

## CHAPTER 9

- Reading 9.1 **Jaspers, K. (1968). The phenomenological approach in psychopathology. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 114: 1313–1323.**
- Reading 9.2 **Husserl, E. ([1900–01] 1970a). Introduction to Logical Investigations Volume II. In *Logical Investigations*, 2 Volumes, (translated by J.N. Findlay) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Volume I pp. 248–266.**
- Reading 9.3 **Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time* (translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson) Oxford: Blackwell (Extract pp. 95–99)**

**Reading 9.1****EXERCISE 5**

Full article: Jaspers, K. (1968). The phenomenological approach in psychopathology. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 114: 1313–1323.

*Editorial Note:* This article was originally published in the *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie* in 1912 (Vol. 9, pp. 391–408). We give it here in translation (on the initiative of Dr. J. N. Curran), in view of the present interest in Professor Jaspers's work and in phenomenology in general.

**The subjectivity of psychic events**

In the examination of a psychiatric patient it is usual to distinguish between objective and subjective symptoms. Objective symptoms include all concrete events that can be perceived by the senses, e.g. reflexes, registrable movements, an individual's physiognomy, his motor activity, verbal expression, written productions, actions and general conduct, etc.; all measurable performances, such as the patient's capacity to work, his ability to learn, the extent of his memory, and so forth, also belong here. It is also usual to include under objective symptoms such features as delusional ideas, falsifications of memory, etc., in other words the rational contents of what the patient tells us. These, it is true, are not perceived by the senses, but only understood; nevertheless, this "understanding" is achieved through rational thought, without the help of any empathy into the patient's psyche.

Objective symptoms can all be directly and convincingly demonstrated to anyone capable of sense-perception and logical thought; but subjective symptoms, if they are to be understood, must be referred to some process which, in contrast to sense-perception and logical thought, is usually described by the same term, "subjective". Subjective symptoms cannot be perceived by the sense-organs, but have to be grasped by transferring oneself, so to say, into the other individual's psyche; that is, by empathy. They can only become an inner reality for the observer by his participating in the other person's experiences, not by any intellectual effort. Subjective symptoms include all those emotions and inner processes, such as fear, sorrow, joy, which we feel we can grasp immediately from their physical concomitants; these we thus take to "express" the underlying emotion. Then there are all those psychic experiences and phenomena which patients describe to us and which only become accessible to us at secondhand through the patient's own judgment and presentation. Lastly, subjective symptoms also include those mental processes which we have to infer from fragments of the two previous kinds of data, manifested by the patient's actions and the way he conducts his life.

It is usual to connect with this classification into objective and subjective symptoms a very definite contrast of values. According to this, only the objective symptoms offer certainty; they alone form a basis for scientific study, whereas subjective symptoms,

though we cannot easily do without them for our preliminary assessments, are considered to be quite unreliable for making final judgments and unfruitful for the purpose of any further scientific investigation. There is a widespread desire to base our study of mental disorder on objective symptoms alone and ideally to disregard subjective symptoms altogether. This is a viewpoint which has its adherents—not all equally consistent—in psychology, just as it has in psychiatry. An "objective psychology" is set up in opposition to "subjective psychology". The former claims to concern itself with objective data only; its natural consequence is *psychology without a psyche*. The supporters of the latter (who, it should be said, have never failed to recognize the real but different values of the former) take into account self-observation, subjective analysis, the determination of the different modes of psychic life and of the specific nature of its phenomena, and ascribe value to such investigations even if they are made in the absence of any objective criteria. As examples of objective psychology we may cite the whole field of sense-perception, mnemometrics, performance curves and their components. The last will serve here to illustrate the fact that such investigations do lead quite systematically to the elimination of everything that can be called mental or psychic. It is not the feeling of fatigue but "objective fatigue" which is being investigated. All such concepts as fatiguability, the power of recovery, learning ability, practice, the effects of rest periods, etc., refer to performances that can be measured objectively, and it does not matter whether one is dealing here with a machine, a live but mindless organism, or a human being endowed with a mind. Nevertheless, those who claim to be purely objective investigators do quite frequently make a secondary use of subjective psychic phenomena to further their interpretations of objective performances, and make comparisons possible—and, of course, they have every right to do so. But when this happens, they are making use of "subjective psychology", with which this paper is to deal. Now, there is no doubt that objective psychology produces results which are more obvious, more convincing, and easier for everyone to grasp than does subjective psychology. But whereas the difference in *degree* of certainty is simply quantitative, when it comes to the *kind* of certainty, the difference is qualitative and fundamental. This is so because subjective psychology always aims at the final realization of the concepts and ideas which form the inner representation of psychic processes, whereas objective psychology finds its ultimate aim in observation in undisputed fields such as sense-perception and the rational contents of thought and by such means as graphs and statistics.

**The systematic study of subjective experience**

What then are the precise aims of this much-abused subjective psychology? While objective psychology, by eliminating everything psychic, transforms itself into physiology, subjective psychology wishes to preserve this same psychic life as its object of study. It asks itself—speaking quite generally—what does mental experience depend on, what are its consequences, and what relationships can

be discerned in it? The answers to such questions are its special aims. But in approaching each problem subjective psychologists have to face the need to make clear both to themselves and to others what particular psychic experience is meant, for they are confronted with a manifold diversity of psychic phenomena which cannot be surveyed or investigated as a whole but from which particular elements must be selected for investigation. So before real inquiry can begin it is necessary to identify the specific psychic phenomena which are to be its subject, and form a clear picture of the resemblances and differences between them and other phenomena with which they must not be confused. This preliminary work of representing, defining, and classifying psychic phenomena, pursued as an independent activity, constitutes phenomenology. The difficult and comprehensive nature of this preliminary work makes it inevitable that it should become for the time being an end in itself.

So long as such independent, systematic investigations had not been undertaken, this phenomenological approach remained limited to a number of unconnected opinions based on chance incidents or implications and *ad hoc* constructions; among these some useful pointers can certainly be found, but it is essential that they should be followed up by further research.

Within the sphere of psychological research E. Husserl has taken the first decisive step towards a systematic phenomenology, his predecessors in this having been Brentano and his school and Th. Lipps. In psychopathology, there have been a number of attempts to create a phenomenology,\* though there has not yet been constituted a generally recognized field of research intended to prepare the ground systematically for the tasks of psychopathology proper. Since phenomenology does in fact offer a productive field of work in which everyone can take part, some programmatic exposition of its aims and methods seems indicated.

### The limitations of empathy

In everyday life no one ever thinks in terms of isolated mental phenomena, whether his own or someone else's. Our inward concern is always with that which is the object of our experience, not with the mental processes which accompany our experiencing. We understand other people, not through considering and analysing their mental life, but by living with them in the context of events, actions and personal destinies. Even when we do on occasion give consideration to mental experience as such, we do this only in a context of causes and effects as understood by us, or else we make a practice of classifying personalities into categories, etc. We never feel prompted to consider a mental phenomenon in isolation, e.g. a perception or a feeling *per se*, and to describe it in terms of its

\* Kandinsky's *Kritische und klinische Betrachtungen im Gebiete der Sinnestäuschungen*. Berlin, 1885, is almost entirely phenomenological in character. Oesterreich's *Die Phänomenologie des Ich in ihren Grundproblemen*, Leipzig, 1910, and Hacker's "Systematische Traumbeobachtungen", *Archiv. f. Psych. w. l.* 21.1, 1911, both conduct systematic phenomenological investigations into phenomena particularly vital for psychopathology. I have myself made efforts in this direction in two papers: "Zur Analyse der Trugwahrnehmungen" and "Die Trugwahrnehmungen". (Reprinted in *Gesammelte Schriften zur Psychopathologie*, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1963.)

appearance and essence. So with the attitude of a psychiatrist to his patient. He can share the patient's experiences—always provided this happens spontaneously without his having to take thought over it. In this way he can gain an essentially personal, indefinable and direct understanding, which, however, remains for him a matter of pure experience, not of explicit knowledge; he acquires practice in understanding, but does not build up a store of case material—"experience" in the professional sense—which would be more useful to him than mere vague feelings and impressions, and which he could compare, set in order, or subject to tests.

This attitude of mere sympathetic understanding, which can be enormously satisfying to individual personalities—so much so that to one so predisposed this may well become his final professional goal—is, one must admit, "subjective" in a very special sense; and when specific assertions or formulations are made on this basis without any reference to more far-reaching study or to any regular system of concepts this well-grounded conceptualization does indeed deserve to be dismissed as "merely subjective" in a derogatory sense. Assertions of this sort cannot be discussed or verified. We may appreciate this type of understanding; we may admire it for the valuable human qualities which it reveals; but we can never give it recognition as a "science", whether we meet it in the everyday form practised by civilized and cultivated people over the centuries, or in its clinical guise as the instinctive concern of psychiatrists for their patients.

If, however, we still wish to develop a science of psychology, we must realize from the start, on the one hand, that its ideal is a fully conscious understanding of mental processes, one that can be presented in definite terms and forms, in contrast to the vague or unconscious understanding which is reached only in a personal and subjective way through the special attitudes and aptitudes of particular individuals; but we must realize also that psychology cannot hope to approach this scientific ideal; instead it must engage in many promising approaches. These, indeed, open up perspectives, but their ideal solution remains infinitely remote. This is why so many people exercise their personal understanding purely for their own satisfaction, and from the heights of their vague yet penetrating comprehension they look down condescendingly on all attempts to define concepts at a conscious psychological level, dismissing these as innocuous platitudes or trivialities. Yet the fact that only such deliberately made psychological determinations constitute contributions to knowledge gives them from a scientific point of view a unique value—but only from that point of view.

### Isolating the phenomena

Now this attitude, which is not satisfied with understanding as mere experience but wishes to promote it to the level of knowledge that can be communicated, investigated and argued about, finds itself faced with an infinity of many-sided psychic phenomena, which are governed by correlations which are still far from clear and whose relations of dependence and consequence have yet to be

elucidated. Without doubt, the first step towards a scientific comprehension must be the sorting out, defining, differentiating and describing of specific psychic phenomena, which are thereby actualized and are regularly described in specific terms.

