

**REASON AND ITS LIVING HORIZONS  
IN EDMUND HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY**

**LA RAZÓN Y SUS HORIZONTES VITALES  
EN LA FENOMENOLOGÍA DE EDMUND HUSSERL**

**Roberto J. Walton**

Círculo Latinoamericano de Fenomenología /  
Academia de las Ciencias de Buenos Aires, Argentina  
[grwalton@fibertel.com.ar](mailto:grwalton@fibertel.com.ar)

**Abstract:** Husserl rejects the contrast between human life as an irrational factum and reason as an objectifying force that is hostile to life. Hence he moves away from the incompatibility between philosophy as science and philosophy of life. This paper has two purposes. First, it attempts to analyze the sequence of living horizons of reason, i.e., to lay out a progressive bringing-into-play that begins in a primal history linked to instinct, goes through history proper with its manners of practical reason, and reaches its culmination in a second historicity with a teleological development. In his last dated manuscript, Husserl speaks of "the upright, fair reason of the natural, sound human understanding" that plays a role before "the scientific, philosophical reason" (Hua XXIX, 386). Secondly, against this background, phenomenology of reason is considered as a view that is grounded in passive fulfillments, traces theory back to life, and emphasizes the interpenetration of the various manifestations of reason. It is argued that the relationship between intention and fulfillment pervades the movement from latent to manifest reason, renders possible different modes of rational legitimation, and shows distinctive traits in each mode. With regard to the vitality of Husserlian reason, a brief epilogue for the Spanish speaking world deals with some of J. Ortega y Gasset's views on the issue.

**Key Words:** Reason, Horizon, Historicity, Instincts, Generativity, Life, Practical Reason, Ethics, Love.

**Resumen:** Husserl rechaza la contraposición entre la vida humana como un *factum* irracional y la razón como una fuerza objetivante hostil a la vida. Por eso se aparta de la incompatibilidad entre la filosofía como ciencia y la filosofía de la vida. Este trabajo tiene dos propósitos. Primero, intenta analizar la secuencia de horizontes vitales de la razón, es decir, desplegar una progresiva puesta-en-juego que se inicia en la protohistoria ligada al instinto, pasa a través de la historia en sentido propio con sus modalidades de razón práctica, y culmina en una segunda historicidad con un desarrollo teleológico. En su último manuscrito fechado, Husserl habla de "la proba y honrosa razón del entendimiento humano natural" que desempeña un papel con anterioridad a "la razón científica, la filosófica" (Hua XXIX, 386). En segundo lugar, frente a este trasfondo, se examina la fenomenología de la razón como una visión que se funda en cumplimientos pasivos, refiere la teoría a la vida, y pone énfasis en la compenetración de las variadas manifestaciones de la razón. Se sostiene que la relación entre intención y cumplimiento atraviesa el movimiento desde la razón latente a la razón patente, hace posible diversos modos de legitimación racional, y muestra rasgos distintivos en cada uno de los modos. Respecto de la vitalidad de la razón husserliana, un breve epílogo para hispanoparlantes considera algunos puntos de vista de J. Ortega y Gasset sobre la cuestión.

**Palabras clave:** Razón, horizonte, historicidad, instintos, generatividad, vida, razón práctica, ética, amor.

In his article "Life and Knowledge" (1892/93), Wilhelm Dilthey distinguishes formal and material categories. The former are grounded on reason and refer to relations such as identity, equality, difference, and generality. These relations are characterized by their thorough transparent and univocal character. On the other hand, material categories are grounded on life, which cannot be understood thoroughly by means of them<sup>1</sup>. This viewpoint is maintained by Dilthey until his final work, where he writes: "In every understanding of life there is something irrational, as life itself is [...]. For the realm of conscious life emerges as an island out of unfathomable depths"<sup>2</sup>. Edmund Husserl's concern has been precisely the rejection of the incompatibility between philosophy as a science and the philosophy of life: "Thus, the fundamental character of phenomenology is a *scientific* philosophy of life, [...] a *radical* science that has universal concrete life and its lifeworld as an originary theme [...]" (Hua XXXII, 241)<sup>3</sup>. My purpose is to show a progressive bringing-into-play of vital horizons in a development of rationality through history. The process attains its highest point in transcendental phenomenology and its concern with a "self-explication of life (*Selbstausslegung des Lebens*)."<sup>4</sup> (Hua XXXII, 147) We shall see that the relationship between intention and fulfillment, which pervades the movement from latent to manifest reason, also renders possible different modes of patent rational legitimation. With regard to the vitality of reason, I add a brief epilogue for Spanish speaking people with a reference to José Ortega y Gasset.

## 1. INSTINCTS AND PRIMAL HISTORICITY

Husserl holds that active reason is contained already in a previous basis: "*Passive motivation is the mother-ground (Muttergrund) of reason [...]. Precisely for this reason, it is a potential reason, for what the intellectus agens brings*

<sup>1</sup> See Wilhelm Dilthey, *Grundlegung der Wissenschaften vom Menschen, der Gesellschaft und der Geschichte, Gesammelte Schriften XIX* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), p. 361 f.

<sup>2</sup> Wilhelm Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften, Gesammelte Schriften VII* (Stuttgart/Göttingen; B. G. Teubner/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), p. 218 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Abbreviation, with indication of volume and page, for Edmund Husserl, *Gesammelte Werke-Husserliana I-XL* (Dordrecht: Springer [previously: Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff; Dordrecht/ Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers], 1950-2009).

forth is already located in the mother-ground." (Hua XXXVII, 332) In an inquiry back into the sources of reason, one must consider first of all an instinctive intentionality that involves an originary affection and so guides individual development since its beginning. It works at the basis of the experience of nature, action in the world, and the relationship with others, and, thus, makes up a previous possession of the world that is presupposed by any further acquisition. Husserl compares "the problem of the instincts" with the "problem of *hidden* reason." (Hua VI, 53) He refers to the "inborn primal being, the primal predisposition of the ego presupposed by all constitution," contends that the constituted world and the universe of rationality are enclosed within it, and goes on to state: "Thus, the inborn predisposition of subjectivity is the irrational that makes possible rationality, or has its rationality in being the 'teleological ground' for all the rational"<sup>4</sup>.

Primal experience is conditioned in all its moments by instincts and is made up by an alien hyletic core and, on the egoical side, by both feelings that prompt or hinder hyletic manifestations, and kinestheses that motivate the constitution of optimal data and through them the experience of objects. Feelings and kinestheses remain, along with hyletic data, in the higher levels of constitution. Husserl holds that "up to objectivation (enworlding) they constantly play their role or rather always receive new roles, higher roles, they acquire higher functional structures"<sup>5</sup>. The revealing force of feeling allows Husserl to state that "mere sensations and, in a higher level, sensible objects, as things that are there for the subject, but are there 'value free' are abstractions"<sup>6</sup>. With this the ultimate genetic ground is laid for a phenomenology of reason in which no differentiation of theoretical, affective, or practical reason is allowed.

<sup>4</sup> „Dieses eingeborene Urwesen, die Uranlage des Ich vorausgesetzt für alle Konstitution. In ihr statisch und ‚genetisch‘ geschlossen ist die konstituierte Welt in ihr Wesensformen, bzw. das Universum der Rationalität. So ist die eingeborene Anlage der Subjektivität das Irrationale, das Rationalität möglich macht, oder es hat seine Rationalität darin, der ‚teleologische Grund‘ für alles Rationale zu sein.“ (Ms E III 9, 4b) Quoted by James R. Mensch, *Husserl's Account of Our Consciousness of Time* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2010), p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> „[...] bis hinauf zur Objektivierung (Verweltlichung) spielen diese Momente beständig ihre Rolle, oder vielmehr, sie erhalten immer neue, höhere Rollen, sie bekommen immer höhere Funktionsgestalten.“ (Ms B III 9, 79b) I wish to thank Prof. Dr. Ullrich Melle, Director of the Husserl Archives in Leuven, for permission to quote from Husserl's unpublished writings.

