to remain an empty gesture but is to become an actual deed? Let us go on then with patience. <50>

§ 4. *Uncovering the final sense of science  
by becoming immersed in science qua noematic phenomenon.*

Obviously one of the first things we must do now is make distinct the guiding idea that, at the beginning, floats before us as a vague generality. The genuine concept of science, naturally, is not to be fashioned by a process of abstraction based on comparing the de facto sciences, i.e. the Objectively documented theoretical structures (propositions, theories) that are in fact generally accepted as sciences. The sense of our whole meditation implies that sciences, as these facts of Objective culture, and sciences “in the true and genuine sense” need not be identical and that the former, over and above being cultural facts, involve a claim, which ought to be established as one they already satisfy. Science as an idea — as the idea, genuine science — “lies”, still undisclosed, precisely in this claim.

How can this idea be uncovered and apprehended? Even though we must not take any position with respect to the *validity* of the de facto sciences (the ones “claiming” validity) — i.e. with respect to the genuineness of their theories and, correlatively, the competence of their methods of theorizing — there is nothing to keep us from “immersing ourselves” in the scientific striving and doing that pertain to them, in order to see clearly and distinctly what is really being aimed at. If we do so,<sup>1</sup> if we immerse ourselves progressively in the characteristic intention of scientific endeavor, the constituent parts of the general final idea, genuine science, become explicated for us, though at first the differentiation is itself general.

<sup>1</sup> Reading, with Typescript C, “*Tun wir so*”, instead of “*Treten wir so*”. Cf. the French: “*Si, agissant de la sorte*”.

Here belongs, first of all, an initial clarification of "*judicative*" doing and the "*judgment*" *itself*, along with the discrimination of *immediate and mediate judgments*: mediate judgments have such a sense-relatedness to other judgments that judicatively believing them "presupposes" believing these others — in the manner characteristic of a believing on account of something believed already. Also clarification of the striving for *grounded judgments*, clarification of the grounding doing, in which the "*correctness*", the "*truth*", of the judgment should be shown —

<51> or, in case of a failure, the / incorrectness, the falsity, of the judgment. Where mediate judgments are concerned, this showing is itself mediate; it rests on the showing that pertains to the immediate judgments involved in the judgment-sense and, as concrete, includes their grounding too. To a grounding already executed, or to the truth shown therein, one can "return" at will. By virtue of this freedom to reactualize such a truth, with awareness of it as one and the same, it is an abiding acquisition or possession and, as such, is called a *cognition*.

If we go further in this manner (here, naturally, we are only indicating the procedure), then, in explicating more precisely the sense of a grounding or that of a cognition, we come forthwith to the idea of *evidence*. In a genuine grounding, judgments show themselves as "correct", as "agreeing"; that is to say, the grounding is an *agreement* of the judgment with the judged state of affairs [*Urteilsverhalt*] (the affair or affair-complex [*Sachverhalt*]) "*itself*". More precisely stated: Judging is meaning — and, as a rule, merely supposing — that such and such exists and has such and such determinations; the judgment (what is judged) is then a merely supposed affair or complex of affairs: an affair, or state-of-affairs, as what is meant. But, contrasted with that, there is sometimes a pre-eminent judicative meaning [*Meinen*], a judicative having of such and such itself. This having is called *evidence*. In it the affair, the complex (or state) of affairs, instead of being merely meant "from afar", is present as the affair "*itself*", the *affair-complex or state-of-affairs "itself"*; the judger accordingly possesses it itself. A merely supposing judging *becomes adjusted* to the affairs, the affair-complexes, themselves by conscious conversion into the corresponding evidence. This conversion is inherently characterized as the fulfilling of what

was merely meant, a synthesis in which what was meant coincides and agrees with what is itself given; it is an evident possessing of the correctness of what previously was meant at a distance from affairs.

