

Reconstruction and Reduction: Natorp and Husserl on Method and the Question of Subjectivity¹

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Abstract

In this article, I argue that Husserl received important cues from Natorp and his project of a transcendental psychology. I also trace the entire relationship both thinkers had over the course of their lifetime and show how there were important cross-fertilizations on both sides. In particular, Natorp's project of a reconstructive psychology proved crucial, I argue, for Husserl's development of genetic phenomenology. Allowing for a reconstruction of subjective-intentional processes makes Husserl see the possibility of breaking with the paradigm of direct intuition as the sole method of phenomenology. However, Natorp's psychology was also seriously flawed, to Husserl. While exploiting the fruitful elements of Natorp's reconstructive psychology, Husserl maintained that they could only come to actual fruition in a transcendental phenomenology.

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Paul Natorp's influence on the development of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, especially on the transcendental reduction and genetic method in Husserl, has been vastly underestimated. Husserl's contemporary, Natorp (1854-1924) was an exact observer and critic of Husserl's philosophical development from before the publication of his *Logical Investigations* (1900/1901, hereafter *LI*) and up to Natorp's death. Moreover, Natorp was the single contemporary philosopher with whom Husserl had the most intimate contact, as is witnessed to by their extensive correspondence.² Natorp provided the "interface" through which Husserl came into

contact with the Neo-Kantianism that was then prevalent in Germany philosophy, as well as with Kant himself.³ As Husserl acknowledged after his transcendental turn, it was his discussions with representatives of the transcendental tradition – i.e., the Neo-Kantians – that aided him in developing a full-fledged *transcendental* phenomenology. His closest ally among these erstwhile opponents was undoubtedly Natorp.⁴

The relation between phenomenology and Neo-Kantianism remains to a large extent an untold story, though the intersections between both schools are extensive. But telling this story will prove decisive for the development of twentieth-century philosophy and beyond, and disentangling the many strands of these interactions has more than just historical merit. The present essay can only be the beginning of this story, and will focus on the relation between Natorp and Husserl and the most important issue that fueled their discussion. This issue is that of the status of transcendental philosophy, especially as it purports to be the method proper for the analysis of *concrete subjectivity*. The original impulse to undertake such an endeavor came, interestingly, from Natorp, whose philosophical psychology – in contradistinction to other brands of psychology, such as Brentano's "descriptive psychology" – intended to carry out such an analysis within the framework of the "Marburg" transcendental method inaugurated by his teacher Hermann Cohen. In so doing, however, Natorp was already in a sense going beyond Cohen's methodological confines. He found in Husserl a kindred spirit in such an attempt, as shall be shown.

While Husserl was striving to develop his own philosophical method and school – this tendency called the "phenomenological movement" is akin to what was frequently called the "movement back to Kant" – he nevertheless with one eye, and competitively, peered at the Neo-Kantians. Husserl's philosophical method of phenomenological reduction and his turn to transcendental phenomenology were developed in close discussion with Natorp. This was so much the case that many of Husserl's followers believed, upon reading *Ideas I* (1913), that he had become a Kantian himself and had thereby fallen back into the naïve or speculative idealism that phenomenology

had supposedly overcome once and for all.⁵ However, it is more appropriate to say that the influence that representatives of the Neo-Kantian tradition exerted on Husserl helped him come into his own. Natorp's influence on Husserl also extends to the very way phenomenological description should be carried out. As has been argued by Iso Kern in his *Husserl und Kant* – the first study to address this topic (1964) – and again more recently by Donn Welton in *The Other Husserl* (2000, 443, n. 38) the development of Husserl's later genetic phenomenological method is inspired by Natorp's concept of a “reconstructive” analysis of consciousness. Put more strongly – Husserl would have been unable to attain this late stage without Natorp's influence.

Hence, this paper will claim that Natorp was the decisive factor that led Husserl to develop both the phenomenological reduction and his later genetic phenomenology. Although their philosophical presuppositions and education, as well as their understanding of the nature of philosophy, were quite different from the outset,⁶ Natorp and Husserl were working on parallel problems and in close proximity, which enabled them to benefit from each other. For his part, Natorp was attempting to draft a philosophical psychology that intended to counter the “objectifying” tendency of the transcendental method developed by his teacher Hermann Cohen. This was called for, according to Natorp, in order to recapture the concrete life of the subject. And indeed, the same philosophical motivation lay behind Husserl's phenomenology and its call to the “things themselves.” Yet it was, ironically, Husserl who exploited and executed the project for which Natorp strove but himself later abandoned (and the many attempts on the part of Neo-Kantians to “overcome” their original positions would be another, perhaps final, chapter of the story that is only begun here). Thus, the relation between Natorp and Husserl does not point to a simple one-sided “learning” of one from the other; instead, it bespeaks a genuine *symphilosophiein* on issues which were commonly held to be vital for doing transcendental philosophy. Especially in the light of Husserl's later self-interpretation, phenomenology is conceived (in line with Natorp) as critical philosophy and is committed to transcendental idealism – as the ultimate scope of his

philosophical project demonstrates, when it finally does justice to the concrete subject and its lifeworld – i.e., a world of culture.

Husserl knew what he owed to the Neo-Kantians: “After having learned to see Kant from my own perspective, I am now able, and especially in the last years, to receive rich instructions from Kant and the true Kantians,” Husserl writes to Ernst Cassirer in 1925 (*Hua-Dok.* III/V, 4).⁷ By the time Husserl composes the *Crisis* in 1936, however, he again obfuscates most traces of contemporary influence and mentions only the most outstanding philosophers in the modern Western tradition (Descartes, Kant, British Empiricists) as having had any significant impact on him.⁸ One reason for this omission may have been the historical fact that after Natorp's death and the emigration of many German philosophers of Jewish descent after 1933 – Cassirer among them – the Neo-Kantian movement had all but died off in Germany. Nevertheless, as of 1913 Husserl had shared with the Neo-Kantians an agreement on the fundamental issues of philosophy – points of convergence which Husserl's first presentation of phenomenology in the *Logical Investigations* of 1900/1901 had explicitly shunned. There are certainly immanent reasons for Husserl to widen his philosophy from a descriptive psychology to a full-fledged transcendental phenomenology – first in a static, and then in a genetic register. But there is a somewhat unhealthy tendency in Husserl scholarship to ignore, or at least downplay, the influences Husserl was exposed to early in his career, especially if they issued from thinkers outside of the Brentano School. Exposing the intersections between Natorp and Husserl will help to rectify a skewed view of Husserl and the influences he incorporated into his mature system. But this paper is not just about Husserl; instead, we shall focus on the philosophical issues *common* to Husserl and Natorp. Rather than playing one off against the other, this discussion will demonstrate how the accommodation of certain theoretical elements in both thinkers led to a richer account and philosophically more satisfying theory of subjectivity in its “concreteness,” within the framework of transcendental philosophy.

Hence, in this paper Natorp's and Husserl's theories of subjectivity and their respective methods for analyzing it shall

be compared. Their philosophical disciplines are termed, respectively, psychology (Natorp) and phenomenology (Husserl). I would like to point out differences and also draw out commonalities, but most importantly to show how both are working on the same project – namely, an attempt to analyze subjectivity in its most *original concreteness*. Both Natorp's method of reconstruction and Husserl's method of reduction add decisive elements to such a theory. Although Natorp rejects any experience of the life of the subject through reflection (or “introspection”), Husserl takes over, in a modified way, the former's idea of a reconstructive method which he employs for a *genetic* account of subjectivity. Hence, this debate is also about the methodological principle of *phenomenology* – which, as it turns out, cannot restrict itself to pure intuition alone. For a phenomenological account of subjectivity, this is an insight of the highest importance.

While Natorp is critical toward his own method and in the last step of his philosophical development moves toward a “general unifying logic” – a doctrine of categories that unifies both “objectifying” and “subjectifying” tendencies – it is, ironically, Husserl who actually carries out Natorp's “grand vision” of a truly philosophical psychology. Natorp's method and conception of psychology proved a dead end for Natorp himself, but had a lasting importance for Husserl's late conception of subjectivity, which needed to be framed in a genetic register in order to capture subjectivity's “full concretion.” Husserl's mature phenomenology, thus, can rightfully be considered phenomenological *as well as* Neo-Kantian. Husserl thus recasts the method for analyzing subjectivity in a way that cannot remain strictly phenomenological in the traditional sense of pure description. His mature method goes beyond the common scope of phenomenology with the help of the methodological tools that he took over from Natorp. Husserl was able to adopt Natorpian elements because both shared in principle the same goal – to analyze the concreteness of subjectivity *without* succumbing to a pre-transcendental, naïve philosophy of “existence.”

The following sections will develop these issues by following the historical order in which Husserl and Natorp interacted with each other between the 1890s and 1924 – the year of Natorp's death – though Natorp's influence can be discerned up until Husserl's death in 1938.

I. Natorp's Theory of Reconstruction and Husserl's Method of Reduction

1. Natorp's Position: Subjectivation versus Objectivation

Since Natorp's position was already well established by the time Husserl developed his phenomenology, it deserves to be discussed first. Natorp drew the conclusion of the Marburg reading of Kant, especially for the discipline of psychology. He presented his theory in an article of 1887, “Ueber subjective und objective Begründung der Erkenntniss” (On the Subjective and Objective Grounding of Cognition) as well as in his short book *Einleitung in die Psychologie nach kritischer Methode* (Introduction to Psychology According to Critical Method, hereafter *EP*) of 1888. This concept of psychology was further developed in the completely reworked *Allgemeine Psychologie nach kritischer Methode* (General Psychology According to Critical Method, hereafter *AP*) of 1912.⁹ As mentioned, the problems with this conception later led Natorp to abandon his psychology altogether and to develop, in his late work, what he called a “general logic.” In this late conception of logic – which was sketched in his posthumously published lecture-courses, *Vorlesungen über praktische Philosophie* (Lectures on Practical Philosophy, 1924) and *Philosophische Systematik* (Philosophical Systematic, 1954) – Natorp comes close to Cassirer's conception in the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. One could even make the claim that Cassirer's philosophy was but the execution – with some important modifications – of Natorp's sketch of a philosophical systematics; and that, in this respect, both Natorp and Cassirer moved beyond the Neo-Kantian project of a science which lays ultimate foundations, the *Grundlegungswissenschaft* inaugurated by Hermann Cohen.