We must begin with a clear representation of what is actually going on in the patient, what he is really experiencing, how things arise in his consciousness, what are his own feelings, and so forth; and at this stage we must put aside altogether such considerations as the relationships between experiences, or their summation as a whole, and more especially must we avoid trying to supply any basic constructs or frames of reference. We should picture only what is really present in the patient's consciousness; anything that has not really presented itself to his consciousness is outside our consideration. We must set aside all outmoded theories, psychological constructs or materialist mythologies of cerebral processes; we must turn our attention only to that which we can understand as having real existence, and which we can differentiate and describe. This, as experience has shown, is in itself a very difficult task. This particular freedom from preconception which phenomenology demands is not something one possesses from the beginning, but something that is laboriously acquired after prolonged critical work and much effort—often fruitless—in framing constructs and mythologies. When we were children, we first drew things as we imagined them, not as we saw them; so as psychologists and psychopathologists we go through a stage where we form our own ideas, in one way or another, of psychic events, and only later acquire an unprejudiced direct grasp of these events as they really are. And so this phenomenological attitude is to be acquired only by ever-repeated effort and by the ever-renewed overcoming of prejudice.

How then do we proceed when we isolate, characterize and give conceptual form to these psychic phenomena? We cannot portray them, or bring them before our eyes in any way that can be perceived by the senses. We can only guide ourselves and others by a multiple approach. We have to be led, starting *from the outside*, to a real appreciation of a particular psychic phenomenon by looking at its genesis, the conditions for its appearance, its configurations, its context and possible concrete contents; also by making use of intuitive comparison and symbolization, by directing our observations in whatever ways may suggest themselves (as artists do so penetratingly) and by demonstrating already known phenomena which appear to play some part in the formation of the phenomenon studied. All this constitutes an incentive, reinforced by these indirect hints, for others to actualize these phenomena for themselves, while we too are encouraged to make use of our findings in later studies. The more numerous and specific these indirect hints become, the more well-defined and characteristic do the phenomena studied appear. Indeed, this personal effort to represent psychic phenomena to oneself under the guidance of these purely external hints is the condition under which alone we can speak of any kind of psychological work at all.

A histologist will provide an exhaustive description of particular morphological elements, but he will do it in such a way as to make it easier for others to see these elements for themselves, and

he has to presume, or else induce, this “seeing for oneself” in those who really want to understand him. In the same way the phenomenologist can indicate features and characteristics, and show how they can be distinguished and confusion avoided, all with a view to describing the qualitatively separate psychic data. But he must make sure that those to whom he addresses himself do not simply *think* along with him, but that they *see* along with him in contact and conversation with patients and through their own observations. This “seeing” is not done through the senses, but through the understanding. This is something quite special, irreducible and ultimate; and if we are to take even one single step forward in phenomenology we have to train ourselves in it and master it—including such things as “representing data to oneself”, “understanding”, “grasping” or “actualizing”. Only so do we acquire a fruitful critical faculty which will set itself against the framing of theoretical constructions as much as against the barren deadly denial of any possibility of progress. Whoever has no eyes to see cannot practise histology; whoever is unwilling or incapable of actualizing psychic events and representing them vividly cannot acquire an understanding of phenomenology.

## The search for irreducible phenomena

This ultimate irreducible quality of psychic phenomena, which can only acquire identical meaning for numbers of people through the incentive and the multiple clues and leads mentioned previously, may already be found in the case of the simplest sensory qualities, such as red, blue, colour, tone; it comes into play also with spatial awareness, object awareness, perception, imagery, thought, etc. In psychopathology we have examples in pseudo-hallucination, the *déjà vu* phenomenon, derealization, heautoscopy, experience of the “double” and so on; though all these terms merely describe groups of psychic phenomena which are in themselves still more subtly differentiated from each other.

For the actualization to ourselves of all these phenomenologically ultimate characteristics, we have such expressions as “seeing”, “viewing”, (“feeling oneself into”, “empathy”, “understanding” and so on. These expressions always denote the kind of ultimate concept-fitting experience which plays the same role in psychology as sensory perception plays in the natural sciences. Just as sense-perceptions are evoked by the demonstration of an object, so this meaningful empathic actualization will be evoked in us by the above-mentioned hints and indications, by our immediate grasp of expressive phenomena and our self-immersion in other people's self-description. From this terminology it follows that empathy and understanding are by no means simple ultimate phenomena in themselves, but probably contain a whole series of elements yet to be defined. In the same way as perception, empathy has its tasks to set: first for phenomenology itself, of which it is the very foundation, and next for the investigation of psychogenesis. At this point we are not concerned with either of these; we need only to note the contribution made to our knowledge by this empathic,

understanding experience, and to raise the question of the reliability of this way of gaining access to the facts. If, on the analogy of perceptual experience, we recognize empathic experience as ultimate, the question can be answered on these lines: in the field of empathic experience the technical means of retaining what has been seen but once, for later comparison and other purposes, are so inadequate that far more difficulties are encountered than in the case of sensory perception. But in principle reliability is established in the same way, i.e. by comparison, repetition and verification of such empathic experiences as reach actualization. In both fields there is much uncertainty; one cannot deny that in the psychological field it is greater than in the natural sciences, but this is only a difference of degree.

Whether we are representing our own past psychic experiences or those of other people is immaterial. The only important difference seems to be between observations which are *systematic, experimental self-observations* of persisting experiences, and those which are ordinary empathic representations. In the investigation of psychopathological phenomena, only the latter can really be considered, since patients can rarely be induced to carry out self-observation in the former sense, and then only in very favourable conditions, in regard to simple disturbances such as agnosias or hallucinations in clear consciousness. However, such empathic representations of phenomena among the mentally ill may well be furthered by concepts that have been won from the more elaborate phenomenological investigations of the former kind.

## Methods of phenomenological analysis

The methods by which we carry out a phenomenological analysis and determine what patients really experience are of three kinds: (1) one immerses oneself, so to speak, in their gestures, behaviour, expressive movements; (2) exploration, by direct questioning of the patients and by means of accounts which they themselves, under our guidance, give of their own experiences; (3) written self-descriptions—seldom really good, but then all the more valuable; they can, in fact, be made use of even if one has not known the writer personally. In all these instances we are pursuing phenomenology in so far as we are orientated towards subjective psychic experience and not towards objective manifestations, which in this context are only stages in our journey—the means, not the object, of our investigation. Of all these sources of information, good self-descriptions have the highest value.\*

\* For those interested, I list a few of the best self-descriptions so far published:

Schreber—*Memoirs of a Neurotic*. Leipzig, 1903.  
 Thomas de Quincey—*Confessions of an Opium Eater*. Gérard de Nerval—*Aurélien*.  
 J. J. David—"Hallucinations." *Neue Rundschau*, No. 17, 874.  
 Kandinsky—"On the study of hallucination." *Archiv. f. Psych.*, 11, 453.  
 Klinke—*Fahr. f. Psych.*, 9.  
 Kieser—*Allgemeine Zeitschr. f. Psych.*, 10, 423.  
 Engelken—*Ibid.*, 6, 586.  
 Meinert—*An Alcoholic Madman*. Dresden, 1907.

When, using these methods, we try to come closer to the patient's psychic life, our first impression is of an unsurveyable *chaos* of constantly changing phenomena. Our first aim must be to capture and delimit some particular item and by depicting it to form a conception of it, of which we and others can make permanent use; and we must supply it with a name by which we can always identify it. Psychopathological phenomena seem to call for just such an approach, one which will isolate, will make abstractions from related observations, will present as realities only the data themselves without attempting to understand how they have arisen; an approach which only wants to see, not to explain. Under pathological conditions, numerous psychic phenomena make their appearance without meaningful antecedents; psychologically speaking they emerge from nothing; seen causally they are occasioned by a disease process. Vivid memories of things never experienced; ideas held with a conviction of their truth without any *intelligible* basis for such conviction; moods and emotions appearing spontaneously and not based on any relevant experiences or ideas; all these, and many others, are common examples. These are the objects of phenomenological investigation, which determines and represents them as they actually are.

Three groups of phenomena can be ascertained in this manner. The first consists of phenomena known to us all from our own experience. They come into existence in the same way as the corresponding psychic processes which in normal conditions arise out of others in an intelligible way; they differ only in their mode of origin from phenomena, otherwise quite similar, occurring in the mentally ill, e.g. many falsifications of memory. Next, there are phenomena which are to be understood as exaggerations, diminutions or combinations of phenomena which we ourselves experience, e.g. the ecstasies of some acute psychoses, pseudo-hallucinations, perverted impulses. How far our "understanding" can go in such cases, when we cannot base it on any conscious experiences of a similar kind, is a question that cannot be conclusively answered. Sometimes it seems as if our understanding can go far beyond the possibilities afforded by experiences, even if similar ones, of our own.

The third group of pathological phenomena are distinguished from the two previous groups by their complete inaccessibility to any empathic understanding. We can only get closer to them by means of analogies and metaphors. We perceive them individually, not through any positive understanding of them, but through the shock which the course of our comprehension receives in the face of the incomprehensible. In this group we may perhaps include those "fabricated" thoughts and moods which many patients report as undoubted experiences (passivity experience), but which we can never identify except by using such terms as these, and by a series of observations designed to ascertain what these phenomena are not. Some patients who, notwithstanding their psychosis, have retained the awareness of their normal mental life readily admit

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the impossibility of describing their experiences in ordinary language. One patient explained: "Partly one has to do with things which simply cannot be expressed in human language. If I am to be understood, even to some extent, I shall have to use figures of speech and analogies which can do no more than get somewhere near the truth; the only way is to make some comparison with well-known facts of human experience. . . ." In another context: "One has also to consider that it is mostly a matter of visions; I have the images in my head but it is uncommonly difficult to describe them in words, in part frankly impossible." Some—though not many—of the neologisms coined by patients are based on similar efforts to give a name to their own experiences; one patient sought to describe a sensation he felt in his hip more precisely in this way: When asked whether what he felt was a "twitching", he said: "No, it isn't a twitching, it's a 'plotching'."

