

HUSSERL'S IDEALISM AT WORK: THE EXAMPLE OF THE TRANSCENDENTALIZATION OF VALUE

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French interpreters of Edmund Husserl, influenced by Heidegger (2006, 82–83), have long emphasized that the founder of phenomenology defends the primacy of intellectual (or cognitive) experiences over the affective, volitional, practical, and moral aspects of existence. Emmanuel Levinas¹ stands out in particular within this movement for arguing that Husserl's intellectualism is responsible for his *idealism*:

The Husserlian thesis of the primacy of the objectifying act [...] leads to transcendental philosophy, to the assertion [...] that the object of consciousness, distinct from consciousness, is virtually a product of consciousness (Levinas 1990, 128)².

¹ In addition to Levinas, Paul Ricoeur (2009, 36; 2004, 76) and Michel Henry (1990, 26) also belong to this exegetical tradition, albeit from very different perspectives.

² See Emmanuel Lévine and Alexis Delamare, "Levinas et l'intellectualisme husserlien," forthcoming in *Mélanges phénoménologiques—À l'occasion du cinquantième anniversaire de la fondation du Centre d'études phénoménologiques*, edited by Sylvain Camilleri, Springer (*Phaenomenologica*).

The primary aim of this chapter is to explore this alleged dependence of idealism on intellectualism in Husserl's work. In doing so, I will not only recall that Husserl, far from being focused solely on logic and the theory of knowledge, also showed a deep interest in affective and volitional issues³. More radically, I intend to completely reverse Levinas' hypothesis: my claim is therefore that *Husserl's idealism is rendered possible by his non-intellectualism*; in other words, it is precisely because he rejects intellectualism and gives affectivity a decisive, non-secondary place that Husserl is able to legitimize his idealism.

In order to establish this thesis, I will refer to the general conception of Husserl's transcendental philosophy that I defended in a recent paper (Delamare 2024). In that work, I sought to show that this idealism should be understood as a *dynamic* of transcendentalization. According to this proposal, such a dynamic is composed of three moments: an *ontological* phase, which studies the objects in themselves as they appear in the natural attitude; a *phenomenological* phase, which investigates the multiple components of lived experiences by bracketing any transcendent position; and, finally, a properly *transcendental* phase, in which the *coordination*—or *representation*, “vertreten” (*Ideas* I, 278/267)⁴—of the objects in themselves and their subjective “indexes” (Husserl 1954, 169; 1973, 179; 1987, 193) is carried out.

This perspective underscores the dependence of Husserl's idealism on the establishment of a universal correlation between consciousness and the world: indeed, it is only when “the concrete and systematic study of transcendental subjectivity” (Husserl 1956,

³ See, among others, Taminiaux (2008); Lobo (2005); Lang (2012); Ducat (2010); Melle (2012); Delamare (2022).

⁴ References to *Ideas* I will be displayed as follows: the page number of the original edition (Husserl 1913a), then the corresponding page of the English translation by Dahlstrom (Husserl 2014). In addition, volume XXVIII of the *Husserliana* (Husserl 1988) will be designated as *Hua* XXVIII, and the second volume of the *Studien zur Struktur des Bewußtseins* (Husserl 2020) will be abridged *Studien* II.

278) has been completed that one is entitled to be a transcendental idealist. Husserl's idealism, therefore, presupposes *specific* phenomenological investigations in order to coordinate the different regions of being with the different types of subjective experience.

The sphere of *value* plays a paradigmatic role from this perspective, by providing an illuminating illustration of Husserl's general approach. Like all objects, values (such as the beauty of a landscape, the injustice of a given policy, the pleasantness of a meal, or the usefulness of a hammer) must also be traced back to their subjective modes of givenness. According to Husserl, such givenness takes place in *feelings* (*Gefühle*): only feelings—and not intellectual experiences such as perceptions, judgments, or ideations—can make values accessible to us (*Hua XXVIII*, 404; Husserl 1997, 231–232).

