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Edmund Husserl's Philosophy of Knowledge

(self-presentation and description of the main theses)

This dissertation starts with a methodological introduction, being also a mean of self-orientation through the contemporary tendencies of secondary literature. This study is meant to be a so-called midway between microanalysis of the micro-context of Husserl's texts (which I've been mostly engaged in) (1), and the global depiction of some marking standpoints in intellectual history and in the history of ideas (2). Its intention is to near Husserl's early thinking to his late philosophy – or at least to make an approach of doing it.

The structure and the theses of the main discoursing part can be summarized as the following:

a) The whole text of the study focuses on the presence and the relation of *five important topics* in Husserl's last work published in Germany, the 1929 text after his academic retirement, *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (from now on *FTL*), by rendering it to their occurrence in the so-called 'early' and 'late' pieces (manuscripts and published works). This runs out to evaluate positively Husserl's self-characterization of the *FTL* by considering it his "best work, but a little too concentrated".

b) In Chapter 1 I work out a close-reading based triad of the term "origin" (*Ursprung*) and I place it as a ground motive of the whole analysis. These three senses are in the context of philosophy of knowledge the following:

(i) genetic (referring to the origin of sg) relations are natural relations, being part of the field of research of the sciences of cognition; (ii) genetic relations are trivial (so are the static ones too), but they must be strictly delimited in a scientific discourse; (iii) genetic is a secondary way of analysis, which have to be omitted as soon as possible. The *FTL*'s account of genetic method brings some novelties.

In *FTL* the traditional epistemological problem of the origin of knowledge is being transformed into the problem of the correlation of subjective and objective sides of science. Subjective and objective are in terms of correlation – they are not the origin of each other.

c) Chapter 2 treat the three senses of logic and their relation. In the 1906/07 introductory lecture logic has three layers: it's a practical craftsmanship and in the meantime a twofold theoretical science: the description of the structure of thinking and a theory of what thinking should be (a prescriptive, normative definition). This reveals two things: 1) in the texts from the entourage of the *Logical Investigations* (cited so forth as *LI*) the phenomenological clarification of logical acts is mostly the task of an epistemologically conscious logical theory; 2) this logic is self-reflexive, which means that its norms are made by itself and so are not coming from the outside. This is the ground of the late thesis that cognition is capable of giving norms to itself. This is what I'll call later the capacity of self-norming.

d) In Chapter 3 I focus on some important topics of Husserl's late philosophy. I try to set up the following:

d1) From the use of the method of primordial reduction (*Primordialreduktion*) Husserl's constitution theory gains a considerable profit. Primordial reduction was made to clarify the complication level of the layers of constitution. It helps us to avoid the false hypothesis, that Husserl's intention consisted in also solving the most complicated problems of constitution by means of the primordial reduction – by presuming the latter we neglect the most valuable benefit of this method. (Constitution theory is regarded as an analogy to the psychological theories of Husserl's contemporaries dealing with the level of complication of intellectual acts – but Husserl's proceedings are definitively the most imperishable.)

d2) Husserl uses two concepts of sedimentation (*Sedimentierung*). I prove it by presenting the two concepts of foundation (*Fundierung*). Between *one-sided* and *reciprocal* foundation and *real* respectively *transcendental* sedimentation exists a concrete linkage. I mean by *real sedimentation* one of Husserl's late concepts that owes a lot to Eugen Fink's publishing policy and to the very rich continental reception the *Crisis*-work. The sedimented knowledge is a perplexing, masking and obscuring process, where the presentational origin of an information is lost. *Transcendental sedimentation* is incomprehensible without the study of constitution theory: in this form of synthesis a higher intellectual act contributes to realizing a lower intellectual act: theoretical contents, types of cognition or speaking with Kant "the concepts" contribute to an uncluttered course of perception. The both types of sedimentation exist only in the genetic

phenomenology, but without the second one, the first is completely useless and gets very near to the triviality of origin in the second sense (section *b/ii*).

Sedimentation is not only a *terminus technicus* of Husserl's late crisis-interpretation, but a key to his whole epistemology. It helps us to comprehend the puzzling fact, that we are able to use complicate information (predicative data, moments from the highest level on constitution) on a very rudimentary level of cognition and respectively we consider knowledge both the simplest and the most complicated information.

[I refer repeatedly to one of Husserl's earliest considerations, that the most various levels of information are all considered knowledge. It's originated in the first works of the 1890s, but these were not even near to the methodic subtlety of the late writings, and their detailed treatment was postponed till then.]

d3) I state, that ideal objects are not equal to the use of idealized relations or information. Then I look for the correct definition of what Husserl names free and bound idealities. This question has a wider field of employment in the transcendental logic, which gives us a good perspective for the following parts of our work.

d4) Husserl uses the concept of *life-world* in a transcendental manner too (here I come very near to the discoveries of section *d2*) The transcendental structure of our life-world helps to comprehend the other life-worlds, completely strange to us. But we must keep the conclusion off that this structural analysis is capable of solving problems caused by non-structural but real divergences of different life-worlds. It's not a mean of solving, but only of describing problems (very close to section *d1*).

e) In Chapter 4 I investigate the presence of these thematic motives in the main text and in the appendices of *FTL*. My goal is to make a shift from micro- to global analysis and to grasp the key elements of Husserl's philosophy of knowledge.

One of my basic assertions is that Husserl in the *FTL* urges the research of the ground structures of cognition. The ground structures of cognition are namely those defied by the correlation of formal and content reasonability. Content reasonability is a basic structural character of knowledge, which is also present, while we are not even thinking of its explicit treatment. It organizes or cognition, even if we are neglecting its research and scientific description. Husserl develops a concept of transcendental logic, which states the following:

every logical investigator has to deal with the problem of how the cognitive apparatus is capable of giving norms to itself, which regulates the process of considering structurally equal the most so as the least complicated intellectual acts and then conferring to all of them the status of knowledge.

f) At last I state that the research of this self-norming, self-structuring and self-organizing cognition is not a mere reduction of our complicated (or even most complicated) knowledge to some plainer and easier ones, but an extensive inquiry of how the moments of content reasonability are present in all kinds of our knowledge.

Phenomenological philosophy is a philosophy based on depicting the structure of problems and not the science of immediate solutions – this is the authoritative sense of phenomenology used by the writer of this essay.

[I attached three appendices to the main text:

The first (1) is a translation from German to Hungarian. It is namely the 27th paragraph of *FTL* exhibiting some retrospective analyses of Husserl's philosophical apprenticeship, the first works (*On the Concept of Number, The Philosophy of Arithmetic*) and the *LI*. This is indispensable for the micro-analyst intentions of this study.

The second (2) is the chart of the constitutive layers of formal logic

The third (3) is a supplementary study on the early-late problem of eidetic variation. I try to summarize how the founder of phenomenology still uses in the last years of his activity a form of ideatic abstraction and keeps it originally close to the structure of presentations – its not a speculative approach but a way of treating the problem that the moments of presentational recognition are still active on the higher level of characterizing forms of spiritual creation.]