The Marburg Neo-Kantian position can be best characterized by the so-called *transcendental method*.¹⁰ This method, first explicated by Cohen in his interpretations of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, was further developed by Natorp and exploited for the discipline of philosophical psychology. Natorp's early work defined this task as filling a gap in the framework of Cohen's transcendental method. This is to say, what Natorp means by “psychology” is not an empirical discipline but a sub-discipline under the rubric of transcendental philosophy. Husserl understands it, quite correctly, as “aprioric psychology.”¹¹ How does this fit in with the transcendental method, and what is the transcendental method about?

The starting point of philosophy, for Cohen, is the given reality as a *factum*. However, the *factum* – Cohen claims--is primarily the *factum* of the positive sciences (*das Faktum der Wissenschaften*). The *factum* is not a *factum brutum*, but itself cognition (cf. Holzhey 2009). After all, Neo-Kantianism arose in the midst of the scientism of the second half of the nineteenth century, when there was seemingly nothing left for philosophy to do apart from providing a foundation or explanatory basis for the activities of the positive sciences. However, Natorp insists – and this is where his own thinking sets in – that the *factum* is in effect a *fieri*, i.e. something that is *made* through cognizing acts in the sciences: What is ascertained in the sciences is the product of theoretical activities. Through these activities the scientist explains the world as governed by *a priori* laws. The world is in this sense *constructed* through cognizing activities. We shall see, however, that the scope of Natorp's epistemology already goes beyond this limitation to scientific cognition. The term Natorp uses is *Erkenntnis*, which has the known ambivalence of meaning both explicit, specifically scientific or philosophical “cognizing,” as well as simply “knowledge” as that *which is known* – and it is *both* meanings that Natorp wants to grasp.¹²

Hence, the transcendental method is about giving a logical justification regarding the conditions that govern the construction of reality through subjective, cognizing acts. The construction of reality is the deed of the scientist, but the philosopher thematizes the *a priori* conditions that factor into

this construction of reality. Insofar as these cognizing acts ascertain something *lawful* through their activity, these laws can be called “objective.” In short, the transcendental method of constructing reality can also be called “objectifying”: It is about constructing objective reality through subjective acts, insofar as they cognize something objective, something with the character of a *law*. The law is a subjective production but, as objective and “fixed,” is *no longer* subjective. Subjectivity thus becomes *objectified*; it is *in* objectifications that we find subjectivity. The method of objectivation – i.e., the transcendental method – is about the objective founding and constructing of knowledge. Knowledge, insofar as it can be called scientific knowledge, has the character of lawfulness. Laws, in turn, are not fleeting or dynamic, but static and abstract vis-à-vis their appearances in the subject. This is precisely what makes them “objective.”

Natorp goes on to argue, however, that not just cognizing ascertainties with the character of laws are objectifying: Subjective life as such is objectifying, although it may not always be lawful. This becomes most visible in utterances. All judgments are objectifying insofar as they claim *something*. This is the character of “objectifying cognizing (*Erkenntnis*), scientific *as well as* prescientific: [. . .] to make objects out of appearances (*Erscheinungen*).” (*AP*, 193; emphasis added).¹³ In other words, the transcendental method can and in fact must be expanded to cover not only objectifying acts in the sciences, but all activities of a subject which are objectifying *in one way or another*, and of which lawful cognizing in the *emphatic* sense of *Erkenntnis* is the highest (and thus the norm for all other judgments). In this respect, Natorp claims that his constructive method proceeds teleologically – beginning *genetically* with the lowest form of objectifications in everyday utterances (which have no explicit truth-claims), up to the highest forms of objectifications in scientific discourse.¹⁴ Thus, to sum up: The transcendental method of constructing reality in *Natorp's* interpretation is about ascertaining objectifications and their conditions by means of subjective acts, precisely by *objectifying* them. With this turn to the subjective, however, Natorp is already

departing from Cohen's transcendental method, for which the objective laws alone are of interest.

What then, asks Natorp, about the subjective “side” of things? Where do subjectivity and its study, psychology, stand in regard to this project? The method or process of objectivation raises a significant question: If all subjective acts *objectify* in a given way, then what about the specifically *subjective* character of these acts? What happens with subjectivity? If subjectivity is objectified in the construction of reality, and if all subjective activities are objectifying, what about those pertaining to subjectivity itself? Obviously they, too, will be objectifying.¹⁵ The result of this objectification is that subjectivity will be treated in the same, constructive way – the result is psychology as a scientific discipline, which in this sense is not different from biology, which objectifies biological affairs. However, in so doing, that element which precisely makes for the subjectivity of the subject – its dynamic, fleeting, concrete life – is lost. There can be, according to Natorp, *no direct description* of the subject in its genuine state of living, since every thematization is objectifying. As Natorp adds dramatically, that which makes the subject a subject is “killed.” (AP, 191) In thematizing the subject one thus deals, metaphorically speaking, with a corpse instead of a living being. *All* traditional psychology supposedly proceeds in this way: It ascertains *facts* about subjectivity, and in this process loses the subject. The “spirit” of the subject vanishes in thematizing it, for thematization is objectivation. Thus it seems that psychology, at least in the sense of a description of psychic states of affairs, is rendered impossible from the outset. That is indeed Natorp's answer, *unless* one construes psychology as a philosophical discipline which pays heed to the special character of subjectivity: This is the task that Natorp set for “transcendental psychology.”

What is needed, then, for a philosophical psychology is a method which allows for a thematization of subjectivity that is *not* objectifying or constructive. This method is now the opposite of construction; rather, it is reconstructive. The method which is opposed to objectivation – namely subjectivation – is that of a *reconstruction* of subjectivity by going back, regressively, from its objectifications. Whereas the

objective method focuses on the relation between an opaque subject which constructs objectivity and this objectivity itself, the subjective method turns 180 degrees and looks at the relation to the subject. As such, it is the *inverse method* of objectivation, and Natorp also speaks of it as a “turning inside out” (*Umstülpung*) of objectification. Whereas construction proceeds teleologically toward objective laws, which are abstract and unifying, the reconstructive method is genetic: It goes back to that which has constructed reality – the dynamic structures of consciousness, subjectivity’s concrete life. Whereas objective laws are always mediated through constructions, the method of reconstruction goes back to the *immediateness* of subjective appearances, to conscious phenomena. It is about a “reconstruction of the immediate in consciousness.” (*AP*, 199) Natorp also calls these conscious givennesses “phenomena.” Thus, quite phenomenologically, the reconstructive method is about a recovery of the phenomena of consciousness which are otherwise only objectified. In *EP* of 1888, Natorp even uses the term “reduction” for this move: “Thus for all spheres” of consciousness, he writes – for instance, “scientific representations as well as unscientific representations such as phantasy, but also the regions of feeling, desiring, willing” – “the same task is posed, [namely,] that of a reduction of the always already and in some way or other objectified representation to the immediate of consciousness.” (*EP*, 89)

Before asserting critical questions, one should point out the valid philosophical motivation for this move: In his insistence on the difference between objectifying (constructive) and subjectifying (reconstructive) methods, Natorp clearly intends to preserve the radically different character of subjectivity vis-à-vis the sphere of objectivity. The distinction between subjectivity and objectivity is so strong that it can almost be considered an “ontological difference.” It is about doing justice methodologically to “subjective *qualia*” which, if one were to treat them in an objectifying manner, would vanish precisely *in* their qualitative character as the dynamic, concrete life of the subject.¹⁶ It is not so much that Natorp denies *any* access to subjectivity; rather, he merely warns that in *describing* consciousness one is already objectifying it. But this

does not mean that consciousness, in its genuine character, cannot be *thematized* altogether; this thematization simply cannot be a *direct* description, but rather must be a reconstruction. It is not descriptive as such, but explanatory: It retroactively explains subjectivity in going back from its objectivations and explaining the specifically subjective moments which were involved in a given objectivation. Whereas objectification is teleological, subjectification is a “reverse teleology”: It is a *causal* reconstruction of objectifications.

Hence, “objectivating” and “subjectivating” methods are nothing but opposite movements on an identical line.¹⁷ One can proceed positively and reach the objectivations in construction, or move in the opposite, negative direction in order to “undo” the objectivations into subjective structures. The method of subjectivation is about regaining the dynamic, flowing subjective life *from which* fixed, crystallized objectivations have been constructed. Thus, on the side of objectivation there are *laws*, which are unified and abstract. On the side of subjectivation there are *phenomena*, which are plural and manifold and concrete because they have not been objectified – and these must be preserved as such by the subjective method. Subjective life cannot be directly described but only reconstructively explained. The only “positive” and irreducible structure of consciousness (*Bewusstsein*) that one can discern is the *fact that it has (something) conscious (Bewusstheit: “conscious-ity”)*.¹⁸ This having (something) conscious, Natorp calls subjectivity's fundamental character of “relation” (*Verbindung* or *Relation*). Thus, the fundamental trait of subjectivity is *having (something) conscious*, yet this “something” has always already been objectified. The pure relation of *being-conscious-of*, however, is the original structure of subjectivity into which one cannot further inquire.¹⁹