However, this affective transcendentalization of value is not straightforward, given that it seems to impose certain structures on feeling that do not correspond to its descriptive determinations. According to the framework of the transcendental dynamic, actual (*wirkliche*) objects are indeed correlated with the *rational* lived experiences that aim at them, that is, with the *fulfilled* (or at least fulfillable) experiences intending these objects. Consequently, an eidetic type of experience can serve as an index of an ontological region only on the condition that it is at once *intentional* and susceptible of *evidence* (*Ideas I*, 282, 310/270, 296)⁵.

However, neither of these characteristics seems to apply easily to the domain of feelings. As far as intentionality is concerned, the young Husserl, during his Halle period, did not hesitate to cast doubt on it through his distinction between act (*Akt*) and state (*Zustand*): “Pleasure (*Lust*) and displeasure (courage, despair, joy, sadness) in all their forms are states (*Zustände*). They are not directed towards anything” (Husserl 2004a, 179).

⁵ This point is deepened in the third part of another work: Alexis Delamare, “Du noème à l’objet : la phénoménologie de la raison (§128–136),” forthcoming in *Relire les Idées directrices I*, edited by Natalie Depraz, Paris, Vrin.

The situation is even more complicated when it comes to *evidence*. Is not every feeling precisely a confused thought essentially alien to the *clara et distincta perceptio*? Is not evidence, under these conditions, reserved to cognition, as the criticism of the “feeling of evidence” (Husserl 1913b, 180) suggests? As Husserl himself confessed in 1902, “we cannot attribute to feeling the capacity to see, to see with evidence (*Einsehen*), to have intuition (*Erschauen*)” (*Hua XXVIII*, 385).

From this point of view, the establishment of a transcendental coordination between feelings and values appears to be a *pivotal moment* with respect to the *a priori* universal correlation: if Husserl succeeds in overcoming the difficulty of rooting value in experiences as seemingly foreign to intentionality and evidence as *Gefühle*, then no sphere of being should be able to resist its constitution in and through subjectivity.

This article follows the three phases of the “transcendental dynamic” outlined above. The first part shows how Husserl manages both to interpret value as an *object as such* (formal ontology) and to recognize the existence of an authentic axiological *region* (material ontology). In the second part, I examine the conditions of possibility for a *phenomenologization* of value in feelings, by investigating the evolution of Husserl’s position between 1900 and 1913. The third part synthesizes the results of the first two phases by emphasizing how value is *transcendentalized* in affective consciousness. In the conclusion, I return to Levinas’ thesis and demonstrate why it must be entirely *inverted*.

1. *Ontological Phase: Formal Axiology as A Priori Material Ontology of Value*

1.1 Value and formal ontology

In his 1908/9 lectures on ethics, Husserl establishes a fundamental methodological principle: any study of value must start with an *ontological* analysis of the latter, initially

disregarding any question relating to axiological “knowledge”⁶. As he puts it:

We begin with objectivities (*Objektivitäten*) [...]. What is meant by valuing (*Werthalten*), how an affective act can claim to reach objectivities, we will not discuss for the moment. Rather, we begin by asking: these values, *what kind of objectivities are they?* (*Hua XXVIII*, 255)

But to what extent is it legitimate to understand value as an “object”? Are beauty, excellence, and generosity strictly speaking “objects,” and if so, in what sense?

In order not to over-interpret this “objectification” of value as an intellectualization of ethics, it is essential to take the absolute *generality* of the notion of object in Husserl’s thought into account. The object is the basic concept of Husserl’s *formal ontology*, defined precisely as the science of *objects as objects* (Husserl 1913b, 244), regardless of the particularity of their content. As §3 of *Ideen I* asserts, by object (*Gegenstand*) is meant nothing other than a conceivable “something” defined in a purely formal way (*Ideen I*, 11/13). The extension of such a concept is, therefore, absolutely unlimited. The 1906/7 *Introduction to Logic and Theory of Knowledge* makes this idea quite explicit:

Anything and everything can figure under the heading object. It may be an empirical object, a thing, or natural process. It may also be an ideal object, like the infinite number series, an elliptical function, perhaps even a mathematical proposition, a chemical concept, etc., possibly also a meaning, as when we make statements about statements (Husserl 1984, 53; 2008, 52).