From its beginnings, psychiatry has had to concern itself with delimiting and naming these different forms of experience; there could, of course, have been no advance at all without such phenomenological definitions. Delusions, sense-deceptions, depressive and expansive mood changes and much else have thus been described. All of this will remain the foundation for further phenomenological research. Often, however, we have first to clear away a ballast of theories concerning the supposed physical basis or psychological framework of these phenomena. Numerous phenomenological approaches have been smothered almost at once by such theoretical endeavours. We cannot now be satisfied with just a few meagre categories, but will devote ourselves without any preconceptions to the phenomena themselves, and whenever we can identify one we will seek to realize and describe it as completely as possible, without claiming to know in advance what the phenomenon is by virtue of our knowledge of psychology. The current classification of symptoms of insanity into sense-deceptions and delusions may be useful in a rough and ready way, but these terms conceal a hitherto unexplored multitude of diverse phenomena.

A few examples will illustrate the sort of phenomena that can be delimited. Kandinsky gave a description of pseudo-hallucinations, a particular kind of pathological imagery. They differ from normal images in their greater sensory concreteness, clarity and detail, their appearance independently of, and even against, the subject's will, and by the accompanying experience of passivity and receptiveness. On the other hand, they differ both from true hallucination and from normal perception in that they do not appear in external space as perceptions do, but in the internal space in which images also are experienced. This conception of pseudo-hallucinations has been attacked on the grounds of theoretical considerations. However, the problem is purely a phenomenological and descriptive one. It might be possible to represent the reported cases in some other more convincing way; one could adduce other cases (self-descriptions, the results of other investigations); but it is only through clearly realized representations of this kind that Kandinsky's views could be refuted, never by mere

theoretical considerations. The task of phenomenology is an independent one, and awareness of this will guard against criticism based on misunderstanding and hence unproductive.

Again, it is not uncommon for patients to report an experience, of which they are acutely aware, of there being somebody just behind or above them. When they look around, this somebody turns round, too; they "feel" it, there really is somebody there. But they have no sensation of actual contact, or indeed any sensation, nor can they ever come face to face with the supposed person. Some of these patients come to the conclusion that there is nobody there, others remain convinced of the existence of this someone whose presence they feel so vividly. Here it is obviously not a matter of sense-deception, since the sense-element is lacking; nor of a delusional idea, since there is an actual experience which is subjected to an act of judgment, and this judgment may be either correct or delusional. A third example, taken from the emotional sphere, will show how, simply by "sinking" oneself in the individual phenomena without the aid of any theory or system, one can arrive at a representation and delimitation of such phenomena. For instance, one hears of "feelings of ecstasy": among these one can readily distinguish if not different phenomena at least different shades of feeling. We are not here concerned with whether we are right or wrong in any particular instance. One can distinguish in the first place a general enthusiasm, emotion or rapture, embracing everything conceivable; secondly, a deep inner happiness out of which some joy-bringing image will occasionally arise; thirdly, a feeling of exaltation and grace, of holiness and high significance. In order to be of lasting value, such rapidly made differentiations should then be subjected to further phenomenological elaboration.

The methods of psychopathological phenomenology have now been discussed (grasp of expressive movements, exploration of patients' experience, and self-descriptions); also the indirect leads by which we are guided towards our own representation of the phenomena (noting their genesis, the conditions and circumstances under which they appear, their content, any already well-known elements they may contain, the symbolic indications, etc.); and the only question that remains is how we can provide an incentive for others to form their own representations of the phenomena in the light of all that has been brought forward. In a work on phenomenology, therefore, individual cases will be presented, general descriptions will be derived from them, and a terminology will be established. That phenomenology deals only with immediately presented data is no reproach to it, merely the statement of a fact. But it will always be difficult to find how one can lead from the individual case to a more general understanding and a more complete delimitation. It must be borne in mind that the experiences of individual patients are infinitely manifold; that phenomenology only extracts from them some general feature which can be found equally in some other case and therefore can be called the same feature, whereas the infinity of individual experience continues to change. We therefore have the position that on the one

hand phenomenology abstracts from an infinity of constantly changing constituents, and on the other hand is definitely oriented towards the perceptible and the concrete, not the abstract. Only where something can be reduced to “reality” and becomes an immediate datum, i.e. becomes concrete, can it form the subject for phenomenology.

## Classifying groups of phenomena

Let us assume that, in the ways described above, a number of phenomena can be delineated and clarified. We now seem to find ourselves once more in the presence of a fresh chaos of innumerable phenomena which have been described and defined, but still cannot satisfy our scientific needs. Delimitation must be followed by the bringing of phenomena into some kind of order, so that we can become aware of the diversity of psychic life in a systematic way, and make it possible to survey them up to the limits we have progressively reached. Phenomena can be arranged in quite different ways according to the purpose one has in view. For example, they can be arranged according to their origin, their physical determinants, their contents, their significance from some particular point of view, such as the logical, ethical or aesthetic. All these principles of classification should be made use of in their rightful place; but for phenomenology itself they are not very satisfactory. We seek a classification which will arrange psychic phenomena according to their phenomenological affinities with each other, somewhat in the way that infinite numbers of colours are arranged in the spectrum in a manner which is phenomenologically satisfying. Now in the present state of phenomenology, it would seem that there exist numerous groups of phenomena between which no relationship can be perceived. Sense-perceptions and ideas, hallucinations and delusions, seem to be phenomena separated by a gulf rather than united by transitions. Such totally unrelated phenomena can only be placed under separate headings and cannot be organized into any particular pattern within the psychic life.

But there are other groups of phenomena which can be related and arranged systematically. Between these, transitions can usually be made out (as between colours). An example of such a systematic arrangement of related phenomena can be given in the case of pseudo-hallucinations. On close consideration of individual cases, it appears that transitions exist between normal imagery and the completely developed pseudo-hallucination (which never becomes substantial but always remains in the internal psychic space, that occupied by imagery). Surveying these phenomena, it is possible to find four main points of contrast, between which they can oscillate through a whole series of transitions. If, then, we can describe each phenomenon in terms of where it can be approximately located in the series, we shall have satisfactorily characterized in phenomenological terms that particular phenomenon, lying as it does somewhere between an

image and a pseudo-hallucination. These four points of contrast are as follows:

<i>Fully-formed pseudo-hallucination</i>	<i>Normal imagery</i>
1. Clear-cut, complete in detail.	1. Vague, incomplete in detail.
2. The sensory elements are each adequately perceived, as in normal perception.	2. A few sensory elements are adequately perceived, or none. e.g. an imagined face is neutral in tone.
3. There is consistency and easy retention.	3. The images dissolve, disperse, have constantly to be recreated.
4. It is involuntary; nothing can be called forth or changed by choice. Associated with feelings of passivity and receptivity.	4. It is volitional; it can be invoked or changed by choice. Feelings are those of activity.

This example, which will not be discussed further here, shows how we set about grouping related phenomena on a purely phenomenological basis, using only those aspects of the phenomena which are really experienced as the points of difference, and excluding any added notions or theories. Further, it shows how vital it is to distinguish between phenomenological *transitions* and phenomenological *gaps*. Transitions will allow us to place phenomena in their order, but where there are gaps we can only enumerate or contrast opposites. It is at the same time evident that to recognize a group of phenomena as a phenomenologically new one, separated by a gap from those already recognized, is something only to be decided after careful consideration of clear evidence. At present, however, when so many people seek to reduce psychic data to the narrowest and simplest terms possible, it is preferable to accept rather too many phenomena—they can be organized later—than to lapse into some shallow psychological system made up of just a few elements.

For while the ideal of phenomenology is an infinity of irreducible psychic qualities, classified and ordered to permit of their survey, there exists another, opposite ideal, that of the fewest possible ultimate elements, as in chemistry. According to this school, all complex psychic phenomena could be derived from such elements, and all psychic phenomena could be satisfactorily presented by breaking them down into those elements. To be consistent, such an attitude must envisage the possibility of making do with a single ultimate psychic atom, everything psychic being built up from varying configurations of this particle. This ideal takes its cue from the natural sciences, and certainly has a meaning in relation to the origins of psychic qualities. Just as the infinite variety of colours can be traced to purely quantitative differences in wave-length, so one could wish to explain the origins of psychic qualities and perhaps establish different classifications on this basis. For phenomenology itself, however, such requirements seem quite pointless. The aim of phenomenological analysis is to increase its awareness of psychic phenomena by clearly delimiting them. As one procedure among others, phenomenology brings to light psychic qualities that appear as constituents of

what is being studied. This breaking down of complex structures into constituents is only one way of proceeding; but those who adopt the point of view already described, which is valid only in relation to the origination of psychic phenomena, speak as if it were the only way. They would, for example, explain perception by analysing it into the elements of sensation, spatial perception and intentional act, whereas true phenomenology would first compare perception with imagery, which is composed of the same elements, and come to the conclusion that perception must be characterized as an irreducible psychic quality. Even when occasionally the conception of “analysis into ultimate elements” does, like that of “analysis as a delimitation of ultimate qualities”, appear to present itself as purely phenomenological and uninfluenced by the genetic point of view, it still tends to relapse at every opportunity into confusion with genetic considerations: once again complex psychic structures are said to arise from combinations of elements. Phenomenology, on the other hand, rejects the ideal of the fewest possible elements; on the contrary it has no wish to restrict the infinite variety of psychic phenomena, only, as far as possible (for the task is, of course, boundless), to try to make them more lucid, precise and individually recognizable at any time.

## The boundaries of phenomenology

In the foregoing we have presented, if only in broad outline, the aims and methods of phenomenology, which has, of course, been practised since psychiatry began, but has never yet been given its opportunity for unfettered development. Since it has suffered most harm from being confused with other lines of research, we will briefly restate what it is that phenomenology does *not* intend to pursue, and with what phenomenology should *not* be confused.

Phenomenology concerns itself only with actual experiences, only with the perceptible and concrete, not with any factors that may be thought to underlie psychic events and are the subject of theoretical constructs. For every one of its findings phenomenology must ask: has this actually been experienced? Does this really present itself to the subject’s consciousness? Phenomenological findings derive their validity from the fact that the various elements of the psychic reality can be evoked repeatedly. Its findings can thus only be refuted if the facts of a case have previously been wrongly represented or are not represented correctly; they can never be refuted by demonstrating their impossibility or error on the basis of some theoretical proposition. Phenomenology can gain nothing from theory: it can only lose. The accuracy of a particular representation cannot be checked by its conformity to general criteria; phenomenology must always find its standards within itself.