2. Husserl's Critique: Natorp's Reconstructive Method is Blind to Intentionality

Husserl first discusses Natorp's position in the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*. Here he is critical of several points in Natorp's account, most famously that of the “pure ego” – of which, however, Husserl later says that he “has

learned to find it.” (*Hua* XIX/2, 374n) Hence Husserl's rejection of Natorp's notion of the pure ego is a moot point for the Husserl of the *Ideas* of 1913. As he adds in the second edition of the *Logical Investigations* (also 1913), Husserl left this passage (§ 8 of the Fifth Investigation) nearly unchanged for the sake of documenting a historical and (according to him, at least) dated debate – because Husserl, being originally “metaphysics shy” with regard to the question of a pure ego, had allegedly moved on in the intervening years. Thus, what Husserl calls “pure” ego in his early critique of Natorp is nothing but the latter's concept of *Bewusstheit*. The fact of having (something) conscious, Husserl holds (in full agreement with Natorp), has a necessary relation *to whom* something is conscious. Hence, the concept of *Bewusstheit* implies a pure ego as “unifying referential point.”²⁰ This is the only positive discernable moment of subjectivity, but as such, it is empty or indescribable for the reasons mentioned above. Hence it is “pure” of any kind of descriptive content – it is a mere *center* of any conscious relation. In Husserl's reading, this center is nothing that can be “seen” (intuited), but it must be assumed as an idea. If it cannot be intuited, however, its status is highly problematic. Yet, Husserl suggests, if we leave these “metaphysical” questions aside we *can* describe subjective acts – “lived-experiences” (*Erlebnisse*) – regardless of how we may *characterize* them. No matter how we determine them within a putative philosophical “system,” the fact is we *have* subjective lived-experiences and experienced phenomena. Thus, Husserl already at this stage presupposes a certain methodological *epoché*, which leaves aside questions regarding a pure ego (as well as the question of the object of experience) and focuses on that which we experience and describe, the “in-between” – i.e., intentional acts in their *relation* to their fulfillments. The “relation” of *Bewusstheit* that Natorp exposes is, to Husserl, none other than that of *intentionality* – intentional acts and their *fulfillments*.

Hence, Natorp holds that consciousness is fundamentally a relation, while Husserl fleshes out this relation. The fact that relation is the basic character of consciousness does not mean that this relational character cannot be described. To say that consciousness is a relation is

far too general; thus Husserl writes in the margin of his copy of Natorp's *Allgemeine Psychologie*:

Consciousness is not, as in Natorp, as such relation. The fact that all relating occurs *consciously* is not to say that all relation is *within* consciousness. And further, the ego's relating itself to the object is not to say that consciousness itself is a relation, as if the ego would posit itself in relation to the object, as if it would posit "right" in relation to "left." (BQ 342, 27)

Thus, Husserl's point is that relation is not merely a structure *within* (rather than of) consciousness as always intending *something*. The character of intentional consciousness is that it relates itself to something, no matter how one wishes to characterize that something (as a meant object, a meaning, a content, etc.); and this relation is not something immediately and evidently seen but can only be known by reflection *on* this relation: "What the *relation* between ego and intentional object (as objective [*gegenständliche*] relation) presupposes, as fundamentally relative, is reflection on the lived-experience and reflection with identification of ego and object" (ibid., 26). Thus, precisely *in* the process of objectification there are experienced phenomena or appearances and corresponding lived-experiences which can be reflectively described *in* the process of experiencing them.

Accordingly, Husserl notes beside a passage in Natorp's *Einleitung in die Psychologie*: "The appearances *before* objectivation are [supposedly] the problem? No, the appearances *of* the objectivations, I would say, are the problem, maybe even the appearances *before*, but first and foremost, especially the appearances *in* the objectivation." (K II 4/104a; Husserl's excerpts from 1904 or, more likely, 1909) In other words, no matter how one characterizes objectivation and its difference vis-à-vis subjectivation, the fact is that even in objectivations there are lived-experiences that "have" phenomena, and these can be described, *not* just reconstructively but reflectively precisely *in* the process of constructing objectivity. Thus, Husserl disregards these supposedly "metaphysical" questions of the fundamental character of subjectivity as "relation" and as pure ego, and simply focuses on the phenomena that are seen in reflection.

However, in “simply” focusing on the realm of intentionality, Husserl implicitly criticizes the relation to the pure ego as a pointless addition. Instead of reflecting on the relation between *Bewusstheit* and ego – which Natorp himself says cannot be described, and which is therefore an empty notion – Husserl focuses on the relation of *Bewusstheit* itself, i.e., on that which is conscious. The ego is hence to be found “in the object” it intends and, on the level of description, there is nothing wrong with this.

As Konrad Cramer claims, Husserl was very well aware of the theoretical problems with Natorp's construction, and *not* going along with Natorp in this respect was therefore a deliberate decision: “If there should be difficulties with Natorp's theory that cannot be alleviated by means of his own approach; if, furthermore, the reasons for the emergence of these difficulties are representative of a whole tradition of theories of consciousness, then this will protect Husserl's objective conception of ego at least from *that* suspicion that he was theoretically naïve.” (Cramer 1974, 548) Husserl purports to be “naïve” in a “positive” sense of focusing on the “things themselves” given in *Bewusstheit*, regardless of any “interpretations” of their ontological or “metaphysical” status.

By thus leaving aside the question of the pure ego – the subjective, essentially opaque “side” of the constructive process – Husserl at the same time avoids the problem of having to describe this subjective side or in general of having to take a position on it. To express it in his later terminology, in the *Logical Investigations* Husserl focuses only on the *progressive* side of the constitutive process (in Natorp's terminology, “construction”) of world constitution. And “within” the noetic side there is no place for a pure ego other than perhaps as an idea – a “unitary ego” corresponding to the “unity of the object.” But more importantly, this is also about the methodological tools to be employed for describing consciousness – a concept which, at this point in Husserl's development (and as a legacy of Brentano), can be called “consciousness without a subject.” The method Husserl employs is that of phenomenological description based on direct evidence: Again, in his later terminology, it is a static description of lived-experiences in their intentional “functioning.”

This method, Husserl claims, is in no way speculative or indirect (i.e., reconstructive), but is directly based on evidence in phenomenological introspection or reflection. This is to say, Husserl goes along with Natorp's method of construction in his analyses of intentionality, only that Natorp was blind to this very intentionality *in* this process, due to the restriction Natorp placed on describing subjectivity *as* objectifying. Husserl rather focuses on the intentional elements precisely *in* the process of objectification. This description is in no way especially difficult or mysterious: One merely has to avert one's eyes from objects as transcendent and focus on the acts in which objects are given in psychic immanence. This description tacitly employs an *epoché* from the object as transcendent, as well as from a pure ego from which these acts supposedly come forth. In fact, it is in this context that Husserl first introduces the phenomenological reduction, in 1907: The reduction means primarily going back to pure immanence, into a sphere that can be described purely and in evident intuition.²¹

3. *Metaphysical Implications of Natorp's Transcendental Method for Husserl's Transcendental Turn*

The “pure ego” that Husserl was able to “find” by 1913 due to his transcendental turn was, of course, the “transcendental subject.”²² This is not the place to reconstruct Husserl's development between 1901 and 1913.²³ But here one can point out some metaphysical implications in Natorp's method to which Husserl was receptive, once he opened up toward “transcendental questions.” Natorp's method of construction was, after all, a *transcendental* method in the sense of tracing the conditions of possibility of the construction of cognition in subjective “deeds.” Natorp tried to emphasize this transcendental aspect by directly opposing the methods of objectivation and subjectivation. This move suggested a critique of Cohen's method, as well as implying that not only were the two methods (supposedly) radically opposed, but so were the *domains* or *spheres* to which they pertained – namely, objectivity and subjectivity. We have called this Natorp's “ontological difference.” This could be seen by the fact that Natorp denies any direct access and description of subjectivity,

because any such description would *nolens volens* revert to the method(s) of objectification. Another way of phrasing this is that the “objectifying” language pertaining to reality and its cognition cannot be applied to a sphere that is utterly different from reality. If subjectivity, in a manner which is indescribable for us, *constructs* reality, then it cannot be of the same *ontological kind* as reality itself. The subject that constructs objectivity is not itself objective but – *transcendental*. Because it is transcendental, it cannot be *described* by means and methods of objectivity. Although Natorp's actual *execution* of a subjectifying method may have serious problems, as Husserl will point out, one can retain the metaphysical implication of his theory. It was this implication that Husserl was shying away from in his first draft of phenomenology as “descriptive psychology.”

It is clear that Husserl would be critical of the term “construction.” Already in the *Logical Investigations*, however, he does use the term “constitution” to refer to the activities in the sphere of intentional life. One can understand this use of constitution entirely free of metaphysically loaded implications: Objectivities constitute themselves in intentional acts; objects are intended in certain (types of) acts and have their ways of giving themselves or appearing in certain ways of experience. However, a “metaphysical” overtone is inevitable if one *generalizes* this structure – as Husserl indeed does later – to say: Reality *in general* or *as such* (and not just its cognition) is constituted in intentional acts, in the immanence of subjective life. In other words, subjectivity *constitutes* objectivity – and this relation is, furthermore, a *correlation* that is valid for all types of subjective experience: The correlation is *a priori*. This at the same time marks a “fundamental essential difference” between “*being as lived-experience* and *being as object*,”²⁴ (*Hua* III/1, 87) and can be termed (as we have also termed it for Natorp) an “ontological” difference. Thus, if one posits a “correlational *a priori*” between constituting subjectivity and constituted objectivity (as the world in which I am also an object), then the question as to the “ontological” status of this “primal” subjectivity arises: That which constitutes the world cannot in itself be a worldly entity. Husserl's transcendental

turn can also be interpreted as *admitting* this “metaphysical” consequence of the theory of constitution. To be sure, (Husserlian) *constitution* is not (Natorpian) *construction*, but both share the idea that the two “regions” – i.e., the constituting and the constituted, the subjective and the objective – are radically different in nature, whether or not one wants to label this difference “ontological.” While there are certainly more motives that factor into Husserl’s transcendental turn, it is safe to say that it is this “metaphysical” implication that Husserl embraced as he came to characterize his phenomenology as “transcendental idealism.” Transcendental idealism means, in the phenomenological sense (which Husserl also calls “constitutive idealism”), that being is only being insofar as it is experienced by a real or ideal subject – and that this subject, insofar as it constitutes being, cannot in itself *be* in the sense of worldly being. This state of affairs is later, in the *Crisis*, treated as the famous “paradox of subjectivity.”