<sup>6</sup> „Alles Leben ist unaufhörliches Streben, alle Befriedigung ist Durchgangsbefriedigung. Bloße Empfindungsdaten und in höherer Stufe sinnliche Gegenstände, wie Dinge, die für das Subjekt da sind, aber ‚wertfrei‘ da sind, sind Abstraktionen. Es kann nichts geben, was nicht das Gemüt berührt, und das Gleichgültige ist nun ein Zwischenstadium zwischen Lust und Unlust [...].“ (Ms A VI 26, 42a)

What is significant for the development of reason is a movement of empty intention and fulfillment that is directly connected with instincts and bears in itself a teleology. A vague, empty horizon of blind intentions strives for satisfaction, has its outcome in bodily movements, and can be fulfilled or disappointed. First tied to nondisclosed instinctive goals, the instinctive horizon gradually gains determination. Insofar as they turn out in bodily movements, instincts imply a practical-kinesthetic horizon that enables us to enter into a relationship with the surrounding world. We learn to be the owners of our living bodies and in this way attain an understanding of ourselves as organized systems of predispositions for movements that can be governed and trace the outline of our world. In this connection it is worth observing that Ludwig Landgrebe has referred to an immanent reason that has its roots in the most basic actions that can be accomplished<sup>7</sup>.

Whereas nonobjectifying instincts are directed toward specific contents, the objectifying instinct only requires the fusion of hyletic contents, whatever may be their kind, in a harmony that leads to the prominence of a material unity. Syntheses of association spring from it and unify contents enabling them to emerge as affecting data. This apprehension of unities within multiplicities, i.e., of unities that stand out against varying hyletic affections lays in turn the ground for harmony as a distinctive trait of reason. What Husserl is interested in showing is that "in the child of the first period of childhood we already have instinctive intentionality, before an intentionality of interests, with reference to being in a proper and full sense" (HuaM VIII, 75)<sup>8</sup>.

Instincts give direction to our primal goals in the field of self-preservation and of our relationship with others: "In his primal instinct, each individual subject [...] carries 'implicitly' all the others that can present themselves to him, and all their achievements, all the world as humanized, as cultural world"<sup>9</sup>. The linking function of instinct brings about a primal generativity as the basis on which the different individual life-streams are sustained. Essential to it is a

<sup>7</sup> "If one understands reason as the higher principle of any establishment of meaning, one can say that this spontaneity of bodily self-movement has its own immanent reason." (Ludwig Landgrebe, "Phänomenologische Analyse und Dialektik," *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, N° 10, 1980, p. 74)

<sup>8</sup> See Nam-in Lee, *Edmund Husserls Phänomenologie der Instinkte*, *Phaenomenologica* 128 (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), pp. 107 ff, 186 ff.

<sup>9</sup> „In seinem Urinstinkt trägt jedes einzelne Subjekt [...] ‚implizite‘ alle andere, die ihm entgegentreten können, und alle ihre Leistungen, die gesamte Welt als humanisierte, als Kulturwelt in sich.“ (Ms A VI 34, 37a)

"love-impulse (*Liebestrieb*)" and a "care of life (*Lebenssorge*)"<sup>10</sup> directed at children and parents. A horizon of generativity is sustained in our homeworld because we know ourselves as the actually living members of a chain of generations. Children grow within a family tradition and adopt through imitation and instruction the typical structures of mature beings, which become a means for the transmission of a wider communitarian historical development. They develop an interest in why things are as they are, and questions about these motives are the originary questions that can be raised with regard to history. Husserl refers to a primal history (*Urgeschichte*) that revolves around the motives and purposes of objects and actions. So it is, then, that, surrounded by fellow human beings that set themselves ends, a child "learns to understand," we are told, "their purposeful action as such, and to understand objects that have a purpose (*Zweckobjekte*) not only as objects of usage (*Gebrauchsobjekte*), but as objects that have come into being teleologically (primal history)" (Hua XV, 420).

Husserl speaks of a "primal form of historicity (*Urform der Gechichtlichkeit*)" that affords a "basis for every higher historicity (*Unterlage für jede höhere Geschichtlichkeit*)"<sup>11</sup>. The counterpart of this development is a "breakdown of the lower reason (*Zusammenbruch der niederen Vernunft*)" that must blaze the trail for higher modes "as an inversion of originary instincts"<sup>12</sup>.

## 2. FIRST AND SECOND HISTORICITY

On the ground of the chain of generations, the establishment of enduring and encompassing ends brings forward a higher-order spiritual generativity that takes on— in new forms tied to these goals—the protentional thrust pertaining to the universal instinctive intentionality. This "first historicity (*erste Historizität*)" is the field in which "reason in the first sense (*Vernunft im ersten Sinne*)" (Hua XXIX, 40) can evolve. A new stage in the fulfillment of empty in-

<sup>10</sup> Ms E III 4, 5b, 9b.

<sup>11</sup> Ms K III 3, 50 a. See Edmund Husserl, "Grundlegende Untersuchungen zum phänomenologischen Ursprung der Räumlichkeit der Natur," in Marvin Farber (ed.), *Philosophical Essays in Memory of Edmund Husserl* (Cambridge [Massachusetts]: Harvard University Press, 1940), p. 319.

<sup>12</sup> „[...] schon vor der Wissenschaft ist konkrete Vernunft und selbst absolut gerichtete da als Umwendung ursprünglicher Instinkte.“ (Ms E III 4, 16 b) Quoted by J. R. Mensch, op. cit., p. 257.

tentions comes forth and is superimposed on the sheer lapsing of generations. In a note to his last dated manuscript (June/July 1937), Husserl offers the following characterizations of this mode of reason: "Reason –in the sense here presented– establishes in fact the separation from animals, and also from animals that zoologically are already called human beings, namely, prehistorical human beings that have not yet acquired the capacity of being able to be free, of being able to reflect and with this to know (as a human capacity, a well-exercised ability that further trains itself in ever higher levels)." (Hua XXIX, 384 n.) Conscious life is orientated toward coherence first in an instinctive manner, and then through the striving for an active coincidence that expresses a decision of the will. A rational praxis emerges through the deliberation on practical possibilities and impossibilities, the care for self-preservation, the regulation of communal life, and the practices of functionaries that deal with these problems. This means that "the human being of everyday life is after all not without reason," and that in this condition he reflects on ends and means, generates methods, and attains results that "can always be understood again in their rationality" (Hua VI, 270, 337). Here one must take into account particular modes of fulfillment, verification, and truth.