Phenomenology, then, deals with what is actually experienced. It views psychic events “as from within”, and brings them into immediate realization. It therefore does not concern itself with external manifestations, with motor phenomena, expressive

movements as such, nor with any kind of objective performance. We have already explained to what extent expressive movements and self-descriptions can be used as the means, but not as the subject, of phenomenology.

Further, phenomenology has nothing to do with the genesis of psychic phenomena. Though its practice is a prerequisite for any causal investigation it leaves genetic issues aside, and they can neither refute nor further its findings. Causal studies relating to colour, perception, etc. are alien to it; yet such factual investigations have been less of a danger than those “cerebral mythologies” which have sought to interpret phenomenology and replace it by theoretical constructions of physiological and pathological cerebral processes. Thus Wernicke, who in fact did make important phenomenological discoveries, distorted them by interpretations in terms of “connective fibres”, “sejunctions” and the like. These sort of constructs constantly prevent phenomenological investigations from reaching their proper goal. At first the originators of such constructs must necessarily practise phenomenology, but having reached this theory they feel on safer ground, and with a remarkable failure to recognize their own sources they declare all phenomenological conclusions to be “highly subjective”.

Lastly, phenomenology must be kept separate from what we call the “genetic understanding” of psychic events, i.e. the comprehension of their meaningful relationships. This is a unique form of understanding which only applies to psychic events; it grasps as self-evident how one psychic event emerges from another; how a man attacked should be angry, a betrayed lover jealous. We have made use of the word “understanding” both for the “representations” of phenomenology and for this “grasp” of the psychic connections. To avoid confusion the former is termed “static understanding”; it is the basis on which their definition must rest, and comprehends only data, experiences, modes of consciousness and delimitation. The latter we call “genetic understanding”—the understanding of the meaningful connections between one psychic experience and another, the “emergence of the psychic from the psychic”. Now phenomenology itself has nothing to do with this “genetic understanding” and must be treated as something entirely separate; yet, where required, it may legitimately study regular sequences of psychic events, if these are actually experienced and as such together form a phenomenological unit *sui generis*. An example, perhaps, is the experience of the Will. But such a phenomenological sequence is quite a different thing from a meaningful flow of psychic events emerging one from the other. We restrict phenomenology to whatever can be understood “statically”.

If we look at psychopathology as a whole, obviously our most essential interest lies in what is “genetically understandable”, in extra-conscious causal connections, and in the ascertainment of the physical basis of psychic processes—in other words, in the way things are *related*. Phenomenology only makes known to us the different forms in which all our experiences, all psychic reality, take place; it does not teach us anything about the contents of the personal experience of the individual, nor anything about the

extra-conscious basis on which psychic events seem to float like a thin layer of foam on the surface of the sea. Penetrating these extra-conscious depths will always be more attractive than merely demonstrating phenomenological findings, yet the completion of this latter task is an essential prerequisite for all further investigation. It is only in the setting of these phenomenologically established forms that actual life, accessible to our immediate understanding, unfolds itself; and it is, after all, in order to arrive at a better comprehension of this psychic life that we are prompted to investigate its extra-conscious relationships.

### Future tasks for phenomenology

In conclusion we will indicate a few specific tasks for phenomenology. Not one field of psychopathological phenomenology can as yet be regarded as fully worked over. Even where the nature of a phenomenon is apparently clear-cut, as with some kinds of hallucinations, really good case-material that can serve to enlarge and verify one's experience is so scanty that careful and detailed case-descriptions are still of great value. Much work still needs to be done on the different types of hallucination, especially those of the higher senses, which ought to be thoroughly investigated. An obvious instance is the problem of visual hallucinations occurring simultaneously with real perceptions in objective space. The phenomenology of delusional experiences has hardly been treated at all; all that exists so far on this subject is to be found in publications on emotional changes as the first symptom in paranoia. The phenomenology of pathological emotions is unbelievably scanty. The best is contained in the excellent work of Janet,

in which, however, little value is placed on careful delimitation or classification. The subjective experience of one's own personality has been treated systematically by Oesterreich. For all these problems phenomenological descriptions by psychiatrists with material to hand, as well as self-descriptions more penetrating than those so far available, would be of the greatest value.

In histology, when examining the cerebral cortex, one is required to account for every fibre, every nucleus. In the same way phenomenology demands that we should account for every psychic phenomenon and every experience that comes to light in the investigation of our patients or in their own self-descriptions. We should in no circumstances be content with a general impression extracted from the total picture, but should get to know, as regards each detail, how it is to be viewed and assessed. Then, if we practise this method for some time, much will appear less startling to us because it has been frequently observed; whereas those who only go on "general impressions" will not have made themselves aware of the phenomena in question, and so, every time these do come to their notice through the momentary direction of their "impressionability", they will appear as novel and surprising. But the practised phenomenologist will pay attention to what is really new and unknown, and may then be justifiably surprised; one need not be afraid that surprises will ever cease! Needless to say, many psychiatrists already make it their practice to act on these lines and would rightly think it an impertinence if we claimed to be telling them something new. But the phenomenological approach is not yet so widespread as not to require repeated efforts to promote it. One may hope that its application will further enrich our knowledge of what the psychiatric patient really experiences.

## Reading 9.2

## EXERCISE 3

From: Husserl, E ([1900–01] 1970a). Introduction to Logical Investigations Volume II. In *Logical Investigations*, 2 Volumes, (translated by J.N. Findlay) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Volume I pp. 248–266.

## § 1 The necessity of phenomenological investigations as a preliminary to the epistemological criticism and clarification of pure logic

THE necessity that we should begin logic with linguistic discussions has often been acknowledged from the standpoint of a logical technology. ‘Language’, we read in Mill, ‘is evidently one of the principal instruments or helps of thought; and any imperfection in the instrument, or in the mode of employing it, is confessedly liable, still more than in almost any other art, to confuse and impede the process, and destroy all ground of confidence in the result. For a mind not previously versed in the meaning and right use of the various kinds of words, to attempt the study of methods of philosophizing, would be as if some one should attempt to become an astronomical observer, having never learnt to adjust the focal distance of his optical instruments so as to see distinctly.’<sup>1</sup> A deeper ground for this necessity of beginning logic with linguistic analysis is, however, seen by Mill in the fact that it would not otherwise be possible to investigate the meaning of propositions, a matter which stands ‘at the threshold’ of logical science itself.

This last remark of our distinguished thinker indicates a point of view regulative for *pure* logic, and, be it noted, for *pure* logic treated as a *philosophical* discipline. I assume accordingly that no one will think it enough to develop pure logic merely in the manner of our mathematical disciplines, as a growing system of propositions having a naïvely factual validity, without also striving to be philosophically clear in regard to these same propositions, without, that is, gaining insight into the essence of the modes of cognition which come into play in their utterance and in the ideal possibility of applying such propositions, together with all such conferments of sense and objective validities as are essentially constituted therein. Linguistic discussions are certainly among the philosophically indispensable preparations for the building of pure logic: only by their aid can the true *objects* of logical research—and, following thereon, the essential species and differentiae of such objects—be refined to a clarity that excludes all misunderstanding. We are not here concerned with grammatical discussions, empirically conceived and related to some historically given language: we are concerned with discussions of a most general sort which cover the wider sphere of an objective *theory of knowledge* and, closely linked with this last, the

*pure phenomenology of the experiences of thinking and knowing*. This phenomenology, like the more inclusive *pure phenomenology of experiences in general*, has, as its exclusive concern, experiences intuitively seizable and analysable in the pure generality of their essence, not experiences empirically perceived and treated as real facts, as experiences of human or animal experients in the phenomenal world that we posit as an empirical fact. This phenomenology must bring to pure expression, must *describe* in terms of their essential concepts and their governing formulae of essence, the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition, and the connections which have their roots purely in such essences. Each such statement of essence is an *a priori* statement in the highest sense of the word. This sphere we must explore in preparation for the epistemological criticism and clarification of pure logic: our investigations will therefore all move within it.

*Pure* phenomenology represents a field of neutral researches, in which several sciences have their roots. It is, on the one hand, an ancillary to *psychology* conceived as an *empirical science*. Proceeding in purely intuitive fashion, it analyses and describes in their essential generality—in the specific guise of a phenomenology of thought and knowledge—the experiences of presentation, judgement and knowledge, experiences which, treated as classes of real events in the natural context of zoological reality, receive a scientific probing at the hands of empirical psychology. Phenomenology, on the other hand, lays bare the ‘sources’ from which the basic concepts and ideal laws of *pure* logic ‘flow’, and back to which they must once more be traced, so as to give them all the ‘clearness and distinctness’ needed for an understanding, and for an epistemological critique, of pure logic. The epistemological or phenomenological groundwork of pure logic involves very hard, but also surpassingly important researches. To revert to what we set forth as the tasks of pure logic in the first volume of these *Investigations*, we have taken it upon us to give firm clarity to notions and laws on which the objective meaning and theoretical unity of all knowledge is dependent.<sup>2</sup>

## § 2 Elucidation of the aims of such investigations

All theoretical research, though by no means solely conducted in acts of verbal expression or complete statement, none the less terminates in such statement. Only in this form can truth, and in particular the truth of theory, become an abiding possession of science, a documented, ever available treasure for knowledge and advancing research. Whatever the connection of thought with speech may be, whether or not the appearance of our final judgements in the form of verbal pronouncements has a necessary grounding in essence, it is at least plain that judgements stemming from higher intellectual regions, and in particular from the regions of science, could barely arise without verbal expression.

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, Book I, ch. I, § I.

<sup>2</sup> See the final chapter of the *Prolegomena*, § § 66–7 in particular.

The objects which pure logic seeks to examine are, in the first instance, therefore given to it in grammatical clothing. Or, more precisely, they come before us embedded in concrete mental states which further function either as the *meaning-intention* or *meaning-fulfilment* of certain verbal expressions—in the latter case intuitively illustrating, or intuitively providing evidence for, our meaning—and forming a *phenomenological unity* with such expressions.