4. *Husserl’s Method of the Transcendental Reduction as a Reconstruction of the Natural Attitude*

Seen from this perspective, it is conceivable that Natorp’s idea of methods that are specific to objectivity and subjectivity, respectively, becomes attractive again for the transcendental Husserl. One element of subjective (intentional) analysis that Husserl deems fundamental to this analysis – and which Natorp flatly denies – is *reflection* in order to access this intentional life. This presupposes, however, a primal way of subjective life prior to reflection – a life that is “straightforward” (*geradehin*), that experiences the world and as such constitutes it. The latter is certainly in line with Natorp’s idea of the method of objectivating being through construction: The scientist, like any normally living human being – Natorp also speaks of “natural consciousness”²⁵ (*AP*, 194) – “constructs” reality, yet without any explicit knowledge of the transcendental elements which make this constructing possible, as conditions of possibility *of* construction. In Natorp, all normal execution of life (and not just science, as Cohen would construe it) is objectifying, and thus knows nothing of

subjectivity's constructing deeds which would have to be reconstructed. For Husserl, however, simple reflection is already capable of accessing this constructing subjective life in intentional acts. That means, however, that normal life is directed at *objects* and not at the intentional life that *constitutes* them: It lives in a state of blindness with regards to intentional life. As of *Ideas I*, Husserl calls this way of life the *natural attitude*. It is characterized as being unaware of the subjective life that intentionally constitutes reality as it is experienced. This sphere of intentional life can, consequently, only be accessed by a *radical break with the natural attitude*.²⁶ This break is one key element of the phenomenological reduction. What emerges, hence, is a new attitude – namely, the phenomenological attitude of the philosopher who has broken with the natural attitude. The natural and phenomenological attitudes are thus two absolutely distinct ways of viewing the world: The natural attitude lives in a state of naïveté with regard to constituting intentional life; the phenomenological attitude thematizes precisely this life, and studies how it constitutes the world in which the human being lives *in* the natural attitude.

In short, the transcendental reduction as a break with the natural attitude can be interpreted as a *reconstruction* of how the natural attitude has come to be constituted through intentional life. It reconstructs how it has “happened” that normal human beings encounter the world as “fixed” and “complete” *after* a process in which it has been constituted – a process which, significantly, is never actually brought to a halt but is merely “bracketed” for the sake of investigation. It is clear, however, that this philosophical method must be fundamentally different from the natural attitude. The latter is guided by a certain “metaphysical” belief, namely that the world exists independently of any experiencing subjectivity (and as such, it is “naïve metaphysics”). Husserl calls this the “general thesis” of the natural attitude. Life in the natural attitude is not itself a method, like the method of a given science. However, it is Husserl's claim that the positive sciences themselves rest on this tacit base of the general thesis – they are “sciences of the natural attitude.” That is, they have developed certain “objectifying” methods, but they share with

the natural attitude of everyday life a belief in the subject-independent existence of the world. This echoes Natorp's levels of objectification, which begins genetically with everyday quotidian utterance and culminates in the objectifications of scientific judgments. Furthermore, Husserl also sees the need of a wholly different "method" of inquiry into subjectivity after a break with the natural attitude. On the one hand, the thematization of intentional life that has constituted the world – now we can say, the world of the natural attitude – is about describing how precisely this world *in* the natural attitude has arisen *in* and *through* these intentional acts. On the other hand, the term Husserl uses to access this sphere of immanence – namely, "reduction" – already implies that there must also be a genuine method that is adequate to what he also calls the "depth sphere of transcendental life."

It is thus from here that Husserl, after *Ideas*, is in general attracted to Natorp's method of reconstruction. As we shall see, however, Husserl is also critical of a crucial aspect of it, due to the theory of transcendental constitution that he developed in the meantime.

5. *The Reduction Overcomes the Problem of Natorp's Method of Reconstruction*

Let us turn back to Natorp briefly. So far, his theory of reconstruction as the method for an *a priori* psychology has remained a sketch. His psychology reconstructs subjectivity by going back from "fixed" and static objectifications to the dynamic, flowing life that has constructed the former. The method of reconstruction, thus, goes the *opposite* way of construction; it is its simple inversion. But so far this is mere theory. How is it actually carried out, and what new element does this *a priori* psychology *add* to the transcendental method? If it is merely reconstructive and, as such, comes *after* the accomplished work of construction, is there anything significant that this subjectifying method can add to the transcendental method? The answer is negative. Natorp's *Allgemeine Psychologie* is, as he points out, at least in the presentation of 1912, merely a sketch – a "foundation of the foundation" of psychology (see *AP*, vi).²⁷ But this psychology is never actually

carried out, and for a simple reason – there *remains* essentially nothing to be done. What can it mean to follow the same constructive path in a negative, reconstructive direction? And what can it mean to “undo” constructions, other than to point out that subjective life is radically different – namely, in its dynamic and flowing character – from its objectivations?²⁸ Indeed, Natorp conceived of his psychology as “philosophy's last word” (see Natorp 1913, 202)²⁹ – but his attempts to enunciate this last word lead him to completely modify his method.³⁰

As Husserl sees it, however, Natorp's reconstructive attempt is not fundamentally flawed; rather, Natorp's mistake is that he does not carry it through to the end. It is, as we have seen, Natorp himself who tries to make a case for the radical difference between the spheres of objectivity and subjectivity. However, the “panmethodist,” as Natorp has been called,³¹ does not transfer this substantive difference to the methodological level. Natorp is rather a “methodological monist”: The methods of construction and reconstruction are, for him, essentially the same and differ merely in their direction. Had Natorp acknowledged the *ontological* difference he emphasizes so strongly, and then accounted for it on the *methodological* level, then the thematic *object* of investigation would also by necessity have had to be different as well. In other words, an ontological dualism stands here against a methodological monism, and this methodological monism was then translated into an ontological monism, regardless of the fact that Natorp himself insisted on the radical difference between subject and object.

Husserl's theory of the phenomenological reduction can now be seen to solve Natorp's dilemma. Instead of presenting a method of subjectivation and, then, claiming any analysis of its very subject-matter (namely, subjectivity) as a “no-go,” Husserl precisely accounts for the difference between objectivity and subjectivity on the *methodological* level. This allows Husserl to avoid the *problem* altogether by shifting to a different level of reflection – from the natural to the transcendental attitude. If one concedes that a different method of analysis is possible – one which does not take the existence of the world for granted but studies its constitution in subjective acts – *then* one can acknowledge that the “structure” (to avoid the term “object”) to

be studied also is by necessity radically different. However, in keeping with this radical difference, this structure is to be analyzed by a method which is, in equal measure, radically different. Thus Husserl writes in the margin of his copy of Natorp's *Allgemeine Psychologie*:

The opposition of object-subject that is at play here finds its comprehensive resolution only through the phenomenological reduction, viz., in contrasting the natural attitude – which has givennesses, entities, objects as pregiven – with the transcendental attitude, which goes back to the *ego cogito*, i.e., which passes over to absolute reflection, which posits primal facts and primal cognition, i.e., absolute cognition of possible cognition that has nothing pregiven but that is purely self-having cognition (*sich selbst habendes Erkennen*).³² (BQ 342, 22)

Thus, the distinction between the natural attitude as objectifying intentional tendency *and* the reflective, transcendental attitude which studies the constitution precisely *of* the natural attitude, is Husserl's solution to the problem that Natorp had posed but was himself unable to solve. Acknowledging this difference, however, makes way for a genuine study of subjectivity *as* constituting intentional life. Husserl also calls the way the reduction pursues a “regressive analysis” (or simply “regression,” *Rückgang*) since it goes back from the “finished,” constituted world as it is experienced in the natural attitude to constituting, subjective life (see, e.g., *Hua VII*, 382).

Let us look at an example of how this works in Husserl, in contrast to Natorp. In Natorp, the objectifying method proceeds teleologically in constructing reality; the reconstructive method, since it is a mere inversion of the former, proceeds causally (although Natorp points out that subjectivity itself is not causally determined). (*AP*, 209) Nevertheless, since both methods are essentially the same, there is no other way in which to reconstruct subjective data than such a causal manner. To Husserl, however, causality is but one way of explaining processes in the world: It is a naturalistic type of explanation in accordance with the methods of the positive sciences (in the “naturalistic attitude”). However, if one concedes that subjective life, seen in its own domain and with the adequate “attitude,” is not objective, then one can also

apply a different method of analyzing it, the “personalistic attitude”: This is where the classical phenomenological distinction between causality and motivation comes into play. Motivation is that type of “causality” which applies specifically to subjective life.³³ A “reduction” to this subjective life by means of attaining a different level of reflection and a subsequent regression into this life allows for an investigation of subjectivity in its true way of functioning, for instance, by using motivational structures as guiding clues.