The surrounding world is experienced according to what is relevant to our practical purposes in such a way that we have our "ontic certainties and nontheoretical, nonlogical interests in verification." (Hua XXXIX, 201) Accomplishments have their truth when they are fit to an end and achieve it. Husserl stresses that a successful praxis presupposes the constitution of a stable experiential world to which it adapts itself: "I have a possible 'rational'-praxis only if I have a world of known things at my disposal." (Hua XXXIX, 150; see 406) On the other hand, experience is a mode of praxis. Even if it alters nothing in an object, experience is reflected in the bestowal of an ever richer experiential meaning on it (see Hua XXXIX, 278). Furthermore, apperception is not limited to experience, but is found also in praxis. Practical apperceptions emerge from previous praxis and anticipate possible future action through a transference that has a bearing on ends, means, procedures, and so forth. In the same manner as perception, practical life is guided by analogies. These can be corroborated and lead to an ever more firm analogy. With regard to the confirmation and disconfirmation of apperceptive anticipations, Husserl refers to practical reason within a world of praxis: "This world has its legitimacy of being

(*Seinsrecht*), and acting within the world has its practical reason in itself, which corroborates itself in general in itself, and also disproves itself in singular items." (Hua XXXIX, 418; see 857)

As he refers to a "care of life (*Lebenssorge*)" or a "care of existence (*Existenzsorge*)" concerned with "how (*Wie*)" life develops, Husserl describes a practical modalization. By way of example: when he is threatened by bankruptcy, a merchant can consider and weigh new forms of life or professional activities according to the horizon of his capacities. His concern is reflected in a hope that is centered in certain possibilities that are subject to confirmation and disconfirmation. A coincidence with what is expected amounts to success, whereas discordance amounts to failure. The process is subject to corrections in the same way as the progress of perception can restore certainty or fall into a refuting canceling-out. In more general terms, care encompasses our whole life: "Care' is in general an expression that, in its meaning, points in advance to the whole of life"<sup>13</sup>. Husserl adds that this teleological tendency implies a future horizon in which the possibility of the fulfillment of ends goes together with possibility of a deception: "Care is a mode of feeling that arises from the modalization of activity and from the constant predelineation of the horizon of possible failure, within which the courses of foreseeable and true success, of success subject to correction, are carried on"<sup>14</sup>.

In the realm of moral practices, Husserl distinguishes the first stage of custom (*Sitte*) as a habitual behavior that lacks valuation and the second stage of morality (*Sittlichkeit*) as a behavior that includes valuation through external criteria and evokes the notion of practical reason highlighted by Paul Ricoeur as wisdom acquired in order to regulate the interaction between human beings. Both levels are contrasted to the autonomy of an inner determination that is tied to insights of reason and appears in a further stage<sup>15</sup>. About this we will have more to say later.

Beyond the relativity of doxic modalization, which varies according to experiential coherence, Husserl calls attention to the relativity pertaining to the al-

<sup>13</sup> „Sorge' ist überhaupt ein Ausdruck, der in seinem Sinn vordeutet auf das Ganze des Lebens." (Ms A VI 34, 22b)

<sup>14</sup> „Die Sorge ist der Gefühlsmodus, der aus der Modalisierung der Aktivität entspringt und aus der beständigen Vorzeichnung des Horizontes möglichen Misslingens, innerhalb dessen die Linien des doch voraussichtlichen und gewissen Gelingens, des Gelingens unter Korrektur, verlaufen." (Ms E III 6, 3a)

<sup>15</sup> See Ms F I 24, 54a-56b.

teration of situations. To the open possibility that, in connection with the horizon of extension of experience, the certainty of an object may turn into doubt or negation, is added the relativity associated with a horizon of anticipation of experience, i.e., the multifarious situations or surrounding worlds within which our experience takes place. Intuitive truths are relative to everyday life in communities or human activities whose practical projects determine their meaning and the required degree of assurance. Still far from universality and objectivity, truth pertains to everydayness in the manner of singularity and relativity because an object, although it remains identical, "transforms its being-meaning, the meaning determined by the situation, so that, with the change of the situation, truths become other truths." (Hua XXXIX, 192) Husserl stresses a condition of equivalence for all these horizons of anticipation: "Every truth refers to its situation, and this change does not have the title 'falsehood of what a moment ago was assured as true' but rather the title truth as truth of the new situation." (ib.) A prescientific knowledge conditioned by situation and tradition enables us to know "how to decide rationally, with regard to each truth and falsehood, which are the grounds and differences that are relevant or irrelevant for it" (Hua XXIX, 385 f.). Husserl deals here with what Heinrich Rombach calls the multiveracity or plurality of reason, and Bernhard Waldenfels *doxa* as a third mode of *episteme* that is contained in the different world-orders that exclude each other.

Nevertheless, for Husserl, a universe of being transcends the relativity of the horizons of anticipation and subsists identically through all situations. In his last dated manuscript, Husserl attempts to show that the task assigned to philosophy is that of being "in a peculiar combat-position against any and every other knowledge that remains in the pre- and extrascientific world-life." (Hua XXIX, 377) In the motivation of this development, a decisive role is played by the awareness of the relativity associated with the differences between traditionally valid truths within various communities. Beyond the differences between what is one's own and what belongs to others, a world-core can be highlighted as an identity that is interpreted in different manners. One could think, Husserl suggests, that this identification first appears in the mutual dealings of individuals or of different strata within a community. Nevertheless, in these cases there is a leveling out of contrasts by way of a reciprocal adjustment. It is precisely this normality that is affected when the vital space of a community is

surpassed in order to enter into another particular world: "With this," claims Husserl, "the natural concept of reason is displaced: out of the upright, fair reason of the natural, sound human understanding there comes now into being the scientific, philosophical reason." (Hua XXIX, 386) Accordingly, a new form of communalization that rightfully includes all human beings comes forth with philosophy and science. This emergence is identified with the origin of a "second historicity (*zweite Historizität*)."<sup>16</sup> (Hua XXIX, 41) A universal or rational generativity contrasts with the limitations of previous generativities because it is characterized by "the infinite movement from latent to manifest reason" with "the different stages of the movement of intention and fulfillment." (Hua VI, 13, 273) With this revolution, the prescientific notions that are taken for granted as regards the possibility of verification are transferred to the new realm in order to make another start. The fact that, in the prephilosophical surrounding world, everything is known as actually existing with its own truth, affords a rational ground for the building-up of philosophy and science.

### 3. PHENOMENOLOGY OF REASON

A "progressive bringing-into-play (*progressives In-Spiel-setzen*)" (HuaM VIII, 187) enables us to see how various manifestations of reason follow one another in a hierarchical structure. We have moved from the level of instinctive strivings, through more articulated modes linked to practical life, into a forceful manifestation in the history of philosophy and science. On this basis, transcendental phenomenology adopts the primal establishments of philosophical reason, i.e., the Greek primal establishment of universal knowledge and its infinite tasks and the Cartesian primal establishment of the requirement of apodicticity. Its inquiry discloses the moments of reason that were functioning implicitly, shows the conditions of possibility of reason, and clarifies the goals of a rational humanity. Having this in mind, Husserl writes: "Reason must already exist and must be able to bring itself to logical disclosure in the rational subject"<sup>16</sup>. In contrast to the previous activity of reason, which builds upon a credulous tak-

<sup>16</sup> „Es muss Vernunft schon sein und muss sich zur logischen Selbstenthüllung in der vernünftigen Subjekt bringen können.“ (Ms E III 4, 19a) Quoted by J. R. Mensch, op. cit., p. 257 s.

en-for-grantedness, phenomenology is called to develop "the total theory of reason," which through absolute responsibility and full self-justification must "raise us above the level of the naïve reason." (Hua XXXV, 42) This higher position sheds light on the previous instinctive, practical and theoretical stages, and effects a self-explication that is deeply rooted in life because it grounds the legitimation of reason on previous modes of verification, and the interlacing of "a unique reason with its essential sides" (Hua XXVIII, 228) on the interweaving of the hyletic core, feeling, and kinestheses at the instinctive level.