When we proceed thus, fundamental components of the final idea governing all scientific doing come immediately to the fore. For example, the scientist intends, not merely to judge, but to ground his judgments. Stated more precisely: He intends to let no judgment be accepted by himself or others as "scientific knowledge", unless he has grounded it perfectly and can therefore justify it completely at any time by a freely actualizable return to his repeatable act of grounding. De facto that may never go beyond being a mere claim; at all events, the claim involves an ideal goal. /

Yet there is one more thing that should be brought out, to supplement what we have said. We must distinguish the judgment in the broadest sense (something meant as being) and evidence in the broadest sense from pre-predicative judgment and from pre-predicative evidence respectively. Predicative includes pre-predicative evidence. That which is meant or, perchance, evidently viewed receives predicative expression; and science always intends to judge expressly and keep the judgment or the truth fixed, as an express judgment or as an express truth. But the expression as such has its own comparatively good or bad way of fitting what is meant or itself given; and therefore it has its own evidence or non-evidence, which also goes into the predicating. Consequently evidence of the expression is also a determining part of the idea of scientific truth, as predicative complexes that are, or can be, grounded absolutely. <52>

#### § 5. *Evidence and the idea of genuine science.*

As we go on meditating in this manner and along this line, we beginning philosophers recognize that the Cartesian idea of a science (ultimately an all-embracing science) grounded on an absolute foundation, and absolutely justified, is none other than the idea that constantly furnishes guidance in all sciences and in their striving toward universality — whatever may be the situation with respect to a de facto actualization of that idea.

Evidence is, in an *extremely broad sense*, an “*experiencing*” of something that is, and is thus; it is precisely a mental seeing of something itself. Conflict with what evidence shows, with what “*experience*” shows, yields the negative of evidence (or negative evidence) — put in the form of a judgment: positive evidence of the affair’s non-being. In other words, negative evidence has as its content evident falsity. Evidence, which in fact includes all experiencing in the usual and narrower sense, can be more or less perfect. *Perfect evidence* and its correlate, *pure and genuine truth*, are given as ideas lodged in the striving for knowledge, for fulfilment of one’s meaning intention. By immersing ourselves in such a striving, we can extract those ideas from it. Truth and falsity, criticism and critical comparison with evident data, are an everyday theme, playing their incessant part even in pre-scientific life. For this everyday life, with its changing and relative purposes, relative evidences <sup>1</sup> and truths suffice. But science

<53> / looks for truths that are valid, and remain so, *once for all and for everyone*; accordingly it seeks verifications of a new kind, verifications carried through to the end. Though de facto, as science itself must ultimately see, it does not attain actualization of a system of absolute truths, but rather is obliged to modify its “truths” again and again, it nevertheless follows the idea of absolute or scientifically genuine truth; and accordingly it reconciles itself to an infinite horizon of approximations, tending toward that idea. By them, science believes, it can surpass *in infinitum* not only everyday knowing but also itself; likewise however by its aim at systematic universality of knowledge, whether that aim concern a particular closed scientific province or a presupposed all-embracing unity of whatever exists — as it does if a “philosophy” is possible and in question. According to intention, therefore, the idea of science and philosophy involves an *order of cognition, proceeding from intrinsically earlier to intrinsically later cognitions*; ultimately, then, a *beginning and a line of advance* that are not to be chosen arbitrarily but have their basis “in the nature of things themselves”.

Thus, by immersing ourselves meditatively in the general in-

<sup>1</sup> Author’s marginal note: They are relative, inasmuch as the sense of the everyday judgment, made at a particular time, relates that judgment to the judger’s circumstances on that occasion.

tentions of scientific endeavor, we discover fundamental parts of the final idea, genuine science, which, though vague at first, governs that striving. Meanwhile we have made no advance judgment in favor of the possibility of those components or in favor of a supposedly unquestionable scientific ideal.

We must not say at this point: "Why bother with such investigations and ascertainments? They obviously belong to the general theory of science, to logic, which must of course be applied both now and later." On the contrary, we must guard ourselves against just this matter-of-course opinion. Let us emphasize what we said against Descartes: Like every other already-given science, logic is deprived of acceptance by the universal overthrow. Everything that makes a philosophical beginning possible we must first acquire by ourselves.<sup>1</sup> Whether, later on, a genuine science similar to traditional logic will accrue to us is an eventuality about which we can at present know nothing.

By this / preliminary work, here roughly indicated rather than <54>  
done explicitly, we have gained a measure of clarity sufficient to let us fix, for our whole further procedure, a *first methodological principle*. It is plain that I, as someone beginning philosophically, since I am striving toward the presumptive end, genuine science, must neither make nor go on accepting any judgment as scientific *that I have not derived from evidence*, from "experiences" in which the affairs and affair-complexes in question are present to me as "*they themselves*". Indeed, even then I must at all times reflect on the pertinent evidence; I must examine its "range" and make evident to myself *how far* that evidence, how far its "perfection", *the actual giving of the affairs themselves*, extends. Where this is still wanting, I must not claim any final validity, but must account my judgment as, at best, a possible intermediate stage on the way to final validity.