Consequently, subjectivity is conceived of as a sphere of experience that can only be accessed in its genuine nature by a *break* with the natural attitude, and this entails a break with the *methods* of the natural attitude. Indeed, this break opens up a whole new region of experience in which nothing of the natural attitude is lost, but merely comes to be seen from a radically new perspective: Not the world, but that consciousness which *has* world as its intentional *relatum*, is absolute being. This makes possible what Husserl envisions, with phenomenology, as a universal “transcendental empiricism.” Although this would be a *contradictio in adiecto* for a Kantian, it was, ironically, Natorp who first envisioned it, though from his standpoint he was unable to take advantage of its discovery. Whereas the very consequence of Natorp's psychology is to render such a study impossible, it is Husserl who exploits it in his transcendental phenomenology. Interestingly, in his reflections on the idea of a “universal empirical science of consciousness” in 1926 – when he had already reached his mature, genetic standpoint--Husserl mentions Natorp's “grand premonition” of such a universal psychology as a laudable exception vis-à-vis all other (!) imperfect attempts at a “pure psychology.” (*Hua* XXXIV, 4) Yet Natorp's sketch of a psychology proper--unlike the interesting epistemological reflections that accompanying it--has not, for essential reasons, been able to contribute to any actual psychologically valid insights, while Husserl's has. As Helmut Holzhey sums up his comparison, “Natorp's groundwork of a philosophical psychology supplies us only with modest contributions to a theory of subjectivity, contributions that are oriented to traditional psychological dispositions. Husserl's

phenomenological analyses present incomparably richer material and have accordingly, also in the positive science, been more intensely received.” (Holzhey 1991, 18)

II. Natorp's Epistemology and Husserl's Phenomenology Form a Correlation

At the outset it was suggested that Husserl's and Natorp's ideas together can yield a richer insight into the nature of subjectivity. With regard to Natorp's psychology, however, we have seen that it is ultimately flawed. The only reason it was worth acknowledging *seemed to be* that it aided Husserl in developing first his concept of transcendental phenomenology as the science of transcendental subjectivity, and then (as we shall see later) in his draft of a genetic phenomenology. One can nevertheless retain an aspect of Natorp's theory which in fact complements Husserl's – a feature which is, indeed, for the most part lacking in Husserl. It is this aspect that can potentially *enhance* Husserl's phenomenology – and it was, in fact, taken up by the late Husserl. (It is worth mentioning that Cassirer took a similar and very fruitful path in his draft of a “philosophy of symbolic forms,” in which Natorp's theory was his explicit point of departure.³⁴) This aspect is, curiously, Natorp's interpretation of the transcendental method – i.e., the method of objectivation.

As has been shown in preceding sections, the methods of objectivation and subjectivation (or epistemology and psychology) form a correlation. As correlative methods, what they have in common is that they are both to be carried out in a transcendental register. They are both about the “grounding of cognition” in objective and subjective senses, respectively. Given that the psychological method has nothing substantial to contribute to an account of the subject and that, consequently, any “hint” of the subject is only to be found (according to Natorp) *in* its objectivations, then it might be appropriate to call Natorp's objectivating epistemology a “psychology in disguise.” After all, it *does* thematize subjectivity – albeit only *ex negativo*, as objectivated in its constructing activities, and primarily with regard to the logical justification of the

conditions of possibility of not only scientific but also everyday cognitions.³⁵ Transcendental epistemology identifies the logical and functional principles at work in cognizing activities and thought-contents³⁶ of the thinking subject. As mentioned, it is about *fixed* laws of cognition vis-à-vis the *dynamic* life of the subject, or more precisely, the lawfulnesses *in* subjective cognitions. This is why epistemology's task (namely, discerning these laws in the acts of cognition) is primarily linked to construction in the positive sciences and only secondarily to “natural consciousness.” But indeed, it is also about the “structures” – which can be called “logical” or “lawful” only in a vague sense – that govern everyday judgments and thoughts. Still very much in the tradition of a formal conception of the *a priori*, Natorp's epistemology thematizes the forms of thinking rather than the actual (intentional) thought processes that phenomenology analyzes – what Scheler famously termed the “material *a priori*.”

In this sense one can say that what Natorp provides is, however mediated, nevertheless an account of subjectivity – to be sure, one lacks the concreteness of a direct description of subjectivity that the phenomenological account is capable of. Yet his epistemology thematizes – to use Natorp's term *Bewusstheit* – the basic relational character of consciousness *with regard to the object of cognition*. The relation as such and in its “inner functioning” are not analyzed – that would be an account of intentionality – rather, this objectively oriented epistemology discerns the *a priori* preconditions of the processes in intentional acts *in* their objectifying activities, i.e., in their relation to the object. As such, this epistemology takes place within a transcendental framework and remains close to Kant's objective deduction in the B-edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.³⁷ It is a transcendental account of consciousness with regard to the *object* of cognition (and of experience in general), and this object can only be grasped as a fixed entity – the constructed object or law that is constructed by subjective activity. Psychology goes backward, inverting this objectivating tendency, but stops short of delving into the depths of subjectivity – the subject is a pure *a priori* principle and as such an eternally distant, ideal point.³⁸

Husserl, however, has shown that it *is* possible to trespass this threshold when one practices the reduction and attains a different perspective from which to analyze subjectivity in its proper nature. In *this* sense, both accounts form a correlation insofar as – in Husserl's terminology – Natorp thematizes the transcendental-*noematic*, Husserl the transcendental-*noetic* aspect of subjectivity. In other words, Natorp's epistemology is not only about a construction or constitution of objectivity in general; it is also a *formal genetic account* of how objectivity has become “constituted” from simple acts up to the highest forms of judgment. Furthermore, this objectivity differentiates itself into distinctive spheres of objectivity; following Kant, it is not only about the constitution of theoretical and scientific cognition, but of “all other regions of objectivation: ethical, aesthetical, and religious.”³⁹ (*AP*, 198)

Although Natorp never carried through with his program, this “noematic” account of the “objectifying” tendency of subjectivity was the starting point for Cassirer's account of the different symbolic forms. It might have also been an inspiration for Husserl's later draft of an ontology of the lifeworld with its different sub-forms (the so-called “special worlds”) as ways in which transcendental subjectivity “enworlds” itself – the “worlds” of science, of everyday life, of art, etc. Thus, Husserl also looks at the noematic side of constitution. The transcendental-noetic account proper, on the other hand, is represented in the phenomenological psychology which Husserl also calls “egology,” meaning the specifically egoic structures of the acts of the *ego*. It is also concerned with the *cogitatum*, but this *cogitatum* is always already embedded in a sphere of objectivity or, more simply speaking, a sphere of “meaning” – a “world.” Constitution is ultimately a constitution of worlds as horizons of meaning, and instead of focusing on the constituting process that forms the world, one can look at the world as a *product* of constitution, and that means, as something that *always already has been* and *is always and at every moment* in time being-constituted. Although Husserl's transcendental method is primarily interested in world-constitution and more specifically in different “spaces of meaning,” it is an insight of his late theory of passive genesis

that these meaningful contexts have not been constituted by a self; rather they are worlds which a self has been endowed with, and can only be taken-over as given horizons of objectivities. This is to say, “world” is something that is constituted by transcendental subjectivity, but this subjectivity is properly speaking an intersubjectivity embedded in a history of world-constitution.

The methods of Husserl and Natorp thus form a correlation insofar as, on the one hand, Husserl thematizes subjective, constituting activities as the accomplishments (*Leistungen*) of transcendental subjectivity. As constituting intentional acts, they constitute *something*. This something, however, is ultimately a world, which is not something a single subject does by itself but rather an intentional activity that has always already been carried out by a community of subjects, and to which the individual merely contributes. On the other hand, Natorp's method thematizes the objective forms *into which* these accomplishments flow as they construct reality. As objectified constructs, however, they have already formed and become differentiated into spaces of meaning – the spheres of science, ethics, aesthetics, and religion (here Cassirer would add myth and language). These in turn have formed specific formal conditions that need to be adhered to when carrying out specific acts – acts of (scientific) knowledge, ethical acts, etc. These would be transcendental-noematic questions – in a manuscript where Husserl takes this Neo-Kantian position, he calls them “*a posteriori* questions of a 'transcendental' kind” – such as: “What would a *world* have to be like in order for it to be accessible for human cognition?” (*Hua* VII, 383)

The Husserlian account can thus be called phenomenal or even dynamic, whereas the Natorpian account is structural or “functional” (as Cassirer has called it) – both present *two sides* of one coin. Whereas the Husserlian account takes place within egology as a “first philosophy,” Natorp's account can be considered (as Husserl would have it) as a “last philosophy.” (*Hua* VII, 385) This indicates that such a “last philosophy” is not at all excluded from the horizon of Husserl's philosophy. Rather, Natorp's “last philosophy” points to a sphere of questions which Husserl sensed would have to be answered at

some point – spheres which he clearly anticipated.⁴⁰ To pursue such a “correlative” transcendental inquiry, then, seems to be a fruitful path of further research, and it shows how Husserl's phenomenological and Natorp's critical accounts can be reconciled, yet also stimulate each other.

1. *Husserl as the Executor of Natorp's Reconstructive Method in Genetic Phenomenology*

Let us focus now on the Husserlian method, i.e., on the transcendental-noetic analysis of subjectivity in its intentional process of world-constitution: What has been thematized thus far is an account of subjectivity *insofar as it constitutes world*. As directed at the world, Husserl also calls this type of intentional analysis “progressive.” This method as investigating the world-constituting activities of subjective accomplishments is the first and foremost task of phenomenological (as intentional) analysis.

However, it was Natorp who criticized this method as remaining on the level of a “static Platonism,” in his review of *Ideas I*.⁴¹ Natorp believed that in this method the transcendental ego was treated like a Platonic, i.e., *static and unchanging* idea, and that Husserl did not consider the human subject in its dynamic and ever-changing character. Instead, Natorp insists that world-constitution is a *genetic* process that proceeds in essential “levels of consciousness” (*AP*, 229ff.). Put on the defensive, Husserl replies to Natorp in a letter of June 1918 to the effect that “already for more than a decade,” (*Hua-Dok*. III/V, 137) he has “overcome the level of static Platonism” and has posed “the idea of transcendental genesis” as the main theme of phenomenology.⁴² Indeed, Husserl asserts that analysis of subjective intentional acts – purely in their “progressive” tendency of constituting – grasps merely the uppermost stratum of this intentional life. Subjectivity, however, when seen in its fullest dimensions is a “thick” and dynamic structure, of which a purely static description catches merely an “abstract” layer and not its full “concretion.” Although, methodologically, static analysis is the first,⁴³ one cannot remain there; it is first *for us* but not *for itself*, to employ the Aristotelian distinction. Rather, the phenomenological

observer has to delve into the dynamic, genetic depths of subjective life in a *regressive* analysis.

