

ON TIME - NEW CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HUSSERLIAN
PHENOMENOLOGY OF TIME

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ISSN 0079-1350

ISBN 978-90-481-8765-2

e-ISBN 978-90-481-8766-9

DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-8766-9

Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010927218

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Printed on acid-free paper

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INTRODUCTION

Husserl's analyses of the constitution of time belong to the most difficult part of his phenomenology. They entail the attempt to gain insight into the deepest level of constitution as well as the different steps involved in the process that lead up to the full objective time. As one should expect, such an attempt faces exceptional difficulties. These difficulties often led Husserl in his research manuscripts to competing aporetic solutions, to unsolvable dilemmas and sometimes also to serious regresses. Yet also, the higher levels of constitution imply temporal aspects that offer challenging questions that sometimes led to the ultimate frontiers of phenomenological understanding. It thus turns out that Husserl's analyses seem to offer at least some promising ways of accessing the problems of time-constitution. And yet, the problems often call for a renewed or even a reformed phenomenological treatment, informed by and systematically oriented to the phenomenological method.

Some difficulties also arise from Husserl's attempt to treat a multitude of constitutional questions simultaneously but without a clear insight into this variety. In his *Lectures* Husserl tries to treat several projects at the same time and this leads to a complex mixture of tasks and methods: (1) the analysis of immanent time itself, i.e., the flow of consciousness, and this means the character of time in the inner experience of consciousness itself (the time of the act itself); (2) the analysis of the subjective time in its function as a medium of representation for objective time in events and lasting objects; (3) the search for the ultimate level of constitution in which, on the basis of the pure hyletic streaming (in all fields of sensibility), sensible data together with their duration are constituted; (4) the investigation of specific time-objects like melodies or events (in subjective and objective time); (5) the constitution of the unity of consciousness itself; (6) furthermore, Husserl also works on the conceptual and methodological tools of his analysis of time.

Besides the deep and challenging difficulty of the topic itself, already the central text of Husserl's investigations of time, the *Lectures on the phenomenology of internal time-consciousness* edited by Martin Heidegger in 1928, offers numerous textual difficulties that mirror Husserl's lifelong struggle with time-consciousness. This text does not entirely coincide with the original *Lectures* Husserl delivered in the winter semester of 1904/1905, but is the result of far-reaching revisions undertaken in 1917. More than half of the text Heidegger edited is composed of Husserl's later sketches, mainly from 1917 and partly of his manuscripts from 1908 to 1911. Moreover, in Husserl's own view, these revisions were far from satisfactory. Husserl wrote the *Bernau Manuscripts* directly after the revisions of the *Lectures* in two working-holidays that he spent in the small village of Bernau in the Black Forest. They reveal a number of undeveloped lines of thought in the *Lectures* that urgently called for renewed treatment. Several problems concerning the constitution of time turned out to be unsolved and some basic methods and patterns of understanding had to undergo serious revisions. In the *Bernau Manuscripts* it becomes obvious that many problems of the *Lectures* cannot find an easy solution. Therefore, even the conceptual framework of problems in the *Lectures* is affected by the discussion of the *Bernau Manuscripts*, all the more as these research manuscripts often generate only contradictory and aporetic solutions.

Concerning themes and methods, the late *C-Manuscripts* offer something quite different from the analyses of the *Lectures* and the *Bernau Manuscripts* that were dedicated to the structures of extended presence in the dimensions of primal-impression, retention and protention. The starting point now is the living present, and a return to this realm of experience is understood as a reductive method, similar to the transcendental and primordial reduction. In the *C-Manuscripts*, the egological analysis of constitution is pursued starting on a full intentional level, i.e. starting with concrete individual objects and a perspective on a world of objects, which the ego experiences and uses in concrete circumstances - but in the ultimate living present of the now. This relation to the things in the world is not only investigated on an intentional level as a striving for fulfillment, but also on a practical level and even on the level of drives and instincts. Nevertheless, some of the central themes of the *Bernau Manuscripts*

are taken up again: for example, the problem of an intersubjective, common constitution of the objective time of the world and full individuation of things in this time of the world. The *C-Manuscripts* also address the self-constitution of the transcendental ego in time in terms of embodiment and becoming part of the world. This field of research includes special features of the ego and leads to the analysis of instincts, pleasure and displeasure, loss of strength in falling asleep, illness and old age. Moreover, these manuscripts also address phenomena like sleep, birth and death as problematic endings, beginnings and limits of subjective experience in their significance for time-constitution.