Because the sciences aim at predications that express completely and with evident fitness what is beheld pre-predicatively, it is obvious that I must be careful also about this aspect of scientific evidence. Owing to the instability and ambiguity

<sup>1</sup> Reading with Typescript C and the French translation. The published text may be rendered: "All that has been developed as beginnings of philosophy we must first acquire by ourselves."

of common language and its much too great complacency about completeness of expression, we require, even where we use its means of expression, a new legitimation of significations by orienting them according to accrued insights, and a fixing of words as expressing the significations thus legitimated. That too we account as part of our normative principle of evidence, which we shall apply consistently from now on.

But how would this principle, or all our meditation up to now, help us, if it gave us no hold for making an actual beginning, that is, for starting to actualize the idea of genuine science? Since the form belonging to a systematic order of cognitions — genuine cognitions — is part of this idea, there emerges, as the *question of the beginning*, the inquiry for those cognitions that are first in themselves and can support the whole storied edifice of universal knowledge. Consequently, if our presumptive aim is to be capable of becoming a practically possible one, we meditators, while completely destitute of all scientific knowledge, must have  
 < 55 > access to evidences that already / bear the stamp of fitness for such a function, in that they are recognizable as preceding all other imaginable evidences.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in respect of this evidence of preceding, they must have a certain perfection, they must carry with them an absolute certainty, if advancing from them and constructing on their basis a science governed by the idea of a definitive system of knowledge — considering the infinity presumed to be part of this idea — is to be capable of having any sense.

§ 6. *Differentiations of evidence. The philosophical demand for an evidence that is apodictic and first in itself.*

But here, at this decisive point in the process of beginning, we must penetrate deeper with our meditations. The phrase *absolute certainty* and the equivalent phrase *absolute indubitability* need clarifying. They call our attention to the fact that, on more precise explication, the ideally demanded *perfection of evidence becomes differentiated*. At the present introductory stage of philosophical meditation we have the boundless infinity of prescientific experiences, evidences: more or less perfect. With

<sup>1</sup> Author's marginal note: As founding evidences! And absolutely certain.



reference to them *imperfection*, as a rule, signifies *incompleteness*, a one-sidedness and at the same time a relative obscurity and indistinctness that qualify the givenness of the affairs themselves or the affair-complexes themselves: i.e., an infectedness of the „experience” with *unfulfilled components*, with *expectant* and *attendant meanings*.<sup>1</sup> Perfecting then takes place as a synthetic course of further harmonious experiences in which these attendant meanings become fulfilled in actual experience. The corresponding idea of perfection would be that of “adequate evidence” — and the question whether adequate evidence does not necessarily lie at infinity may be left open.<sup>2</sup>

Though this idea continuously guides the scientist’s intent, a *different perfection* of evidence has for him (as we see by the aforesaid process of “immersing ourselves” in his intent) a higher dignity. This perfection is “*apodicticity*”; and it can occur even in evidences that are inadequate. It is *absolute indubitability* in a quite definite and peculiar sense, the absolute indubitability that the scientist demands of all “*principles*”; and its superior value is evinced in his endeavor, / where groundings < 56 > already evident in and by themselves are concerned, to ground them further and at a higher level by going back to principles, and thereby to obtain for them the highest dignity, that of apodicticity. The fundamental nature of apodicticity can be characterized in the following manner:

Any evidence is a grasping of something itself that is, or is thus, a grasping in the mode “it itself”, with full certainty of its being, a certainty that accordingly excludes every doubt. But it does not follow that full certainty excludes the conceivability that what is evident could subsequently become doubtful, or the conceivability that being could prove to be illusion — indeed, sensuous experience furnishes us with cases where that happens. Moreover, this open possibility of becoming doubtful, or of non-being, *in spite of evidence*, can always be recognized in advance by critical reflection on what the evidence in question does. An apodictic evidence, however, is not merely certainty of the affairs or affair-complexes (states-of-affairs) evident in it; rather it discloses itself, to a critical reflection, as having the signal pe-

<sup>1</sup> Author’s marginal note on this sentence: But that must be shown.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence marked as unsatisfactory.