Since this regression is not to be understood in a causal or any other “mundane” manner, it proceeds backward according to the genuine structures of transcendental subjective life. And as such, Husserl's regressive analysis actually goes the “subjectifying” way, and thereby fulfills Natorp's original idea – namely, to actually observe subjective *genesis* from a new standpoint (after the reduction). Husserl himself refers to the Neo-Kantian transcendental method interchangeably as “regressive” and “reconstructive,” and claims that the Neo-Kantians (and he means mainly Natorp) never truly understood their own project correctly: “All regressive, 'transcendental' method in the specific sense of regressive – often used by Kant and most prominently preferred in Neo-Kantianism – operates with presuppositions that were never systematically sought for, never scientifically established and, especially, that were not grounded on a pure, transcendental basis.”⁴⁴ (*Hua* VII, 370)

This regressive move is a “regression to origins, namely a transcendental phenomenological inquiry into the constitution,” that is, into the “*origins of objectivity in transcendental subjectivity*, of relative being of objects out of the absolute [...] in the sense of consciousness” (ibid.). This regression, however, is a move back to dimensions of transcendental life that lie – genetically as well as logically – *prior* to the acts in the “here and now” viewed in static analysis. It is not simply a regression back to subjective life as such (something that Natorp would reject). Rather, it goes further back and *beyond current* subjective life as witnessed in the “lived present,” and back into the passive (“hidden”) dimensions of subjectivity – dimensions for which Husserl uses different notions such as latency, the unconscious, “sleeping” subjectivity, etc.⁴⁵ This implies that a regressive analysis regresses into spheres that *cannot* be made intuitively evident in the lived present of the subject (for instance, certain past primal institutings). There can be, accordingly, no *direct description* of these spheres, but only a certain explanation or “interpretation.” Structurally, one can discern certain eidetic “laws of genesis,” but sedimented phenomena *in* this genetic process can only be retroactively

explained and consequently interpreted. The phenomenological *Urmethode* of intuition finds its limits in the realm of “passivity.” In a remarkable passage, Husserl concedes that actually *all* genetic analysis is based on interpretation; the passage concludes as follows: “This [type of genetic inquiry] is ‘interpretation,’ but obviously it is not arbitrary, but an unfolding (*Auseinanderwicklung*) of an explicatable intentionality. Or rather, such unwrapping (*Aufwicklung*) is *from the very start* interpretation; and all intentional analysis, all self-clarification (*Selbstverständigung*) of consciousness that finds its expression in ‘description,’ is interpretation.”⁴⁶ (*Hua XXXIX, 2*)

What kind of original evidence can this interpretation be based on? If these “depth structures” of subjectivity cannot be accessed directly, but only regressively, and hence cannot be described but only explained or interpreted, then the method of making such structures evident can only be a *reconstruction*. Although Husserl prefers the terms “regression” or (as just cited) “interpretation,” there can be no doubt that this type of consideration might equally be called a “reconstruction”: and Husserl at certain places does indeed use this term.⁴⁷ What is at stake, however, is more than a merely terminological issue (to whatever extent Husserl may have adopted a Natorpian term). It is about a *significant modification* or *transformation* of the very principle of phenomenology: It is a tacit acknowledgment that the conception of intuition is too narrow, so that Husserl broadens the scope of phenomenological descriptive analysis by allowing the use of reconstructive or regressive analysis as an interpretation rather than a direct description of intuitively evident phenomena. This is called for because these phenomena in genetic analysis *are* not and cannot be *made* evident in direct intuition. This insight would have been quite foreign to the Husserl of *Ideas I* with its “principle of all principles”: “that every originary presentative intuition is a legitimizing source of cognition, that everything originary (so to speak, in its ‘personal’ actuality) offered to us in ‘intuition’ is to be accepted simply as what it is presented as being, *but also only within the limits in which it is presented there.*” (*Hua III/1, 43-44*; Kersten translation, emphasis added)

As Kern states, this “type of phenomenology” – namely, the type employed in genetic analysis – “Husserl also calls 'explanatory' in opposition to the descriptive character of static [analysis]. 'Explanatory' science to Husserl essentially goes beyond the realm of the intuitive. In this sense, he concedes explicitly a non-intuitive, constructive element for *genetic* phenomenology.” (Kern 1964, 370) To allow “genetic” dimensions to become at all thematic for phenomenological analysis requires a modification of the phenomenological method from a purely descriptive account of static intentionality to a *genetic* dimension of subjectivity based on reconstruction or interpretation. Thus, it was again Husserl who saw the “hidden truth” in Natorp's method, and it was this that he exploited after his turn to genetic phenomenology. Indeed, the regressive or reconstructive method with which Husserl was familiar was *proposed* by Natorp already in texts of the 1880s. Though this proposal was *opposed* by Husserl at the time, it is fair to say that he came to know of this option through Natorp, and that it heightened his awareness of the possibility of a genetic dimension of transcendental analysis - a possibility that Natorp proposed in his draft of an *a priori* psychology from the very start.

Husserl did not admit to this methodological shift, and instead presented it as a flowing development. Yet, given his original resistance to Natorp's regressive psychology, this seamless development is not as continuous as Husserl himself presents it. It is no exaggeration to say that Husserl's mature form of philosophy as genetic phenomenology would not have been possible without Natorp's interventions. Husserl might have stayed true to the “letter” of phenomenology in his later work, but in the actual execution of his analyses he overstepped the boundaries which he had previously set himself.

III. Conclusion

This paper attempted to reconstruct parallels between Natorp's psychology and Husserl's phenomenology with the intent of showing how each influenced the other's attempts to produce a method that would yield a rich account of subjectivity. Husserl and Natorp were on parallel tracks and

dealt with similar issues, despite coming from different traditions. Following their philosophical instincts, they were each attempting to reach the “primal concreteness” of the subject. At a certain stage in this continuing discussion, Natorp had a view that was superior in certain respects to Husserl's, because he was willing to consider “metaphysical” questions regarding the ego that Husserl refused to broach. However, as of Husserl's transcendental stage – which was influenced by Natorp – Husserl in turn went beyond Natorp in overcoming the restrictions imposed by Natorp. Indeed, it was the transcendental reduction that “cashed in” on Natorp's wish to have direct access to the life of the subject – a wish which Natorp deemed unrealizable. Moreover, elements of this continual *Auseinandersetzung* then factored into Husserl's late recasting of phenomenology as a genetic analysis of transcendental consciousness. Hence, this comparison should help to highlight some of the important features of each thinker's views and how they influenced one another in their concrete work. It also shows that many insights taken to be “possessions” of phenomenology proper have been inspired in decisive ways by Neo-Kantianism.⁴⁸

Finally, what is at stake in this discussion between Natorp and Husserl – and which still is at the heart of the discussion concerning *phenomenology itself* – is the question of what method is to be employed for an analysis of subjectivity. The deepening of the intuitive by a “reconstructive” method – largely unacknowledged by Husserl – breaks with the methodological paradigm of self-giving evidence which is sometimes believed to be the “holy grail” of phenomenology. Indeed, one can hardly underestimate the importance that this discovery had for Husserl's method, as well as for a reassessment of his phenomenology as a whole. But its importance is also due to the fact that Husserl strove, in the 1920s, to develop a philosophical system inspired by the idealistic thinkers of the first half of the nineteenth century. Whether openly admitted or not, Husserl's genetic phenomenology is influenced by the idea of a “history of self-consciousness” as professed by the German Idealists – a kinship which he dimly felt through his interaction with the Neo-

Kantians. And since Husserl came into contact with the *latter* tradition by way of Natorp, a tradition so different from the one in which he came of age philosophically, the present essay intends to contribute no less to reopening a philosophical dialogue between phenomenology and Kantianism in general, than to recovering the dialogue between Husserl and Marburg Neo-Kantianism in particular. If the sketch of a Natorp-Husserl relationship which is provided here is in any way convincing, it should be clear that there are intricately connected and provocative dialogues which philosophers, particularly since the Second World War, have wrongly considered to be concluded.

Appendix: Works of Natorp Studied by Husserl

“Ueber objective und subjective Begründung der Erkenntniss.” *Philosophische Monatshefte* 23 (1887): 257-286.

Einleitung in die Psychologie nach kritischer Methode. Freiburg: Mohr, 1888. (In Husserl's library under the signature: BQ 326.)

Both texts, which appeared at nearly the same time, deal with the same issue of the possibility of a “subjective grounding” of cognition, vis-à-vis Hermann Cohen's critical (constructive) epistemology (the “Transcendental Method”). The 1887 essay is a programmatic text which emphasizes the possibility of a “subjective” direction of transcendental-philosophical research – a possibility that Cohen ruled out.

Husserl studied both texts in the course of composing *Logical Investigations* (cf. esp. *Hua* XIX/2, 372-376). New excerpts in 1904 (?) and October 1909 on EP, on the occasion of Natorp's visit to Husserl in Göttingen on 17 October 1909. (Archive signature: K II 4/98-110.)

Allgemeine Psychologie nach kritischer Methode. Erstes Buch: Objekt und Methode der Psychologie (hereafter AP). Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1912. (Archive signature: BQ 342.)

“Philosophie und Psychologie.” *Logos* 4 (1913): 176-202. (Archive signature: SQ 111.)

Originally intended as a new edition of EP (1888), the AP is rather a new work that is roughly three times the length of EP. Some sections, however, are taken over *verbatim* from EP; Husserl marks these passages in the margins of his copy of AP. Again, Natorp's book and article appeared at nearly the same time. His article lays out again the project of a philosophical psychology – a topic with which the AP deals explicitly – in programmatic terms.

Both texts were studied by Husserl in August and September 1918, in Bernau.⁴⁹ In the winter semester of 1922-1923, Husserl held a seminar on Natorp's AP (cf. Archive signature N I 26, class notes by the Dutch philosopher H. J. Pos). At this time, Husserl also reread sections of the EP from 1888, in order to compare Natorp's earlier and later positions on a transcendental psychology. H. J. Pos wrote an article in reaction to Husserl's seminar, on "the methodological difference between Natorp and Husserl concerning subjectivity": "Het methodisch verschil tusschen Natorp en Husserl inzake der subjektiviteit," *Tijdschrift voor Wijsbegeerte* 19 (1925): 313–330.