⁶ This is precisely how the 1908/9 course is composed: it begins with the investigation of formal axiology and formal practice, before turning to the study of the correctness of evaluation in its final part. This demonstrates the necessary priority of the ontological part of these lectures—in line with the general structure of the “transcendental dynamic” (Delamare 2024, 172–73).

In this respect, it is clear that the concept of object applies at once to material things or realities and to ideal entities. What about value, though? The debate that Husserl engages in with Rickert in the 1910 manuscript A I 42 clarifies his position. Following Lotze, Rickert distinguishes between what has “being” (*Sein*) and what has “validity” (*Geltung*). The reign of *Sein* includes both “objective” entities (real entities as well as ideal entities such as numbers) and “subjective” entities, what he calls psychic “actualities” (*Wirklichkeiten*) (Rickert 1910, 11). *Values*, conversely, belong to a different realm entirely:

The concept of being is not the only concept to which we can subordinate a “something,” but alongside it, in addition to nothing, there is a second concept encompassing non-being, that of *value* (Rickert 1909, 203).

Husserl does not accept this classification. For him, “object” is not a subspecies of “being,” but the *most generic concept* under which the difference between being and value is subsumed:

Objects in the broadest sense can be broken down into values and non-values (*Werte und Nicht-Werte*) (or rather the reverse). Non-values constitute being (*das Sein*) in the narrow sense (something that has value but is not itself a value) (Ms A I 42, 2a).

In this framework, even though values are ontologically distinct from the sphere of “being” (including real and ideal entities as well as lived experiences), they nevertheless belong to the realm of “object”, as Husserl explicitly states in *Ideen I*:

The concept of “formal ontology” has been expanded. Values, the kinds of object pertaining to practice, arrange themselves under the formal heading “object,” “something in general” (*Ideen I*, 308/295)⁷.

⁷ See also Ms A I 42, 6a (“Jeder Wert ist selbst ein Gegenstand”) and *Hua XXVIII*, 283.

Importantly, the claim that values are objects does not imply that they can exist on their own. For Husserl—unlike Scheler (1916, 10)—values are not independent entities. On the contrary, every value is a property or quality “founded” (*fundiert*)⁸ on a “support” (*Hua XXVIII*, 255; *Studien II*, 2), as “red” is necessarily a quality founded on a spatial thing. To take up the example given above, beauty cannot float in the air: it must be the beauty *of* a landscape, a painting, a person ... Hence, values are axiological *moments* that are grafted onto a concrete object, the latter always being capable of existing independently of these new axiological layers (*Ideas I*, 198/190).

In conclusion, values are not real things, ideal objectivities, or concrete objects that can exist by themselves; however, they are “somethings” in general, and, therefore, are objects in the sense established by formal ontology.

1.2. Formal axiology as a priori regional ontology

The subsumption of values under the universal category of “object” has important consequences. Every object has an essence (*Ideas I*, 9/11) that is stratified into several eidetic levels, from the lowest species to the highest genus. As far as value is concerned, Husserl is chiefly interested less in its particularizations (the various axiological subspecies) and more in the class “value” itself. This raises a key question: does this class constitute a supreme genus, that is, a *region*, or is it still subsumed under a more generic *eidōs*? On this question, the 1908/9 lectures on ethics leave no room for doubt: “Values, like the objectivities of nature, of physical and psychic nature, form a closed unity (a region). Values are objects, and objects of a very specific region” (*Hua XXVIII*, 283)⁹.

⁸ On the Husserlian vocabulary of dependence and foundation, see DeLamare (2021).

⁹ See also *Ideas I* (244/234).

Considering values as forming a region is tantamount to recognizing that value *as such* is governed by a certain number of regional properties that are derived from *a priori* regional axioms; these, ultimately, refer to fundamental *regional categories*, i.e. to the basic concepts involved in the description of any axiological predicates. Such a generic approach, far from amounting to an empty research endeavor, leads instead to the discovery of *a priori* laws that are valid for all values, whatever their nature (aesthetic, moral, vital ...). These laws, thus, constitute the theme of the *material ontology* of the value region, which is, in turn, to be identified with what Husserl famously calls “formal axiology” (*Hua XXVIII*, 48).