culiarity of being at the same time the absolute unimaginableness (inconceivability) of their non-being, and thus excluding in advance every doubt as "objectless", empty. Furthermore the evidence of that critical reflection likewise has the dignity of being apodictic, as does therefore the evidence of the unimaginableness of what is presented with <apodictically> evident certainty. And the same is true of every critical reflection at a higher level.<sup>1</sup>

We remember now the Cartesian principle for building genuine science: the principle of absolute indubitability, by which every imaginable doubt (even though it were in fact groundless) was to be excluded. If, by our meditations, we have acquired that principle in a clarified form, there arises the question whether and how it might help us make an actual beginning. In accordance with what has already been said, we now formulate, as an initial definite question of beginning philosophy, the question whether it is possible for us to bring out evidences that, on the one hand, carry with them – as we now must say: apodictically — the insight that, as "first in themselves", they precede all other imaginable evidences and, on the other hand, can be seen to be themselves apodictic. If they should turn out to be inadequate, they would have to possess at least a recognizable apodictic content, they would have to give us some being that is firmly secured "once for all", or absolutely, by  
 <57> virtue of their apodicticity. *How*, / and even *whether*, it would be possible to go on from there and build an apodictically secured philosophy must, of course, remain for later consideration.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Strasser reports that the passage rendered by the sentences beginning with "An apodictic evidence ..." includes emendations made by Fink. The earlier wording given by Strasser may be rendered as follows: "An apodictic evidence, however, has the signal peculiarity that the certainty of the being of what is beheld in it discloses itself, to a critical reflection, as an absolute unimaginableness (inconceivability) of the seen object's non-being and therefore of that object's being dubitable. [Blank space for a word] the evidence of that critical reflection likewise has this dignity of being apodictic. And the same is true at every level of critical reflection and also with respect to always possible apodictic reflections." (Translator's note: The thought underlying the phrase, "with respect to always possible apodictic reflections", may be that one can see apodictically that *apodictic* reflective insight into the apodicticity of any apodictic reflective evidence is always possible.)

<sup>2</sup> Author's marginal note: From here Fink. (Translator's note: Strasser comments: "Yet § 6 already shows numerous improvements by Eugen Fink's hand." The improvements to which Strasser refers were made before the French translation (1931). Husserl's marginal note probably refers to suggestions for revision submitted by Fink in 1932. See Strasser's introduction to *Husserliana*, Vol. 1, p. XXVIII.

§ 7. *The evidence for the factual existence of the world not apodictic; its inclusion in the Cartesian overthrow.*

The question of evidences that are first in themselves can apparently be answered without any trouble. Does not the *existence of the world* present itself forthwith as such an evidence? The life of everyday action relates to the world. All the sciences relate to it: the sciences of matters of fact relate to it immediately; the apriori sciences, mediately, as instruments of scientific method. More than anything else the being of the world is obvious. It is so very obvious that no one would think of asserting it expressly in a proposition. After all, we have our continuous experience in which this world incessantly stands before our eyes, as existing without question. But, however much this evidence is prior in itself to all the <other> evidences of life (as turned toward the world) and to all the evidences of all the world sciences (since it is the basis that continually supports them), we soon become doubtful about the extent to which, in this capacity, it can lay claim to being apodictic. And, if we follow up this doubt, it becomes manifest that our experiential evidence of the world lacks also the superiority of being the absolutely primary evidence. Concerning the first point, we note that the universal sensuous experience in whose evidence the world is continuously given to us beforehand is obviously not to be taken forthwith as an apodictic evidence, which, as such, would absolutely exclude both the possibility of eventual doubt whether the world is actual and the possibility of its non-being. Not only can a particular experienced thing suffer devaluation as an illusion of the senses; the whole unitarily surveyable nexus, experienced throughout a period of time, can prove to be an illusion, a coherent dream. We need not take the indicating of these possible and sometimes actual reversals of evidence as a sufficient criticism of the evidence in question and see in it a full proof that, in spite of the continual experiencedness of the world, a non-being of the world is conceivable. We shall retain only this much: that the evidence of world-experience would, at all events, need to be criticized with regard to its validity and range, before it could be used for the purposes of a radical grounding of science, and that therefore

<58> we / must not take that evidence to be, without question, immediately apodictic. It follows that denying acceptance to all the sciences given us beforehand, treating them as, for us, inadmissible prejudices<sup>1</sup>, is not enough. Their universal basis, the experienced world, must also be deprived of its naïve acceptance. The being of the world, by reason of the evidence of natural experience, must no longer be for us an obvious matter of fact; it too must be for us, henceforth, only an acceptance-phenomenon.