NOTES

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² See his correspondence with Husserl, published in *Hua-Dok*. III/V. Husserl and Natorp as well as their families were on friendly terms. Their later correspondence seemed to center primarily around university business, especially hiring affairs, where both more than once asked for, and trusted, the other's good judgment. For example: One of the reasons for Heidegger's call to Marburg was Husserl's recommendation to Natorp and Natorp's high opinion of what later has been called the "Natorp-Bericht," Heidegger's excerpt on his (never published) work on Aristotle. (Heidegger's "Natorp report" is published as "Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation)," in *Dilthey-Jahrbuch* 6 (Heidegger 1989). Natorp and Husserl viewed each other as the most distinguished representatives of the Neo-Kantian and phenomenological movements, respectively. At least up to 1923, Husserl read Natorp's writings time and again (cf. the appendix at the end of this paper) and remembers Natorp's "grand vision" of a philosophical psychology in a manuscript from 1926 (cf. *Hua* XXXIV, 4). Also, Natorp was an engaged reader of Husserl's publications, wrote penetrating reviews (of *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas I*) and quoted

them in his own writings. For an account of Natorp's discussion of Husserl's philosophy, cf. Sieg (1994, esp. 413-416).

³ Regarding the relationship between Husserl and Kant as well as Neo-Kantianism, see the extensive study dedicated to this topic by Kern (1964).

⁴ Though Husserl felt, especially in his late Göttingen and Freiburg years, somewhat closer to the Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism – especially to Rickert, whom Husserl succeeded in Freiburg in 1916 (cf. Hua XXXII; Weiler 2001; the introduction by Weiler is highly instructive) – he was nevertheless over the entire Halle, Göttingen, and Freiburg periods in closest contact with Paul Natorp. It should also be noted that it is striking that Husserl never mentions Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), the perceived head and founder of the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism and arguably one of the most renowned philosophers in Germany at the turn of the century. This is most likely due to a biographical fact: In his later philosophy, especially after the turn of the century, Cohen had turned to an exploration of the Jewish roots of modern moral philosophy and was an ardent proponent of the project of a Jewish state and the question of preserving the Jewish identity. After his retirement from Marburg, Cohen moved to Berlin where he worked at the Center for the Study of Judaism, where Theodor Herzl also worked (cf. Ollig 1979, 32-34). An irritable man, Cohen despised Jewish converts such as Husserl, who together with his wife was baptized – like many Jews in the (nonetheless quite secular) German Reich. Cohen's disdain for Husserl is revealed in a letter to Natorp of 23 August 1914, where he writes: “Der oesterreichische Konvertit ist auch so eine geschwollene Eitelkeitsfigur, ohne Aufrichtigkeit & Wahrhaftigkeit.” “The Austrian convert is also a blown-up figure of vanity, without a sense of honesty and truthfulness.” (Quoted in Holzhey 1986, 430). Cohen makes this statement in the context of his fight against anti-Semitism within the Jewish community, which has to become, he believes, more “positive” (ibid.), instead of denying its Jewish origins – as the Husserls had done. According to the late Karl Schuhmann, with whom the author corresponded about this passage, there can be “no doubt” that it is Husserl that Cohen is referring to here. Cf. also Cohen's letter to Natorp of December 1908 (Holzhey 1986, 369-370), where he warns Natorp of Husserl, and suggests “einige Reserve und nicht vollkommene Vertrauensseligkeit”: “some reservation and not complete gullibility.”

⁵ See the account of this split within the phenomenological movement in Landgrebe (1978, 27-28). See also the note on Natorp (ibid., n22). In 1929 Heidegger, during the Davos debate with Cassirer, claims that Husserl had “in a certain sense fallen into the arms of the Neo-Kantians between 1900 and 1910.” It is interesting that Heidegger dates this influence in the *first* decade of the twentieth century, i.e., before the publication of Husserl's *Ideas I* in 1913, which is usually seen as inaugurating Husserl's transcendental turn. See Heidegger (1973, 247). Although one could think that Heidegger's phrasing “falling into the arms” is a bit strong, it is the intention of the present paper to show that Husserl in fact not only came close to Neo-Kantian (or simply Kantian) thought by 1910, but that by 1913 he explicitly embraced this philosophical tendency and came to more and more disregard, sometimes even belittle, his origins in the Brentano circle.

⁶ Husserl's background was, of course, in mathematics, and he slowly worked his way into philosophy by way of Brentano's psychology. Natorp's background was partly in mathematics as well, but besides being formally trained as a philosopher, he also held a degree in classics. His scholarship with respect to Greek philosophy, especially Plato, is considered solid and careful, although not unproblematic in respect to its philosophical claims. See the second edition (1921) of Natorp's influential *Plato's Theory of Ideas: In Introduction to Idealism* (originally published in 1902), with its famous "Metacritical appendix" (Natorp 2004).

⁷ See also Husserl's letter to Natorp from June 1918 (*Hua-Dok.* III/V, 135-138, esp. 137, ll. 9-39).

⁸ In Husserl's late manuscripts, he deals less and less with any other philosophers and, by the 1930s, with literally none of his contemporaries, except for (as with Heidegger and Scheler) in a polemical context. Another reason for Husserl not mentioning any Neo-Kantians (e.g., in the *Crisis* of 1936) might be due to the fact that by the mid-1930s Neo-Kantianism can be said to have nearly vanished from the European continent. In terms of influence, the movement had seen its final day as a philosophical school of any importance after 1918 (the end of World War I and the year of Cohen's death) and even more so by 1924 (the year of Natorp's death). For instance, Windelband and Rickert are mentioned in passing in a manuscript of the *Crisis* period, but here in the framework of a dated debate (cf. *Hua* VI, 344). In the letter quoted in note 7 (above), from 1925, Husserl calls Neo-Kantianism "totgesagt" (moribund), but indicates that Cassirer (and not Nicolai Hartmann, who had inherited Natorp's chair) is one of the only ones that has kept this heritage alive.

⁹ Cf. the appendix to this essay for an overview of the relevant publications of Natorp's in Husserl's research.

¹⁰ For a comparison of the transcendental and the phenomenological methods, esp. Natorp and Husserl, see Holzhey (2009).

¹¹ Cf. BQ 326, Husserl's copy of *Einleitung in die Psychologie*, title page. Here Husserl writes: "Apriorische Psychologie Korrelat der apriorischen Erkenntnistheorie." The latter is what is discussed above as the method of "objectivation."

¹² In including also pre-scientific cognizing as part of constructing activity (of the *fieri* of consciousness), Natorp already goes significantly beyond Cohen's "Marburg paradigm" (cf. Sieg 1994, 414): "Vielmehr gelte es [for Natorp], den subjektiven Charakter aller seelischen Phänomene hinreichend zu berücksichtigen. Dies bedeutet eine entscheidende Erweiterung des philosophischen Konzepts der 'Marburger Schule,' die sich bislang ausschliesslich mit der objektiven Begründung bereits vorhandener wissenschaftlicher Erkenntnis beschäftigt hatte."

¹³ See also *ibid.*: "Dass nun diese Rekonstruktion eine wirkliche und nicht ganz leichte Aufgabe ist, wird gerade dann besonders klar, wenn man sich vergegenwärtigt, wie unmittelbar und unvermerkt die Objektivierung alles [!] Subjektiven sich zu vollziehen pflegt. Schon jede Benennung, jede Fixierung des Blicks, man möchte sagen jeder Fingerzeig, jede noch so entfernt auf ein

Erkennen gerichtete Funktion schliesst wenigstens den Ansatz, den Versuch einer Objektivierung ein.”

¹⁴ See *AP* (chap. 10, 229ff.), where Natorp presents a first “sketch” of this genetic account. The operative term for the levels of *Erkenntnis* is, interestingly, “*Potenz*” (potency), the central notion Schelling uses in his (“reconstructive”) history of self-consciousness in, for instance, the *System des transzendentalen Idealismus*. See Husserl’s reflections on *Potenz* in the manuscript pages (BQ 342, 244-245).

¹⁵ This has led Cramer (1974, 537-603, esp. 556-569) to argue that Natorp’s theory renders self-consciousness essentially impossible. However, the way the argument proceeds in the present essay hopes to show that the reconstructive method for subjectivity does not *want* to claim any such accessibility. To *accuse* Natorp of this omission, as Cramer does, is thus to misunderstand his intentions. Rather, Natorp claims that self-consciousness “takes place,” “occurs,” on a level deeper than that of explicit, objectifying knowledge. What Natorp wants to *preserve*, precisely through this methodological *caveat*, is something like pre-reflexive self-awareness, which is close to Husserl’s paradigm of intuition as foundation for the phenomenological method. For an account of pre-reflexive self-awareness from a phenomenological point of view, and a critique of the so-called “Heidelberg School” of which Cramer was part (see Zahavi 1999, esp. 31-37).

¹⁶ It seems that Nagel’s arguments against the “various forms of reductionism – behavioristic, causal, or functionalist,” aim at the same intention that Natorp is pursuing in his philosophical psychology (Nagel 1986, 15). This lead cannot be pursued here. For a comparison between Husserl and Nagel (see Ratcliffe 2002).

¹⁷ See *AP* (200): “Der zweifache, gleichsam Plus- und Minussinn des Erkenntnisweges, vom Subjektiven zum Objektiven und zurück, entspricht der zweiseitigen Bedingtheit der Erkenntnis, durch die Erscheinung einerseits, den ‘Gesichtspunkt’ der Einheit des Mannigfaltigen andererseits. Die subjektivierende Erkenntnis deckt sich demnach mit der objektivierenden nach dem ganzen Umfang des zu Erforschenden, aber ist der Richtung nach ihr diametral entgegengesetzt.”