The interpretation of formal axiology as the “a priori regional ontology of value” might seem surprising *prima facie*. Indeed, Husserl introduces this discipline in terms of an analogy with *formal logic* (Gérard 2004, 117). He himself acknowledges its apparent ambivalence in his 1910 lecture on logic:

The formal theory of value has, first and foremost, an analogy with the theory of the synthetic-formal being of nature, with the ontology of nature according to space, time, movement, substantiality, causality, but also, secondly, an analogy with the analytic-formal ontology, analytic logic (Husserl 1996, 293–94).

This ambivalence can be clarified, however. The analogy between formal axiology and formal ontology actually means that the discovery of axiological *a priori* laws must be inspired by formal-logical laws. For example, the principle of the excluded third, which stipulates that any proposition “S is p” is either true or false, becomes the principle of the excluded fourth in the axiological sphere: an object *X* is either good, bad, or indifferent (*adiaphoron*) (*Hua XXVIII*, 87–88). The existence of an analogy here merely denotes a methodological and *heuristic* relationship: we start from the well-known propositions of formal logic and try to adapt them to values so as to derive the *a priori* axiological axioms. As a result, the analogy between formal logic and

formal axiology in no way implies that these two disciplines are to be considered on an equal footing: formal axiology is posterior to formal logic, both from a strictly methodological point of view—axiological laws are inspired by logical laws and not vice versa—and from an ontological point of view—values, *as objects*, must obviously conform to analytic-formal laws.

The same cannot be said of the analogy between value theory and the theory of nature, which ought to be placed on the same level. The value region and the nature region are indeed materially distinct genera with their own categories¹⁰, but they function in the same way as *regions*—they each have their regional concepts and axioms. Hence, there is no difficulty in assimilating formal axiology to the material ontology of the axiological domain.

This is not the place to examine this discipline's principles in detail. These (for example, the laws of comparison between isolated values and collections of values, or between values extended in time) are found in Brentano (1889)¹¹ and have already been widely studied in the literature¹². At this stage, it suffices to have shown that the treatment of value meets the generic requirements inherent in the first phase of the transcendental dynamic: values are *objects* that all belong to the same supreme genus (region), which must be rigorously explored by uncovering the *a priori synthetic laws* that govern them, in a manner inspired by the laws of formal logic.

¹⁰ For example, only values are positive or negative (Ms A I 42, 2a), higher or lower (*Hua* XXVIII, 90). These concepts have no general meaning for natural things.

¹¹ Husserl explicitly acknowledges this debt (*Hua* XXVIII, 90). He also richly annotated his copies of both the first and second editions of *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis*. In particular, he attempted to translate the Brentanian propositions in the form of mathematical inequalities in the margin of page 25 of the first edition, which is devoted to these formal laws in specific.

¹² See Hedwig (1982); Melle (1988); Mulligan (2006); Le Quitte (2013); Mariani (2015); Drummond (2018) and especially Dominique Pradelle's introduction to the French edition of the *Leçons sur l'éthique et la théorie de la valeur* (Husserl 2009, 7–54).

2. *Phenomenological Phase: Feeling as Value-Experience*

2.1. Ethical skepticism and phenomenology

In accordance with the second phase of the “dynamic,” it is now necessary to leave the “ontological attitude”—as Husserl calls it in his 1920 introduction to ethics (2004b, 244)—and to “return to consciousness” in its phenomenological and eidetic purity.

Such a move is not without its challenges, however. The aim of Husserl’s axiology is indeed primarily to repel ethical *skepticism*, which destroys the meaning of the concepts of good and evil (*Hua XXVIII*, 13), leaves the field open to all vices (*Hua XXVIII*, 17), and is even the source of the rise of nationalism that led to the crisis of European culture and the First World War (Husserl 1989a, 5). Against this skepticism, Husserl’s first weapon is precisely the existence of formal laws applying to the realm of values, which are the source of the objectivity of axiology:

Value does not dissolve in subjectivity, and therefore in the relativity of evaluation, as if what is valuable (*wert*) for one person were non-valuable for another, and indifferent for a third. No more than there is a true and a false for someone, [...] there is no more, and in the same sense, a beautiful and an ugly, a good and a bad [...] for someone (*Hua XXVIII*, 88).