If we maintain this attitude, is any being whatever left us as a basis for judgments, let alone for evidences on which we could establish an all-embracing philosophy and, furthermore, do so apodictically? Is not "the world" the name for the universe of whatever exists? If so, how can we avoid starting *in extenso*, and as our first task, that criticism of world-experience which, a moment ago, we merely indicated? Then, if criticism were to yield the result considered likely in advance, would not our whole philosophical aim<sup>2</sup> be frustrated? But what if the world were, in the end, not at all the absolutely first basis for judgments and a being that is intrinsically prior to the world were the already presupposed basis for the existence of the world?

### § 8. *The ego cogito as transcendental subjectivity.*

At this point, following Descartes, we make the great reversal that, if made in the right manner, leads to transcendental subjectivity: the turn to the *ego cogito* as the ultimate and apodictically certain basis for judgments, the basis on which any radical philosophy must be grounded.<sup>3</sup>

Let us consider. As radically meditating philosophers, we now have neither a science that we accept nor a world that exists for us. Instead of simply existing for us — that is, being accepted naturally by us in our experiential believing in its existence — the world is for us only something that claims being. Moreover,

<sup>1</sup> Supplied in accordance with Typescript C and the French translation.

<sup>2</sup> Reading, with Typescript C, "*Absehen*" instead of "*Ergebnis*" (result). Cf. the French translation: "*entreprise*".

<sup>3</sup> Author's marginal note: It is necessary to say that the reduction has apodictic significance, since it shows apodictically that the being of the transcendental Ego is antecedent to the being of the world.

that affects the intramundane existence of all other Egos,<sup>1</sup> so that rightly we should no longer speak communicatively, in the plural. Other men than I, and brute animals, are data of experience for me only by virtue of my sensuous experience of their bodily organisms; and, since the validity of this experience too is called in question, I must not use it. Along with other Egos, / naturally, I lose all the formations pertaining to sociality and culture. In short, not just corporeal Nature but the whole concrete surrounding life-world is for me, from now on, only a phenomenon of being, instead of something that is. <59>

But, no matter what the status of this phenomenon's claim to actuality and no matter whether, at some future time, I decide critically that the world exists or that it is an illusion, still this phenomenon itself, as mine, is not nothing but is precisely what makes such critical decisions at all possible and accordingly makes possible whatever has for me sense and validity as "true" being — definitively decided or definitively decideable being. And besides: If I abstained — as I was free to do and as I did — and still abstain from every believing involved in or founded on sensuous experiencing,<sup>2</sup> so that the being of the experienced world remains unaccepted by me, still this abstaining is what it is; and it exists, together with the whole stream of my experiencing life. Moreover, this life is continually there *for me*. Continually, in respect of a field of the present, it is given to consciousness perceptually, with the most originary originality, as it itself; memorially, now these and now those pasts thereof are "again" given to consciousness, and that implies: as the "pasts themselves". Reflecting, I can at any time look at this original living and note particulars; I can grasp what is present as present, what is past as past, each as itself. I do so now, as the Ego who philosophizes and exercises the aforesaid abstention.

Meanwhile the world experienced in this reflectively grasped life goes on being for me (in a certain manner) "experienced" as before, and with just the content it has at any particular time. It goes on appearing, as it appeared before; the only difference is that I, as reflecting philosophically, no longer keep in effect

<sup>1</sup> Author's marginal note: Likewise the intramundane existence of my own Ego as human!

<sup>2</sup> Reading with Typescript C. According to the published text and the French translation: "every experiential believing".

(no longer accept) the natural believing in existence involved in experiencing the world <sup>1</sup> — though that believing too is still there and grasped by my noticing regard.<sup>2</sup> The same is true of all the processes of meaning that, in addition to the world-experiencing <sup>3</sup> ones, belong to my lifestream: the non-intuitive processes of meaning objects, the judgments, valuings, and deciding, the process of setting ends and willing means, and all the rest, in particular the position-takings necessarily involved in them all when I am in the natural and non-reflective attitude — since precisely these position-takings always presuppose the  
 <60> world, i.e., involve believing in its existence. Here too / the philosophically reflective Ego's absention from position-takings, his depriving them of acceptance, does not signify their disappearance from his field of experience. The concrete subjective processes, let us repeat, are indeed the things to which his attentive regard is directed: but the attentive Ego, qua philosophizing <sup>4</sup> Ego, practices abstention with respect to what he intuit. Likewise everything *meant* in such accepting or positing processes of consciousness (the meant judgment, theory, value, end, or whatever it is) is still retained completely — but with the acceptance-modification, "mere phenomenon".