Usually Husserl's analysis of time-constitution is thought of in terms of three phases that are roughly bound up with the central publications, the *Lectures*, the *Bernau Manuscripts* and the *C-Manuscripts*. Today, after the publication of the central texts incorporating the last two phases, the discussion of Husserl's analysis of time-constitution has entered a new phase. This is true for the interpretation of the latter two texts but it also affects our reading of the *Lectures*. Today, in the aftermath of the recent publication of the *C-Manuscripts*, it seems more likely that the seemingly separated first two phases are more close to each other than expected. The new and broader context allows for a more thorough interpretation of the whole enterprise of time-constitution.

Our intention in publishing a collection of contributions of recognized international experts in this field, entailing some refreshing approaches of new-coming researchers, is to give an overview of the most outstanding contemporary interpretations of this fundamental phenomenological theme.

The last years have seen a number of conferences on the topic of time-constitution and a great number of excellent discussions can be found in monographs and articles. It thus seems to be the right time to concentrate these insights in a thematic collection of articles. This is the background of our enterprise of a book concentrating on analyses of time-constitution in which the leading researchers in this difficult field can present their views.

Nevertheless, we are quite conscious of the fact that the theme of time-constitution is not only considered to be complicated but it also does not belong to the core themes that are investigated by many

phenomenologists. No one, however, would reject the central importance of this research. Therefore we decided to publish all articles in English to give the discussion the most effective dissemination.

Let us shortly characterize the contributions to this volume.

The contribution of Rudolf Bernet provides a short historical and systematic overview of the analysis of time-consciousness developed in the *Bernau Manuscripts*. It investigates where these manuscripts make significant progress when dealing with problems that had remained unsolved in the texts of Husserliana X, and where they prepare themes of the *C-Manuscripts*. Four fields of new or renewed theory-formations in constitution are discussed: The constitution of immanent time objects; a genetic analysis of the emergence of all acts of intentional consciousness; a new understanding of the present now in terms of a process of fulfillment in the tension between retentions and protentions; and new analyses of specifically noematic temporal characteristics including the theme of individuation. These new insights have decisive consequences for some well-known technical issues in Husserl's phenomenology of time: Concerning the use of the schema "apprehension - apprehension-content" in analyses of (different kinds of) temporal objects; the infinite regress argument arising from the search for an absolute foundation of time-consciousness; the distinction between a passively lived-through temporal stream and the modification it undergoes when it becomes an object of reflection. Besides emphasizing where and how progress has been made, this contribution also points out remaining difficulties.

The essay of John Brough intends to serve as a partial primer for the central theme of the "absolute time-constituting flow of consciousness" and to discuss some of the difficult and perplexing questions that surround it. It starts characterizing three levels involved in time-consciousness: first, the primal level of the absolute flow; second, the level of immanent temporal unities or experiences, such as acts, which the flow constitutes; and third, the level of transcendent objects in world time constituted by the acts. The connections among these levels are examined, as well as the structure of the absolute flow that enables it to constitute both itself and immanent temporal experiences. This is followed by a consideration of a series of issues concerning the flow, many of which arise from Husserl's sometimes paradoxical statements about it: Whether and in what sense the flow can be said to have a temporal character;

the difficulties in finding a vocabulary suitable for describing the flow; whether the consciousness belonging to the flow is intentional in character and how it differs from the objectivating consciousness of acts such as perception; the sense in which the flow and what it constitutes are distinct but inseparable, and whether Husserl introduces needless complexity into consciousness by distinguishing between the absolute flow and the stream of experiences it constitutes in immanent time. The essay concludes with some reflections on the absolute flow as the living present or *nunc stans*, formulations that capture the constant and centering role of the flow in our conscious lives.