In these complex phenomenological unities the logician must pick out the components that interest him, the characters of the acts, first of all, in which logical presentation, judgement and knowledge are consummated: he must pursue the descriptive analysis of such act-types to the extent that this helps the progress of his properly logical tasks. We cannot straightway leap, from the fact that theory ‘realizes’ itself in certain mental states, and has instances in them, to the seemingly obvious truth that such mental states must count as the primary object of our logical researches. The pure logician is not primarily or properly interested in the psychological judgement, the concrete mental phenomenon, but in the logical judgement, the identical asserted meaning, which is one over against manifold, descriptively quite different, judgement-experiences.<sup>3</sup> There is naturally, in the singular experiences which correspond to this ideal unity, a certain pervasive common feature, but since the concern of the pure logician is not with the concrete instance, but with its corresponding Idea, its abstractly apprehended universal, he has, it would seem, no reason to leave the field of abstraction, nor to make concrete experiences the theme of his probing interest, instead of Ideas.

Even if phenomenological analysis of concrete thought-experiences does not fall within the true home-ground of pure logic, it none the less is indispensable to the advance of purely logical research. For all that is logical must be given in fully concrete fashion, if, as an object of research, it is to be made our own, and if we are to be able to bring to self-evidence the *a priori* laws which have their roots in it. What is logical is first given us in imperfect shape: the concept as a more or less wavering meaning, the law, built out of concepts, as a more or less wavering assertion. We do not therefore lack logical insights, but grasp the pure law with self-evidence, and see how it has its base in the pure forms of thought. Such self-evidence depends, however, on the verbal meanings which come alive in the actual passing of the judgement regarding the law. Unnoticed equivocation may permit the subsequent substitution of other concepts beneath our words, and an appeal on behalf of an altered pro-positional meaning may quite readily, but wrongly, be made on the self-evidence previously experienced. It is also possible, conversely, that a misinterpretation based on equivocation may distort the sense of the propositions of pure logic (perhaps turning them into empirical, psychological propositions), and may tempt us to abandon previously experienced self-evidence and the unique significance of all that belongs to pure logic.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. § II of Investigation I.

It is not therefore enough that the Ideas of logic, and the pure laws set up with them, should be given in such a manner. Our great task is now to *bring the Ideas of logic, the logical concepts and laws, to epistemological clarity and definiteness*.

Here *phenomenological analysis* must begin. Logical concepts, as valid thought-unities, must have their origin in intuition: they must arise out of an ideational intuition founded on certain experiences, and must admit of indefinite reconfirmation, and of recognition of their self-identity, on the reperformance of such abstraction. Otherwise put: we can absolutely not rest content with ‘mere words’, i.e. with a merely symbolic understanding of words, such as we first have when we reflect on the sense of the laws for ‘concepts’, ‘judgements’, ‘truths’ etc. (together with their manifold specifications) which are set up in pure logic. Meanings inspired only by remote, confused, inauthentic intuitions—if by any intuitions at all—are not enough: we must go back to the ‘things themselves’. We desire to render self-evident in fully-fledged intuitions that what is here given in actually performed abstractions is what the word-meanings in our expression of the law really and truly stand for. In the practice of cognition we strive to arouse dispositions in ourselves which will keep our meanings unshakably the same, which will measure them sufficiently often against the mark set by reproducible intuitions or by an intuitive carrying out of our abstraction. Intuitive illustration of the shifting meanings which attach to the same term in differing propositional contexts likewise convinces us of the fact of equivocation: it becomes evident to us that what a word means in this or that case has its fulfilment in essentially different intuitive ‘moments’ or patterns, or in essentially different general notions. By distinguishing among concepts confounded by us, and by suitably modifying our terminology, we then likewise achieve a desired ‘clearness and distinctness’ for our logical propositions.

The phenomenology of the logical experiences aims at giving us a sufficiently wide descriptive (though not empirically-psychological) understanding of these mental states and their indwelling sense, as will enable us to give fixed meanings to all the fundamental concepts of logic. Such meanings will be clarified both by going back to the analytically explored connections between meaning-intentions and meaning-fulfilments, and also by making their possible function in cognition intelligible and certain. They will be such meanings, in short, as the interest of pure logic itself requires, as well as the interest, above all, of epistemological insight into the essence of this discipline. Fundamental logical and noetic concepts have, up to this time, been quite imperfectly clarified: countless equivocations beset them, some so pernicious, so hard to track down, and to keep consistently separate, that they yield the main ground for the very backward state of pure logic and theory of knowledge.

We must of course admit that many conceptual differentiations and circumscriptions of the sphere of pure logic can become evident to the natural attitude without phenomenological analysis. The relevant logical acts are carried out and adequately fitted to their fulfilling intuitions, though there is no reflection on the

phenomenological situation itself. What is most completely evident can, however, be confused with something else, what it apprehends can be misconstrued, its assured directives can be rejected. Clarifying researches are especially needed to explain our by no means chance inclination to slip unwittingly from an objective to a psychological attitude, and to mix up two bodies of data distinguishable in principle however much they may be essentially related, and to be deceived by psychological misconstructions and misinterpretations of the objects of logic. Such clarifications can, by their nature, only be achieved within a phenomenological theory of the essences of our thought- and knowledge-experiences, with continuous regard to the things essentially meant by, and so belonging to the latter (in the precise manners in which those things are *as such* 'shown forth', 'represented' etc.). Psychologism can only be radically overcome by a pure phenomenology, a science infinitely removed from psychology as the empirical science of the mental attributes and states of animal realities. In our sphere, too, the sphere of pure logic, such a phenomenology alone offers us all the necessary conditions for a finally satisfactory establishment of the totality of basic distinctions and insights. It alone frees us from the strong temptation, at first inevitable, since rooted in grounds of essence, to turn the logically objective into the psychological.

The above mentioned motives for phenomenological analysis have an obvious and essential connection with those which spring from *basic questions of epistemology*. For if these questions are taken in the *widest* generality, i.e. in the 'formal' generality which abstracts from all matter of knowledge—they form part of a range of questions involved in the full clarification of the Idea of pure logic. We have, on the one hand, the fact that all thought and knowledge have as their aim *objects* or *states of affairs*, which they putatively 'hit' in the sense that the 'intrinsic being' of these objects and states is supposedly shown forth, and made an identifiable item, in a multitude of actual or possible meanings, or acts of thought. We have, further, the fact that all thought is ensouled by a thought-form which is subject to ideal laws, laws circumscribing the objectivity or ideality of knowledge in general. These facts, I maintain, eternally provoke questions like: How are we to understand the fact that the intrinsic being of objectivity becomes 'presented', 'apprehended' in knowledge, and so ends up by becoming subjective? What does it mean to say that the object has 'intrinsic being', and is 'given' in knowledge? How can the ideality of the universal *qua* concept or law enter the flux of real mental states and become an epistemic possession of the thinking person? What does the *adaequatio rei et intellectus* mean in various cases of knowledge, according as what we apprehend and know, is individual or universal, a fact or a law etc.? These and similar questions can, it is plain, not be separated from the above-mentioned questions regarding the clarification of pure logic, since the task of clarifying such logical Ideas as Concept and Object, Truth and Proposition, Fact and Law etc., inevitably leads on to these same questions. We should in any case have to tackle them so that the essence of the clarification aimed at in phenomenological analyses should not itself be left obscure.

### § 3 The difficulties of pure phenomenological analysis

The difficulties of clearing up the basic concepts of logic are a natural consequence of the extraordinary difficulties of strict phenomenological analysis. These are in the main the same whether our immanent analysis aims at the *pure* essence of experiences (all empirical facticity and individuation being excluded) or treats experiences from an empirical, psychological standpoint. Psychologists usually discuss such difficulties when they consider introspection as a source of our detailed psychological knowledge, not properly however, but in order to draw a false antithesis between introspection and 'outer' perception. The source of all such difficulties lies in the unnatural direction of intuition and thought which phenomenological analysis requires. Instead of becoming lost in the performance of acts built intricately on one another, and instead of (as it were) naïvely positing the existence of the objects intended in their sense and then going on to characterize them, or of assuming such objects hypothetically, of drawing conclusions from all this etc., we must rather practise 'reflection', i.e. make these acts themselves, and their immanent meaning-content, our objects. When objects are intuited, thought of, theoretically pondered on, and thereby given to us as actualities in certain ontic modalities, we must direct our theoretical interest away from such objects, not posit them as realities as they appear or hold in the intentions of our acts. These acts, contrariwise, though hitherto not objective, must now be made objects of apprehension and of theoretical assertion. We must deal with them in new acts of intuition and thinking, we must analyse and describe them in their essence, we must make them objects of empirical or ideational thought. Here we have a direction of thought running counter to deeply ingrained habits which have been steadily strengthened since the dawn of mental development. Hence the well-nigh ineradicable tendency to slip out of a phenomenological thought-stance into one that is straightforwardly objective, or to substitute for mental acts, or for the 'appearances' or 'meanings' immanent in them, characters which, in a naïve performance of such acts, were attributed to their objects. Hence, too, the tendency to treat whole classes of genuinely subsistent objects, e.g. Ideas—since these may be evidently given to us in ideating intuitions—as phenomenological constituents of presentations of them.

A much discussed difficulty—one which seems to threaten in principle all possible immanent description of mental acts or indeed all phenomenological treatment of essences—lies in the fact that when we pass over from naïvely performed acts to an attitude of reflection, or when we perform acts proper to such reflection, our former acts necessarily undergo change. How can we rightly assess the nature and extent of such change? How indeed can we know anything whatever about it, whether as a fact or as a necessity of essence?

In addition to this difficulty of reaching firm results, capable of being self-evidently reidentified on many occasions, we have the further difficulty of *stating such results*, of *communicating them to others*. Completely self-evident truths of essence, established by the most exact analysis, must be expounded by way of expressions whose rich variety does not compensate for the fact that they only fit familiar natural objects, while the experiences in which such objects become constituted for consciousness, can be directly referred to only by way of a few highly ambiguous words such as 'sensation' 'perception', 'presentation' etc. One has, further, to employ expressions which stand for what is intentional in such acts, for the object to which they are directed, since it is, in fact, impossible to describe referential acts without using expressions which recur to the things to which such acts refer. One then readily forgets that such subsidiarily described objectivity, which is necessarily introduced into almost all phenomenological description, has undergone a change of sense, in virtue of which it now belongs to the sphere of phenomenology.