¹⁸ This is how Moran translates this term in his *Husserl’s Phenomenology: An Introduction* (2006).

¹⁹ See *AP* (24), where Natorp names the three “moments” of subjectivity: (1) the content of consciousness, (2) the *ego* which *has* the consciousness, and (3) the *relation* between both, i.e., the *Bewusstheit*, which can best be rendered as “the fact of having (something) conscious,” or literally, “conscious-ity.” Only this last, however, is the “irreducible” moment in consciousness – and this is the topic of psychology (cf. *AP*, § 3, 27ff.).

²⁰ See *Hua* XIX/2 (372): “einheitlicher Beziehungspunkt.” One can question already at this point whether this is a fair reading of Natorp. The pure ego is something Natorp mentions, however, it does not play a significant role in his account. Whereas Husserl’s argument shuns any concept of a “pure” ego and focuses instead on what he calls the “empirical” ego, i.e., the ego’s actual life as (intentional) experience-of(-something).

²¹ See *Hua II* (IV, 44). See also the 5th „Lecture” in Hardy translation (63): “That which is transcendent (not really [reell] immanent) I may not use. For that reason [!] I must perform the *phenomenological reduction*; I must exclude all that is posited as transcendent”.

²² The pure ego is not coextensive with the transcendental ego. In his analysis of the constitution of the ego as person in *Ideas II*, the “pure ego” is the lowest level of egoity in its pure function as “ego pole” and as “radiating center” (*Ausstrahlungszentrum*) of acts (see *Hua IV*, 97). However, from the way the transcendental ego is introduced in *Ideas I* (cf. *Hua III/1*, § 33, 66ff.), it is clear that Husserl in this period uses “pure” and “transcendental” ego nearly interchangeably. See also the insightful passage in *ibid.* (124), where Husserl mentions the difficulties with the “pure ego” and makes a reference to *Ideas II*. It is precisely in this passage where, in the footnote, Husserl makes reference to the discussion with Natorp on the issue of the pure ego. For a support of this reading of pure and transcendental ego, see Welton (2000, 230).

²³ A full-scale study has been devoted to this reconstruction by Lavigne (2002).

²⁴ It is in this context that Husserl also uses the term “constitution.”

²⁵ The way Natorp describes this “natural consciousness” is incidentally quite similar to Husserl’s account of the natural attitude: “Dem natürlichen Bewusstsein gilt es [. . .] als selbstverständlich, dass die Gegenstände zuerst da und gegeben, das Wahrgenommenwerden oder Erscheinen sekundär sei.” – “It is a matter of course for natural consciousness that firstly objects are there and given, whereas the being-perceived and the appearing are secondary.”

²⁶ I am leaving aside here the question of “normal” and “phenomenological” reflection. When I mention earlier in this passage that “simple reflection” suffices to access intentional life, it certainly does not mean that it suffices in order to thematize subjectivity in its universal dimension after the transcendental reduction. For the latter, a radical reflection and a break with the natural attitude are necessary. For a discussion of this distinction see *Hua I* (§ 15, 71ff).

²⁷ The published work of 1912 is volume one of a projected two-volume series and as such merely a “*Grundlegung der Grundlegung*” (“grounding of a grounding”). The planned but never completed second volume was to contain the actual execution of psychology under the title “General Phenomenology,” although Natorp concedes that he is not sure if he can also lay out the “systematic of the unities of lived-experience” (*Systematik der Erlebniseinheiten*) (*AP*, vii) in this second part. It is, in other words, the most crucial part of his psychology that he leaves open at this point- and eventually abandons! In general, the *Allgemeine Psychologie* was considered a work of remarkable density, originality, and acumen. It was discussed, apart from members of the Marburg School (for instance, by Cassirer in his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*), by representatives of phenomenology and experiential psychology. A. Reinach and L. Binswanger applauded its philosophical quality, though they also pointed out the problematic elements of Natorp’s sketch (see Sieg 1994, 416-417).

²⁸ It is not in itself a critique to point out that re-construction is itself a form of construction, as Heidegger seems to suggest in his critical discussion of Natorp's psychology, in his lecture from the *Kriegsnotsemester* 1919 (Heidegger 1987, 107; see also the whole of § 19c, 107-109). Natorp would immediately concede that reconstruction is constructive, albeit negatively. What is more problematic is what this further implies, i.e., that there is no real difference *on the methodological level* for Natorp's insistence on the difference between subjectivity and objectivity. But this is not Heidegger's point, which is moot for Natorp.

²⁹ This formulation already indicates a shift of perspective away from psychology being a mere "parallel" discipline of epistemology.

³⁰ This modification was not so much a giving up of the reconstructive method as it was Natorp abandoning the notion of an invertedness of constructive and reconstructive methods. This led him to a radicalization of the reconstructive method. The change in Natorp's method can already be seen in his review of Bauch's Kant-book (Natorp 1918, n. 13), and is further carried out in his lectures on "Allgemeine Logik" of 1920 (Natorp 1980; partially published), and in his posthumous works (Natorp 1925; Natorp 1958). See also the fine introduction to *Philosophische Systematik* (1958) by H.-G. Gadamer (1958, xi-xvii), who was after all a student of Natorp. Natorp's late development clearly distanced him from Neo-Kantianism in the "classic" sense; for an account of this development see Stolzenberg (1995); see also Wolzogen (1985), and, finally, Ferrari (2009).

³¹ Gadamer has also called him "the most rigorous method fanatic and logicist of the Marburg school," in his introduction to Natorp's *Philosophische Systematik* (Gadamer 1958, xiii).

³² "Der Gegensatz Objekt-Subjekt, der hier überall spielt, findet erst seine verständliche Aufklärung durch die phänomenologische Reduktion bzw. in der Kontrastierung der natürlichen Einstellung, aus der natürlichen Reflexion, die Vorgegebenheiten, Seiendes, Objekte im Voraus hat, und der transzendentalen Einstellung, die auf das Ego cogito zurückgeht, also in die absoluten Reflexion übergeht, die die Urtatsachen setzt und Urerkenntnis, also absolute Erkenntnis von möglicher Erkenntnis, die nichts vorgegeben hat, sondern sich selbst habendes Erkennen ist." (BQ 342, 22)

³³ For Husserl's account of motivation as "fundamental law of the spiritual world," see *Hua* IV (§§ 54-61, 211ff.).

³⁴ I have tried to show this in greater detail in Luft (2004).

³⁵ As Welton has suggested to me (in our electronic correspondence), this may be an interesting application of Kant's principle that the unity of the subject is to be found in the unity of the object (cf. Kant AA III, B 136ff).

³⁶ See the Natorp quotation in Holzhey's (1991, 11), as well as his discussion (11-12).

³⁷ Cf. Kant AA III, B 129ff. In his penetrating review of Husserl's *Ideas I*, Natorp himself points out that this distinction is the decisive difference between his own and Husserl's position (Noack 1973, 41; see also Sieg 1994, 414-415).

³⁸ "Unendlich ferner Punkt" ("infinitely distant point") says Natorp (*AP*, 199).

³⁹ In his famous review of Bauch's Kant-book, Natorp defines philosophy as follows: "Ist doch Philosophie überhaupt nichts anderes als das Bewusstsein der zentral begründeten *Einheit, der unzerstückten, nie zu zerstückenden Ganzheit* des Kulturlebens." – "I indeed, philosophy is nothing but the consciousness of the centrally founded *unity, of the unsevered, never to be severed unity* of cultural life." (Natorp 1918, 426; emphasis added).

⁴⁰ In Husserl's discussion of the transcendental and phenomenological methods, he himself presents the two as correlative or at least compatible, although the phenomenological method goes deeper. In this account, the transcendental method as regressing to "logical origins [. . .], leading back to logical beginnings and principles" (*Hua* VII, 382), is presented as comparable to the eidetic reduction that calls for a deeper inquiry into the origins of these origins – i.e., the *transcendental* reduction. Thus, he goes on: "*These* origins of cognition, the logical ones, call for a further regress to origins, namely a transcendental phenomenological inquiry into the constitution of that which is referred to as objective in these principles: the *origins of objectivity in transcendental subjectivity*" (ibid.). Cf. also the discussion of this passage in the following section of the present essay.

⁴¹ Natorp compares his and Husserl's methods esp. in his review of *Ideas I* (see Natorp 1973, 37-38 and 54ff).

⁴² As both Kern (1964, 348) and Welton (2000, 198ff.) argue, what Husserl had in mind with this retrospective self-interpretation were most likely his analyses of inner time-consciousness, which Husserl first presented in his lecture course of 1904/1905 (published in *Hua* X). This discussion is not crucial for the above train of thought, and hence need not be broached here.

⁴³ See Husserl's reflections in his text (*Hua* XI, 336-345) on "static and genetic phenomenological method," especially with regard to the question of *Leitfäden* (guiding clues).

⁴⁴ See also the subsequent passage where Husserl reflects on the relation between (his own) progressive and regressive methods.

⁴⁵ These concepts are familiar from Husserl's late reflections on the problems of passive genesis (see *Hua* XI and XV).

⁴⁶ I am indebted to R. Sowa of the Husserl Archives in Leuven for bringing this passage to my attention.

⁴⁷ For a list of these and more passages see Kern (1964, 370-372).

⁴⁸ To be sure, there are still many other areas of philosophy where Husserl drew heavily from the Neo-Kantians – and not exclusively from the Marburg School, though I have focused on them here. One would also have to mention Husserl's reflections on the philosophy and theory of science; reflections that he carried out mostly in conversation with the Southwest School of Neo-Kantianism, especially Windelband and Rickert (cf. *Hua* XXXII). Finally, Husserl was also heavily influenced by volume 2 of Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, which deals with mythical thought.

⁴⁹ This was – *nota bene* – after Husserl penned his *Bernau Manuscripts* on time. The latter were written on the occasion of two visits to Bernau in the Black Forest, in the late summer of 1917 and the spring of 1918 (see the editors' elucidations, *Hua* XXXIII, xx).

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