From this point of view, by bringing value back to its affective phenomenologization, is there not a risk of falling prey to the ethical relativism so vehemently opposed? Are feelings not experiences that vary to significant degrees between people? As Husserl describes: “Feeling would only introduce fluctuating relativity instead of unitary objectivity. One feels this way, another this way; one race takes pleasure in this, another in that” (*Hua XXVIII*, 385). Under these circumstances, what is the added value of the phenomenological phase in the framework of the struggle against axiological skepticism? The 1908/9 lectures on ethics provide a crucial response to this question:

The essential interest of the psychologistic controversy is not exhausted by deciding [...]: the logical laws are not psychological and likewise the purely ethical, the purely axiological laws are not psychological laws [...]. *Completely unsolved remain the difficulties concerning the relation between psychological subjectivity, on the one hand, and the objectivity becoming conscious in it, on the other* [emphasis mine]. Yet it is in these difficulties that the insistent driving forces of psychologism lie (*Hua XXVIII*, 245).

In other words, the objectivistic attitude of the formal axiologist (like that of the formal logician) is an ostrich strategy that does not suppress the danger of skepticism, but instead only makes it invisible. As such, dogmatic axiological reason, much like dogmatic reason in general, remains *naive* (Husserl 1956, 169; 1987, 182). It is precisely for this reason that the ontological phase must be overcome: the *a priori* objective laws it involves must be traced back to the lived experiences in which they are subjectively grounded. This operation of “regression” (*Rückgang*), as Husserl calls it in the *Krisis* (Husserl 1954, 91; Cimino 2020, 190), constitutes what is to be properly called the *critique* of reason, and, in the case of value, the *critique of axiological reason*.

New difficulties arise at this point, however. As mentioned in the introduction, such a critique essentially appeals to *feelings* (*Gefühle*): only these, according to Husserl, are capable of phenomenally valuing values¹³. Nevertheless, “*how can a value in itself become conscious in an affective act, and how can we even claim, and not only claim, but also justify the claim to perceive a true value?*” (*Hua XXVIII*, 250, emphasis in original)? Here we return

¹³ The letter to Meinong, dated April 5, 1902, is as a decisive milestone in this framework. In this letter, Husserl emphasizes that he is undertaking a “complete redesign” (*völligen Neugestaltung*) (Husserl 1994, 145) of his ethics, the results of which appear in his lectures from the subsequent summer semester. This reworking, though still tentative in many respects, convinced Husserl that the affective-axiological domain was also governed by *a priori* laws (a *Gefühlsapriori*) (*Hua XXVIII*, 408) and that, accordingly, a rational ethics based on feelings was possible.

to the two questions raised in the introduction: on the one hand, how can feelings be intentionally directed towards values? On the other hand, how is it possible to identify evident feelings, the only ones capable of providing such axiological “justification”?

2.2. What is the intentional object of feeling?

Let us start with the first question. In the introduction, we saw that the young Husserl doubted affective intentionality in general. It could, nevertheless, be argued that this is almost a kind of *hapax* in Husserl’s corpus, and that such a conception is still immature. As early as the *Fifth Logical Investigation* (§15), Husserl rejects his earlier view and recognizes the intentionality of feelings, such as joy or sadness (1913c, 388): I rejoice and feel sad about such and such an event or state of affairs, for instance, the birth of a child, good news, failure in an exam, and so on.