This universal depriving of acceptance, this "inhibiting" or "putting out of play" of all positions taken toward the already-given Objective world and, in the first place, all existential positions (those concerning being, illusion, possible being, being likely, probable, etc.), — or, as it is also called, this "phenomenological epoché" and "parenthesizing" of the Objective world — therefore does not leave us confronting nothing. On the contrary we gain possession of something by it; and what we (or, to speak more precisely, what I, the one who is meditating) acquire by it is my pure living, with all the pure subjective processes making this up, and everything meant in them, *purely as* meant in them: the universe of "phenomena" in the (particular and

<sup>1</sup> The phrase "the world" supplied in accordance with Typescript C.

<sup>2</sup> Author's marginal note: Background, habitual accepting, etc., do not seem to be taken into consideration.

<sup>3</sup> Reading with Typescript C. According to the published text and the French translation, simply "experiencing".

<sup>4</sup> Reading, with Typescript C, "*philosophierendes*" instead of "*philosophisches*" (philosophical).

also the wider) <sup>1</sup> phenomenological sense. The epoché can also be said to be the radical and universal method by which I apprehend myself purely: as Ego, and with my own pure conscious life, in and by which the entire Objective world exists for me and is precisely as it is for me. Anything belonging to the world, any spatiotemporal being, exists for me — that is to say, is accepted by me — in that I experience it, perceive it, remember it, think of it somehow, judge about it, value it, desire it, or the like. Descartes, as we know, indicated all that by the name *cogito*. The world is for me absolutely nothing else but the world existing for and accepted by me in such a conscious *cogito*. It gets its whole sense, universal and specific, and its acceptance as existing, exclusively from such *cogitationes*.<sup>2</sup> In these my whole world-life goes on, including my scientifically inquiring and grounding life. By my living, by my experiencing, thinking, valuing, and acting, I can enter no world other than the one that gets its sense and acceptance or status [*Sinn und Geltung*] in and from me, myself. If I put myself above all this life and / refrain from doing any believing that takes “the” world <61> straightforwardly as existing — if I direct my regard exclusively to this life itself, as consciousness of “the” world — I thereby acquire myself as the pure <sup>3</sup> ego, with the pure stream of my *cogitationes*.

Thus the being of the pure ego and his *cogitationes*, as a being that is prior in itself, is antecedent to the natural being of the world — the world of which I always speak, the one of which I *can* speak. Natural being is a realm whose existential status [*Seinsgeltung*] is secondary; it continually presupposes the realm of transcendental being. The fundamental phenomenological method of transcendental epoché, because it leads back to this realm, is called transcendental-phenomenological reduction.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Supplied in accordance with Typescript C and the French translation.

<sup>2</sup> Author's marginal note: But if something becomes for me an illusion.

<sup>3</sup> Author's marginal note: Pure in the transcendental sense. This purity I shall call transcendental purity.

<sup>4</sup> Author's marginal note: There seems to be lacking the apodicticity of the pre-judgement belonging to transcendental subjectivity.

§ 9. *The range covered by apodictic evidence of the "I am".*

The next question is whether this reduction makes possible an *apodictic* evidence of the being of transcendental subjectivity. Only if my experiencing of my transcendental self is apodictic can it serve as ground and basis for apodictic judgments; only then is there accordingly the prospect of a philosophy, a systematic structure made up of apodictic cognitions, starting with the intrinsically first field of experience and judgment. That *ego sum* or *sum cogitans* must be pronounced apodictic, and that accordingly we get a first apodictically existing basis to stand on, was already seen by Descartes. As we all know, he emphasizes the indubitability of that proposition and stresses the fact that "I doubt" would itself presuppose "I am". For Descartes too it is a matter of that Ego who grasps himself after he has deprived the experienced world of acceptance, because it might be doubtful. After our differentiations, it is clear that the sense of the indubitability with which the ego becomes given by transcendental reduction actually conforms to the concept of apodicticity we explicated earlier. To be sure, the problem of apodicticity — and consequently the problem of the primary basis on which to ground a philosophy — is not thereby removed. In fact, doubt arises immediately. For example: Does not transcendental subjectivity at any given moment include its past as an inseparable part, which is accessible only by way of memory? But can / apodictic evidence be claimed for memory? <62> Assuredly it would be wrong to deny the apodicticity of "I am", on the ground that the evidence of memory is not apodictic; such a denial is possible only if one confines oneself to arguing about that apodicticity — that is to say, if one shuts one's eyes to it. Nevertheless, in view of such questions, the problem of the range covered by our apodictic evidence becomes urgent.