If we ignore such difficulties, others emerge concerned with the persuasive communication of our resultant insights to others. These insights can be tested and confirmed only by persons well-trained in the ability to engage in pure description in the unnatural attitude of reflection, trained in short to allow phenomenological relations to work upon them *in full purity*. Such purity means that we must keep out the falsifying intrusion of all assertions based on the naïve acceptance and assessment of objects, whose existence has been posited in the acts now receiving phenomenological treatment. It likewise prohibits any other going beyond whatever is essential and proper to such acts, any application to them of naturalistic interpretations and assertions. It forbids us, i.e., to set them up as psychological realities (even in an indefinitely general or exemplary fashion), as the states of 'mind-endowed beings' of any sort whatsoever. The capacity for such researches is not readily come by, nor can it be achieved or replaced by, e.g., the most elaborate of trainings in experimental psychology.

Serious as are the difficulties standing in the way of a pure phenomenology in general, and of the phenomenology of the logical experiences in particular, they are by no means such as to make the whole attempt to overcome them appear hopeless. Resolute cooperation among a generation of research-workers, conscious of their goal and dedicated to the main issue, would, I think, suffice to decide the most important questions in the field, those concerned with its basic constitution. Here we have a field of *attainable* discoveries, fundamentally involved in the possibility of a *scientific* philosophy. Such discoveries have indeed nothing dazzling about them: they lack any obviously useful relation to practice or to the fulfilment of higher emotional needs. They also lack any imposing apparatus of experimental methodology, through which experimental psychology has gained so much credit and has built up such a rich force of cooperative workers.

## § 4 It is essential to keep in mind the grammatical side of our logical experiences

Analytic phenomenology, needed by the logician in his preparatory laying of foundations, is concerned, among other things, with 'presentations' and with them primarily; it is, more precisely, concerned with those presentations to which *expression* has been given. In the complex objects of its study, its primary interest attaches to the experiences lying behind 'mere expressions', experiences which perform roles either of meaning-intention or of meaning-fulfilment. It cannot, however, quite ignore the sensuous-linguistic side of its complex objects (the element of 'mere expression' in them) nor the way in which this element is associated with the meaning that 'ensouls' it. Everyone knows how readily and how unnoticeably an analysis of meaning can be led astray by grammatical analysis. Since the direct analysis of meaning is, however, difficult, we may welcome each aid, however imperfect, that indirectly anticipates its results, but grammatical analysis is even more important in virtue of the errors its use promotes when it replaces a *true analysis of meaning*, than for any positive aid. Rough reflection on our thoughts and their verbal expression, conducted by us without special schooling, and often needed for the practical ends of thinking, suffice to indicate a certain parallelism between thinking and speaking. We all know that words mean something, and that, generally speaking, different words express different meanings. If we could regard such a correspondence as perfect, and as given *a priori*, and as one particularly in which the essential categories of meaning had perfect mirror-images in the categories of grammar, a phenomenology of linguistic forms would include a phenomenology of the meaning-experiences (experiences of thinking, judging etc.) and meaning-analysis would, so to speak, coincide with grammatical analysis.

Deep reflection is not, however, needed to show that a parallelism satisfying such far-reaching demands has as little foundation in grounds of essence as it obtains in fact. *Grammatically relevant distinctions of meaning* are at times *essential*, at times *contingent*, according as the practical aims of speech dictate peculiar forms for essential or contingent differences of meaning. (The latter are merely such as have a frequent occurrence in human intercourse.)

It is well-known, however, that differentiation of expressions does not merely depend on differences of meaning. I need point only to 'shades' of meaning, or to aesthetic tendencies which fight against any bare uniformity of expression, or against discord in speech-sound or rhythm, and so demand an abundant store of available synonyms.

The rough concomitances among verbal and thought-differences, and particularly among *forms* of words and thoughts, makes us naturally tend to seek logical distinctions behind expressed grammatical distinctions. It is, therefore, *an important*

*matter for logic that the relation between expression and meaning should be made analytically clear.* We should perceive clearly that, in order to decide whether a distinction should, in a given case, count as logical or merely grammatical, we must go back from *vague* acts of meaning to the correspondingly clear, articulate ones, acts saturated with the fullness of exemplary intuition in which their meaning is fulfilled.

It is not enough to have the common knowledge, easily garnered from suitable examples, that grammatical differences need not coincide with logical ones. The common knowledge that such distinctions do not always go hand in hand—that languages, in other words, express material differences of meaning, widely used in communication, in forms as pervasive as the fundamental logical differences having their *a priori* roots in the general essence of meanings—such common knowledge may open the way to a dangerous radicalism. The field of logical forms may be unduly restricted. A wide range of logically significant forms may be cast forth as merely grammatical: only a few may be kept, such as suffice to leave some content to traditional syllogizing. Brentano's attempted reform of formal logic, valuable as it no doubt still is, plainly suffered from this exaggeration. Only a complete clearing-up of the essential phenomenological relations between expression and meaning, or between meaning-intention and meaning-fulfilment, can give us a firm middle stance, and can enable us to give the requisite clearness to the relations between grammatical and meaning-analysis.

## § 5 Statement of the main aims of the following analytical investigations

We accordingly pass to a series of analytic investigations which will clear up the constitutive Ideas of a pure or formal logic, investigations which relate in the first place to the pure theory of logical forms. Starting with the empirical connection between meaning-experiences and expressions, we must try to find out what our variously ambiguous talk about 'expressing' or 'meaning' really amounts to. We must try to see what essential phenomenological or logical distinctions apply *a priori* to expressions, and how we may in essence describe, and may place in pure categories, the experiences—to deal first with the phenomenological side of expressions—that have an *a priori* fitness for the meaning-function. We must find out how the 'presenting' and 'judging' achieved in such experiences stand to their corresponding 'intuition', how they are 'illustrated', or perhaps 'confirmed' or 'fulfilled', in the latter, or rendered 'evident' by it etc. It is not hard to see that investigations of such matters must precede all clarifications of the basic concepts and categories of logic. Among our introductory investigations we shall have to raise fundamental questions as to the acts, or, alternatively, the ideal meanings, which in logic pass under the name of 'presentations' (*Vorstellungen*). It is important to clarify and prise apart the many concepts that the word 'presentation' has covered, concepts in

which the psychological, the epistemological and the logical are utterly confused. Similar analyses deal with the concept of *judgement* in the sense in which logic is concerned with it. So-called 'judgement-theory' neglects this task: it is in the main, in respect of its essential problems, a theory of presentation. We are naturally not interested in a psychological theory, but in a phenomenology of presentation- and judgement-experiences as delimited by our epistemological interests.

As we probe the essence of the expressive experiences, we must also dig more deeply into their *intentional subject-matter*, their objective intention's ideal sense, i.e. into the unity of its meaning and the unity of its object. We must, above all, dwell upon the enigmatic double sense or manner, the twosided context, in which the same experience has a 'content', and the manner in which in addition to its real (*reell*) and plainly performed on an actual *given* basis of experiences of thinking and knowing. That acts of thought at times refer to transcendent, even to non-existent and impossible objects, is not to the case. For such direction to objects, such presentation and meaning of what is not really (*reell*) part of the phenomenological make-up of our experiences, is a descriptive feature of the experiences in question, whose sense it should be possible to fix and clarify by considering the experiences themselves. In no other way would it be possible.

We must keep apart from the pure theory of knowledge questions concerning the justifiability of accepting 'mental' and 'physical' realities which transcend consciousness, questions whether the statements of scientists regarding them are to be given a serious or unserious sense, questions whether it is justifiable or sensible to oppose a second, even more emphatically 'transcendent' world, to the phenomenal nature with which science is correlated, and other similar questions. The question as to the existence and nature of 'the external world' is a metaphysical question. The theory of knowledge, in generally clearing up the ideal essence and valid sense of cognitive thought, will of course deal with general questions regarding the possibility and manner of a knowledge or rational surmise about 'real' objective things, things in principle transcending the experiences which know them, and regarding the norms which the true sense of such a knowledge requires: it will not enter upon the empirically oriented question as to whether we as men really can arrive at such knowledge from the data we actually have, nor will it attempt to realize such knowledge. On our view, theory of knowledge, properly described, is no theory. It is not science in the pointed sense of an explanatorily unified theoretical whole. *Theoretical explanation* means an ever increased rendering intelligible of singular facts through general laws, and an ever increased rendering intelligible of general laws through some fundamental law. In the realm of facts, our task is to know that what happens under given groups of circumstances, happens *necessarily*, i.e. according to *natural laws*. In the realm of the *a priori* our task is to understand the *necessity* of specific, lower-level relationships in terms of comprehensive general necessities, and ultimately in terms of those most primitive, universal

relational *laws* that we call axioms. The theory of knowledge has nothing to explain in this theoretical sense, it neither constructs deductive theories nor falls under any. This is clear enough if we consider the most general, the so-to-say formal theory of knowledge that came before us in our *Prolegomena* as the philosophical completion of pure mathematics conceived in absolute width as including all *a priori*, categorial knowledge in the form of systematic theories. This theory of theories goes together with, and is illuminated by, a-formal theory of knowledge which precedes all empirical theory, which precedes, therefore, all empirical knowledge of the real, all physical science on the one hand, and all psychology on the other, and of course all metaphysics. Its aim is not to *explain* knowledge in the psychological or psychophysical sense as a *factual* occurrence in objective nature, but to *shed light* on the *Idea* of knowledge in its constitutive elements and laws. It does not try to follow up the real connections of coexistence and succession with which actual acts of knowledge are interwoven, but to understand the *ideal* sense of the *specific* connections in which the objectivity of knowledge may be documented. It endeavours to raise to clearness the pure forms and laws of knowledge by tracing knowledge back to an adequate fulfilment in intuition. This 'clearing up' takes place in the framework of a phenomenology of knowledge, a phenomenology oriented, as we saw, to the essential structures of pure experiences and to the structures of sense (*Sinnbestände*) that belong to these. From the beginning, as at all later stages, its scientific statements involve not the slightest reference to real existence: no metaphysical, scientific and, above all, no psychological assertions can therefore occur among its premisses.