Nicolas DeWarren frames his attempt with the question, whether and how a phenomenology of sleep is possible. If sleep is the complete absence of experience, including the self-experience of consciousness itself, how can phenomenology have access to it? The article wants to respond to Jean-Luc Nancy's challenge that a phenomenology of sleep is impossible in direct and indirect manner. To do this it first offers a sketch of an indirect phenomenology of sleep investigated in Husserl's employment of the distinction between sleep and wakefulness as a metaphor, starting with the metaphorical characterization of retentive consciousness. The author argues that Husserl's phenomenology of time-consciousness would remain incomplete without an account of "sleep-consciousness", especially of dreamless sleep. Following Husserl's genetic account of sleep, falling asleep and waking up, he proposes a suggestion how to understand the sense in which consciousness constitutes itself as sleep, namely as the complete absence of itself. The contribution concludes drawing an analogy with Husserl's investigations of imagination: In sleep and in imagination consciousness induces within itself its own suspension and loosens the connections to the world, practical interests and affects.

The paper of James Dodd outlines a reading of the *C-Manuscripts* that aims to fix how Husserl formulates the problem of death from a phenomenological perspective. The paper explores an approach to the question "What can death tell us about time?" by considering first what life has to tell us about time, with the working thesis being that the problem of death bears precisely on how egoic life is conscious of itself as a "whole," or how the whole of a personal "life" is a given unity of sense for an ego. This approach illuminates why Husserl pursues the themes of death, birth, sleep and sedimentation, since all of these themes form

the basic parameters of Husserl's conception of egoic life. This paper is to be understood as a preliminary exploration of possible ways to approach Husserl's late writings on time. It concludes with the suggestion that Husserl takes a very different course than other phenomenological philosophers, like Sartre and Heidegger, who lay much more emphasis on the "ecstatic" character of lived time.

Saulius Geniusas wants to provide a systematic account of the problematic of birth, death, and sleep in Husserl's *C-Manuscripts*. He argues that for Husserl, the full constitution of human finitude rests upon a threefold disclosure of birth, death, and sleep as limit-phenomena, intersubjective phenomena, and paradoxical phenomena. Then he treats the central topic of the transcendental necessity of the phenomena in question. His resulting thesis is, that in the absence of birth, death, and sleep, subjectivity could not be conceived as a world-constituting subjectivity. Therefore to accentuate the distinguishing features of Husserl's analyses, he brings them into a polemic with Heidegger's notion of authentic temporality.

Klaus Held situates Husserl's analyses of time in a tension of alternative points of view we can find already in Greek philosophy. In his *Timaeus* Plato recognized two aspects of time, the past and the future, but not the present. In contrast, Aristotle's analysis of time in the *Physics* took its orientation from the 'now'. It is the latter path that Husserl first follows with his conception of the 'original impression' (Urimpression). But as we can learn from certain parts of the *Bernau Manuscripts*, here the present loses significance because of a novel interpretation of protention. This development, which revitalizes Plato's understanding of time, is furthered in Heidegger's late lecture *Time and Being*: the present can be understood on the basis of the 'withdrawal' which determines the mutual relation between the arrival as authentic future and the having-been as authentic past.

The paper of Dieter Lohmar addresses some of Husserl's attempts to answer the question how the objective time of the world is constituted on the basis of the experienced subjective time. Although this task is introduced already in the *Lectures* from 1904/1905, we may find acceptable attempts to answer this question only in the *Bernau Manuscripts*. The first step of this solution concerns my own past that does not only appear in the form of singular static pictorial memories but rather in short narrative stories raised by memories that already own an internal order of

time. But these internally ordered stories are not yet ordered externally, somehow they are still lying “side by side”. Thus they lack an objective, synthetic coordination in time. This synthetic unification of my narrative memories in an objective unity and order is the first step towards objectivation of time. Nevertheless, this first synthetic unification is done only by myself and thus we have not yet reached an intersubjective-objective order in time. The objective order in the full sense we are searching for necessarily depends on communication, critique and agreement with other persons. The communicative ways, authorized subjects and rules of this common constitution of objective time in a community is discussed by Husserl only in the late *C-Manuscripts*. Therefore, based on suggestions and elements from these two sources - and exceeding both - what follows is a discussion of the contribution of common intersubjective constitution to the formation of a full objective time of the world.