Yet, this first evolution is still far from sufficient for our present needs. In 1901, Husserl indeed considers *Gefühl* to be a *non-objectifying* act (1913c, 498). The pleasure that I experience while smoking a cigar, for instance, is certainly an intentional experience, one directed towards an object (the cigar), but *it does not objectify anything in itself*, it does not add a new objectual layer to the cigar as constituted by the underlying (objectifying) perception. In other words, according to the *Logical Investigations*, feelings pertain to the *quality* of acts, not to their *matter*. Consequently, they express a mere subjective *attitude* towards their intentional object. Crucially, in this attitudinal conception of feeling, *value is nowhere to be found*: according to this approach, insofar as the underlying “objectifying” act provides the feeling with *all of its matter*, the affective act does not form a new, axiological layer. As Levinas rightly writes, in the *Logische Untersuchungen*, non-objectifying acts have “the function of relating to these objects, without contributing, in any way, to their actual constitution. Through matter alone the object appears, and matter is always that of an objectifying act” (2001, 98).

In this early framework, feelings thus cannot form value-experiences. New developments in this direction are, therefore, required, which are especially visible in the 1908/9 lectures on ethics. There, Husserl emphasizes that there can be no phenomenologization or objectification of value in *Gefühl* unless the latter is itself *an objectifying act*, that is, unless the affective act brings to the total act an object “of its own”, a proper stratum of “sense”. As Husserl writes:

There is also something that appears in evaluative acts; there also appear precisely value-objects (*Wertobjekte*), i.e., not only objects that have value, but the values as such. When we perform a pleasure (*Gefallen*), then what appears is not just the thing that pleases (*das Gefallende*) as it would appear if there were no pleasure (but still the same founding act of objectification); rather, the thing that pleases stands there as such, or rather as something pleasant (*Gefälliges*)—what is beautiful as beautiful, what is good as good (*Hua XXVIII*, 323).

This is a genuine *revolution* with regard to the 1901 theory of acts¹⁴. Affective acts are now granted their *own* power of objectification. This shift is officially confirmed in *Ideen I*: “*all acts in general—including affective and volitional acts—are ‘objectifying’ acts*” (*Ideen I*, 244/234, trans. modified)¹⁵. Or, more precisely:

With the new noetic moments, *new noematic moments* also surface in the correlates. [...] The new sense introduces a whole *new dimension of sense*; with it are constituted not new determining elements of mere “*things*” (*Sachen*), but “*values of things*,” axiological qualities or concrete axiological objectivities: beauty and ugliness, goodness and badness, the object of use, the artwork, the machine, the book, the action, the deed, and so forth. (*Ideen I*, 239–40/229–30, trans. modified).

¹⁴ Husserl acknowledges the absolute turnaround implied by the recognition of the objectifying character of feeling in an autobiographical remark (*Studien II*, 39).

¹⁵ See also *Ideen II*: the value, as an axiological predicate, is “something new” (*neu*) (Husserl 1952, 16; 1989b, 18) added by the feeling.

Hence, in contrast to the *Logical Investigations*, the affective noesis now has a noematic impact of its own, one which consists precisely in the axiological layer of the appearing object.

The first problem has been solved, therefore. Far from being a mere state, or even an attitude towards an object which is already fully determined by the underpinning intellectual experiences, a feeling is truly *constitutive*: it produces a new noematic layer, namely the value.

2.3. Affective evidence

The second difficulty mentioned above still needs to be addressed. At this point, nothing prevents values from being subjective *illusions* that phenomenologically appear as transcendent, but which are devoid of authentic objectivity (*Objektivität*). In other terms, it is not enough for affective experience to *manifest* an axiological quality; it is additionally required that such a value-appearance can be *correct*. As Husserl points out with regard to moral evaluation:

Without the distinction between correct (richtigen) and [merely] apparent evaluations (Scheinwerten), and without the ability to become aware of this distinction and to make it the practical measure of one's actions, there is no question of speaking of morality (Hua XXVIII, 401, emphasis in original).