A purely phenomenological 'theory' of knowledge naturally has an application to all naturally developed, and (in a good sense) 'naïve' sciences, which it transforms into 'philosophical' sciences. It transforms them, in other words, into sciences which provide us with clarified, assured knowledge in every sense in which it is possible to desire the latter. As regards the sciences of 'reality', such epistemological clarification can as much be regarded as a 'scientific' as a 'metaphysical' evaluation.

The investigations which follow aspire solely to such freedom from metaphysical, scientific and psychological presuppositions. No harm will of course be done by occasional side-references which remain without effect on the content and character of one's analyses, nor by the many expository devices addressed to one's public, whose existence (like one's own) is not therefore presupposed by the content of one's investigations. Nor does one exceed one's prescribed limits if one starts, e.g., from existent languages and discusses the merely communicative meaning of their many forms of expression, and so on. It is easily seen that the sense and the epistemological worth of the following analyses does not depend on the fact that there really are languages, and that men really make use of them in their mutual dealings, or that there really are such things as men and a nature, and that they do not merely exist in imagined, possible fashion.

The real premisses of our putative results must lie in propositions satisfying the requirement that what they assert permits of an *adequate phenomenological justification*, a fulfilment through *evidence* in the strictest sense. Such propositions must not, further, ever be adduced in some other sense than that in which they have been intuitively established.

**Reading 9.3****EXERCISE 4**

From: Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time* (translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson) Oxford: Blackwell (Extract pp. 95–99).

## A. Analysis of Environmentality and Worldhood in General

### 15. The Being of the Entities Encountered in the Environment

The Being of those entities which we encounter as closest to us can be exhibited phenomenologically if we take as our clue our everyday Being-in-the-world, which we also call our “dealings”<sup>1</sup> in the world and *with* entities within-the-world. Such dealings have already dispersed themselves into manifold ways of concern. The kind of dealing which is closest to us is as we have shown, not a bare perceptual cognition, but rather that kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use; and this has its own kind of ‘knowledge’. The phenomenological question applies in the first instance to the Being of those entities which we encounter in such concern. To assure the kind of seeing which is here required, we must first make a remark about method.

In the disclosure and explication of Being, entities are in every case our preliminary and our accompanying theme [das Vor-und Mitthematische]; but our real theme is Being. In the domain of the present analysis, the entities we shall take as our preliminary theme are those which show themselves in our concern with the environment. Such entities are not thereby objects for knowing the ‘world’ theoretically; they are simply what gets used, what gets produced, and so forth. As entities so encountered, they become the preliminary theme for the purview of a ‘knowing’ which, as phenomenological, looks primarily towards Being, and which, in thus taking Being as its theme, takes these entities as its accompanying theme. This phenomenological interpretation is accordingly not a way of knowing proper content, an ideal, intentional content must and can dwell in it.

Here also belong questions relating to the ‘object-directedness’ or ‘objectlessness’ of logical acts, to the sense of the distinction between intentional and true objects, to the clarification of the Idea of truth in relation to the Idea of judgemental self-evidence, to the clarification of the remaining, closely connected logical and noetic categories. These investigations in part cover the same ground as those dealing with the constitution of logical forms, to the extent, of course, that we settle questions as to the acceptance or rejection of putative logical forms, or doubts as to their logical or merely grammatical distinctness from forms already recognized, in the course of our clarification of form-giving, categorial concepts.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Umgang’. This word means literally a ‘going around’ or ‘going about’, in a sense not too far removed from what we have in mind when we say that someone is ‘going about his business’. ‘Dealings’ is by no means an accurate translation, but is perhaps as convenient as any. ‘Intercourse’ and ‘trafficking’ are also possible translations.

We have thus vaguely indicated the range of problems to which the ensuing investigations will be oriented. These investigations make no claim to be exhaustive. Their aim is not to provide a logical system, but to do the initial spadework for a philosophical logic which will derive clearness from basic phenomenological sources. The paths taken by such an analytic investigation will also naturally differ from those suitable to a final, systematic, logically ordered statement of established truth.

## § 6 Additional notes

*Note 1* Our investigations will often inevitably take us beyond the narrow phenomenological sphere whose study is really required for giving direct evidence to the Ideas of logic. This sphere is itself not given to us initially, but becomes delimited in the course of our investigation. We are, in particular, forced beyond this sphere of research when we prise apart the many confused concepts obscurely confounded in our understanding of logical terms, and when we find which of them are truly logical.

*Note 2* To lay down the phenomenological foundations of logic involves the difficulty that we must, in our exposition, make use of all the concepts we are trying to clarify. This coincides with a certain wholly irremovable defect which affects the systematic course of our basic phenomenological and epistemological investigations. If a type of thought requires prior clarification, we should not make uncritical use of its terms or concepts in that clarification itself. But one should not expect that one should only be required to analyse such concepts critically, when the actual interconnection of one’s logical materials has led up to them. Or, put differently, systematic clarification, whether in pure logic or any other discipline, would in itself seem to require a stepwise following out of the ordering of things, of the systematic inter-connection in the science to be clarified. Our investigation can, however, only proceed securely, if it repeatedly breaks with such systematic sequence, if it removes conceptual obscurities which threaten the course of investigation *before* the natural sequence of subject-matters can lead up to such concepts. We search, as it were, in zig-zag fashion, a metaphor all the more apt since the close interdependence of our various epistemological concepts leads us back again and again to our original analyses, where the new confirms the old, and the old the new.

*Note 3* If *our* sense of phenomenology has been grasped, and if it has not been given the current interpretation of an ordinary ‘descriptive psychology’, a part of natural science, then an objection, otherwise justifiable, will fall to the ground, an objection to the effect that all theory of knowledge, conceived as a systematic phenomenological clarification of knowledge, is built upon psychology. On this interpretation pure logic, treated by us as an epistemologically clarified, *philosophical* discipline, must in the end likewise rest upon psychology, if only upon its preliminary descriptive researches into intentional experiences. Why then so much heated resistance to psychologism?

We naturally reply that if psychology is given its old meaning, phenomenology is not descriptive psychology: its peculiar 'pure' description, its contemplation of pure essences on a basis of exemplary individual intuitions of experiences (often freely *imagined* ones), and its descriptive fixation of the contemplated essences into pure concepts, is no empirical, scientific description. It rather excludes the natural performance of all empirical (naturalistic) apperceptions and positings. Statements of descriptive psychology regarding 'perceptions', 'judgements', 'feelings', 'volitions' etc., use such names to refer to the real states of animal organisms in a real natural order, just as descriptive statements concerning physical states deal with happenings in a nature not imagined but real. All general statements have here a character of empirical generality: they hold for this nature. Phenomenology, however, does not discuss states of animal organisms (not even as belonging to a possible nature as such), but perceptions, judgements, feelings *as such*, and what pertains to them *a priori* with unlimited generality, as *pure* instances of *pure* species, of what may be seen through a purely intuitive apprehension of essence, whether generic or specific. Pure arithmetic likewise speaks of numbers, a pure geometry of spatial shapes, employing pure intuitions in their ideational universality. Not psychology, therefore, but phenomenology, underlies all clarifications in pure logic (and in all forms of rational criticism). Phenomenology has, however, a very different function as the necessary basis for every psychology that could with justification and in strictness be called scientific, just as pure mathematics, e.g. pure geometry and dynamics, is the necessary foundation for all exact natural science (any theory of empirical things in nature with their empirical forms, movements etc.). Our essential insights into perceptions, volitions and other forms of experience will naturally hold also of the corresponding empirical states of animal organisms, as geometrical insights hold of spatial figures in nature.

*Translator's Additional Note 4* The above Note 3 is a typical account of what Husserl had come to mean by 'phenomenology' by the time that the Second Edition of the *Logical Investigations* was published in 1913. It replaces the following Note, which indicates what he meant by the term when the First Edition was published in 1901:

Phenomenology is descriptive psychology. Epistemological criticism is therefore in essence psychology, or at least only capable of being built on a psychological basis. Pure logic therefore also rests on psychology—what then is the point of the whole battle against psychologism?

The necessity of *this* sort of psychological foundation of pure logic, i.e. a strictly descriptive one, cannot lead us into error regarding the mutual independence of the two sciences, logic and psychology. For pure description is merely a preparatory step towards theory, not theory itself. One and the same sphere of pure description can accordingly serve to prepare for very different theoretical sciences. It is *not the full science of psychology that serves as a foundation for pure logic*, but certain classes of descriptions which are the step preparatory to the theoretical

researches of psychology. These in so far as they describe the empirical objects whose genetic connections the science wishes to pursue, also form the substrate for those fundamental abstractions in which logic seizes the essence of its ideal objects and connections with inward evidence. Since it is epistemologically of unique importance that we should separate the purely descriptive examination of the knowledge-experience, disembarassed of all theoretical psychological interests, from the truly psychological researches directed to empirical explanation and origins, it will be good if we rather speak of 'phenomenology' than of descriptive psychology. It also recommends itself for the further reason that the expression 'descriptive psychology', as it occurs in the talk of many scientists, means the sphere of scientific psychological investigation, which is marked off by a methodological preference for inner experience and by an abstraction from all psychophysical explanation.

## § 7 'Freedom from presuppositions' as a principle in epistemological investigations

An epistemological investigation that can seriously claim to be scientific must, it has often been emphasized, satisfy the *principle of freedom from presuppositions*. This principle, we think, only seeks to express the strict exclusion of all statements not permitting of a comprehensive *phenomenological* realization. Every epistemological investigation that we carry out must have its pure foundation in phenomenology. The 'theory' that it aspires to, is no more than a thinking over, a coming to an evident understanding of, thinking and knowing as such, in their pure generic essence, of the specifications and forms that they essentially have, of the immanent structures that their objective relations involve, of the meaning of 'validity', 'justification', 'mediate' and 'immediate evidence', and their opposites, as applied to such structures, of the parallel specifications of such Ideas in relation to varying regions of possible objects of knowledge, of the clarified sense and role of the formal and material 'laws of thought' seen in their *a priori* structural connections with the knowing consciousness etc. If such a 'thinking over' of the meaning of knowledge is itself to yield, not mere opinion, but the evident knowledge it strictly demands, it must be a pure intuition of essences, exempt of those characteristics of entities which themselves are [seiender Beschaffenheiten des Seienden]; it is rather a determination of the structure of the Being which entities possess. But as an investigation of Being, it brings to completion, autonomously and explicitly, that understanding of Being which belongs already to Dasein and which 'comes alive' in any of its dealings with entities. Those entities which serve phenomenologically as our preliminary theme—in this case, those which are used or which are to be found in the course of production—become accessible when we put ourselves into the position of concerning ourselves with them in some such way. Taken strictly, this talk about "putting ourselves

into such a position” [Sichversetzen] is misleading; for the kind of Being which belongs to such concerned dealings is not one into which we need to put ourselves first. This is the way in which everyday Dasein always *is*: when I open the door, for instance, I use the latch. The achieving of phenomenological access to the entities which we encounter, consists rather in thrusting aside our interpretative tendencies, which keep thrusting themselves upon us and running along with us, and which conceal not only the phenomenon of such ‘concern’, but even more those entities themselves *as* encountered of their own accord *in* our concern with them. These entangling errors become plain if in the course of our investigation we now ask which entities shall be taken as our preliminary theme and established as the pre-phenomenal basis for our study.