We remember in this connexion an earlier remark: that *adequacy and apodicticity* of evidence *need not go hand in hand*. Perhaps this remark was made precisely with the case of transcendental self-experience in mind. In such experience the ego is accessible to himself originaliter. But at any particular time this experience offers only a core that is experienced "with strict adequacy", namely the ego's living present (which the grammatical sense of



the sentence, *ego cogito*, expresses); while, beyond that, only an indeterminately general presumptive horizon extends, comprising what is strictly non-experienced but necessarily also-meant. To it belongs not only the ego's past, most of which is completely obscure, but also his transcendental abilities and his habitual peculiarities at the time. External perception too (though not apodictic) is an experiencing of something itself, the physical thing itself: "it itself is there". But, in being there itself, the physical thing has for the experiencer an open, infinite, indeterminately general horizon, comprising what is itself not strictly perceived — a horizon (this is implicit as a presumption) that can be opened up by possible experiences. Something similar is true about the apodictic certainty characterizing transcendental experience of my transcendental I-am, with the indeterminate generality of the latter as having an open horizon. Accordingly the actual being of the intrinsically first field of knowledge is indeed assured absolutely, though not as yet what determines its being more particularly and is still not itself given, but only presumed, during the living evidence of the I-am. This presumption implicit in the apodictic evidence is subject therefore to criticism, regarding the possibilities of its fulfilment and their range (which may be apodictically determinable). How far can the transcendental ego be deceived about himself? And how far do those components extend that are absolutely indubitable, in spite of such possible deception?

When making certain of the transcendental ego, we are standing at / an altogether dangerous point, even if at first we leave out of consideration the difficult question of apodicticity. <63>

§ 10. *Digression: Descartes' failure to make the transcendental turn.*

It seems so easy, following Descartes, to lay hold of the pure Ego and his *cogitationes*. And yet it is as though we were on the brink of a precipice, where advancing calmly and surely is a matter of philosophical life and death. Descartes had the serious will to free himself radically from prejudice. But we know from recent inquiries, in particular the fine and profound researches

of Mr. Gilson and Mr. Koyré,<sup>1</sup> how much scholasticism lies hidden, as unclarified prejudice, in Descartes' *Meditations*. Not only that. In the first place we must stay clear of the previously mentioned prejudice, arising from admiration of mathematical natural science and, as an old heritage, exercising a determining influence even on us: the prejudice that, under the name *ego cogito*, one is dealing with an apodictic "axiom", which, in conjunction with other axioms and, perhaps, inductively grounded hypotheses, is to serve as the foundation for a deductively "explanatory" world-science, a "nomological" science, a science *ordine geometrico*, similar indeed to mathematical natural science. In this connexion, furthermore, it must by no means be accepted as a matter of course that, with our apodictic pure ego, we have rescued a little *tag-end of the world*, as the sole unquestionable part of it for the philosophizing Ego, and that now the problem is to infer the rest of the world by rightly conducted arguments, according to principles innate in the ego.

Unfortunately these prejudices were at work when Descartes introduced the apparently insignificant but actually fateful change whereby the ego becomes a *substantia cogitans*, a separate human "*mens sive animus*",<sup>2</sup> and the point of departure for inferences according to the principle of causality — in short, the change by virtue of which Descartes became the father of transcendental realism, an absurd position, though its absurdity cannot be made apparent at this point. We remain aloof from all that, if we remain true to the radicalness of our meditative self-examination and therefore to the principle of pure "intuition" or evidence — that is to say, if we accept nothing here but  
 <64> what we / find actually given (and, at first, quite immediately<sup>3</sup>) in the field of the *ego cogito*, which has been opened up to us by epoché, and if accordingly we assert nothing we ourselves do not "see". Descartes erred in this respect. Consequently he stands on the threshold of the greatest of all discoveries — in a certain manner, has already made it — yet he does not grasp its proper

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: Etienne Gilson, *Études sur la rôle de la pensée médiévale dans la formation du système cartésien* (Paris, 1930), and Alexandre Koyré, *Essai sur l'idée de dieu et sur les preuves de son existence chez Descartes* (Paris, 1922).