Husserl refers the phenomenological "critique of reason" back to "the clarification of evidence and all the pertinent relationships between mere 'intention' and 'fulfillment' [...]." (Hua XVII, 120) As we have seen, these relationships already belong to the previous stages of reason. Now the nature and unity of reason becomes manifest through an analysis of the legitimation they provide when harmony is attained, and of their link both with regulating a priori structures and horizons of possible development. This is the invariant core of reason as contradistinguished to its manifold manifestations. Transcendental phenomenology shows reason as a development of evidence without the accidental characters that the latter can show at first. Reason is grounded not so much on a single experience or action as on a harmonious synthesis in the fulfillment of the corresponding horizon-consciousness. It is endowed with more weight due to the forcefulness of evidences that reciprocally corroborate themselves. Evidence and truth, as well as reason and verified actuality, are pairs of correlative concepts within the noetic-noematic parallelism. Actuality legitimates itself and shows itself as truth to rational consciousness, and, conversely, rational consciousness effects a bestowal or dictation of legitimacy (*Rechtgebung, Rechtsprechung*) as regards actuality. Thus, for transcendental phenomenology, consciousness is autonomous because the validity or nonvalidity of its positing is legitimated by its own means within the absolute self-sufficiency of the correlation between the world and world-consciousness.

Due to its openness and its undetermined structure, horizon-intentionality both renders possible the synthetic harmony on which rationality is grounded and sets limits to an absolute rationality. As this process can take place in an individual life-flow alone, there is an ego-centeredness in which each subject is the point around which legitimation revolves. Furthermore, by virtue of its indetermination, horizontality situates the life of each ego under its rule and respon-

sibility. For new intentions emerge over and over again enabling a new viewpoint under which life can be assembled and interpreted. Thus, the subject shows himself as a center of spontaneity: "Only by its own freedom can a human being come to reason [...]" (Hua XXVII, 42 s.)<sup>17</sup>. It is because indeterminateness motivates an endeavor toward completion that it places the subject in the midst of teleology. Finally, by its structure of determination, horizontality turns each subject into a center of apperceptive anticipation that adopts a heritage of meaning and as a result traces out courses for potential legitimation. In sum: reason is characterized by harmony in the fulfillment of empty intentions, the responsible role played by the subject in a teleological process, and the increasing acquisitions that result from this process. This is the invariant that repeats itself and differentiates itself in specific domains of reason.

Now I would like to draw attention to two points that clarify the vital character of rational legitimation. One concerns its grounds in passive syntheses and the other the nature of the a priori universalities by which it is ruled<sup>18</sup>.

To find the groundwork for rational legitimation, we must turn to Husserl's phenomenology of internal time-consciousness and consider originality not in connection with the beginning of the genesis of the ego as in our previous reference to instincts, but rather in connection with an inquiry back from the constituted world into the ultimate constitutive functions in the living present (see HuaM VIII, 279). A threefold foundation must be emphasized. It concerns the movement of intention and fulfillment, the constitution of noematic unities, and the positing that can be referred to the noematic unities on the basis of fulfillment.

<sup>17</sup> Javier San Martín deals with the problem of free reason by offering an analysis of the structure, the function, and the principle of phenomenology. The structure, which amounts to the correlation between the world and world-consciousness and to its a priori conceived as the core of a theory of strong rationality, accomplishes a function that has to do with the requirements of rational life. The principle according to which the function effects the structure is that we are not the outcome of the world but rather the true originary locus of meaning: "If we are convinced of this and attempt to shape our life, our culture, and our political life out of *free reason*, I believe that Husserl's thought will still be an active force among us." (*La fenomenología como teoría de una racionalidad fuerte. Estructura y función de la fenomenología y otros ensayos* [Madrid: UNED, 1994], p. 163)

<sup>18</sup> Miguel García-Baró examines these two points. On the one hand, he highlights a second level that deals not so much with the performances of constitution as with the "*originary evident conditions*" of transcendental constitution. These second-order problems concern temporality, intersubjectivity, bodilyhood, and the ego, and "affect in an equal manner all forms of reason." On the other hand, with regard to "the regionalized and concrete phenomenology of reason," García-Baró stresses Husserl's "keen perception of the *teleological* problem of transcendental constitution" and refers it back to "the insatiable theoretical and practical *interest* that is raised by the constituted unities and keeps transcendental life in the balance." (*Vida y mundo. La práctica de la fenomenología* [Madrid: Trotta, 1999], pp. 234, 238)

The Bernau Manuscripts offer an analysis of the first two themes. The primordial time-flow is examined as an intermingling of retention and protention within a fulfillment process. The fulfillment of a previous protention must go retentionally into the following phases of consciousness, and, motivated by the continuum of preceding retentions, new protentions emerge directed toward future fulfillments, which, in being fulfilled, both become conscious again in the mode of a retention and arouse new protentions: "It belongs to the essence of this consciousness that it can constantly be fulfilled, so that each fulfillment is at the same time an intention for a new fulfillment, and so forth." (Hua XXXIII, 24) In this primordial process of general fulfillment there is a culmination point, which is the maximum point of fullness and the point of minimal emptying. A general fulfillment plays a role in the self-constitution of the primordial time-process and, as contradistinguished to "all other levels of noemas," brings forth "ultimate noematic formations." (Hua XXXIII, 163) These formations are time-moments that lay the framework for the constitution of immanent temporal objects through particular fulfillment. They have their own correlative noetic functions in the intentions of the primordial time-process, and Husserl speaks of a "reshaping of the concept of hyletic datum" (Hua XXXIII, 161 n.) with the purpose of showing only its time-features. On this basis there arise hyletic data that, along with noematic time-moments, also include sensuous contents. The noematic levels lead to the constitution of external objects that incorporate an apprehension of the sensuous contents.

As regards positionality, Husserl shows that there is a positing pertaining to the consciousness of inner time insofar as our lived experiences can show themselves in the flow as internally and actually posited. He draws the distinction between a first and second belief. Whereas the second belief pertains to our acts or judgments and has as its correlates actualities of the external world, the first belief is a part of internal consciousness: "Its correlate is the characteristic of actuality belonging to every lived-experience" (Hua XXIII, 338 n.; see 424, 469, 588)<sup>19</sup>.

A second aspect under which to consider the vitality of theoretical reason lies in the nature of the a priori that rules the teleological process of legitima-

<sup>19</sup> John B. Brough, "Notes on the Absolute Time-Constitution Flow of Consciousness," in Dieter Lohmar and Ichigiro Yamaguchi (eds.), *On Time – New Contributions to the Husserlian Phenomenology of Time, Phaenomenologica* 197 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), p. 36 s.

tion. Bearing in mind that the intellectual seeing of an essence "is, in the highest sense, an act of 'reason'," (Hua III/1, 317) let us point out some significant characters of the eidos that make the distinction between abstract and concrete become weaker and eventually disappear. First, although the apodictic positing of the existence of transcendental life as the first truth cannot be canceled out, the movement of intention, confirmation, and cancelation remains valid for the factual contents that go hand in hand with it. Second, the relationship between the essence of the transcendental ego and its factualness is unique. After stating that I exist with apodictic necessity and also have as a concrete life-stream my apodictic essence, Husserl goes on to make clear that "it is not as if my factualness were now something contingent [...]"<sup>20</sup>. The reason for this is that, if it is to examine its essence or any other essence, transcendental subjectivity must necessarily exist. In this manner it becomes clear that its essence cannot be considered as a mere possibility like the essence of a triangle. Third, the material a priori is contingent because it is concerned with the hyletic side of subjectivity. This is the contingency of a reason that is only pure in the sense that it does not require a specific type of sensibility, but is referred to a subject that is endowed necessarily with sensibility. Husserl contrasts the contingent a priori of the hyletic essences with the formal a priori of pure reason that is above material determination (see Hua XVII, 33 f.). Fourth, essences move away from a closed ideality because a horizon always remains open for further eidetic determinations. Even if what has been attained cannot be canceled out, empty intentions can be fulfilled in a process of specification (see Hua XXV, 247). Thus general essences establish a rule, but do not close down possibilities for subjectivity. They determine a "what" that does not provide a complete and thorough outline for our performances. In other words, general essences are included in factual actualizations, but the "how" of the actualizations is not reducible to them. Consequently, Husserl can come to speak of eidetic singularities, which are universals with no particular cases that serve as examples by adding their own factual determinations. Eidetic singularities have no extension in contrast to all other essences. They included the eidos of each transcenden-