One may answer: “Things.” But with this obvious answer we have perhaps already missed the pre-phenomenal basis we are seeking. For in addressing these entities as ‘Things’ (*res*), we have, tacitly anticipated their ontological character. When analysis starts with such entities and goes on to inquire about Being, what it meets is Thinghood and Reality. Ontological explication discovers, as it proceeds, such characteristics of Being as substantiality, materiality, extendedness, side-by-side-ness, and so forth. But even pre-ontologically, in such Being as this, the entities which we encounter in concern are proximally hidden. When one designates Things as the entities that are ‘proximally given’, one goes ontologically astray, even though ontically one has something else in mind. What one really has in mind remains undetermined. But suppose one characterizes these ‘Things’ as Things ‘invested with value’? What does “value” mean ontologically? How are we to categorize this ‘investing’ and Being-invested? Disregarding the obscurity of this structure of investiture with value, have we thus met that phenomenal characteristic of Being which belongs to what we encounter in our concerned dealings?

The Greeks had an appropriate term for ‘Things’: *πράγματα*—that is to say, that which one has to do with in one’s concerned dealings (*πράξις*). But ontologically, the specifically ‘pragmatic’ character of the *πράγματα* is just what the Greeks left in obscurity; they thought of these ‘proximally’ as ‘mere Things’. We shall call those entities which we encounter in concern “*equipment*”.<sup>2</sup> In our dealings we come across equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement. The kind of Being which equipment possesses must be exhibited. The clue for doing this lies in our first defining what makes an item of equipment—namely, its equipmentality.

<sup>2</sup> ‘das Zeug’. The word ‘Zeug’ has no precise English equivalent. While it may mean any implement, instrument, or tool, Heidegger uses it for the most part as a collective noun which is analogous to our relatively specific ‘gear’ (as in ‘gear for fishing’) or the more elaborate ‘paraphernalia’, or the still more general ‘equipment’, which we shall employ throughout this translation. In this collective sense ‘Zeug’ can sometimes be used in a way which is comparable to the use of ‘stuff’ in such sentences as ‘there is plenty of stuff lying around’. In general, however, this pejorative connotation is lacking. For the most part Heidegger uses the term as a collective noun, so that he can say that there is no such thing as ‘an equipment’; but he still uses it occasionally with an indefinite article to refer to some specific tool or instrument—some item or bit of equipment.

Taken strictly, there ‘is’ no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment is essentially ‘something in-order-to . . .’ [“etwas um-zu . . .”]. A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the ‘in-order-to’, such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability.

In the ‘in-order-to’ as a structure there lies an *assignment* or *reference* of something to something.<sup>3</sup> Only in the analyses which are to follow can the phenomenon which this term ‘assignment’ indicates be made visible in its ontological genesis. Provisionally, it is enough to take a look phenomenally at a manifold of such assignments. Equipment—in accordance with its equipmentality—always is *in terms of* [*aus*] its belonging to other equipment: inkstand, pen, ink, paper, blotting pad, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room. These ‘Things’ never show themselves proximally as they are for themselves, so as to add up to a sum of *realia* and fill up a room. What we encounter as closest to us (though not as something taken as a theme) is the room; and we encounter it not as something ‘between four walls’ in a geometrical spatial sense, but as equipment for residing. Out of this the ‘arrangement’ emerges, and it is in this that any ‘individual’ item of equipment shows itself. *Before* it does so, a totality of equipment has already been discovered.

Equipment can genuinely show itself only in dealings cut to its own measure (hammering with a hammer, for example); but in such dealings an entity of this kind is not *grasped* thematically as an occurring Thing nor is the equipment-structure known as such even in the using. The hammering does not simply have knowledge about [um] the hammer’s character as equipment, but it has appropriated this equipment in a way which could not possibly be more suitable. In dealings such as this, where something is put to use, our concern subordinates itself to the “in-order-to” which is constitutive for the equipment we are employing at the time; the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific ‘manipulability’ [“Handlichkeit”] of the hammer. The kind of

<sup>3</sup> ‘In der Struktur “Um-zu” liegt eine *Verweisung* von etwas auf etwas.’ There is no close English equivalent for the word ‘Verweisung’, which occurs many times in this chapter. The basic metaphor seems to be that of *turning* something away towards something else, or *pointing* it away, as when one ‘refers’ or ‘commits’ or ‘relegates’ or ‘assigns’ something to something else, whether one ‘refers’ a symbol to what it symbolizes, ‘refers’ a beggar to a welfare agency, ‘commits’ a person for trial, ‘relegates’ or ‘banishes’ him to Siberia, or even ‘assigns’ equipment to a purpose for which it is to be used. ‘Verweisung’ thus does some of the work of ‘reference’, ‘commitment’, ‘assignment’, ‘relegation’, ‘banishment’; but it does not do *all* the work of any of these expressions. For a businessman to ‘refer’ to a letter, for a symbol to ‘refer’ to what it symbolizes, for a man to ‘commit larceny or murder’ or merely to ‘commit himself’ to certain partisan views, for a teacher to give a pupil a long ‘assignment’, or even for a journalist to receive an ‘assignment’ to the Vatican, we would have to find some other verb than ‘verweisen’. We shall, however, use the verbs ‘assign’ and ‘refer’ and their derivatives as perhaps the least misleading substitutes, employing whichever seems the more appropriate in the context, and occasionally using a hendiadys as in the present passage. See Section 17 for further discussion. (When other words such as ‘anweisen’ or ‘zuweisen’ are translated as ‘assign’, we shall usually subjoin the German in brackets.)

Being which equipment possesses—in which it manifests itself in its own right—we call “*readiness-to-hand*” [*Zuhandenheit*].<sup>4</sup> Only because equipment has *this* ‘Being-in-itself’ and does not merely occur, is it manipulable in the broadest sense, and at our disposal. No matter how sharply we just *look* [Nur-noch-*hinsehen*] at the ‘outward appearance’ [“Aussehen”] of Things in whatever, form this takes, we cannot discover anything ready-to-hand. If we look at Things just ‘theoretically’, we can get along without understanding readiness-to-hand. But when we deal with them by using them and manipulating them, this activity is not a blind one; it has its own kind of sight, by which our manipulation is guided and from which it acquires its specific Thingly character. Dealings with equipment subordinate themselves to the manifold assignments of the ‘in-order-to’. And the sight with which they thus accommodate themselves is *circumspection*.<sup>5</sup>

‘Practical’ behaviour is not ‘atheoretical’ in the sense of “sightlessness”.<sup>6</sup> The way it differs from theoretical behaviour does not lie simply in the fact that in theoretical behaviour one observes, while

in practical behaviour one *acts* [*gehandelt* wird], and that action must employ theoretical cognition if it is not to remain blind; for the fact that observation is a kind of concern is just as primordial as the fact that action has *its own* kind of sight. Theoretical behaviour is joist looking, without circumspection. But the fact that this looking is non-circumspective does not mean that it follows no rules: it constructs a canon for itself in the form of *method*.

The ready-to-hand is not grasped theoretically at all, nor is it itself the sort of thing that circumspection takes proximally as a circumspective theme. The peculiarity of what is proximally ready-to-hand is that, in its readiness-to-hand, it must, as it were, withdraw [*zurückziehen*] in order to be ready-to-hand quite authentically. That with which our everyday dealings proximally dwell is not the tools themselves [*die Werkzeuge selbst*]. On the contrary, that with which we concern ourselves primarily is the work—that which is to be produced at the time; and this is accordingly ready-to-hand too. The work bears with it that referential totality within which the equipment is encountered.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Italics only in earlier editions.

<sup>5</sup> The word ‘Umsicht’, which we translate by ‘circumspection’, is here presented as, standing for a special kind of ‘Sicht’ (‘sight’). Here, as elsewhere, Heidegger is taking advantage of the fact that the prefix ‘*um*’ may mean either ‘around’ or ‘in order to’ ‘Umsicht’ may accordingly be thought of as meaning ‘looking around’ or ‘looking around for something’ or ‘looking around for a way to get something done’. In ordinary German usage, ‘Umsicht’ seems to have much the same connotation as our ‘circumspection’—a kind of awareness in which one looks around before one decides just what one ought to do next. But Heidegger seems to be generalizing this notion as well as calling attention to the extent to which circumspection in the narrower sense occurs in our every-day living. (The distinction between ‘sight’ (Sicht) and ‘seeing’ (Sehen) will be developed further in Sections 31 and 36 below.)

<sup>6</sup> ‘... im Sinne der Sichtlosigkeit . . .’ The point of this sentence will be clear to the reader who recalls that the Greek verb *θεωρεῖν*, from which the words ‘theoretical’ and ‘atheoretical’ are derived, originally meant ‘to see’. Heidegger is pointing out that this is not what we have in mind in the traditional contrast between the ‘theoretical’ and the ‘practical’.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Das Werk trägt die Verweisungsganzheit, innerhalb derer das Zeug begegnet.’ In this chapter the word ‘Werk’ (‘work’) usually refers to the product achieved by working rather than to the process of working as such. We shall as a rule translate ‘Verweisungsganzheit’ as ‘referential totality’, though sometimes the clumsier ‘totality of assignments’ may convey the idea more effectively. (The older editions read ‘deren’ rather than ‘derer’.)