<sup>2</sup> Author's marginal note: And, in his opinion, even a pure *intellectus*, allegedly thinkable as an *intellectus* without any imagination.

<sup>3</sup> Author's marginal note: And then mediately; but mediate givenness is not always deduction.

sense, the sense namely of transcendental subjectivity, and so he does not pass through the gateway that leads into genuine transcendental philosophy.

§ 11. *The psychological and the transcendental Ego.  
The transcendency of the world.*

If I keep purely what comes into view — for me, the one who is meditating — by virtue of my free epoché with respect to the being of the experienced world, the momentous fact is that I, with my life, remain untouched<sup>1</sup> in my existential status, regardless of whether or not the world exists and regardless of what my eventual decision concerning its being or non-being might be. This Ego, with his Ego-life, who necessarily remains<sup>2</sup> for me, by virtue of such epoché, is not a piece of the world; and if he says, “I exist, *ego cogito*,” that no longer signifies, “I, this man, exist.”<sup>3</sup> No longer am I the man who, in natural self-experience, finds himself *as* a man and who, with the abstractive restriction to the pure contents of “internal” or purely psychological self-experience, finds his own pure “*mens sive animus sive intellectus*”; nor am I the separately considered psyche itself. Apperceived in this “natural” manner, I and all other men are themes of sciences that are Objective, or positive, in the usual sense: biology, anthropology, and also (as included in these) *psychology*. The psychic life that psychology talks about has in fact always been, and still is, meant as psychic life in the world. Obviously the same is true also of one’s own psychic life, which is grasped and considered in *purely internal experience*. But phenomenological epoché (which the course of our purified Cartesian meditations demands of him who is philosophizing) inhibits acceptance of the Objective world as existent, and thereby excludes this world completely from the field of judgment. In so doing, it likewise inhibits acceptance of any Objectively apperceived facts, including those of internal experience. Consequently for me, the meditating Ego who, standing / and remaining in the attitude <65>

<sup>1</sup> The word *unberührt* (untouched) crossed out, but nothing put in its place.

<sup>2</sup> The word *verbleibende* (remaining) crossed out, but nothing put in its place.

<sup>3</sup> Author’s marginal note: Kant and all his convictions relating to Ego-transcendent apperceptions, and likewise the convictions of all others, are parenthesized.

of epoché, posits exclusively himself as the *acceptance-basis* of all Objective acceptances and bases [*als Geltungsgrund aller objektiven Geltungen und Gründe*], there is no psychological Ego and there are no psychic phenomena in the sense proper to psychology, i.e., as components of psychophysical men.

By phenomenological epoché I reduce my natural human Ego and my psychic life — the realm of my *psychological self-experience* — to my transcendental-phenomenological Ego, the realm of *transcendental-phenomenological self-experience*. The Objective world, the world that exists for me, that always has and always will exist for me, the only world that ever can exist for me — this world, with all its Objects, I said, derives its whole sense and its existential status, which it has for me, from me myself, *from me as the transcendental Ego*, the Ego who comes to the fore only with transcendental-phenomenological epoché.

This concept of the transcendental and its correlate, the concept of the transcendent, must be derived exclusively from *our* philosophically meditative situation. The following should be noted in this connexion: Just as the reduced Ego is not a piece of the world, so, conversely, neither the world nor any worldly Object is a piece of my Ego, to be found in my conscious life as a really inherent part of it, as a complex of data of sensation or a complex of acts. This “*transcendence*” is part of the intrinsic sense of anything worldly, *despite* the fact that anything worldly necessarily acquires all the sense determining it, along with its existential status, exclusively from my experiencing, my objectivating, thinking, valuing, or doing, at particular times — notably the status of an evidently valid being is one it can acquire only from my own evidences, my grounding acts. If this “*transcendence*”, which consists in being non-really included, is part of the intrinsic sense of the world, then, by way of contrast, the Ego himself, who bears within him the world as an accepted sense and who, in turn, is necessarily presupposed by this sense, is legitimately called *transcendental*, in the phenomenological sense. Accordingly the philosophical problems arising from this correlation are called transcendental-philosophical.