In order to solve this second issue, Husserl refers to the doctrine of his teacher Franz Brentano, who faced a similar problem in *Vom Ursprung sittlicher Erkenntnis*. Brentano considers that the psychological origin of moral concepts resides in the “third class” of psychic phenomena¹⁶, which combines emotions and volitions and that he calls “affective movements” (*Gemütsbewegungen*) or “acts of love and hate”. As he puts it, “we call a thing *good* when

¹⁶ Let us call to mind that the first two classes are *representations* (which determine the relationship to an intentional object) and *judgments* (in which the existence of the represented object is either posited or rejected).

the love relating to it is correct. In the broadest sense of the term, the good is that which is worthy of love, that which can be loved with a love that is correct" (1889, 17; 2009, 11). The analogy between truth and goodness is decisive here:

The fact that we affirm something does not mean that it is true, for we often judge quite blindly [...]. What is affirmed in this way may often be true, but it is just as likely to be false. For these judgements involve nothing that manifests correctness (1889, 18–19; 2009, 12).

As a result, the true is not the correlate of any judgments, but only of those judgments that are characterized as "insightful" (*einleuchtende*) or "evident" (*evidente*) (1889, 19; 2009, 12). The same applies to emotional experiences, as Oskar Kraus aptly observes:

It is not that love and hate are correct according to whether we thereby love something good or hate something bad, but, conversely: when we love something correctly, we call it good, and when we hate it correctly, we call it bad (Brentano 1930, 173).

The paradigmatic example used by Brentano is the love of knowledge (1889, 20–21; 2009, 13–14). Only love appears to be *correct* or *appropriate* in the face of knowledge. The love of money that drives the miser, conversely, is a purely blind impulse, one devoid of any evidence, and, therefore, is not *characterized as correct*.

Husserl takes up his teacher's extension of the concept of evidence into the affective realm¹⁷:

A judgment is said to be "enlightened by evidence" if it is not only correct, but if it is carried out in the awareness of the adequacy of its reasons, i.e., the reasons for its correctness [...].

¹⁷ In addition to the numerous annotations that Husserl made on his copies of both the first and second editions of *Vom Ursprung ...*, there are many explicit references to this Brentanian conception in the *Studien II*. See, e.g., *Studien II* (282) and Melle (2012, 65).

Similarly, an evaluation in the broadest sense, any intention of affectivity, can be totally fulfilled. Emotional (*emotionale*) fulfillment is parallel to intellectual fulfillment. The evaluation is not only correct, but totally justified, and this justification does not mean justification by thought, but affective justification (*Gemütsbegründung*) (*Hua XXVIII*, 241).

Because of its ability to “bring to givenness” (*zur Gegebenheit bringen*) (*Hua XXVIII*, 281) values, emotional fulfillment plays the role assigned to *Wahrnehmung* in the sphere of sensible cognition, and it thus appears as “an *analogon* of perceiving” (*Hua XXVIII*, 281; see also 342). Based on this parallel, Husserl is led to speak about “Wertnehmen” or “Wertnehmung,” literally “value-grasping” or “valueception”¹⁸. In *Ideen I*, the thesis of an affective fulfillment parallel to the theoretical fulfillment appears as a definitive acquisition—with an explicit reference to the “ingenious work” that is Brentano’s *Vom Ursprung ...*: “Theoretical’ or ‘doxological truth’ or evidence has its parallel in ‘axiological and practical truth or evidence’” (*Ideen I*, 290/278). In this way, reason is ultimately extended beyond mere understanding (*Verstand*); all spheres of acts are subject to the distinction between blind impulses and insightful intuitions.

Importantly, in numerous places (1959, 104; 1952, 9–10), especially in the *Studien II* (28, 101, 404, 430, 450), Husserl explores the deeper significance of affective intuition with all the necessary phenomenological rigor, emphasizing its specificity with respect to other forms of evidence. I have given a precise account of these developments in other works (Delamare 2022; 2023), stressing in particular the role played by affective sensations (*Gefühlsempfindungen*) in affective fulfillment, analogous to that of hyletic data in sensible intuition. For our current purposes, it suffices to have shown that *feelings, too, are susceptible of evidence*.

¹⁸ See *Hua XXVIII* (370) and the *Studien II*, in which the term is ubiquitous (7, 28, 56, 60, 112, 271 ...). Von Hildebrand asserts that Husserl used this concept in his lectures as early as 1902 (1916, 205).