<sup>20</sup> „Ich bin in apodiktischer Notwendigkeit, nicht als leerer Ichpol, sondern in meinem konkreten Leben mit all dem, was damit untrennbar eins ist. Al das habe ich mein Wesen. Aber nicht ist es so, als ob meine Tatsächlichkeit nun ein Zufälliges wäre, als ob mein apodiktisch einsehbares allgemeines Wesen voranginge in dem Sinn, wie wir es sonst im Verhältnis von apodiktischen Wesensallgemeinheiten und darunter Fallenden Fakten kennen.“ (Ms E III 9, 7b) See Hua XV, 385, 403.

tal subjectivity as a unique singular entity or a concretum in which the essential and the factual only differ because the essential contents that make up a *So-sein* are apprehended apart from actual existence<sup>21</sup>. Husserl refers to an "individual essence (*individuelles Wesen*)," (Hua III/2, 487) and holds that "every lived-experience belonging to the stream [...] has an essence of its own which can be seized upon intuitively, a 'content' which allows of being considered by itself in its ownness." (Hua III/1, 70; see 35)

#### 4. AXIOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL REASON

The axiological and practical side of reason stresses the vital characters of reason by pointing out ultimate ends associated, along with a community of truth, with a community of love in the framework of a teleology that guides human life. Husserl speaks of an "emotional evidence (*Gemütsevidenz*)" with regard to an "emotional and volitional meaning of the world (*Gemüts- und Willenssinn der Welt*)," so that "emotion and will are a peculiar source of the legitimate and genuine"<sup>22</sup>. It should be recalled that doxic acts are themselves practical acts that have truth as a goal of the will, the value of which is apprehended through feeling. As was mentioned, due to the disclosing role of feeling, Husserl can contend that there are no value-free objects.

Husserl characterizes love as "one of the basic problems of phenomenology"<sup>23</sup>, and the criticism has been leveled that he does not offer an explicit and systematic reflection on the relationship between truth and love<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, it can be argued that the precise point of contact between the two can be seen in the movement of intention to fulfillment and the subsequent possibility of confirmation and disconfirmation within the general framework provided by a horizon. This bridge concerns the harmony that can be attained both in the horizon of experience and the horizon of action. Husserl holds that the world

<sup>21</sup> This point is strongly made by J. N. Mohanty. See *Phenomenology. Between Essentialism and Transcendental Philosophy* (Evanston [Illinois]: Northwestern University, 1997), pp. 3-7; and *The Philosophy of Edmund Husserl. A Historical Development* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 329-333.

<sup>22</sup> „Die Gemüt und der Wille ist eine eigene Quelle des Rechten und Echten [...].“ (Ms A V 21, 127b)

<sup>23</sup> „Liebe im echten Sinn ist eine der Hauptprobleme der Phänomenologie, [...].“ (Ms E III 2, 36b)

<sup>24</sup> See Ulrich Melle, "Edmund Husserl: From Reason to Love," in J. J. Drummond and L. Embree (eds.), *Phenomenological Approaches to Moral Philosophy, Phaenomenologica 47* (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 247.

"not only fulfills theoretical conditions of possibility for harmonious being, but also conditions of possibility for harmonious valuable being and for harmonious being as a field of human rational praxis"<sup>25</sup>. This establishes a solid connection between doxic reason and axiological-practical reason. Just as the world of experience is posited as actual because discrepancies are resolved in a higher-level unity, the actual world of valuation and praxis is the correlate of the unity of a volitional validity. This practical validity intends a complex of goals that outline the living future horizon of the totality of our life. Thus a rational subject should anticipate his whole life according to previous decisions taken with regard to the shaping of a vital horizon, and also be conscious of coincidences, modalizations, and cancelations in the fulfillment of the empty intentions. Consciousness of a discordance can assume the form of shame and repentance that lead to a reestablishment of the canceled validity or of retroactive motivation that brings forth a new validity correcting the previous one: "The final goal of the individual is a full harmony with himself and a full freedom from all drives that do not lie in the direction of rational self-legislation"<sup>26</sup>.

Harmony is achieved through a sequence of levels that include i) ethical consciousness (*ethisches Gewissen*) as the possibility of guiding our life beforehand so that our acts are not justified subsequently and by chance, ii) rational disposition (*Gesinnung der Vernunft*) as a habituality or life-style that comprises all our acts, iii) self-contentment (*Selbstzufriedenheit*) as the outcome of the constant manifestation of the disposition in justified ethical behavior, and iv) happiness (*Glückseligkeit*) as the additional satisfaction with our abilities and the surrounding world, i.e., the finishing touch of what is not only good but also successful<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, Husserl stresses the intersubjective side of happiness, and refers to a "rational-ethic community" in the following way: "One can be completely happy," he claims, "only if humanity as a whole can be happy. Life deserves to be lived [...] with a superior right when in my acting I see the open horizon of a social bond of love and a working-community in which all of

<sup>25</sup> Edmund Husserl, "Wert des Lebens. Wert der Welt. Sittlichkeit (Tugend) und Glückseligkeit," *Husserl Studies* 13, Nº 3, 1997, p. 233.

<sup>26</sup> "Das letzte Ziel des Individuums ist, völlige Einstimmigkeit mit sich selbst und völlige Freiheit von allen Antrieben, welche nicht in der Richtung einer vernünftigen Selbstgesetzgebung liegen." (Ms F I 24, 47b) See Ms A V 22, 3a-4b. On the role of decision in the harmonious building-up of one's own being, see Urbano Ferrer Santos, *La trayectoria fenomenológica de Husserl* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 2008), pp. 230-236.

<sup>27</sup> See Roberto J. Walton, "La razón práctica como saber y como crítica," *Anuario Colombiano de Fenomenología*, Vol. IV (Popayán: Universidad de Cauca, 2010), pp. 221-242.

us advance in the average and can help ourselves in raising the level of our existence"<sup>28</sup>. The intersubjective side of happiness will lead us to see the distinctive trait of axiological-practical reason in a displacement to otherness within the encompassing striving for harmony.

Husserl states that love "has horizons, horizons of fulfillment and cancellation"<sup>29</sup>. In fulfillment, the outcome of love is accordance: "Loving, to be one with the loved, to 'coincide,' to 'merge,' in one's own being with the loved being in a pure harmony, in a dual-unity"<sup>30</sup>. This accordance differs from the harmony that legitimates an object in the realm of doxic reason. According to Husserl, phenomenology "shows how, in the genuine love of neighbor, the other is not thematic as an object in the world, as something real, but rather exists as a counter-ego, and shows how in love a personal, i.e., permanent unification takes place, [...]"<sup>31</sup>. Along with accordance, horizontality implies the collapse of one's own ego in the other ego, and Husserl stresses the scope and permanence of the horizon as the distinctive traits of true love: "Love is an outstanding sense," he writes, "is a personal being-one-with-another and living-one-with-another with the horizon of the whole life. It is not merely to be and to live as an individual ego, and only occasionally to go along co-living with another, but rather at the same time in one's own being to be in the other and to sustain oneself in the other, and this in a fully concrete manner"<sup>32</sup>. The community of love between the ego and the alter ego entails a reciprocal movement in which the striving of one enters for ever in the striving of the other. The other is per-

<sup>28</sup> E. Husserl, „Wert des Lebens," p. 233.