The contribution of Yves Mayzaud opens with a dichotomous consideration of Husserl’s phenomenology of time. On the one hand, Husserl unveils contradictions and the opaqueness of the objective time, discovers retention, and interprets transcendental characteristics of time. On the other hand, he conceives of time as continuous and it seems that he leaves no space for forgetting. This holistic conception of time leads Husserl to the idea that consciousness forms a totality. It is therefore always threatened by the shadow of solipsism. Against this threat, this essay explores the possibilities of a description of the experience of time through a phenomenological monadology.

James Mensch’s article discusses Husserl’s controversial schema of interpretative intention, contents-there-to-be-interpreted, and the resulting intentional object. One central problematic of time-constitution is how we are to understand our retention of just past time. This short-term memory is the basis of our consciousness of extended time, but such time-consciousness is fundamental for our apprehension of every temporally determinate object. Thus, the question of the schema concerns the very basis of Husserl’s theory of how we grasp our world. Although Husserl severely criticizes the schema, he never abandons it. In fact, we find him continuing to employ it in the C and B manuscripts on time-consciousness from the 1930’s. Mensch shows in detail how Husserl applies the schema to our apprehension of time. This includes a crucial limitation he imposes on the schema with regard to the lowest level of such apprehension. But this schema also determines what Husserl means

by retention and temporal constitution. After making clear how his use of the schema overcomes the objections that have been brought against it, the implications are discussed that thereby arise regarding the priority of appearing as such.

The contribution of Stefano Micali discusses the temporalization of the absolute flow of consciousness. He starts with the relationship between the time of the intentional acts and the absolute pre-phenomenal flow of time constituting consciousness. In this regard, John Brough draws a distinction between the intentional acts and the specific dimension of the absolute flow of time-consciousness. Dan Zahavi questions the validity of this distinction: the inner time-consciousness should not be regarded as an additional flow aware of the intentional act, but it is nothing but the pre-reflective self-awareness of the act. Despite these differences, a common presupposition characterizes both of the above-mentioned interpretations of the absolute time-constituting flow: the absolute flow is indifferent to the acts; it always flows in the same way, the same form. Micali shows that the validity of this thesis may be challenged from two different angles: Considering an essential ambiguity of Husserl's configuration of the absolute flow to be found not only in the *Lectures* but also in the *Bernau Manuscripts*. And by taking into consideration Husserl's analyses of specific temporal experiences, as they are lived during the time of unclear phantasia and the experience of the radically new.

Liangkang Ni discusses the relation of "time" and "genesis" starting with the *Logical Investigations* where Husserl did not put both in any, not even an opposite, relationship. Only through some fragmental statements can we realize Husserl's concentration on "analyses of time" and his exclusion of "analyses of genesis". But his attitude toward the analysis of "time" and "genesis" changed in the *Lectures*. Here Husserl tried to grasp their immanent relationship. Later, in the period of the *Cartesian Meditations*, the connection of "time" and "genesis" found its expression in a discussion of the relationship between static phenomenology, which takes "crosswise-intentionality" as its theme, and genetic phenomenology, which takes "longitudinal-intentionality" as its theme. It is likely that this thought led Husserl to consider "time" as "the universal form of all geneses of egology" in the *Cartesian Meditations*. Starting from here, particularly in the *Crisis*, the historical dimension of the relation of time and genesis came into Husserl's horizon. Now the problematic relation

concerns the way in which history is studied, i.e. the immanent relationship between history, time and genesis, and the possible connection and difference between the “form” and “content” of his phenomenology of history.