3. Transcendental Phase: Indexing Value to Feeling

We can now proceed to the third and final phase, namely the transcendentalization of value. This phase harvests the fruits of the first two, since it simply correlates each value in itself, as it was dogmatically studied in the ontological phase, with its subjective representatives, that is, with the rational feelings aiming at it. We, thus, coordinate each value with the set of affective experiences that are directed towards *that particular value*. Evidence plays a decisive role in this operation: not all feelings are coordinated with an actual value, *only those that have the same objectual sense as an evident feeling*. To illustrate: the pleasure taken in a cruel deed is not correlated with any objective (positive) value, whereas a feeling of sadness directed towards a war—even if this feeling is blind—is correlated with the objective “bad” character of the latter, since an *evident* feeling of sadness directed at the same object can be produced.

The 1908/9 lectures on ethics help clarify this operation of correlation from a general point of view:

Enlarged phenomenology¹⁹ is extremely close to the various sciences of principles that we have called ontologies. But whereas the latter naively speak of objectivities as such or of real objectivities, of physical or axiological objectivities, and naively posit what is a priori valid for them as such objectivities, phenomenology resolves (*löst ... auf*) everything that is objective (*alles Gegenständliche*) into its essential correlations. For each fundamental kind of objectivities, all that belongs to the various forms of its intentions (*Meinungen*) and appearances (*Erscheinungen*), including in particular that belonging to the corresponding ultimately demonstrating givennesses, is brought out in accordance with the essence [...]. Each ontological assertion resolves itself transcendently: as an expression of a law of essence for connections of givenness, or for demonstrations that legitimize mere

¹⁹ This term refers to phenomenology understood as an “all-encompassing transcendental philosophy” (*Hua XXVIII*, 330).

intentions (*Gemeintheiten*) by the corresponding givennesses (*Hua XXVIII*, 330–31).

The study of the particular case of value allows us to better grasp the significance of this transcendental resolution of all objects. The objective values, as well as the axiological judgments about them, do not vanish in the transcendental attitude; rather, they are preserved in the specific form of (fulfilled) *axiological noematic correlates*.

Conclusion: The Interplay Between Affectivity and Idealism

It is now easy to refute Levinas' thesis regarding the relationship between intellectualism and idealism, thanks to this exploration of the three phases of the transcendentalization of value. It is not because Husserl is an intellectualist that he is an idealist; on the contrary, it is precisely his rejection of intellectualism that enables him, through the phenomenological investigation of the sphere of affectivity, to trace values back to their subjective modes of presentation and, in so doing, to concretize the *universal* correlation inherent in his transcendental idealism. It is, thus, *Husserl's anti-intellectualism that made his idealism possible*.

It should be noted, however, that the correlation of value with the affective experiences corresponding thereto is not a pure and simple *application* of a general method. Clearly, this dynamic of transcendentalization, structured by the three phases that we have described, does not exist independently from its concrete realizations. Its meaning, scope, and resources are refined and reformulated as the correlation itself expands. This is particularly true of the axiological-affective domain²⁰, which requires the development of new tools and, above all, the broadening of the

²⁰ The increasing number of investigations into ethics and affectivity that Husserl carried out in the decisive Göttingen years (numerous courses on ethics—1902, 1908/9, 1911, 1914—as well as multiple manuscripts on affective themes—especially from 1909–1911, as emphasized in the *Studien II*) should,

concept of evidence, which might initially have been thought to be limited to the theoretical (sensible and categorial) sphere. From this point of view, it appears that Husserl's idealism is continually informed in light of his material investigations.

Funding

The research conducted in this publication was funded by the Irish Research Council under grant number GOIPD/2024/295.

Acknowledgments

I am particularly grateful to Luz Ascarate, Circé Furtwängler, and Quentin Gailhac for having organized the “Séminaire des doctorants et des jeunes chercheurs en phénoménologie” at Panthéon-Sorbonne University and for the editorial work on this volume. I am also thankful to the Husserl Archives in Leuven for providing me with the permission to include quotations from unpublished manuscripts, and to Sean O'Dubhghaill for his numerous relevant comments on this chapter.

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thus, be paralleled with the concomitant development of the idealist doctrine and the gradual expansion of the *a priori* correlation.

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