<sup>29</sup> „In mir selbst Urakte der Liebe, die als Liebe Horizonte hat, Horizonte der Erfüllung und der Durchstreichung." (Ms E III 2, 40b)

<sup>30</sup> „Liebend mit dem Geliebten eins sein, sich im eigenen Sein mit dem geliebten Sein ‚decken,' verschmelzen, zu einer reinen Harmonie, zu einer Zweieinigkeit." (Ms E III 2, 39 b)

<sup>31</sup> „Sie [die Phänomenologie] weist auf, wie in der echten Nächstenliebe nicht der Andere als Weltobjekt, als Reales, thematisch ist, sondern der Andere als Gegen-Ich, und wie in der Liebe transzendente personale, d.i. bleibende Einigung statthat, [...]" (Ms E III 4, 10b) Husserl refers to the condition of cosubjects of the others: "But they are also for me cosubjects as subjects in the field of my ethical solicitude, their true welfare concerns me, and mine conversely concerns them [...]" „Aber sie sind auch für mich Mitsubjekte als Subjekte in meinen ethischen Fürsorgefeld, ihr wahres Wohl und Wehe geht mich selbst an, und meines [...] umgekehrt sie an." (Ms E III 4, 15a)

<sup>32</sup> „Liebe im ausgezeichneten Sinn ist ein personales Miteinander-Sein und Miteinander-Leben mit dem Horizont des gesamten Lebens. Es ist nicht bloß als Einzel-Ich Sein und Leben und nur gelegentlich auf einen Anderen mitlebend Eingehen, sondern in seinem eigenen Sein zugleich im Anderen Sein und den Anderen in sich Tragen, und das völlig konkret." (Ms E III 8, 8b) On the unified life of subjects and identification in feeling and will, Husserl writes: "Love looks out into the loved and in such a way that I, the lover, reach round in my love the being of the other, and do so concretely as being in his life, and he himself concretely with my actual current life, but I reach round in a unity, in a 'harmony'": „Liebe geht auf dem Geliebten und so, dass ich, der Liebende, in meinem Lieben das Sein des Anderen, und zwar konkret als Sein in seinem Leben, umspanne und ihn selbst konkret mit meinem jeweiligen Leben, aber umspanne in einer Einigkeit, in einer ‚Harmonie'." (Ms E III 2, 40a)

manently in the horizon of my life, and I am likewise in the horizon of his life. Self-forgetfulness extends to the totality of the horizons of the other so that these horizons become my total horizon. It is because the horizon of love reaches the totality of my life that it has an infinite character: "This relation is also," Husserl adds, "an individual value-relation, just as in general love in a genuine sense is a being given away to the other in feeling, valuing, and striving, a being given away that has in the total being of the other as an other ego its horizon of love, an infinite horizon"<sup>33</sup>. Infinitude is tied to the idea of a possible maximum and an absolute character: "This love is infinite," Husserl goes on to say, "it is absolute and universal, it is of such a kind that I cannot think about something that I could love more, namely, in the sense that, for its sake, I could abandon the loved"<sup>34</sup>. Thus, a second mode of empathy must be distinguished, which has nothing to do with objectivation and amounts to an assimilation to alterity that disregards one's own life, brings one's own motivation to nothing, and adopts the other's goals. As Husserl puts it: "Empathy admits in general a twofold manner: to have the other face to face, to understand him as an other, but to have him objectively; and to live, experience, think, feel happy jointly with the other, to be assimilated in his being and so eventually to strive in his life-striving"<sup>35</sup>. Self-renunciation extends its reach to the sacrifice of one's own life in a love of neighbor that asserts the absolute value of the other's life. On offering life in sacrifice, Husserl writes: "If he sacrifices his life to the community, or for a genuine love of neighbor, then he loses his terrestrial life, but gains his true life, because in the decision for sacrifice he has accomplished an act of life, act which he must love and will absolutely. And all at once he asserts the life of humanity as a life that is absolutely demanded, beautiful, and good *in infinitum*"<sup>36</sup>. Thus Husserl anticipates themes that will be elaborated by Emmanuel Lévinas and Jan Patočka.

<sup>33</sup> „Auch diese Beziehung ist eine Individualwertbeziehung, wie denn überhaupt Liebe im echten Sinn eine fühlend-wertend und strebend Hingegebensein an den Anderen ist, das in dem ganzen Sein des Anderen als einem anderen Ich seinen Horizont der Liebe hat, einen unendlichen Horizont.“ (Ms E III 9, 33b)

<sup>34</sup> „Diese Liebe ist unendlich, ist absolut und universal, sie ist von einer Art, dass ich nichts denken kann, was ich mehr lieben könnte, nämlich in einem Sinn, dass ich um dessentwillen das Geliebte preisgeben könnte.“ (Ms E III 4, 15b)

<sup>35</sup> „Einfühlung lässt überhaupt eine doppelte Weise zu, den Anderen gegenüber zu haben, ihn als Anderen verstehend, aber objektiv ihn haben und in dem anderen Leben mitleben, miterfahren, mitdenken, sich mitfreuen, in seinem Sein aufgehen und somit ev. in seinem Lebensstreben streben.“ (Ms E III 9, 34a)

<sup>36</sup> „Opfert er sein Leben der Gemeinschaft, oder aus echter Nächstenliebe, so verliert er sein irdisches Leben, aber er gewinnt sein wahres Leben, weil in der Entscheidung für das Opfer ein Lebensakt

Love has a relation with the value of persons and involves a call that is lived as an absolute ought prior to any axiological comparison. It has nothing to do with a calculation of values, i.e., the rational law of absorption of lower by higher values: "There is an unconditional 'you should and must', which is orientated toward persons, and which, for whom experiences this absolute affection, is not subject to an absolute grounding and does not depend from it for its legitimate constrictio. This affection has a priority over rational analysis, even where this analysis is possible"<sup>37</sup>. Such a feeling goes before a rational analysis, but does not withdraw from the realm of reason because it depends on an "evidence of preference (*Evidenz der Bevorzugung*)"<sup>38</sup>. As values of an absolute ought, the values of loving another do not admit a comparison that would relativize them because they bring forth insurmountable demands that enter into a conflict. This can lead to a decision with the sacrifice of one of them: "The voice of consciousness, the voice of an absolute ought, can demand from me something that I would never acknowledge in a comparison of values"<sup>39</sup>. Here Husserl raises an objection to his first formulation of the categorical imperative according to which we are obliged to do the best attainable within the sphere of our rational influence. In order to acknowledge the claims of a vocation (*Beruf*) or an inner call (*Ruf*), Husserl restricts the best attainable to the facts or events accompanying a decision: "Do your best according to your best knowledge and belief (*Tue dein Bestes nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen*)" (Hua XXXVII, 7)<sup>40</sup>.

In contrast to a calculation that compares and weighs objective values and falls prey to irrationality when higher values are set aside, the best knowledge and belief takes personal values into account and follows an inner call that is grounded in the love of neighbor. Following this path we reach "the most com-

vollzogen ist, den er absolut lieben und wollen muss. Und in eins bejaht er das Leben der Menschheit als ein absolut gefordertes, schönes und gutes in infinitum." (Ms E III 4, 16 ab)

<sup>37</sup> Ms B I 21, 65a. Quoted by Ullrich Melle, "Einleitung des Herausgebers," in Edmund Husserl, *Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre 1908-1914, Husserliana XXVIII* (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), p. xlviii.