Luis Niel analyses the way Husserl presents the problem of the I in some of the *Bernau Manuscripts* in its relationship to temporality and to the stream of consciousness. By giving an account of the commonly misunderstood meaning of the methodical suspension of the I he characterizes it as the necessary center and pole of the stream of consciousness. We can neither identify it with a moment of the stream nor with the stream itself and we can understand its special temporal character as ‘supra-temporal’. From the point of view of its givenness the I appears as an ‘object-I’, objectified through reflection. But we also recognize that this ‘object-I’ is not the original I-pole of my consciousness, namely the ‘primal-I’. This ‘primal-I’ (Ur-Ich), which as an ‘operating I’ should not be confused with other egological levels, appears as the necessary original ‘mine-ness’ of all my experiences. Finally it turns out that the primal-I is always given together with the stream of consciousness as the innermost original intentional primal-tension.

The contribution of Lanei Rodemeyer discusses the reliability of the contents of retention and recollection. While most analyses of Husserl’s phenomenology of inner time-consciousness focus on the structures of the layers of constitution, we should not forget that they are the utmost foundation for all phenomenological research and for the relation of consciousness to its objects. But the fact that I can make mistakes, that I can think I am recollecting when I actually am not, forces us to consider not just the structure of inner time-consciousness, but its content as well. How could any noetic act be incorrect? Then the paper takes up the intersection of Husserl’s analyses of recollection and belief in order to identify how apodictic acts of consciousness can be mistaken. For this purpose three items are discussed: The relation of the content of consciousness with its activity; the importance of the context of an experience to how I take it up as actual or not; the relation of retention and recollection with regard to their content. The resulting thesis is that at this level no experience can be taken in isolation, but every meaning and temporality of each experience must be taken up in light of the horizons of its context.

Tetsuya Sakakibara thematizes the difficulties of the phenomenological reflection on the living present in the *C-Manuscripts*. Following Husserl's manuscripts chronologically, Sakakibara tries to exhibit the special mode of these reflections on the living present in those manuscripts, and how he understands these reflections. It turns out that the reflections upon the living present are based on the self-touching or inner primal consciousness of the functioning Ego. Wavering between epistemological and ontological perspectives in those manuscripts, Husserl finally reaches what is best named an epistemological-ontological method of reflective exhibition grounded on the self-touching consciousness. The special characteristics of this unique method are clarified in the last section of this contribution.

The essay of Ichiro Yamaguchi treats the topic of intermonadic temporalization in simultaneous reciprocal awakening. Husserl persistently strives to deepen his analysis of the problem of the infinite regress, not only in his *Lectures* from 1904/1905 but also in the *Bernau Manuscripts*. His central concern in this regard seems to be the proper interpretation of the character of retentive intentionality as passive egoless intentionality. Such an interpretation must continue to maintain the distinction between egoic and egoless intentionality. This distinction leads to the latter distinction between egoic and intermonadic temporalization of the temporal stream of the living present given in the *C-Manuscripts*. The final solution of the problem of infinite regress is found in the concept of the reciprocal awakening between the empty shapes of the drive intentionality as primal affection and the primal impression (primal hyle) in the process of intermonadic temporalization. This unconscious temporalization in genetic phenomenology can establish a cooperative, but limited relation between phenomenology and neural science.

Dan Zahavi's contribution wants to examine the relation between Husserl's notion of inner consciousness (self-consciousness) and his theory of inner time-consciousness. He argues that the distinction between reflective and pre-reflective self-consciousness is crucial if we are to understand Husserl's analysis of time. Moreover, the article claims that the latter analysis contains Husserl's most profound contribution to our understanding of the pre-reflective self-manifestation of subjective life.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Klaus Sellge from the Husserl Archive in Cologne who spent a lot of time and effort on the texts of the present collection, as well as to Dr. Saulius Geniusas and Jasmin Dücker who carefully corrected the English text of this introduction.