<sup>38</sup> Ms E III 9, 34a. Husserl admits that "it would be ridiculous to make a demand on a mother that she should first think over if supporting her child is the best in her practical sphere." (Ms F I 49, 144a/Hua XXVIII, xlvi) The value of her child is for the mother an absolute value that cannot be understood by an impartial onlooker that compares values. Only the mother can live her motherly ought with evidence in an originary manner, and only another mother, by virtue of what her child means for her, can understand the first mother.

<sup>39</sup> Ms A V 21, 122ab. Quoted in Hua XXVIII, xlvi s.

<sup>40</sup> Ms B I 21, 65a. Quoted in Hua XXVIII, xlvi. Husserl refers to a life conducted "according to the 'best knowledge and belief,' namely, the best possible in each case for the particular ethical subject." (Hua XXVII, 40)

plete superiority of reason (*die vollendeste Herrschaft der Vernunft*)<sup>41</sup> in the intersubjective realm. The community of love extends to the point in which the entire humanity is contemplated as a life-community for which I have a vital interest and in whose self-contentment is included the self-contentment of individual subjects: "To the categorical imperative of the individual subject pertains a striving to the highest form of community [...]"<sup>42</sup>. Just as rationality loses its true course when the references of its ideal constructions to the intuitive world and the community of sciences is overlooked, it is also laid astray when ethical norms lose their reference to ethical consciousness and the community of love.

The analogy between truth and love is based on a parallel striving within the intersubjective horizon for accordance between the plurality of subjects, but in the case of truth it is grounded on a balance and adjustment between subjects, whereas in the case of love there is a loss of balance in favor of the other. With love and sacrifice a first breach is introduced in each center of legitimation because the realm of subjective accordance and their balanced integration into intersubjective accordance is overcome.

A second breach is related to will and concerns irrationality. The surrounding world is an open realm of unforeseen events that put obstacles in the way of our action. This irrational contingency amounts to a destiny that has to do with the foolishness and wickedness of human beings and our dependence on the course of nature and our body with its deficiencies, illness, and death. Practical reason gets disturbed by fortuitous, irrational, and incalculable events, which, nevertheless, make up a medium for the development of our freedom and hence have the function of conveying dignity and justification to life insofar as they urge us to encompass them within a realm of rationality in a process that can be characterized, in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's words, as the establishment of rationality in contingency. In spite of the tension between destiny and freedom, the ultimate horizon belongs to reason: "Everything rational has its horizons of irrationality. But irrationality is itself a formation of rationality apprehended in a more extended scope [...]"<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> Ms F I 24, 47b.

<sup>42</sup> E. Husserl, „Wert des Lebens," p. 219 s.

<sup>43</sup> „Alles Rationale hat seine Horizonte der Irrationalität. Aber die Irrationalität ist selbst eine Gestalt der weiter gefassten Rationalität; [...]" (Ms A V 22, 23b)

The teleology of reason is submitted to the power of a superior principle because a guarantee is required for this development. In a letter to Ernst Cassirer, Husserl refers to "the problems of factualness as such, the problems of 'irrationality,' which, in my opinion, can only be treated in an extended method of the Kantian postulates." And he adds: "Maybe this is the greatest of all Kantian discoveries"<sup>44</sup>. Husserl has in mind the disappearance of the culture and its systems of values due to the possible end of life on the earth. Life shows us that nothing is definite and that we are threatened by a universal declination. Thus, if the constitution of the world is a contingent and perishable fact that can end up in a chaos, human life is affected by a lack of meaning: "But if I believe and become conscious of this belief, if I perform it *freely* out of this practical source, it bestows meaning to the world and to my life, it provides the joyful confidence that nothing is in vain and that everything is for good." (Hua VIII, 355) Only with the presupposition of this belief, which has no theoretical basis but is grounded on motives of rational practical life, my life can "persist in a rational manner"<sup>45</sup> by attempting to overcome irrationalities helped by the "force of rational faith (*Kraft des verünftigen Glaubens*)"<sup>46</sup>. The categorical imperative is now joined to the acceptance of an absolute will in a contact that can be accomplished in several levels: "[...] the highest is the pure belief in which the individual ego has abandoned himself completely, and wants to do nothing but to satisfy God, i.e., to fulfill absolutely God's call"<sup>47</sup>.

We can see, then, that not only my vital horizon depends on the vital horizon of the other but all vital horizons are subject to the guidelines of a universal teleology. Two modes of abandonment of the self with a displacement in the harmony of one's own vital horizon set aside self-centeredness in the striving for harmony. The displacement is, to be sure, without escape from harmony, but the absorption of one's own vital horizon in the other's vital horizon and of both in teleology becomes the distinctive trait of axiological-practical reason.

<sup>44</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Briefwechsel. V. Die Neukantianer, Husserliana-Dokumente III/5* (Kluwer Academic Publishers: Dordrecht/Boston/London, 1994), p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> „Erst unter Voraussetzung dieses Glaubens gewinnt mein Leben Zwecksinn und kann vernünftigerweise erhalten bleiben und erhält Schwungkraft und notwendig steigernden Wert.“ (Ms A V 21, 24b)

<sup>46</sup> Ms A V 21, 128b.

<sup>47</sup> „[...] Die höchste der reine Glaube, in dem das einzelne Ich sich selbst ganz hingegeben hat und nichts anderes will als Gott wohlgefallen, d.i. rein den Gottesruf erfüllen.“ (Ms A V 21, 107 b)

These two breaches amount to a breakthrough in the unitary style that must be bestowed on the life of every individual subject.

It is worth dwelling for a moment on a point of contact in Husserl's presentation of the categorical imperative with Martin Heidegger's notion of formal indication as a methodological moment of phenomenology. In his first Freiburg courses, devoted to the search for an originary science of life in which no a priori eidetic laws would afford an anticipation of their object, Heidegger holds that philosophical concepts do not intend directly what they refer to but hand over a task of self-transformation. It is because the experience of life is threatened by a tendency to lapse into objectivity that formal indication has a precautionary character intended to keep away this possible deviation. According to Heidegger, with regard to phenomena, we can inquire into their content (*Gehalt*), i.e., "what" is experienced, their reference (*Bezug*), i.e., "how" the content is experienced, and their accomplishment (*Vollzug*), i.e., "how" the reference is effected. In this totality of meaning, with three directions that must be explained by phenomenology, reference and accomplishment are not determined beforehand but are left undecided (see GA 60, 63 f.). At the same time Heidegger stresses that the binding force of formal indication is undetermined as regards content but determined as regards accomplishment (see GA 61, 19 f.)<sup>48</sup>.

The question may now be raised whether Husserl shares this standpoint in his analysis of the categorical imperative. It should not be overlooked that the background of formal indication is to be found in Husserl's notion of formalization and in his distinction, as regards essentially occasional expressions, between an indicating meaning that keeps open a situational understanding and an indicated meaning that fulfills the indetermination<sup>49</sup>. It has also been argued that the three senses enclosed in formal indication refer back to Husserl: content-sense to the noematic content, referential sense to the quality of an act, and actualizing-sense to the distinction between inauthentic or empty and authentic or fulfilled thinking<sup>50</sup>. Be this as it may, it could also be argued that

<sup>48</sup> Abbreviation, with an indication of volume and page, for Martin Heidegger, *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1978-2010).

<sup>49</sup> See José Adrián Escudero, *Heidegger y la genealogía de la pregunta por el ser* (Barcelona: Herder, 2010), p. 405 ff.

<sup>50</sup> This is advocated by Steven Galt Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning. Paths toward Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001), p. 142 f.

Husserl's formal presentation of the categorical imperative can be connected with the content-sense, that the various formulations—those referred to the best attainable, the vital individual horizon, the love of neighbor, and the call of God—reflect Heidegger's referential sense, and that ethical praxis itself is associated with the accomplishment-sense. Indication orientated toward actualization is present in Husserl, although always with a clearly formulated guiding content, i.e., not only with the constricting of an accomplishment but also with orientations for the course that must be taken by action. This can be found both in the formal and provisional presentation of the categorical imperative and in the peculiar character of personal values that demand an actualization or accomplishment. Husserl holds that "a categorical imperative with a general content (*Inhalt*) is referred (*bezogen*) to the whole future life," (Hua XXXVII, 247) and adds that "I am not ethical through sheer knowledge but rather by a free decision"<sup>51</sup>.

#### 5. A BRIEF EPILOGUE FOR SPANISH SPEAKING PEOPLE

By way of conclusion I will briefly touch upon a controversial contention of Ortega y Gasset. The Spanish philosopher holds that Husserlian lived-experiences (*Erlebnisse*) have nothing to do with life but rather are opposed to it: "The phenomenological attitude is strictly the opposite of the attitude that I call 'vital reason'" (V, 545)<sup>52</sup>. Furthermore, Ortega recalls that Dilthey remained trapped up in the opposition between vital irrationalism and intellectual rationalism, and criticizes him for not discovering the rationalism of life (see VI, 196 n.). In showing that the contrast with Husserl fades away, I wish to suggest that Ortega returns in a way to Dilthey.

We have first examined the instinctive basis of reason. This view is shared by Ortega, who characterizes reason as "a correction of instinct, an improvement of spontaneity," "a mere supplement to a deficient instinct," and "an additional instinct that substitutes the lost ones." (III, 485; VI, 473) In a second step, we have considered the upright reason of natural human understanding,

<sup>51</sup> E. Husserl, „Wert des Lebens“, p. 212.

<sup>52</sup> Reference, with indication of volume and page, to José Ortega y Gasset, *Obras Completas* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente/Alianza Editorial, 1946-1983).

and mentioned Husserlian descriptions that show, in Ortega's words, that "living has no alternative than reasoning in view of the inexorable circumstance" (VI, 67). We can also remember that Ortega, for whom life is "concern," urges us to "take care"<sup>53</sup> of ourselves, and describes reason as emerging out of the vicissitudes of life. He also states that the divergence between subjective worlds "does not imply the falsehood of one of them" because the reduction of the world to horizontality "furnishes it with a vital dimension, locates it in the stream of life, [...]." (III, 200, 202) The Husserlian transition to second historicity is exposed by Ortega as the passage from the "absorbed" to the "open." (see IX, 132 ss.) And the analysis of the movement from latent to manifest reason evokes Ortega's statement that "new modes of reason, sometimes with features opposite to the codified ones, emerged out of its previous figure, overflowing and overcoming it."<sup>54</sup>

According to Ortega, what is urgently required is that cultural objective imperatives be complemented with vital subjective imperatives: "The ethical ideal," he writes, "cannot content itself with being itself extremely correct: it should succeed in exciting our impetuosity." (III, 171) Thus truth must join together with sincerity in the realm of thought, beauty with delectation in the realm of feeling, and goodness with vehemence in the field of will. The imperative of objectiveness must blend with loyalty to ourselves, i.e., it must incite our deep energies. We have seen an expression of this demand in the successive link of the categorical imperative with the circumstances of life, the requirements of love, and the claims of teleology.

Regarding truth and sincerity, there are clearly Husserlian themes that go through Ortega's philosophy. An acute depiction of evidence is offered in the observation that it "consists in searching if there is in the thing itself about which one speaks what is spoken of it, what is said about it"<sup>55</sup>. Ortega's contention that vital reason cannot be substituted by pure reason goes hand in hand with the Husserlian reference to the "primal evidence (*Urevidenz*)" of transcendental life and the lifeworld as the two originary evidences that ground all other evidences (see Hua VI, 80, 131) and with the distinction drawn between con-

<sup>53</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *Unas lecciones de metafísica* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1974), p. 41. See OC IV, 144.

<sup>54</sup> José Ortega y Gasset, *Sobre la razón histórica* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente/Alianza Editorial, 1980), p. 230.

<sup>55</sup> J. Ortega y Gasset, *Unas lecciones de metafísica*, p. 64.

tingent a priori and formal a priori. Formal pure reason, understood as a play of thoughts or a calculation of values is certainly for Husserl, put in Ortega's words, "only a small island floating on the sea of a primary vitality." (III, 177)

In what concerns feeling, Ortega refers to "the great components of love," (IV, 476) i.e., the perspicacity or intuition that enables us to appreciate vital perfection in the intimacy of other human beings, the enchantment by which we feel ourselves torn away from our own vital depths and transplanted into the depths of the loved person, and the absorption of the lover by the loved. As we have seen, each of these moments is present in Husserl's analyses, whose valuation of love as a basic problem of phenomenology has its counterpart in Ortega's question: "Who can estimate the revelations that the study and politics of love will grant us?" (II, 27)

As regards the will, Husserl gives prominence to three factors: a rational decision, the irrationality that confronts us as destiny, and our confidence in teleology, i.e., "our hope in an actual rationality." (Hua VI, 343) In turn, Ortega highlights "three specific powers of our human destiny," (IX, 587) i.e., the capacity of having enthusiasm, the awareness of hazard, and hope. Enthusiasm, which Ortega matches with the Greek *eros*, enables us to project ourselves to the future and is connected with the fact that, for a human being, "reason or rationality is an inexorable imperative, a call or outcry that is sounded in his most deep and genuine intimacy [...]"<sup>56</sup>. But the future is uncertain because it is not in our hands and humanity does not always adopt a rational behavior. This implies an awareness of hazard, i.e., of the Greek *tyché*, which is a consciousness of the insecurity or "indocility of the future." (IX, 588) Thus, our life is full of perplexity in the sense of an oscillation between enthusiasm and anxiety (see VI, 349 f.). Finally, the third specific power is hope, or the Greek *elpís*, conceived as an ultimate confidence that allows us to face insecurity. Ortega holds that reason "manages to give an outline of rationality to hazard itself, the demon of the irrational [...]" (IX, 392) But he also contends that confidence is so irrational as contingencies.

The difference between Husserl and Ortega lies not in the imperative of rationality, nor does it lie in the role assigned to contingency. Rather the difference lies in the nature of confidence or hope. When he considers rationality as

<sup>56</sup> J. Ortega y Gasset, *Sobre la razón histórica*, p. 230.

such as a "small island surrounded everywhere by irrationality," (III, 292; see V, 602) Ortega refers to Dilthey's statement, which I have quoted at the outset and which he himself criticizes, about reason being like an island that emerges out of unfathomable depths. On Husserl's account, confidence in reason cannot be considered so irrational as contingencies. Even if he calls attention to its frontiers, Husserl does not consider rationality as an island at least from a teleological point of view. On the contrary, he asserts that it is not an "accidental green spot in the desert of the world"<sup>57</sup>. Whereas Ortega describes a background of irrationality as what actually is, Husserl exhibits it as what should not be. The permanent and essential perplexity inherent to life has a path to be followed, and the responsibility of a philosopher is to encompass irrationality within a more extensive rationality. Even if pure reason in the sense of a formal a priori is a small island floating on the sea of primal vitality, reason as such is not for Husserl an island surrounded everywhere by irrationality.

<sup>57</sup> E. Husserl, "Wert des Lebens", p. 215.